OPT STEM Extension: I-765 Form Completion Guide

Please review our important advice and detailed instructions for completing Form I-765: Application for Employment Authorization.

These directions are designed to help you complete the Form I-765 in order to apply for OPT STEM Extension. Please note that the following suggestions are not legal advice and provide a general overview of the most commonly misunderstood items – be sure to complete **ALL** relevant fields of the Form I-765.

Be sure to use the most recent version of the Form I-765 by visiting the USCIS I-765 website.

Further questions can be sent by email to the Kearney Center at international@mnsu.edu.

Included in this packet:

Important OPT General Advice

1) **Type your I-765**
   a. Typing is preferred. Typing helps prevent unclear handwriting from causing errors on your EAD and helps avoid mail delivery problems or delays.
   b. Use the fillable PDF I-765 on the USCIS website to type in your answers.
   c. If you can't type your form, clearly print answers in black ink.
2) **Sign your I-765 in black ink**
   a. Typed signatures are not acceptable. The government will reject and return I-765s that are not signed.
   b. Make sure the signature fits within the box provided.
3) **Answer all questions fully and accurately**

a. If a question does not apply to you, type or print "N/A" (short for "Not Applicable") unless otherwise directed. If a question asks for a numerical response and does not apply to you, write "None".

b. Include **all** pages of the Form I-765 along with your supplemental documents. The government will reject and return applications that do not include all 7 pages of the Form I-765.

4) **If you need extra space, use Part 6. Additional Information (page 7 of Form I-765)**

a. Make sure to type or print your A-number (if any) at the top of the sheet.

b. Use Part 6 to provide all previously used SEVIS numbers along with evidence of previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.

c. Provide the Page Number, Part Number, and Item Number to which your answer refers.

d. Even if you do not need the extra space, include the blank page with the rest of your application materials.

How to pay the I-765 Fee

Be sure to carefully prepare the I-765 fee. The government will reject and return OPT STEM Extension applications if there is not the exact amount of money available to pay the fee when the application arrives at the government center. Do not send a check and plan to add money to your bank account later. Have 100% of the fee money ready when you mail your application to the government.

Credit Card, Personal Check, Cashier's Check, or Money Order? What's the Difference?

- Money orders can be purchased at many large grocery stores and places like the U.S. Post Office.
- Usually you must have a checking account at a bank to either write a personal check or request a cashier's check.
- If you buy a money order or get a cashier's check from a bank, the amount of money written on the document is guaranteed to be available when USCIS processes your application.
- If you write a personal check, you could make a mistake and not have enough money in your checking account when USCIS processes your application fee. USCIS will reject your application!
- If using the Form G-1450, be sure to pay attention to detail as any error on the form will result in a processing delay or denial. Like with the personal check, make sure that you have enough money/credit available in your account to cover the application fee.

Paying by Check or Money Order Tips

1) The check or money order for the fee must be drawn from a bank or other financial institution located in the United States and must be payable in U.S. currency.

   a. Do not use a check or money order from a foreign bank with online U.S. accounts. This is most common for Canadian students with U.S. dollar Canadian bank accounts.

2) Make the check or money order payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

   a. NOTE: Spell out U.S. Department of Homeland Security; do not use initials like "DHS".

3) Dates on a check or money order are critical! Write the current date on the check or money order; do not write a future date.

4) Use the standard U.S. date style of Month Day Year (example: June 15 2018).

Paying by Personal Check

To write a check for your OPT STEM Extension application, you will need to start by making sure that the check has your name and address pre-printed in the top left corner. If there is no address printed, we recommend getting a money order instead. Please see the example to the right.

Smith Park
12345 Main Street
Apt. 4
Anywhere, USA

Date _09/02/2017_

Pay To The Order Of _U.S. Department of Homeland Security_ $ _410.00_

Four Hundred Ten and 00/100   Dollars

For _N00123456789 (Your SEVIS ID)_

⑆000000000⑆ 12345678910⑈ 123

Figure 1: Example of Personal Check

How to Write a Check

- You should write the date in the upper right hand corner of the check.
- Next you will need to "Pay to the Order of" the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for the amount of $410.00 (make sure that you include the amount in dollars and cents).
- On the line under the "Pay to" line, you should be sure to write out the amount in words, i.e. Four hundred ten and 00/100.
- In the Memo/For section, you should be sure to include your SEVIS ID number.
- Finally, you will want to make sure that you hand-sign the check in bottom right hand corner. Do NOT sign the back of the check. Leave that portion entirely blank.

