Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT)
24-Month Extension for STEM Majors

Eligibility and the Application Process:
If you are currently on post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) and meet one of the following requirements:

- have completed a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree in a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) field (https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/stem-list.pdf); OR
- have completed all course requirements for the degree in a STEM field, excluding any thesis requirement or equivalent; OR
- have completed a STEM degree in the U.S. within the last 10 years;

you can request a 24-month extension of your Optional Practical Training with an employer who is enrolled in U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services’ (USCIS) E-Verify employment verification program, as long as the position is a paid full time (twenty hours or more a week) position.

The STEM OPT extension process is two major actions, which are divided up into smaller steps, listed below. The first step is to apply for your new I-20 from ISSS showing the STEM OPT extension recommendation. Once ISSS has recommended the STEM OPT extension for you and issued you a new I-20, the second action is to submit your application to USCIS, who will make the final decision on your STEM OPT extension.

Step One Process

To obtain this benefit, you must apply to USCIS for a new Employment Authorization Document (EAD). Since the process usually takes about three months, we recommend that you apply 90 days in advance of the current OPT end date listed on your EAD card. Please submit the following information to the International House:

- Confirm employer is enrolled in E-Verify and employment meets STEM requirements.
- Complete I-983 with employer.
- Complete I-765 and collect supporting documents.
- Submit documentation to ISSS.
Checklist of documents to be submitted to ISSS with OPT Extension Request Form for STEM majors:

- STEM Request Form (see page 3)
- Copies of all of your I-20s showing OPT and CPT recommendation, including your current I-20.
- Copy of passport page(s) showing picture, biographical information, and expiration date
- Copy of most recent U.S. entry visa and I-94 [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94)
- Copies of all of your Employment Authorization Documents (EADS), including current one
- Copy of your diploma or transcript showing your STEM-related degree and major
- Completed Form I-765
  - Please refer to the online I-765 guide on the DU website for more details.
- Copies of two color passport-style photographs taken within the last 30 days. Do not submit original photos to ISSS!
  - Department of State photo requirements: [http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/photos/photos.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/photos/photos.html)
  - Do not reuse old photos. If you reuse old passport or visa photos, you will receive a USCIS request for new photos that will delay the processing of your OPT application.
  - Gently write your name and your I-94 number on the back of the photos.
  - Do not cut, trim, or otherwise change the photographs
- Copy of a personal check or money order for $410 made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Do not submit original check to ISSS.
  - Personal check is strongly recommended.
  - Please review this website for information on how to correctly fill out a check: [https://www.uscis.gov/fees](https://www.uscis.gov/fees).
  - On the memo line, write “OPT” then your I-94 number
  - You will submit the original check to USCIS.
  - More information on payment options, including payment via credit card can be found here: [https://www.uscis.gov/i-765](https://www.uscis.gov/i-765), under “Filing Fee.”
- At LEAST one of the following to confirm employment during initial OPT:
  - Employer letter
  - Earnings statement
- [Form I-983](https://www.du.edu/isss/), Training Plan for STEM OPT Students, completed with your employer (Instructions).
  - In Section 1: Student Information use the following for the Designated School Official Name and Contact Information: Laura Buhs, 2200 S. Josephine Street, Denver, CO 80210, Phone: 303-871-4912.
- Optional: [Form G-1145](https://www.du.edu/isss/) (to be notified by email that your OPT application was received by USCIS)

Important: ISSS has a 3-4 business day processing time for requests.
After your STEM OPT Extension Application has been submitted, please remember that

You must also agree to report the following information to ISSS:

- Within 10 days:
  - Change of legal name
  - Start or loss of employment
  - Change of employer name or location
  - Change of immigration status
  - Permanent departure from the United States
  - Material changes to Form I-983 such as employer’s EIN, reduction in compensation/pay, significant decrease in hours per week, changes to learning objectives on Form I-983.

- Validate SEVIS information every six months:
  - Legal name
  - Residential or mailing address
  - Employer name and address
  - Status of current employment

- Each year to ISSS
  - Self Evaluation on Form I-983.

Important Reminders Concerning STEM Optional Practical Training

- As long as your STEM OPT extension was received by USCIS prior to your OPT expiring, you are eligible to work up to 180 days from the date your EAD expired, while your extension request is pending.
- You must work full time (Twenty hours or more) for every employer during a STEM OPT extension and every employer you work for must be enrolled in E-Verify.
- You must submit an I-983 for every employer you work for during STEM OPT.
24-Month STEM OPT Extension Request Form

This request form must be submitted along with all of the documents listed below. Once your request has been processed, you will receive an email from ISSS to come to the International House to sign the new I-20. Please visit our website for more information about the OPT extension for STEM majors: [http://www.du.edu/isss/employment/opt-stem-extension.html](http://www.du.edu/isss/employment/opt-stem-extension.html)

Eligibility Requirements for 24-month OPT extension for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics majors

1. Degree is included on the U.S. Government’s [STEM-Designated Degree Program List](http://www.du.edu/isss/employment/opt-stem-extension.html)
2. Currently on post-completion OPT based on STEM degree (awarded or all coursework completed excluding thesis) or completed a STEM degree in the U.S. within the last ten years.
3. Have not exceeded 90 calendar days of unemployment during initial period of post-completion OPT
4. Have job or job offer for at least 20 hours per week of paid employment from an employer enrolled in E-Verify
5. Form I-765 must be received by USCIS before expiration of current Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

### Section A: Student Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LAST (FAMILY) NAME in Passport:</th>
<th>FIRST NAME in Passport:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DATE OF BIRTH (mm/dd/yyyy)</td>
<td>DU ID Number:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU Email Address:</td>
<td>Current EAD Expiration Date: (mm/dd/yyyy)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employer Name: ____________________________

Job Title: ____________________________

Employer Address (Street, City, State, Zip Code):

Please verify that you understand and accept the following items:

- The 24-month extension is only allowed if I have not been unemployed more than 90 days during my current post-completion OPT.
- I can only accept paid employment that is directly related to my STEM degree and all employers must be enrolled in E-Verify.
- I understand that while I am on the 24-month extension of OPT I must report the following to ISSS within ten days:
  - Change of legal name
  - Start or loss of employment
  - Change of employer name or location
  - Change of immigration status
  - Permanent departure from the United States
  - Material changes to Form I-983 such as employer’s EIN, reduction in compensation/pay, significant decrease in hours per week, changes to learning objectives on Form I-983.
- During the 24-month OPT extension I must make a Validation Report to ISSS every six months.
- During the 24-month OPT extension I must make an annual self-evaluation on Form I-983 to ISSS.
- I understand that the I-20 travel signature is only valid for six months and can be renewed by ISSS.
- I understand that my work authorization will be terminated if my F-1 SEVIS record is transferred to another school.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to review any advisor notes and make necessary edits to my STEM OPT application.

I confirm that the information I have provided in this application is accurate. I have read and understand the requirements that are part of the 24-month OPT extension for STEM majors. I authorize the release of any information necessary for this request and authorize any changes needed to complete my request.