

F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)

General Information

Optional Practical Training for F-1 students is intended to provide hands-on practical work experience complementary to the academic program. An F-1 student is eligible for a **maximum of 12 months of full-time employment**. However, if a student begins a new academic program at a higher level (e.g. master's after bachelor's degree, or PhD after master's), the student is eligible for another 12 months of OPT.

(Students in advanced certificate programs at John Jay College do not qualify for OPT.)

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for Optional Practical Training, you must:

- *have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis for one full academic year;*
- *currently be maintaining a full-time program of study and valid F-1 status; and*
- *work in a job directly related to your major field of study.*

Types of OPT

OPT is available in the following cases:

- *Summer vacation and semester break – either part-time or full-time employment*
- *While school is in session – part-time employment only*
- *After completion of all course requirements for a bachelor's or master's degree, excluding the thesis or equivalent – part or full-time employment*
- *After completion of all requirements for the course of study – full-time employment only*

Reporting Requirements While on OPT

Students on OPT are required to report any change of name or address, or any interruption of such employment within 10 days. The following must be reported to the college's Designated School Official (DSO):

- *The beginning of employment, with the name and address of the employer*
- *The termination of employment*
- *Any change in your personal address*
- *Any change in your employer's address*

Such reporting should be done via e-mail to the DSO.

Limited Periods of Unemployment to Maintain Status

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 post-completion OPT authorization.

OPT Filing Window

A student will be able to file the OPT application up to 90 days before the program completion date, and up to 60 days after the program completion date. **However, the OPT application MUST be received by USCIS within 30 days of the date on which the DSO issues an OPT I-20.** Processing times for OPT applications can be found on the USCIS web site at <http://www.uscis.gov>. In general, expect that the OPT application will take up to three months for approval.

Selecting OPT Dates

Pre-Completion

List the dates you actually intend to work. Your start date should be the earliest date that you could possibly begin work. Your end date should be the latest day that you could possibly work.

Post-Completion

If you are applying for post-completion OPT, you are given a 60-day grace period following the completion date of your studies. Therefore, for post-completion OPT, the beginning date must be within the 60-day grace period.

Duration of OPT Employment Authorization

Employment authorization will begin on the date requested or the date the employment authorization is adjudicated, whichever is later.

Stem Extension

Currently, John Jay College is approved by the Department of Homeland Security to offer an additional 17 months of OPT for students graduating in specific majors in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). To qualify for the STEM Extension:

- *Student must be currently participating in a 12-month period of OPT, working for a U.S. employer in a job directly related to the student's STEM major area of study.*
- *The student's current or prospective employer must be registered with the DHS [E-Verify](#) employment verification system.*
- *The student has not previously received a 17-month OPT extension.*

Deadline to Apply for the 17-month OPT Extension

The application for the 17-month OPT extension must be received by USCIS prior to the expiration date of the student's current OPT Employment Authorization Document (EAD), and no later than 30 days after the DSO signs the OPT extension recommendation on Form I-20.

Application Process

Step 1

- *Request an I-20 recommending OPT from the DSO. (Call a John Jay College DSO for an appointment. Please refer to end of document for contact information of DSOs.)*
- *Complete *Form I-765 (available at <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>) – type or print legibly (For pre-completion OPT, enter “c 3 A” under Item 16.) (For post-completion OPT, enter “c 3 B” under Item 16.) (*If you are not sure how to fill out the Form I-765, the DSO will assist you during your appointment.)*

Step 2

Prepare your OPT application for mailing. Include the following:

- *A completed Form I-765 Application*
- *A check or money order (for the I-765 application fee) for \$380 (a check is preferable because, if necessary, you can determine if and when it is cashed), payable to the US Department of Homeland Security*
- *A copy of your new OPT I-20 with OPT recommendation*
- *Photocopy of all your previous and current I-20s*
- *Photocopy of Form I-94 (front and back), or download and print your most recent I-94 number at <http://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/i-94-instructions>.*
- *Photocopy of passport (biographical data, photo, and expiration date)*
- *Two US passport-style photos (lightly print your name on the back of each photo with a pencil)*
- *Front and back copy of any previously approved employment authorization (EAD) cards.*

Check all documents for completeness and accuracy. Be sure to sign Forms I-20 and I-765. Make a complete copy of your application for your records. The college does not maintain copies of OPT applications.

