

Yeshiva University

Office of International Students and Scholars

F-1 Optional Practical Training Information and Application

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary off-campus employment authorization, granted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to F-1 students for the purpose of gaining practical experience in their major. Eligible students may apply for up to 12 months of OPT per academic level. Eligible students may apply for OPT both before and after graduation. OPT authorization can take 3 months or more, to be approved, so it is important to plan ahead.

Eligibility Criteria

Students do not need a job to apply for OPT. You must:

- Have been a full-time student in F-1 status in the U.S., for at least one full academic year (2 semesters or 9 months)
- Be in valid F-1 status
- Be in good academic standing and making normal progress toward finishing your degree
- Not have used more than 12 months of OPT in the past at your current degree level
- Not have exceeded 12 months of Curricular Practical Training (CPT) at your current degree level

When Can You Use Your OPT?

- Before you finish your studies (Pre-Completion OPT)
- After you finish your studies (Post-Completion OPT), or
- A combination of the two, as long as the total amount of OPT does not exceed 12 months.

****You may not start working until the OPT is authorized and you receive the authorization documentation back from the government.**

How Long Does it Take to Get the OPT Authorization?

Plan on three to four months:

- 2 weeks to gather the documentation and obtain academic signatures
- 2 weeks to process the application at the OISS
- About 3 months (estimate) to obtain approval from the government

How Do I Apply for OPT?

1. Complete the entire **OPT application (see page 4)**
2. Bring the complete, original application to the OISS office on the Beren or Wilf Campus. (Cardozo students should bring their application to the Beren Campus). Only original application packets will be accepted.
3. The OISS will recommend the student for OPT in SEVIS and provide a new I-20 with the OPT recommendation. **(Remember to provide your requested OPT start date. OPT cannot be recommended without this.)**
4. Once the recommendation is made, the OISS will contact you to come to the OISS to pick up the application.
5. The student mails the application to USCIS.

How do I check the status of my OPT Application?

You will receive an official receipt notice by mail from USCIS after the government receives your application. Once you have your receipt number, you can check the progress of your application online at My Case Status: <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/Dashboard.do>.

Travel While on OPT

1. Travel before program completion is the same as usual.
2. Travel after graduation: students must have:
 - a) An unexpired passport valid for at least six months beyond the end date on the EAD
 - b) A valid F-1 visa (Canadian citizens are exempt)
 - c) I-20 endorsed for travel within the past six months
 - d) The employment authorization document (EAD) and USCIS approval notice
 - e) SEVIS Fee receipt: reprint at <https://fmjfee.com>
 - f) Employment letter or a bank statement showing that you have money to live on while looking for a job.
 - g) Students are not advised to leave the U.S. until OPT is approved. Once the OPT is approved, you must have the EAD to be readmitted to the U.S. in F-1 status.
 - h) Students with an expired F-1 visa should speak with the OISS prior to traveling

Reporting OPT Employment

Once OPT is approved and the start date is reached, students are limited to 90 days of accrued unemployment. Students, who go more than 90 days without reporting post-OPT employment information, risk of automatic SEVIS termination of F-1 status, I-20 and employment authorization. Please report OPT employment using the [Report Optional Practical Training \(OPT\) Employment Form](#).

Returning to School

OPT employment authorization is automatically terminated when a student **transfers to another school** or begins study at another educational level at the same school.

Going Home

Students who decide to depart the U.S. early with the intention of forfeiting the remainder of their OPT, must report this to the OISS.

Notify the OISS within 10 days if any of the following happen:

- Change in legal name
- Change in mailing or residential address
- Change in employer (submit "**report OPT Employment**" form)
- Decision to depart the U.S. with the intention of forfeiting the remainder of your OPT
- Return to school full time, or
- Change of immigration status

Yeshiva University

OISS F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) Request Form

I am requesting the following Optional Practical Training (OPT) Work Authorization:

- Pre-Completion OPT (*Before graduation-during your program*)
- Post Completion OPT (*After Graduation*)
- THERE IS A DIFFERENT APPLICATION FOR STEM OPT*

Name: _____ Yeshiva ID: _____
First Name Last Name

Contact Information: _____
Email Phone Number

Current local address in New York City area: _____

Will you be there for at least 3 months? No Yes

If no – be sure to enter an address on the I-765 where you can safely receive mail while your application is pending.

Academic Information: Academic Level (circle one): Bachelor Master Doctorate Law (LLM or JD)

Academic Major(s): _____ Date of Expected Graduation: _____

Have you been authorized for full-time CPT or OPT in the past? No Yes

Dates: _____

Do you have a job offer? (You do not need one to apply for OPT) No Yes If yes, please include the job offer letter with your application.

I am requesting work authorization for these dates:

Proposed OPT start date: _____ Proposed OPT end date: _____

I want to work:

- Part-time:** 20 hours per week while classes are in session (fall and/or spring semester)
- Full-time:** 21 or more hours per week during the summer vacation and at other times when school is not in session, or after completion of your course of study.

Do you have travel plans outside of the U.S.? No Yes

Departure date: _____ Return Date: _____

F-1 visa expiration date: _____

DSO/Advisor Notes:

F-1 OPT Application Checklist

- Complete OISS F-1 OPT Request Form (page 3 of application)
- [I-765 Application for Employment Authorization](#)
Type or write neatly in black ink. [A sample of a completed post-OPT I-765](#) is on the OISS website.
- Copy of new Form I-20 recommending OPT, signed by Designated School Official (DSO) and F-1 student (**provided by OISS**)
- Copies of all previously issued Forms I-20
- A statement from the Registrar confirming your requested program completion date. Plan ahead, this can take a few weeks to process.**
- Copy of passport identity page
- Copy of your most recent Form I-94 Arrival/Departure www.cbp.gov/i94
- Copy of F-1 visa (Canadians are exempt)
- If you were approved for a change of status inside the U.S., include a copy of your USCIS approval notice
- Copy of any previously issued Employment Authorization Documents (EADs)
- \$410 check or money order payable to: "U.S. Department of Homeland Security." If using a personal check, it must be from a U.S. based bank account. Write your I-94 number in the memo.
NEW Students can now pay by credit card on form G-1450! <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/paying-uscis-fees>
- Photos: you must submit two identical color PASSPORT photographs of yourself taken within 30 days of filing your application.
 1. The photos must have a white to off-white background, be printed on thin paper with a glossy finish, and be unmounted and unretouched.
 2. The passport-style photos must be 2" by 2".
 3. The photos must be in color with full face, frontal view on a white to off-white background.
 4. Head height should measure 1" to 1 3/8" from top to bottom of chin, and eye height is between 1 1/8' to 1 3/8" from bottom of photo.
 5. Your head must be bare unless you are wearing headwear as required by a religious order of which you are a member.
 6. Remove your glasses.
 7. Using pencil or felt pen, lightly print your name and I-94 Alien Receipt Number on the back of the photo.
- Optional: [Form G-1145](#) Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance. (USCIS will send the applicant a text or email once application is received.)

Where are these forms?

Form I-765: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

Optional Form G-1145: <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf>

Instructions for filling out Form I-765: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765instr.pdf>

Where to mail your OPT application? If you live in New York, New Jersey or Connecticut use the addresses below. **If you live outside of the northeast check the address at the bottom of this page** <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses>

U.S. Postal Service Mail (USPS) USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266	Express Mail (UPS, FedEx) USCIS Attn: AOS 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067
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