STEM OPT extension

(Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)

International Students and Scholars Office

309 Wes Watkins Center / 405-744-5459

STEM OPT

What is OPT STEM Extension?

- Allows for up to <u>24 additional months</u> for STEM fields
- Start after 12-month post-completion OPT

- USCIS Webpage for STEM OPT
    https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/optional-practical-training-extension-for-stem-students-stem-opt

STEM OPT - Eligibility

- Must be in active post-completion OPT status with BS, MS, or PhD degree listed on DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List

- Must have **current** or **previous** degree in eligible STEM major from U.S. SEVP certified institution of higher education

- Check STEM eligible **CIP code:** https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/stemList2024.pdf

- Must have **full-time** job offer for paid employment from E-Verified employer who is willing & able to meet STEM OPT reporting requirements

- STEM OPT is available for **two times** in lifetime

- Must not used STEM extension either at current or higher education level

STEM OPT - Eligibility

Employer – Employee Relationship

- Must have bona-fide employer-employee experience

- No volunteer positions

- Start up businesses & self-employment do not qualify for STEM-OPT extension option

Previously Obtained STEM Degrees

- F1 student participating in post-completion OPT based on non-STEM degree can use prior STEM-OPT qualified degree for STEM OPT application

- If you have STEM-OPT eligible prior degree, on I-983, page 1, question **"Based on prior degree?"** check "yes" - if application is based on the prior degree

- Employment must be related to previous STEM degree

- Degree must be received **within 10 years**

- Student must send official transcript of prior degree to ISS to verify

STEM OPT - Employment

Unemployment Period

- Unemployment days – additional 60 cumulative days (including weekends & holidays)

- Total unemployment days accrues for

  Post-completion OPT (90) + STEM OPT extension (60) = **150 days**

- Must **report** termination of employment within 10 days of event

- Inquire to ISS for remaining unemployment days

STEM OPT - Filing Parameters

- Must file STEM OPT within 90 days of current OPT expiration date but may **NOT** apply after current OPT expiration date

- Student and employer must complete and sign **Form I-983** (Training Plan for STEM OPT Students) and submit to ISS. The job offer must be full-time and paid job.

- Check official I-983 guidelines**:** https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983Instructions.pdf

- Check I-983 Form overview**:** https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub/additional-resources/form-i-983-overview

- USCIS must receive application **within 60 days of STEM OPT I-20 issuance**

> A student who files application timely may continue employment while extension application is pending, until final decision is made, or for 180 days. Contact USCIS if processing time is over 180 days.

Filing OPT By Mail

List to apply for I-765 Application

- Application fee $520 - Check or Money order

- 2 passport style photos

- **Completed I-765 – Item #27 (C) (3) (C)**

- Form G1145 - Electronic notification (Mail filers only)

- I-20 copy with STEM OPT Notation

  * OPT application must be filed within **60 days** of date DSO enters recommendation for STEM OPT in SEVIS

- Copies of all previous I-20s for OPT & CPT

- Copy of EADs

- Copy of I-94

- Colored copy of Valid page

- Copy of official transcript or diploma - showing completion of degree

Filing location

Mail filers submit applications to USCIS Chicago Lockbox at:

U.S. Postal Service (USPS):
USCIS
PO Box 805373,
Chicago, IL 60680

FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:
USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor,
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

Filing OPT By Mail

Previous OPT, CPT & SEVIS ID# on I-765 Form - Page 7, Part 6

Part 6. Additional Information

If you need extra space to provide any additional information within this application, use the space below. If you need more space than what is provided, you may make copies of this page to complete and file with this application or attach a separate sheet of paper. Type or print your name and A-Number (if any) at the top of each sheet; indicate the **Page Number**, **Part Number**, and **Item Number** to which your answer refers; and sign and date each sheet.

1.a. Family Name (Last Name)   Pete

1.b. Given Name (First Name)   Pistol

1.c. Middle Name

2. A-Number (if any) ► A-

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

3.d. Current SEVIS ID# N00012345678.
Master's degree;
Previous CPT:
Full-time 05/20/2017 - 08/15/2017

SAMPLE

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

4.d. Previous SEVIS ID# N00222333555.
Bachelor of Science
Previous CPT:
Full-time: 05/14/2015-08/15/2015
Previous OPT:
Post-Completion: 05/21/2016-08/20/2017

STEM OPT – Reporting requirement

In SEVP portal, STEM OPT students are unable to add new employer or change start date of new employer due to Form I-983 (Training plan) requirement

- For **new employment**
    ⇒ Submit new I-983 to ISS (DSO) **within 10 days** of new employment start date

- For **employment end date changes**
    ⇒ Submit Final Evaluation on Student Progress (page 5 of I-983) to ISS (DSO) **within 10 days** of job end date

> STEM OPT **Report forms** are available on ISS website
>
> https://iss.okstate.edu/employment/stem-opt.html

STEM OPT – Reporting requirement

- Changes in employment status

  Termination / Resignation / Departure

- For **Material changes** on Form I-983
  ➡ Submit updated I-983 to ISS (DSO) **within 10 days** of any material changes :
    - Change in employer's EIN
    - Compensation and reduction of work hours
    - Significant decrease in hours per week
    - Changes in learning objectives or employer's commitment

