

OPT STEM Extension Information Sheet

To request an OPT STEM extension I-20, you must complete & submit **this form** and **I-983** to intlservices@webster.edu (Subject line: OPT STEM Extension Request, Last name, First name, Webster id #, campus code WEBG/ORLN/KANS, etc.)

F-1 students who are currently authorized for OPT employment based on completion of a Bachelor's, Master's or Ph.D. degree in a STEM field, as defined by DHS, may be eligible for a 24-month extension of OPT.

In order to be eligible for this extension, students applying for this benefit must:

- already be on valid OPT based on a STEM-eligible degree:
<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/eligible-cip-codes-for-the-stem-opt-extension>
- have had fewer than 90 days of unemployment while on OPT
- be employed by, or have a job offer from, an **employer who is registered in the E-Verify employment verification system**

There is a lifetime limit of **two** periods of 24-month STEM OPT; each occurring after a higher degree level has been obtained. A STEM degree obtained at a U.S. university prior to your current degree may be the basis for a STEM extension under certain circumstances.

See detailed information on the STEM Hub: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub>

Materials required for the OPT STEM extension application:

To International Services:

- ___ Completed and signed "Request for 24 Month Extension of OPT" (page 3 & 4)
- ___ Completed [Training Plan I-983 form](#)
 - Email both forms to intlservices@webster.edu Subject Line: STEM OPT Request, Last name, First name, Webster ID #, campus code (WEBG/ORLN/KANS, etc.)

To USCIS:

Please refer to the USCIS OPT section for required documents: <https://www.uscis.gov>

- ___ Completed and signed **Form I-765** <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- ___ **Form G-1145** (Optional: If you want to receive an e-mail and/or a text message that your I-765 has been accepted at a USCIS Lockbox facility)
- ___ **I-765 Filing Fee** as instructed <https://www.uscis.gov>
- ___ **2 color, U.S. passport-style, photographs**; write name and SEVIS ID on back. Photos should be taken within the last 30 days prior to the extension application.
- ___ Copy of the front and back of your current **OPT-EAD card**
- ___ Copy of **new I-20** from International Services, with recommendation for OPT extension (keep the original I-20)
- ___ Copy of all previous I-20s
- ___ Evidence that your degree meets the STEM degree/major requirements
 - ONLY ONE** of the following must be submitted with your application:
 - Official transcript (Request from Registrar's Office)
 - Copy of the diploma that shows your degree level and program of study
- ___ Copy of your current I-94 printout
- ___ Copy of your passport identity page (and any renewal pages)

Submitting OPT Application to USCIS

You are required to submit the application on your own to the appropriate USCIS Service Center (see page 5 for mailing instructions). Please be aware of the following:

- Be sure to sign your STEM OPT I-20 form when you receive it from Webster University.
- Make a copy of the entire application before you submit it to the USCIS.
- Submit the application to the USCIS Lockbox with jurisdiction over the address you list on the I-765 form. Filing jurisdiction information can be found at: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

Download I-765 form here: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>

Also refer to the PDF version of Instruction for Form I-765 on how to correctly complete it.

Hints for filling out Form I-765

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|----------|--|
| Item #3 | Use your current address. If your address changes you are required to immediately update our office & USCIS at https://www.uscis.gov/addresschange
Mail from USCIS is <u>not</u> forwarded by the Postal Service. |
| Item #9 | Use your U.S. Social Security Number. |
| Item #10 | This is the 11-digit number on your most recent I-94 |
| Item #11 | Includes your current OPT information. |
| Item #14 | USCIS wants to know what your status was the last time you entered the U.S.
For most students applying for OPT, it is "F-1". |
| Item #15 | This must be "F-1". |
| Item #16 | (C)(3)(C) |
| Item #17 | Degree = your degree level and major; Employer's name as listed in E-Verify;
Employer's E-Verify Identification Number (E-Verify information can only be obtained from your employer) |

- ✓ ***It is student's responsibility to make sure USCIS receives all required application materials within 30 days of the new OPT I-20 being issued. You must mail your completed application packet with TRACKING to USCIS.***

The dates on the I-765, check, photos, and I-20 must also be less than 30 days old!

