

F-1 OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING



Yeshiva University
Office of International Students and Scholars

Types of F-1 Work Permission

1. On-campus employment
2. Off-campus employment
 - a) Practical training [8CFR214.2(f)(10)]
 - i. Curricular Practical Training (CPT) “...integral part of an established curriculum.” [8 CFR 214.2 (f)(10)(i)]
 - ii. Optional Practical Training (OPT) [8 CFR 214.2 (f)(10)(ii)]
 - A. Pre-completion
 - B. Post-completion
 - C. 24 Month OPT Extension for STEM Majors
 - b) Severe Economic Hardship [8CFR 214.2(f)(9)(ii)(F)]
 - c) Internship with an international organization: employment by a recognized international organization within the meaning of the International Organization Immunities Act (59 Stat. 669) [8CFR214.2(f)(9)(iii)]

Optional Practical Training

What is OPT?

- Temporary employment authorization that is directly related to your major field of study.
- Benefit of F-1 status
 - Authorized by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS)

Optional Practical Training

Eligibility requirements:

Students must:

- be full time for a minimum of one academic year (2 semesters; fall and spring) by the time work permission begins.
- be in F-1 status at the time of application
- be in good academic standing and making regular progress toward finishing your degree
- not have already used 12 months of OPT at your current degree level
- You do not need a job to apply

Optional Practical Training

When can you use OPT?

- **Pre-completion:** before you finish your program
 - During the semester (part-time*)
 - Summer (part-time or full-time)
- **Post-completion:** after you complete your program
 - Full-time only

*Part-time: up to 20 hours per week;
Full-time: 20+ hours per week

Optional Practical Training

How long does it last?

- 12 months of OPT per degree level
- Post-OPT must be completed within 14 months of completion of study.
 - It does not accumulate: USE IT OR LOSE IT
- OPT automatically ends when you transfer to a new school or begin a new degree program.

Optional Practical Training

When Should You Apply for Post-OPT?

- You have a **150 day** window to submit a post-OPT application to U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) .
 - **90 days before program completion through 60 days after completion of studies.**
 - **Completion of studies** is the actual date when you complete all degree requirements. (i.e. the date of your final exams, or submission of your thesis or dissertation). “Completion of studies” is NOT automatically considered to be the date of graduation ceremonies.
 - May completion: (May 31)
 - December/January completion (December 20 or January 15)

Optional Practical Training

When Should You Apply?



Optional Practical Training

How do I apply?

1. Complete the entire [OPT application](https://www.yu.edu/student-life/resources/international/resources)
 - <https://www.yu.edu/student-life/resources/international/resources>
2. Bring application to OISS at Beren or Wilf
3. We will contact you as soon as OPT is recommended. Allow 2 weeks to process the application internally.
4. Pick up application and mail it right away to USCIS (do not file online)
 - OPT Application must be received by USCIS by the 30th day after OPT is recommended in SEVIS OR the 60th day after program completion, whichever is earlier.
 - Applications received by USCIS after the deadlines will be denied.

Optional Practical Training

How do I apply?

- Completing the I-765
- <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

Optional Practical Training

What Happens After I Mail My OPT Application?

- You should receive a receipt from USCIS 2 to 4 weeks after the application is received. During peak OPT application periods it can take longer.
- The Notice of Action provides an application case number starting with **EAC** xxxxxxxxxxxx.
- Track the progress of your application by entering your receipt number in the case status field on the [USCIS website](http://www.uscis.gov/). <http://www.uscis.gov/>
- It is not uncommon for OPT applications to take 90 days.
 - It is not possible to expedite OPT applications
- Please be patient.

Optional Practical Training

What Happens After OPT is Authorized?

- Receive EAD and I-797A approval notice separately, by mail
- Apply for a U.S. Social Security Number if needed
- Only 90 days of unemployment permitted from authorized OPT start date. Once you find a job, complete the “Report OPT Employment” form and scan to OISS
- While on OPT, all students are required to report within 10 days:
 - any change of legal name or address,
 - any change or interruption of employment
- Please let us know about any changes to your immigration status or if you decide to leave the U.S. before the end date on your EAD.

Post-OPT and Travel Outside the U.S.

[8 CFR 214.2 (13)]

Are There any Travel Restrictions While on OPT? NO, however, to return to the U.S. after program completion you need:

- **Unexpired EAD**
- **A job – bring a letter from your employer.**
 - If you do not have a job travel is not advised, especially if you need to apply for a new F-1 visa. Please speak with the OISS before making travel plans.
 - Volunteers: bring proof of finances to show that you have living expenses.
- **Valid F-1 visa (unless exempt)**
 - Applying for a new F-1 visa becomes riskier as you get closer to your OPT end date.
- **An I-20 endorsed for travel within the past six months**
- **A passport valid for at least six month beyond the expiration of your OPT.**
- **SEVIS fee receipt (I-901) reprint at fmjfee.com**

Optional Practical Training

Common Pitfalls

- Application received at USCIS more than 30 days after OPT was recommended in SEVIS
- Poor photo quality
- Check drawn on a foreign account, bounced check, check not correctly written. If in doubt, obtain a money order from a post office.
- Incorrect local mailing address
 - Make sure you include a reliable mailing address on the Form I-765, valid for at least three months. Your name, or a “Care of” C/O should be on the mailbox.
 - If you call the USCIS National Service Number and are asked to verify your address, provide the address on your I-765, unless you have actually moved.
- If a student applies for OPT and leaves the U.S. before it is approved, USCIS can consider your application as abandoned. Have someone you trust check your mail.

Optional Practical Training

OF NOTE:

1. SEVIS Filing fees will increase on 12/24/2016.
 - OPT: \$380 up to \$410
2. SEVP is developing a student SEVIS portal where students will be able to update their address and report regular OPT employment. Projected implementation in early 2017. Stay tuned.
3. SEVIS is tracking unemployment days. At some point the SEVIS system will begin auto-terminating F-1 status. Remember to report your employment.
4. 24 Month STEM OPT Extensions: students who qualify should apply 3 months before their OPT end date. Information is online:
<https://www.yu.edu/student-life/resources/international/employment/stem-opt-extension>

Thank you

- While on post-OPT you are still an F-1 student and still under YU student immigration sponsorship.
- Feel free to contact our office for assistance with any F-1 non-immigrant concerns.
- Good luck and thank you for being a part of the Yeshiva University community.