



OPT STEM EXTENSION

During the 12 month Optional Practical Training (OPT) period, certain government designated degree holders (STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) are eligible for an additional 24 months of OPT.

The degree programs that qualify for the STEM extension are listed on <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/stemList2022.pdf>. Please note that the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code is located on page 1 of the Form I-20 adjacent to “Major 1” under the Program of Study.

I. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STEM EXTENSION

1. Students must be currently authorized in the 12-month OPT and working for a United States employer in a job that is directly related to the student’s program of study
2. Students must have graduated from a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral level degree in a program of study listed on the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) STEM Designated Degree Program List.
3. Students’ jobs or job offers must be from an employer registered with the E-Verify employment verification system
4. Students have not previously received the STEM extension at the same educational level
5. Student submits a completed I-983 Mentoring and Training Plan to a DSO at Touro University.
6. A Designated School Official (DSO) will recommend the OPT STEM extension in SEVIS after verifying student’s eligibility, certifying that students’ degrees are on the STEM Designated Degree Program List, and ensuring that students are aware of their responsibilities for maintaining F-1 status while on OPT.
7. The application for the STEM extension includes a fee.

II. VALIDATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS DURING THE OPT STEM EXTENSION

1. Students with an approved OPT STEM extension must submit a validation report to the DSO every six months starting from the date the STEM extension begins and ending. when:
2. The validation report must include:
 - a. student’s full name; and
 - b. current residence address and mailing address if different from residence address; and
 - c. name and address of current employer; and
 - d. date student began working for the current employer.
3. In addition to the validation reports, students on STEM extension must notify the DSO within 10 days:
 - a. any change of name, residence, or mailing address; and
 - b. any changes to current employment; and
 - c. any change of employer (new employment or any interruption or termination of previous employment) by submitting OPT Reporting Form, new I-983, and an employment letter from the new employer, if applicable; OR
 - d. the student’s F-1 status ends; or
 - e. the student begins a new academic program; or
 - f. the student transfers to another school

III. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Submit the following documents to a DSO at Touro University for STEM OPT I-20 extension purposes:
 - a. A completed STEM extension application
 - b. A completed I-765 form (can be obtained from <http://www.uscis.gov/I-765>)
 - c. A completed I-983 Mentoring and Training Plan (<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983.pdf>)
 - d. A copy of employment verification letter
 - e. A copy of diploma or transcript which your STEM extension will be based.
2. The DSO will issue a new Form I-20 recommending the OPT STEM extension. The extension starts following the expiration of your current EAD and ends 24 months later.

IV. APPLICATION PERIOD

The Form I-765 and supporting documentation must be sent directly to the US Citizenship and Services (USCIS). The USCIS should receive your STEM OPT application before your 12 month OPT expires.

V. EXTENSION OF WORK AUTHORIZATION

Students who timely file an application for OPT STEM extension will be able to continue their employment up to 180 days while the application is pending.

VI. TRAVEL

Although students may continue to work while the OPT STEM extension application is being adjudicated, students will not be able to return to the U.S. after traveling abroad after the first EAD has expired and before you receive the EAD for the OPT STEM Extension. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT STUDENTS IN F-1 STATUS NEED AN UNEXPIRED PASSPORT VALID FOR 6 MONTHS INTO THE FUTURE AND AN UNEXPIRED F-1 VISA IN YOUR PASSPORT TO RETURN BACK TO THE UNITED STATES.

VII. Be sure that your application contains all of the following documents:

1. Original form I-765, Application for employment Eligibility (properly completed and signed in blue ink)
2. Fee: \$410 payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3. Photocopy of a newly issued I-20 with your DSO OPT STEM recommendation
4. Photocopy of all Form I-20 that was issued by Touro University and any other schools
5. Photocopy of your recent diploma or official or unofficial transcript as evidence that your program of study was in the DHS designated OPT STEM program list
6. Two passport format photos: See the photo requirements at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos.html>
7. Photocopies of the following:
 - a. Previous EAD's (both sides)
 - b. Passport identification page including photo and expiration date
 - c. Visa
 - d. Photocopy of paper I-94 or electronic I-94 from <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>
8. A copy of a job offer or employment letter from your current employer

VIII. Make a photocopy of all of the above documents for your records

IX. File your application online via <http://www.uscis.gov/I-765> or mail your complete application by express mail or courier service to the USCIS Lockbox facilities:

For the most up-to-date information regarding filing addresses, please visit <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses>

It is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** to send your application online for easier tracking and faster processing.

USCIS must receive your STEM OPT application within 30 days of the DSO's OPT recommendation.

Please Note: If your complete application is returned to you, for any reason, that means your application has not been accepted. Contact our office immediately for information about your options.

X. Track the progress of your application through the USCIS Case Status Online System at www.uscis.gov.

XI. Please provide the Designated School Official with a photocopy of your EAD Card as soon as possible after you receive it in the mail.

VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

Please Verify that You Understand and Accept the Following:

- I am currently engaged in post-completion OPT that is from a STEM designated degree.
- I have inquired and received confirmation from my current or prospective employer that they are registered with the E-Verify program
- I understand that my employer is required to report to the Designated School Official any interruptions of employment.
- I understand that while I am engaged in the 24-month OPT STEM Extension period I must report the following:
 - Changes in residential local U.S. address (including telephone number and email address)
 - Changes in employment (including unemployment, change of employers, etc.)
- I understand that I must validate my status with a Designated School Official every six months, starting with the start date of the 24-month OPT STEM Extension period

I have read and understand my F-1 student status responsibilities while I am on OPT STEM Extension. I understand that it is my legal responsibility to comply with the responsibilities of my F-1 student status during this time period. I understand that it is always my sole responsibility to insure that I adhere to all Federal regulations relating to Optical Practical Training STEM Extension. Touro University's P/DSO does not render any legal advice in this topic and I hereby acknowledge the same. I understand that I am completely responsible for properly filing my OPT application with the USCIS, as explained above, and tracking its processing through the USCIS Case Status Online System at www.uscis.gov. I hereby waive any claims, demands, suits or obligation against Touro University related thereto and hereby release Touro University from any liability arising out of or in connection with the loss of F-1 status, loss of my OPT STEM Extension or denial of my OPT STEM Extension application even due to Touro University's own negligence, or any other claim related to any immigration matter.

My Signature

My Name (please print)

Date Signed

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE COORDINATOR OF STUDENT REGISTRARIAL SERVICES

New Form I-20 will be: Mailed Picked up at Touro College

Student Id#: _____ CIP Code: _____ EAD Expiration Date: _____

STEM Eligibility: Yes No, if no explain: _____

Evaluated By: _____ Date Evaluated: _____

P/DSO (please print name)