Paying by Money Order

To purchase a money order, you can go to any United States Post Office location, your bank and many stores (Kwik Trip, Walgreens, CVS, and Walmart) in Mankato. The cost of a money order is usually under $2, plus amount of the money order, i.e. $410. Do NOT send your money order separate from the application the money order is for. Your money order should be included with your other application materials.

To view money order samples, please visit NYU's Check and Money Order Explained.

How to Fill Out the Money Order

- To fill out the money order, you will need to "Pay to" U.S. Department of Homeland Security. If the money order asks for the recipient address, you should list the address where you are mailing your OPT application.
- In the Memo/Payment For section, you should include your SEVIS ID number.
- In the bottom right corner, you should sign your name in the From section.
- If the money order asks for the purchaser's address, you should be sure to include the address that you have written on question number #5 on the I-765 form.
- You will also want to keep the receipt portion of the money order for your records as that is the only way you can track your payment.
- Do NOT sign the back of the money order. Leave that portion entirely blank.

Paying with Credit or Debit Card
USCIS Form G-1450 allows you to send your credit card information in place of a check or money order.

When using Form G-1450, be sure to complete all fields in black ink and sign the authorization. Place your Form G-1450 **ON TOP** of your OPT packet when sending to USCIS.

How to fill out the Form I-765: Step-by-Step Guide

Please read through the Step-by-Step Guide carefully while completing the form. The Kearney Center will carefully review your form when requesting your OPT STEM Extension; however, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that the Form I-765 is filled out properly before sending it to USCIS.

Part 1: Reason for Applying

Item 1: Reason for Applying

- Applicants requesting authorization for OPT STEM Extension should select "1.c. Renewal of my permission to accept employment. (Attach a copy of your previous employment authorization document (EAD)".

Part 2: Information About You

Part 2: Item 1: Full Legal Name

- Write your Family Name in CAPITAL letters.
- If you can't fit your full name in the space, see Part 6: Additional Information for instructions.

Part 2: Item 2-4: Other Names Used

- Provide all other names you have ever used, including aliases, maiden name, and nicknames. If you have never used another name, write "NA" or "Not Applicable"

Part 2: Item 5: U.S. Mailing Address

Important mail about your OPT STEM Extension application, including your official receipt and Employment Authorization Document (approval card), will be mailed to the address you write here. If your mail is sent to someone other than yourself, please include an "In Care of Name" (Part 2, Item 5.a.—see screenshot below for example) as part of your mailing address.

Figure 2: Item 5.a. - "In Care Of" mailing address

Warning! Government mail will not be forwarded to a new address by the U.S. Postal Service, even if you ask the U.S. Postal Service to forward your mail. The only way to change the address USCIS uses for your OPT-related mail is to submit an official change of address to USCIS using the website tool.

TIP: If you might change addresses, recommended options are:

a. Rent a P.O. box at a Post Office. The post office locations can be anywhere – even in a new city where you are moving. This is also convenient because you can pick up mail day, night, or weekends.

b. Use a friend's address. Make sure to provide your friend's name as a response to Part 2: Item 5a: In Care Of.

Part 2: Item 8: Alien Registration Number (A-Number)
- Your A-Number is on your EAD from your Post-Completion OPT.

Part 2: Item 12: Have you previously filed Form I-765
- **Yes**: Check "yes" as you are requesting to extend your post-completion OPT.

Part 2: Items 13-14 related to the Social Security Number
- **Yes:** Check "yes" and insert your Social Security number in 13.b.
- **No:** Check "no" and skip to Part 2., Item Number 18.a.

Part 2: Item 21.a.: Form I-94 Arrival/Departure Record Number
Check out the [University of Washington's webpage](#) for more instructions on how to retrieve your I-94 number.

In some cases your most recent entry to the U.S. was after a short trip to Canada or Mexico, and there will not be updated trip information in your I-94 record or in your passport. This is standard, and you can have different information in Questions 16 & 17 from what appears on your I-94.

Part 2: Item 24-25: Status at Last Entry and Current Immigration Status
Most OPT STEM Extension applicants will write "F-1 Student" for items 24 and 25.

