



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/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.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 College.
5. 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.
6. 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:
 - a. the student’s F-1 status ends; or
 - b. the student changes educational levels at the same school; or
 - c. the student transfers to another school; or
 - c. the OPT extension ends.
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 change of employer, submitting an employment letter from the new employer; and
 - c. any change to the name and address of this employer; and
 - d. any interruption of this employment

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) updated the OPT information and FAQs. STEM Extension information is found at <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub>.

III. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Submit the following documents to a DSO at Touro College 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
 - 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 the following the expiration of your current EAD and ends 24 months later.

IV. APPLICATION PERIOD

1. The Form I-765 and supporting documentation must be sent directly to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regional office that has jurisdiction over your residence address. The USCIS should receive your STEM OPT application before your 12 month OPT expires.

V. EXTENSION OF WORK AUTHROIZATION

1. 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

1. 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. Original G-1145, E-Notification of Application
3. Fee: \$410 (bank check/money order) payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security
4. Photocopy of a newly issued I-20 with your DSO OPT STEM recommendation
5. Photocopy of all Form I-20 that was issued by Touro College and any other schools
6. Photocopy of your recent diploma
Or official or unofficial transcript as evidence that your program of study was in a government designated OPT STEM extension field
7. Two passport format photos with your name and SEVIS ID# printed on the back: See the photo requirements at <http://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/i-765instr.pdf>
8. 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 www.cbp.gov/I94
9. 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/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** that send your application by express mail or courier service that will

