

Office of Global Engagement OPT STEM Extension Packet

What is a STEM Extension?

A 24-month extension of post-completion OPT for students with a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) degree [8CFR§214.2(f)(10)(ii)(C)].

Am I eligible for Stem Extension?

A qualified student may apply for an extension of OPT while in a valid period of post-completion OPT. The extension will be for 24 additional months, for a total of 36 months of OPT. The following requirements must be met:

1. The student has not previously received a 24-month OPT extension after earning a STEM degree.
2. Student must currently be participating in a standard OPT based on a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree that is listed in the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program.
 - Actuarial Science. NCES CIP Code 52.1304
 - Computer Science: NCES CIP Codes 11.xxxx (except Data Entry/ Microcomputer Applications, NCES CIP Codes 11.06xx)
 - Engineering: NCES CIP Codes 14.xxxx
 - Engineering Technologies: NCES CIP Codes 15.xxxx
 - Biological and Biomedical Sciences: NCES CIP Codes 26.xxxx
 - Mathematics and Statistics: NCES CIP Codes 27.xxxx
 - Military Technologies: NCES CIP Codes 29.xxxx
 - Physical Sciences: NCES CIP Codes 40.xxxx
 - Science Technologies: NCES CIP Codes 41.xxxx
 - Medical Scientist (MS, PhD): NCES CIP Code 51.1401

For a complete list of CIP codes and majors please go to: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/stemlist.htm>

3. Student must currently be working for, or have a job offer from a U.S. employer for a position that is directly related to the student's major area of study.
4. The employer **must** be an E-verify registered company. The employer should provide an E-verify identification number or, if the employer is using a designated agent to perform the E-verify queries, a valid E-verify client company identification number, and the employer is a participant in good standing in the E-verify program, as determined by USCIS.

How do I submit an application?

A student meeting the eligibility requirement may file for a 24-month extension of employment authorization by filing form I-765, application for employment authorization, with the appropriate fee, prior to the expiration date of the student's current OPT employment authorization. If a student timely and properly files an application for

a 24-month OPT extension, but the form I-765, Employment Authorization Document, currently in the student's possession, expires prior to the decision on the student's application for 24-month OPT extension, the student's Form I-765 is extended automatically pursuant to the terms and conditions specified in 8 CFR 274a.12 (b)(6) (iv).

Checklist:

Please gather the following items and contact your Utah State University immigration advisor to apply. Make sure to share the below documents as PDF documents through a secure file share.

- Completed I-983 form.
- Photocopies of your Passport, visa, I-94 (front and back) and OPT I-20.
- Photocopy of completed form I-765
- Photocopy of your current EAD card, front/back
- Letter from current employer requesting OPT extension (*please see example*), must be original letter on company letterhead.
- Copy of diploma or **original** transcripts (transcript must show degree completion)
- Copy of two passports photos taken in the last six months. Please make sure to sign (pencil) the back and include your I-94 number.
- Copy of check or money order in the amount of \$410, made to Department of Homeland Security
(*In the memo line of check write I-765 and your I-94 number*).
- OPT Report form

Once all of the required documents have been received and reviewed the OGE will create a new I-20 and it will be sent to you. Once you have received the new I-20 you should send the following items to the Service Center:

- Photocopies of your Passport, visa, I-94 (front and back) and your **new** OPT I-20 (*make sure you sign the original I-20, send only a photocopy, do not send your original I-20*).
- Original completed form I-765 (make sure you sign it)
- Photocopy of your current EAD card, front/back
- Letter from current employer requesting OPT extension (*please see example*), must be original letter on company letterhead.
- Copy of diploma or **original** transcripts
- Original passports photos taken in the last six months. Please make sure to sign (pencil) the back and include your I-94 number.
- Original check or money order in the amount of \$410, made to Department of Homeland Security
(*In the memo line of check write I-765 and your I-94 number*).

Please remember to make a copy of all documents for your records. We highly recommend that you send your package by certified mail, return receipt requested. Please send your package to the following place:

If you live in:		File your application at:	
Alaska	Montana	<p><u>USCIA Phoenix Lockbox</u> For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries: USCIS P.O. Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036</p> <p>For express mail and courier service deliveries: USCIS Attn: A.O.S. 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S. Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034</p>	
Arizona	Nebraska		
California	Nevada		
Colorado	North Dakota		
Guam	Ohio		
Hawaii	Oregon		
Idaho	South Dakota		
Illinois	Utah		
Indiana	Washington		
Iowa	Wisconsin		
Kansas	Wyoming		
Michigan	Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands		
Minnesota			
Missouri			
Alabama	New Jersey		<p><u>USCIS Dallas Lockbox</u> For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries: USCIS P.O. Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266</p> <p>For express mail and courier service deliveries: USCIS Attn: A.O.S. 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067</p>
Arkansas	New Mexico		
Connecticut	New York		
Delaware	North Carolina		
District of Columbia	Pennsylvania		
Florida	Puerto Rico		
Georgia	Rhode Island		
Kentucky	South Carolina		
Louisiana	Oklahoma		
Maine	Texas		
Maryland	Virginia		
Massachusetts	U.S. Virgin Islands		
Mississippi	West Virginia		
New Hampshire			

Additional Information I Should Know

Employment Authorization period of the 24-month OPT extension begins on the day after the expiration of the initial post-completion OPT employment authorization and ends 24 months thereafter, regardless of the date of the actual extension is approved.

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Periods of Unemployment during post-completion OPT 214.2 (f)(10)(ii)(E)

During post-completion OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment. Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment during any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization. Students granted a 24-month OPT extension may not accrue an aggregate of more than 120 days of unemployment during the total OPT period comprising any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization and the subsequent 24-month extension period.

Additional reporting obligations for students with an approved 24-month OPT 214.2 (f)(12)(ii)

Students with an approved 24-month OPT extension have additional reporting obligations. Compliance with these reporting requirements is required to maintain F-1 status. The reporting obligations are:

- Within 10 days of the change, the student must report to the student's DSO a change of legal name, residential or mailing address, employer name, employer address, and /or loss of employment.
- The student must make a validation report to the DSO every six months starting from the date the extension begins and ending when the student's F-1 status ends, the student changes educational levels at the same school, or the student transfers to another school or program, or the 24-month OPT extension ends, whichever is first.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this material or the process of STEM extension, please feel free to contact our office at 435-797-1124 or via email at rob.llewellyn@usu.edu or maribeth.hengge@usu.edu.

Employer Sample Letter

(Letter should be an original and on company letterhead. Photocopies or scanned copies will not be accepted)

Office of Global Engagement
Utah State University
9545 Old Main Hill
Logan, Utah 84322-9545

Date

RE: **Student
Name**

To Whom It May Concern:

The following is a request for an OPT extension for **student name** who is employed by **company name** at **company address**. *Student name* has been employed at **company name** since **date** and is under the supervision of **supervisor name** and he/she can be contacted at **contact info**. The employee's title is **title** and his/her responsibilities are **list of responsibilities**.

Our company e-verify number is **e-verify number**. Therefore, we kindly request an OPT extension for student name. Please contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Office of Global Engagement OPT Reporting Form

Date:

Name:
Address:
Phone:
E-mail:
Employer Information:
Company Name
Address
Supervisor's Name
Supervisor's Contact Information (phone and email)
Employer - Employer Identification Number (EIN)
Job Start Date
Job Title
Description of Duties