- ✓ ***Submit the STEM OPT application to USCIS within 90 days of your initial OPT expiration date.***
- ✓ ***While the STEM OPT I-765 is pending with USCIS, you may continue to work for up to 180 days.***

Complete this form and email to intlservices@webster.edu

Subject Line: STEM OPT Request, Last name, First name, Webster ID # campus code (WEBG/ORLN)

Request for 24 Month Extension of OPT

Last name: _____ First name: _____

Webster ID # _____ SEVIS ID #: N _____

Phone #: _____ Email address: _____

Current home address: _____

Your Job Title: _____

How do you want to receive your new STEM OPT I-20. (Your new I-20 will be ready in **5-7 business days**):

- By mailing to my current home address
- Picking up from the Welcome Center room # 130 (First floor of Webster Hall).

I understand that I must mail this form to International Services in order to request my STEM OPT I-20 form.

By signing below, you verify that you understand and agree to adhere to the following DHS regulatory requirements:

1. You are currently on Optional Practical Training (OPT) and are employed or have been offered employment for practical training in your major field of study.
2. Your current or future employer is enrolled in E-Verify. For more information, see: http://www.dhs.gov/ximgtn/programs/gc_1185221678150.shtm
3. You have not been unemployed for more than 90 days while on OPT.
4. **You will report to International Services via www.webster.edu/iris within 10 days of each occurrence:**
 - any change in your home address each time that you move
 - any change in the name **AND/OR** the address of your employer by submission of a new [I-983 form](#)
 - the loss of your job at any time during your OPT authorization
5. Your employer agrees to notify the Office of International Affairs (intlservices@webster.edu) within 5 days in the event of the **termination of your employment or your departure from the job.**
6. You and your employer agree to **submit an [I-983 form](#) to update your employment information** as soon as a material change occurs and within 10 days of each 12-month evaluation.
7. Your OPT will end if you accrue a total of 150 days of unemployment (counted from the start of your total OPT period), or if you transfer to another school.

8. The STEM OPT extension regulations have added new reporting requirements that must be completed in order to maintain your status. You will “check in” with IS (intlservices@webster.edu) with an e-mail titled “STEM OPT validation” Last name, First name, Webster ID #, campus code (WEBG/ORLN/KANS, etc.) **every six months** during the STEM OPT extension from the start date listed on your new OPT card; at those check-ins, we need your mailing address as well as your employer’s name and address. The reporting requirements include a 6-month demographic information update and a 12 and 24 month self-evaluation.

Every 6 months I will report to the Designated School Official (DSO) verifying that my details have not changed:

My STEM OPT start date is ____/____/____

My first 6 month reporting date falls on ____/____/____

My second 6 month reporting date (12 months into extension) is ____/____/____

My third 6 month reporting date (18 months into extension) is ____/____/____

My last 6 month reporting date (24 months into extension) is ____/____/____

Additionally, 12 months and 24 months into my STEM extension I must submit a self-evaluation:

My first self-evaluation at 12 months into my STEM extension is due on ____/____/____

My second self-evaluation at 24 months into my STEM extension is due on ____/____/____

Please set the reminders of these report deadline dates (you can report as early as 30 days prior to your deadline) immediately into your calendar to avoid late report!

9. Traveling While on OPT Extension: You may travel while on OPT Extension. However, please keep in mind that you are still in F-1 status and that you will need the following in order to re-enter the United States:

- A valid travel signature on your most current I-20 (within 5 months of re-entry)
- Your unexpired Employment Authorization Document (EAD) or I-797 receipt notice
- A letter from your employer indicating that you currently hold a job in your field of study and will be returning to the U.S. to resume employment
- A valid passport
- A valid F-1 visa

10. After completing your 24-month STEM OPT Extension: You are entitled to a 60-day grace period after the last day of OPT as indicated on your EAD. You may not work during your 60-day grace period. This 60-day grace period is to return home or to start a new program. You will need to notify the Office of International Affairs if you plan to begin another course of study after your OPT ends.

