

Guide to Filing Form I-765 for STEM OPT Extension

How to File Online with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

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Revised
12/02/2024

After reviewing the [STEM OPT Extension Instructions](#) and receiving the [STEM OPT Extension I-20](#) from the Office of International Services (OIS), F-1 students must submit their Form I-765 STEM OPT Extension application to USCIS for adjudication. USCIS must receive the Form I-765 and supporting documents prior to the student's OPT EAD expiration date. *It is the student's responsibility to ensure the Form I-765 is completed fully, accurately, and includes all required document uploads before submitting their application to USCIS.*

F-1 students seeking STEM OPT Extension approval can file the Form I-765 online via [myUSCIS](#). The online filing option allows F-1 students to apply for the STEM OPT Extension EAD, upload supporting application documents, track the status of their application, communicate with USCIS through a secure inbox, and respond to Requests for Evidence (RFE).

Filing Fee—Prior to submitting the Form I-765, the student will be prompted to complete the non-refundable filing fee payment online. Payment can be completed by electronic bank transfer or with a credit or debit card. Once the payment is submitted, the I-765 is considered submitted. Please ensure sufficient funds are available and the application is ready prior to submitting the filing fee.

Students must have copies of the following documents ready to upload when filing the Form I-765 through [myUSCIS](#):

- Recent passport-style color photograph (JPG, JPEG, or PNG)**
 - Must comply with [U.S. Department of State passport photograph requirements](#)
- Passport photo page that includes name, passport number and expiration date (JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, TIFF)**
 - Passport must be valid for at least 6 months from application date
- [Most recent electronic Form I-94](#) (JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, TIFF)**
- Verification of Graduation from USC (JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, TIFF)**
 - A copy of official or unofficial USC transcript **OR** a copy of USC diploma showing degree earned and program of study will fulfill this requirement
- Signed STEM OPT Extension I-20 (all pages) (JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, TIFF)**
 - Student must print the STEM OPT Extension I-20 from the OIS email titled "STEM OPT Extension I-20 Processed" and then sign and date the **Student Attestation** section in ink
 - Verify the following information is under **Employment Authorizations** section: *STEM OPT, FULL-TIME, REQUESTED, START DATE,*

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

TYPE	FULL/PART-TIME	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
POST-COMPLETION OPT	FULL TIME	APPROVED	07 OCTOBER 2017	06 OCTOBER 2018
STEM OPT	FULL TIME	REQUESTED	07 OCTOBER 2018	06 OCTOBER 2020

END DATE. Example:

- Student must confirm the CIP code following **Major 1** under **Program of Study** on **Page 1** of the STEM OPT Extension I-20 matches a code on the [DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List](#). Students who do not have a I-20 with a STEM-eligible CIP code must not proceed with application and need to [contact OIS](#).
- **REMINDER:** Student must check the **expiration date of their OPT EAD** and **Date Issued** on **Page 1** of their **STEM OPT Extension I-20**. If their application is received by USCIS after the expiration of the OPT EAD and/or more than 60 days after **Date Issued** on **Page 1** of the STEM OPT Extension I-20, their STEM OPT Extension will be denied.

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After receiving the STEM OPT Extension I-20 from OIS, the student must create or log into their existing [myUSCIS account](#). From the student's myUSCIS account, under *File A Form*, select "**Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)**". It is the student's responsibility to complete the Form I-765 application fully and accurately in accordance with USCIS instructions. Students may use the guide below for additional assistance.

Form I-765 Question or Entry Field	Response
What is your eligibility category?	Choose "c(3)(C) STEM Extension".
What is your degree?	Enter degree/major name as it appears on USC diploma. There is a 40 character limit; if needed, shorten or abbreviate and use the Additional Information section to clarify the response.
What is your employer's name as listed in E-Verify?	Enter the employer's name as it is listed with E-Verify. There is a 40 character limit; if needed, type as much as can fit and use the Additional Information section to clarify the response.
What is your employer's E-Verify company identification number or a valid E-Verify client company identification number?	Enter the four- to seven-digit E-Verify number. Do not enter the Employment Identification Number (EIN).
What is your reason for applying?	Select "Renewal of permission to accept employment".
Have you previously filed Form I-765?	Select "Yes".
Is someone assisting you with completing this application?	Select "No".
What is your current legal name?	Enter name exactly as it appears on student's passport.
Have you used any other names since birth?	Select "Yes" or "No". If "Yes", the student must enter other names. Most students will select "No".
How may we contact you?	Enter preferred phone number(s).
Email address	Enter preferred USC or non-USC email address.
What is your current U.S. mailing address?	<p>Students are recommended to use an address they will reliably have access to up to six months after applying for the STEM OPT Extension. Students may use someone else's address if they will be moving.</p> <p>In care of name (if any) - If the student is using someone else's address, such as a friend or family member's, to receive their mail, enter their name here. Otherwise, leave blank.</p>
Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?	Select "Yes" or "No". If "No", the student must enter their current physical address (i.e., where they currently live).