Step 3

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
PO Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For express mail and courier service deliveries:
US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
Attn: AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121, Business Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

(Make sure to write in the lower left hand corner ***“Optional Practical Training, Form I-765”*** on the front of the envelope.)

We recommend that you mail your application by Express Mail or by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, so you will have a record of its delivery.

Travel Information for Post-Completion OPT

Currently, the following are required to return to the US:

- *A valid passport*
- *A valid F-1 visa stamp in your passport (except Canadian and Bermudian citizens)*
- *Your OPT I-20 endorsed for reentry by the DSO within the last six months*
- *Your valid EAD card for OPT*
- *Evidence of employment such as a job offer or employment verification letter*

If you do not have all of these documents listed above or plan to leave the US while your OPT application is pending with USCIS, you should consult with the DSO before traveling abroad. For more information, visit: http://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel/faq_f2.htm.

Please note: Your EAD will have a notation “not valid for reentry to US.” This is printed on all EAD cards issued for OPT and simply means that the card alone is not sufficient for reentry to the US.

Special Notes

Your program end date on your I-20 may be shortened if deemed appropriate

- *If you later decide not to mail your OPT application to USCIS for any reason, you must notify the DSO immediately so that we may timely cancel your OPT recommendation in SEVIS. Failure to inform the DSO that you are not applying for OPT can cause problems for you in the future*
- *Please email a John Jay College DSO a copy of your OPT card immediately upon receipt*
- *While OPT is pending, we strongly advise you against changing the address listed on Form I-765*
- *Your OPT will be automatically terminated when you begin study at another educational level or transfer to another school*

Designated School Officials (DSO’s) at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Elaine Thompson
Associate Director of Graduate & International Admissions
Office of Admissions, Room L.64 NB
Telephone: (212) 393-6440
Fax: (212) 237-8777
Email: elthompson@jjay.cuny.edu

Angelos Kyriacou
Associate Director of Admissions Processing
Office of Admissions, Room L.64 NB
Telephone: (212) 237-8199
Fax: (212) 237-8777
Email: akyriacou@jjay.cuny.edu



Optional Practical Training Application

(Print Clearly)

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ MI: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

EMPL ID #: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Degree Level: _____

Program of Study: _____ Expected Graduation Date: _____

What type of OPT are you applying for? (Please check one):

_____ Pre-Completion OPT (part-time during Fall or Spring; full-time during Summer)

_____ Post-Completion OPT (full-time upon completion of program of study)

_____ STEM Extension (17 additional months after post-OPT. See handout regarding STEM extension qualifications.)

List any periods of previously approved CPT (CPT authorization can be found on previously issued I-20's)

P/T or F/T: _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____ Degree Level: (ex. AS, BA, MA): _____

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List any periods of previously approved OPT (OPT authorization can be found on previous I-20's & EAD cards)

P/T or F/T: _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____ Degree Level: (ex. AS, BA, MA): _____

P/T or F/T: _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____ Degree Level: (ex. AS, BA, MA): _____

(Use the back of this page if you need to enter more dates)

Employment Dates

Students must choose a start and end date for the OPT request. The start date is the date that you want to be able to begin working. OPT applications must be mailed to USCIS for processing. OPT applications can take 1 to 3 months to be processed. Students cannot work until the EAD card is received. **It is the student's responsibility to mail their application to USCIS within 30 days of the date on which the DSO issues an OPT I-20.**

OPT Start Date: _____ OPT End Date: _____

Do you have a job offer? ___ Yes ___ No If yes, please provide the company name and address below:

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

During post-completion OPT, F-1 legal status is dependent upon employment. Students may not be unemployed for an aggregate of more than 90 days, including weekends. Aggregate means that you add up individual days, even if they are spaced apart. F-1 regulations require students to report employment information to DHS through notification to your DSO. F-1 students must therefore contact the DSO with updates on employer name and address. This information can be reported via email or by providing an employment letter. Students should also maintain accurate records of employment, internships, or any unpaid work done while on OPT. Please sign below acknowledging that you understand this and all other requirements relative to your F-1 status in the United States.

Signature: _____

Date: _____