

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Procedures to follow if you are seeking the 17 month extension of your OPT

1. Check if your major is one of those on the Immigration Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) list. At MSU, this would include most of those in the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology. Since Immigration at this time is defining this extension to be in the interest of the U.S. competitive market with perceived shortage workers, no OPT extensions are currently available in the Colleges of Allied Health & Nursing, Arts & Humanities, Business, Education, Social & Behavioral Sciences. Since this current regulation is Interim and possible changes could show in a future Final rule, please continue to monitor such changes from the official government sources of Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), SEVIS, USCIS, etc.

2. If your major is in the STEM area, **submit to the International Center the following copies** (no originals needed):

- a. Completed newly revised I-765 form (go to www.uscis.gov under "Immigration Forms"). Note that sections 16 and 17 are new on the form. Your employer will need to be registered in the computer I-9 employment verification system (E-Verify www.dhs.gov/everify) and must provide that ID number on the form.
- b. Current OPT EAD card to prove you are currently in a valid OPT period.
- c. Updated passport (if you received an extension)
- d. Updated I-94 (if you traveled and received a new I-94)

3. Provide updated information on your current employment and residence.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) now requires all students in F-1 status who have been granted Optional Practical Training employment authorization to report the location of the OPT experience, including name and address of their OPT employer or organization. MSU is required to report this information to DHS through the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Students must begin reporting this information by the start date of their OPT and report changes or interruptions in employment (within 10 days) during of all periods of post-completion of OPT. It is your obligation to report this information. If you fail to report OPT activity/employment information to MSU, you could be considered in violation of your F-1 immigration status by the Department of Homeland Security. All OPT employment must be directly related to the student's major field of study and commensurate with the degree level. Go to web site: <http://www.mnsu.edu/international/employment>

If the link does not take you directly there, it is under the MSU International Student site, under employment/OPT Information Update.

Once at that website, you will enter your MSU tech ID and answer the questions. There are two possible updates. One for personal information (the address where you live)- the other for information on your OPT employer. After completing the fields, you must hit the "SUBMIT" button so we get the information. You must provide MSU updates the entire 12 months you are on OPT when changes occur. Keep updating your address on your own via the MSU Campus

Hub and sending to the Department of Homeland Security/Immigration the free form AR-11 (www.uscis.gov under "Immigration Forms") to ensure your address matches the Immigration databases. Those males from specific countries with Special Registration requirements should also maintain their address updates using the form AR-11SR.

Send documents and updates to the Kearney International Center:

E-mail: iss@mnso.edu

Mailing address: 250 Centennial Student Union, Mankato, MN 56001

Fax: 507-389-2790

The Kearney International Center will:

- ***Extend your OPT in the SEVIS system***
- ***Update information in SEVIS on your address and the employer name, address***
- ***Send you a new I-20 (or you can arrange for someone to pick it up on your behalf if you provide us this request in writing).***

4. **You will send the following to the Regional Service Center** closest to your current residence (see instructions and states on page 11 – (only send to one of the four Service Centers which are California, Texas, Vermont, and Nebraska – local/district Immigration offices are not accepting such OPT extensions).

- **Copy of I-20 with 17 month extension**
- **Copy of unexpired passport**
- **Copy of I-94** (front & back)
- **Copies of previous I-20s with any OPT and CPT authorized**
- **Copy of current unexpired EAD** (Employment Authorization Document/Card with valid OPT dates)-(front & back)
- **Copy of Proof of degree completion** (Either a transcript or Diploma)
- **Copy of Form I-765** with new sections 16, 17 completed. For the 17 month STEM OPT extension, use the code: (c)(3)(C)
- **Screen print of E-Verify Information of Employer** – Suggested in recent correspondence to show proof of employer's compliance with E-Verify and show the name as it appears in the Department of Homeland Security system
- **\$340 Fee** made to US Department of Homeland Security
- **Recent photo**-must be within 30 days that meets EAD guidelines
- **Information on you and your employer:**
 - Your title
 - You e-mail address
 - Your supervisor's name
 - Your supervisor's contact information
 - Your employers company name and address

5. **Keep in communication with the International Center** – When you receive your extension, please send us a copy. In compliance with the Interim Regulation, you will need to update the International Center on your address and employer every six months. We are continuing to monitor this Interim Regulation and other official correspondence on this issue.

The International Center is also maintaining the alumni e-mail list to electronically send out information – please ensure you have provided a non-MSU e-mail address for this list for future updates.

For more information:

Department of Homeland Security STEM Designated Degree Programs -

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/stemlist.htm>

Department of Homeland Security Updates to Post Completion Practical Training -

http://www.ice.gov/sevis/updates_postcompletion_opt.htm