

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING EXTENSION INSTRUCTIONS

As of April 08, 2008, students who are employed while on OPT in certain fields of study may apply for a 17-month extension of their OPT period.

Eligibility: The additional 17 months of OPT must be applied for AFTER a student has already been granted the initial 12-month period of work authorization. Only students who earned a degree in one of the following fields may apply for the extension:

Actuarial Science	Computer Science Applications
Engineering	Engineering Technologies
Life Sciences	Mathematics
Military technologies	Physical Sciences

Please check the NAFSA website for more detailed information on the degree programs which are eligible for extensions: http://www.nafsa.org/regulatory_information.sec/29_month_opt_rule_updates

Additionally, the extension will be available only to those students who are currently employed, whose employers are enrolled in the E-VERIFY program (more information can be found on the USCIS website: www.uscis.gov click on the link called "For Employers"), and who have not yet been approved for a 17-month extension.

***IMPORTANT NOTE:** Students whose employers have filed H1B applications for them are NOT eligible for the 17-month extension, but may continue working until the H1B becomes valid or until a denial of the H1B application is received. No additional EAD will be issued to cover this period of time.

Application timing: Students who have received approval for the initial 12-month period of OPT who wish to apply for an extension must request the extension at least 3 weeks before their 12-month OPT period ends.

Continuing employment while waiting for OPT extension: The 17-month extension becomes valid the day after the 12-month period of authorized OPT ends, provided the student applies for the extension in a timely manner. Students may continue working until approval or denial is received OR up to 180 days. If the extension application is denied, students must cease employment immediately and are given 60 days from the notice of denial to leave the country or change to a new program of study.

Periods of unemployment: The April 2008 regulations set a limit on the amount of time a student may be unemployed while within their authorized period of OPT. If you are unemployed for more than 90 days total during your 12-month period of OPT, you are no longer considered to be maintaining your immigration status and will have to go home. Should you be approved for an additional 17 months of OPT, this total period of unemployment is extended by 30 days to 120 days total. It is not yet clear how this 90-day period will be tracked, but we assume SEVIS will be set up to keep track of this.

Reporting requirements while on OPT: While on OPT, you must report to us any changes in your name, address, employer name and/or address and if you stop working. Please report this information to psuopt@pdx.edu. Additionally, if you are approved for the 17-month extension, your employer is required to report to us within 48 hours if you stop working for them.

OPT EXTENSION FILING PROCEDURE

Please bring the following documents to IES. We will review your application and check your status maintenance then issue the I-20 on which your OPT period will be recommended. Once you sign this new I-20, we will mail your application to the CIS processing center in Lincoln Nebraska. We require 5-7 business days to process your application, so please plan ahead!

- ❑ CIS form I-765 (attached). You may also choose to download the form from the CIS website, located at http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/I-765_form.pdf and the accompanying \$340 fee;
- ❑ 2 passport style photographs;
- ❑ Photocopies of your passport, your visa, your I-94 card (front and back) and your current EAD;
- ❑ A photocopy of your diploma;
- ❑ A signed copy of the Student Acknowledgement of Responsibilities

Please note that you must include your employer's name and E-verify number on the I-765 in item 17.

STUDENT REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Students who have been granted an extension of their OPT period under the new OPT 17-month extension rule must understand and agree to the following reporting requirements:

You must report any change in your name, home address, employer or employer's address to your international student advisor within 10 days of that change.'

You must report if you stop working for an employer.

You are allowed to be unemployed for only 90 days of your initial 12-month OPT period. IF granted a 17-month extension, this period of time is extended by 30 days to at total of 120 days per 29-month period.

Student certification:

This is to certify that I, _____ (*student's name*), have read the above and understand the responsibilities I assume in applying for a 17-month extension of my current OPT period. While it is not a federal regulation, I understand that the Office of Int'l Student and Scholar services uses e-mail as its primary mode of communication with students, so I will update my primary e-mail address with OISSS as soon as it changes.

Student' signature

Printed name

Telephone Number and /or E-mail Address