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Form I-765 Question or Entry Field (<i>continued</i>)	Response
What is your gender?	Select one of the options.
What is your marital status?	Select one of the options.
What is your city, town, or village of birth?	Enter the student's city, town, or village of birth.
What is your state or province of birth?	Enter the student's state or province of birth. If none, leave blank.
What is your country of birth?	Enter the country where the student was born.
What is your date of birth?	Enter the student's date of birth formatted as MONTH/DAY/YEAR.
What is your country of citizenship or nationality?	List all countries where the student is a citizen or national.
What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)?	Enter the number from the student's most recent electronic I-94 Record .
When did you last arrive in the United States?	<p>Enter the arrival date, place of arrival, and status at arrival, as it appears on the student's most recent I-94 record.</p> <p>Date of arrival – Enter the date of arrival as MONTH/DAY/YEAR.</p> <p>Place of arrival – Select the city or port of entry. If the student was admitted at a CBP pre-clearance site, the student may select that site as their place of arrival (e.g., "ABU DHABI PRECLEARANCE AIRPORT").</p> <p>Status at last arrival – Select "F1 – STUDENT, ACADEMIC, OR LANGUAGE PROGRAM."</p>
What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?	Enter passport number.
What is your travel document number (if any)?	Leave blank.
What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?	Enter passport expiration date.
What country issued your passport or travel document?	Select the country that issued the student's passport.
What is your current immigration status or category?	Select "F1 – STUDENT, ACADEMIC, OR LANGUAGE PROGRAM."
What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?	Enter the SEVIS number from top left corner of the STEM OPT Extension I-20, beginning after "N".

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Form I-765 Question or Entry Field (<i>continued</i>)	Response
What is your A-Number?	If the student was previously issued an EAD by USCIS, enter the USCIS # from the EAD. If the student does not know their A-Number or does not have an A-Number, select the checkbox. Most students will select the checkbox.
What is your USCIS Online Account Number?	If applicable, enter the student's USCIS Online Account Number (OAN). If the student does not know their OAN or does not have an OAN, select the checkbox. Most students will select the checkbox.
Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?	Students applying for STEM OPT Extension must already have a Social Security Number (SSN). Select "Yes" and enter the SSN in the field provided.
Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?	If the student does not need an SSN card, select "No". If the student would like the SSA to issue a reprint of their SSN card, select "Yes". Selecting "Yes" requires the applicant to agree to the Consent for Disclosure and enter their father's and mother's birth names.

Evidence	Files to upload
2 x 2 Photo of You	Copy of a recent passport-style color photograph that meets U.S. Department of State passport photograph requirements .
Form I-94	Copy of most recent electronic Form I-94 Record ; travel history is not required.
Employment Authorization Document or Government ID	Copy of OPT EAD AND copy of passport page that includes photo, passport number and expiration date. Passport must be valid for at least 6 months from application submission date.

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Evidence (<i>continued</i>)	Files to upload
<p>Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status</p>	<p>Student must print the STEM OPT Extension I-20 from the OIS email titled "STEM OPT Extension I-20 Processed" and then sign and date the Student Attestation section in ink. Student's typed or electronic signature on the STEM OPT Extension I-20 is <i>not</i> allowed.</p> <p>Student must check the expiration date of their OPT EAD and Date Issued on Page 1 of their STEM OPT Extension I-20. If their application is received by USCIS <i>after the expiration of the OPT EAD</i> and/or more than 60 days after <i>Date Issued</i> on Page 1 of the STEM OPT Extension I-20, their STEM OPT Extension <u>will be denied.</u></p>
<p>College Degree</p>	<p>A copy of official or unofficial USC transcript OR a copy of USC diploma showing degree earned and program of study.</p> <p><i>Most students apply for STEM OPT Extension based on their most recently obtained degree from USC. Students applying for STEM OPT Extension based on a prior STEM degree must upload a copy of the transcript or diploma for the previously earned STEM-eligible degree.</i></p>
<p>Institution Accreditation</p>	<p><i>Only applicable for students applying for STEM OPT Extension based on a prior degree. Most students apply for STEM OPT Extension based on their most recently obtained degree from USC. This upload does not apply to most USC graduates.</i></p> <p><i>If applying for STEM OPT Extension based on a prior degree, the student must upload the supplemental documents listed on Applying for STEM OPT Extension Based on Prior Degree:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Letter of Explanation from Student 2) Letter of Support from Employer 3) One or both of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photocopy of I-20 from Previous Degree with STEM-eligible CIP Code • Letter from a Designated School Official (DSO) where the STEM-eligible degree was obtained

Additional Information—Students may use this section to explain, clarify, or elaborate on their responses or document uploads.