I affirm that I understand the information provided to me on this application form and on the supplemental “OPT STEM Extension Information Sheet”, and I agree to the conditions set forth as described by these documents.

Print Name (*this indicates your signature of this form*)

Date

Send the completed application and required documents (with check or money order placed on top of the documents) to:

Filing USCIS location:

As instructed <https://www.uscis.gov>

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

Please refer to your eligibility category, category description, and correct filing USCIS location.

E-Notification: If you want to receive an e-mail and/or a text message that your Form I-765 has been accepted at a USCIS Lockbox facility, complete Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance and clip it to the first page of your application.

STEM OPT Frequently Asked Questions

How do I get a STEM extension of my EAD?

Only students who have completed certain STEM majors and have an eligible employer who is enrolled in E-Verify are eligible for the 24 Months STEM extension

How do I apply for STEM extension?

Eligible students may apply for a 24-Month STEM Extension up to 90 days prior to the expiration of their 12 Months OPT EAD. Please carefully read and follow the application instructions listed here www.webster.edu/iris (under Employment Forms)

There is no way to expedite an application.

How do I report my STEM OPT employment?

You must report any change in address and employment information to Webster IRIS within 10 days of the change through our online form: **[STEM OPT Reporting Form](#)**

- STEM OPT holders are required to report every 6 months to Webster University as listed here: **[24-Month STEM OPT Extension Reporting Requirements](#)** via: **[STEM OPT Reporting Form](#)**

STEM OPT reports can be entered into SEVIS as early as 30 days before the report deadline.

Can I change employers while on pending STEM OPT?

Change of your employer while your STEM OPT is pending is NOT recommended

Can I change employers while on approved STEM OPT?

Yes, however you will have to report it as described (partial/incomplete documentation cannot be accepted) here: [24-Month STEM OPT Extension Reporting Requirements](#) via: [STEM OPT Reporting Form](#)

Will I receive a new I-20 and when?

Once you complete and submit the OPT or STEM OPT report to our office, we will update the information into the SEVIS database. We will contact you via email if your report will be missing anything. Update process of your record will take approximately 7-10 business days. There is no way to expedite the issuance of the I-20. Webster University is typically closed during federal holidays, weekends, and winter break. Please note that not every change requires an issuance of the new I-20.

We DO issue the new I-20 when:

- You apply for OPT or STEM OPT
- Your employer has changed
- You request a Cap Gap I-20

If your I-20 has to be mailed to you, you will receive a FedEx email notification with tracking number.

We DON'T issue the new I-20 when:

- Your address has changed
- Your supervisor, contact information of your employer has changed
- You report 6,12,18, 24 Months STEM OPT Report and your employer remains the same

How do I request a Transfer OUT from Webster to another school?

Complete the transfer out package available at www.webster.edu/iris or contact intlservices@webster.edu for guidance before your EAD expires (it is mandatory to complete the final 24 months STEM OPT report before you request the SEVIS transfer)

Changing Visa status:

If you are approved for change of status while you are still on F-1, please report as instructed <http://www.webster.edu/iris> or contact intlservices@webster.edu for guidance. You might also want to check with the immigration legal counsel on your change of status application to determine what options are available if you remain in the United States past the end of your 60-day grace period.

H-1B pending: if you have a pending or approved change of status to H-1B you may be eligible for Cap-Gap Extension I-20. Please consult with the immigration legal counsel working on your case.

Leaving the United States?

If your plan is to depart the United States after STEM OPT, you must do so within your 60-day grace period. You must stop working by the end of your EAD card.