If you have changed from a different immigration category to F-1 status by filing paperwork with the U.S. government, include a copy of your change of status Approval Notice.

Part 2: Item 27: Information about your Eligibility Category
Write 'c 3 c' for OPT STEM Extension.

Part 2: Items 28.a.-28.c. are specific to OPT STEM Extension applications
- 28.a. relates to the degree level you completed AND the CIP code located on your I-20 in **PROGRAM OF STUDY**
  - BS 52.1401 (this example is for a student who completed their Bachelor's degree in Marketing)
    You must refer to your I-20 to complete this portion.
- 28.b. Employer's Name as Listed in E-Verify (your employer must be E-verified for you to be eligible for OPT STEM Extension.
- 28.c. the E-Verify company ID number, which consists of four to seven numerical characters.

Part 2: Items 29—31: Further Questions about your Eligibility Category
  - You do not need to fill these out.

Part 3: Applicant's Statement, Contact Information, Declaration, Certification and Signature:
Part 3: Item 7.a.: Applicant's Signature
Your signature must be handwritten in black ink (not typed) and fit inside the box. Signatures that fit will be scanned and printed on your EAD card. If the signature is too big, your application could be delayed.

Part 4: Interpreter's Contact Information, Certification and Signature
Complete all fields with "NA", "Not Applicable", or "None", unless an interpreter read and explained every question and instruction to you.

Part 5: Contact Information, Declaration, and Signature of the Person Preparing this Application, if Other Than the Applicant
Complete all fields with "NA", "Not Applicable", or "None", unless another person completed this form on your behalf.

Part 6: Additional Information

Complete this section only if:

- You do not have enough room to sufficiently answer any of the items contained in Parts 1-5*
- You have been approved for **CPT** in the past
- You have been approved for **OPT** in the past
- You have used a different SEVIS ID in F-1 status in the U.S. (for example, you attended school for a while, left the U.S. to take a break from school, and returned with a new I-20, you would have a SEVIS ID from your first period of attendance that is different than your current SEVIS ID). Your SEVIS ID is on the top right corner of your I-20, and starts with N00...

How to Complete Part 6

If you need to complete this section because one or more of these apply to you, please complete Items 1 and 2 (if applicable)

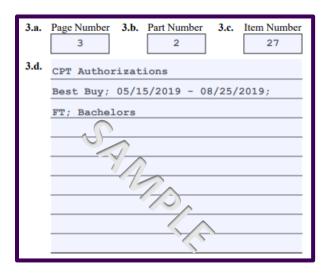For each of the items listed above, complete **one** box in Part 6.

We suggest using the following to complete the Page Number, Part Number, and Item Number for any previous work authorization, as this information is required specific to Category (c)(3)(B) (per the I-765 instructions, page 4): **Page 3, Part 2, Item 27**
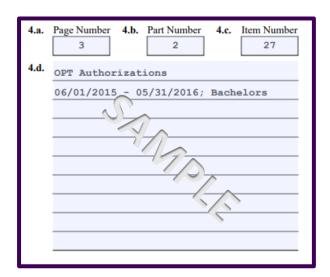
CPT: Please list your CPT approvals. We suggest this format: CPT Authorizations (as a title to the section). Employer; Start date – End date; Part-time or Full-time; Degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate). You can find your CPT details on the I-20 that was approved for each period of CPT.

OPT: Please list your past OPT approvals. We suggest this format: OPT Authorizations (as a title to the section). Start date – End date; Degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate). Make sure to also include a copy of any previously issued EADs.

Previous SEVIS IDs: Please list your other SEVIS IDs you have used in the past. We suggest this format: Previous SEVIS IDs (as a title to the section). SEVIS ID: N00...; program start date – program end date; Degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate). (Use Page 3, Part 2, Item 26 to label your response in Part 6)

Examples:

5.a. Page Number	5.b. Part Number	5.c. Item Number
3	2	26

5.d. Previous SEVIS ID's:

N0001234 67; Associates

* If you are using Part 6 to record any information that did not fit in the appropriate section in Parts 1-5, make sure to use the accurate locator. For example, if your family name does not fit in the box provided in Part 2, Item 1.a., in Part 6, you would complete a box as follows, in addition to writing your full, legal, family name:

6.a. Page Number	6.b. Part Number	6.c. Item Number
1	2	1.a.

REMINDER: SIGN AND DATE PAGE SEVEN