STEM OPT **Report forms** are available on ISS website

https://iss.okstate.edu/employment/stem-opt.html

STEM OPT – Reporting requirement

Reporting on SEVP portal

- You will **not** be able to change read-only portions

- **Must** go through ISS (DSO) to report **new employment** with **completed & signed Form I-983**

    ISS form: STEM OPT Change of Employment Report (https://iss.okstate.edu/employment/stem-opt.html)

    Form I-983: https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/i983.pdf

- You **cannot** edit employer information to work for another employer

- SEVIS will push updates into SEVP portal (within a few days)

STEM OPT – Reporting requirement

Regular Participation Reporting - Every 6 month

OPT STEM REPORTING REMINDER FROM SEVP PORTAL

SEVP Portal will provide you with reminders of when you are expected to report.

example of reminder email

Your STEM OPT Reporting Deadlines

While on STEM OPT, you must give your designated school official (DSO):

1. Validation reports to confirm that your address and employer information in SEVIS is correct. These are due every six months.
2. Two Evaluations of Student Progress (page 5 of the Form I-983). These are due:
   a. 12 months after your STEM OPT starts and
   b. 24 months after your STEM OPT starts.
3. Evaluation of Student Progress (page 5 of the Form I-983) when you stop working for a STEM employer before your STEM OPT authorization ends. These are due within 10 days after you stop working for the employer.

Your reporting deadlines:

Date	What is Due?
Feb 9 2019	Validation report for address and employer information
Aug 9 2019	Validation report for address and employer information Evaluation of Student Progress (page 5 of Form I-983)
Feb 9 2020	Validation report for address and employer information
Aug 9 2020	Validation report for address and employer information Evaluation of Student Progress (page 5 of Form I-983)

Missing these deadlines may affect the state of your SEVIS record.

For more information, go to the STEM OPT Hub (https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub) pages on the Study in the States website.

36

STEM OPT – Reporting requirement

Regular Participation Reporting - Every 6 month

- 6 & 18 month Participation Report

  Student is responsible for **reporting** following information **to ISS**

  o   Legal name

  o   Current address

  o   Name and address of current employer

  o   Job title

  o   Supervisor information

  o   End date of employment

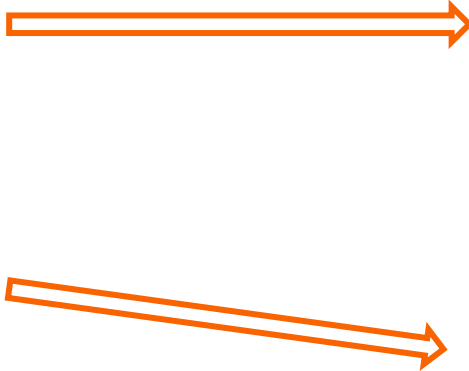Submit **6 & 18 month participation report** to ISS through ISS website

https://iss.okstate.edu/employment/stem-opt.html

STEM OPT – Reporting requirement

Regular Participation Reporting - Every 6 month

I-983 Form, Page 5

- **12 month** STEM OPT report
  Must report with completed & signed
  <u>Evaluation on Student Progress</u>

- **Final or 24 month** STEM OPT report
  Must report with completed & signed
  <u>Final Evaluation on Student Progress</u>

- Keep copy of the evaluations for your record

Submit **12 & Final or 24 month participation report** to ISS through ISS website
https://iss.okstate.edu/employment/stem-opt.html

STEM OPT – EAD delivery

- Use **your own physical address** as mailing address on I-765 form

- Do **NOT** move after filing I-765 application for STEM OPT
    If you must move, <u>use ISS address as mailing address</u> on I-765 to avoid mailing complications and inform ISS

- USCIS mailing is not forwarded to another address
- If EAD is not delivered successfully, it will be returned to USCIS

- If you must change your address after filing, contact

    USCIS National Customer Service number : **(800) 375-5283**

There is risk in changing your address after filed I-765 application

After STEM OPT Completion

You have a **60-day grace period** following your STEM OPT end date

STEM OPT
End Date

60-day Grace Period
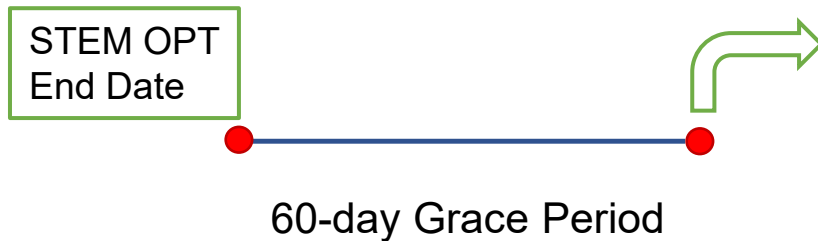
You must choose one of following :

- **Depart the U.S.** by end of 60 days

- **Change educational level** at OSU for different degree

- **Transfer out** to another university and start new program
  (no later than 5 months from STEM OPT end date)

- Complete **change of status**

ISS OPT Fees

In an effort to increase support services for OSU international students and alumni the ISS would like to announce the following fees. These fees will be implemented for the Fall 2025 semester starting August 18, 2025.

- $150 F-1 Optional Practical Training Fee per application
- $300 F-1 STEM Optional Practical Training Fee per application

This will be charged to student's bursar account when OPT or STEM OPT I-20 is issued.

International Students & Scholars Office

O | 405.744.5459

E | iss@okstate.edu

A | 309 Wes Watkins Center, Stillwater OK 74078

iss.okstate.edu