



International Student & Scholar Services Office

Applying for the 17-month STEM OPT Extension

Who is eligible to apply for a one-time 17 month extension?

According to the regulations:

1. Recipients of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in certain STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) fields can apply for a one-time 17-month extension of post-completion OPT (for a total eligibility of up to 29 months).
2. To be eligible for the extension, the student's employer must be registered in **E-Verify**, and agree to report to the DSO when the student is terminated or leaves employment.
3. The student must agree to make periodic reports to the DSO. In this manual, we will refer to this benefit as the "17-month STEM OPT extension."

I'm eligible to apply for an extension, what should I do next?

The applicant should contact our Office and set up an appointment with an International Student Advisor.

Student must bring:

- I765 form (ISSS office will provide this form)
- Check for \$380.00 (pay to the order of: Department of Homeland Security)
- (2) passport photos

- Copy of Passport identification page

- Copy of F-1 visa

- Copy of I-94 (front and back)

- Copy of latest I20 (OPT recommendation)
- Copy of previous EAD card.

- Copy of the diploma as long as it states the program of study

- Applicant's current address, email, phone number
- Letter from Employer with E-verify information
- Employer's name, address, phone number
- Supervisor's name, phone number or email address

Applicant's position/ title

The I-765 form will be mailed to the USCIS Service Center **with jurisdiction over the address where the applicant currently resides**, not where the first I-765 for regular OPT was filed.

When should I apply for the extension?

Applicants may apply for the 17-month STEM OPT extension *anytime* during the regular period of post-completion OPT. However, it is the International Student & Scholar Services Office that we will help you file your applications as early as 90 days prior to the current EAD expiration date.

- Note: USCIS *must receive* the application no later than the expiration date of the applicant's *current OPT employment authorization*.

What if I'm working out of state?

If I'm working out of state and cannot take off from work, you should contact SMU ISSS advisor via email to make arrangements to apply for extension application by mail.