

# Work After Graduation & F-1 OPT Q&A Session

February 11, 2022

Christine Dima, Immigration Advisor

International Services Office | [questions@iso.rochester.edu](mailto:questions@iso.rochester.edu)

# Is this session for you?

This session is intended for students who attended or watched the recording of ISO's:

**Work After Graduation and F-1 OPT Application Procedures** workshop:

<https://iso.rochester.edu/events/archive.html>

**NOTE**: If you are not familiar with that content, today's session may not be as useful to you. ISO will screen question submissions accordingly.

# OPT: Eligibility factors

In order to be **eligible for OPT**, you must have...

- ...been enrolled in a full course of study for **at least 1 academic year** (9 months)
- ...not been previously authorized for OPT at **current or higher degree level** (12 months of OPT is available at each ascending degree level)
- ...not been authorized for more than **12 months of full-time CPT at the current degree level**

**No job offer is required to apply for 12-month OPT!**

# OPT: Application Window

**Program completion date** determines your timeline!

## 5-month eligibility window:

- ➔ May apply up to **90 days** *before* completion
- ➔ May apply up to **60 days** *after* completion\*  
(grace period)
- ➔ Must apply within **30 days** of ISO's OPT recommendation (new I-20)

\* Applications during grace period depend on maintenance of status

# Application process

1. Request an OPT recommendation from ISO (new I-20)
2. Submit required application materials to USCIS
3. Wait: Look out for updates and notices regarding your application status.
4. Receive Employment Authorization Document (EAD card)

<https://iso.rochester.edu/employment/students/opt/apply.html>

# 1. Obtain OPT Recommendation

## OPT Recommendation Issued on new I-20

**ISO** INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OFFICE • UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER  
215 Money Hall, Box 270446, Rochester, NY 14627 • Phone: (585) 275-2866 • Fax: (585) 275-2943  
Email: iso@iso.rochester.edu • Web: www.iso.rochester.edu

**Departmental Recommendation for F-1  
12-months Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

The application process for Optional Practical Training requires two steps: 1) a recommendation from the school, and 2) application to USCIS for authorization. This form will provide the necessary information to issue a new I-20 with the recommendation for OPT. Please allow one week for processing; you will be notified by email when the new document is available for pick-up. Additional information on the application process is available through the ISO website. Please meet with an International Student Advisor to discuss timing and application materials.

**Student Information:** University ID#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary Major: \_\_\_\_\_

**Requested OPT:** Pre-completion:  
 During the academic year, while fully enrolled – part time only (20 hrs/week)  
 During an annual vacation term – part or full time  
Post-completion:  
 After completion of all degree requirements excluding thesis – full time  
 After completion of all degree requirements – full time

**OPT Period:** Start Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
*Date Selection: Post-completion OPT may begin immediately or up to 60 days after the expected completion date listed below. Reporting requirements and 90-day unemployment limit are in effect once the OPT authorization starts. These dates are impossible to change after USCIS approval.*

**Recommendation of Academic Advisor:**  
Has this student maintained continuous full-time enrollment?  Yes  No  
If No, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
Expected Date of Completion: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
*Please determine this date carefully: The I-20 completion date should reflect the estimated completion of all remaining degree requirements by the student, which does not necessarily coincide with graduation or finalization of US administrative processing. For programs which require a thesis, this date may be earlier than the student's official degree completion, provided he or she satisfies all requirements within the scheduled OPT period. The completion date on the I-20 also indicates the end of on-campus work permission for student employment or payments through a graduate award. Students who are unable to finish all non-thesis degree requirements by the reported date are limited in using their OPT authorization and could lose their work permission entirely.*

Advisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Certification from Dean's Office:**  
Grad/Undergrad Dean's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

OPT Recommendation Form.docx; January 2012

### Student Information

- Post-Completion OPT
- OPT Start & End Date

### Advisor

- Confirm Completion Date

### Dean's Office Certification

Submit to ISO at least 1 week before  
you intend to send your application to USCIS!

# 2. Submit OPT Application to USCIS

## TWO OPTIONS: Online Filing OR Paper Filing

APPLICATION: Form I-765

FILING FEE: \$410

PHOTOS: US Passport-style

COPY: Recommendation I-20

COPY: Previous CPT/OPT I-20s

COPY: Passport

COPY: I-94 record

COPY: Previous/current EAD(s)

See ISO's [Preparing & Filing OPT Applications](#) webpage for:

- ❖ A [list of required documents](#)
- ❖ **OPT application guides** with additional instructions for each filing method. The guides can be found under the *APPLICATION: Form I-765* section.
- ❖ Access to our URcompass client portal to [upload your application materials for review](#).
- ❖ Information on [filing your application](#).

**ISO** INTERNATIONAL SERVICES OFFICE | UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER  
40 Celebration Drive, Box 270446, Rochester, NY 14627 | Phone: (585) 273-2866 | Fax: (585) 276-2943  
Email: [questions@iso.rochester.edu](mailto:questions@iso.rochester.edu) | Web: [www.iso.rochester.edu](http://www.iso.rochester.edu)

### 12-Month Post-Completion OPT I-765 Online Filing Guide

Last updated 08/2021

- ☑ This guide should only be used for **12-Month Post-Completion OPT applications filed online, not any other type of USCIS application**. If you are replacing a lost, stolen, or incorrect EAD card, please consult an ISO advisor.
- ☑ This document, as well as any other application review support from ISO, should not be considered legal advice. **We highly recommend having your application materials reviewed by an ISO advisor before sending your application to USCIS**, but please be aware that ISO advisors are not legal professionals and any recommended changes are only suggestions based on experience. You are responsible for accurately completing your forms and timely submitting your application!
- ☑ The information in this guide is updated regularly. We advise that you check the most updated version of this guide on our website.

Have your application reviewed by an ISO advisor before submitting!

# OPT & Travel

It is possible to travel outside the US without impacting your pending OPT application, but you want to carry the correct documents in order to re-enter the US.

The documentation you should carry depends on where you are in the OPT process.

## **Travel before your program completion date**

Travel considerations are the same as they have been, even if you've applied for OPT.

You should carry:

- Passport valid 6 months into the future
- Valid visa
- Form I-20 with valid travel signature
- Documentation of UR enrollment
- I-94 record



# Travel on OPT (after program completion)

OPT Application Status (after program completion)	Documents to Carry
<b>Students with Pending OPT Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passport valid 6 months into future</li><li>• Valid visa</li><li>• Form I-20 with valid travel signature (valid for <b>six months</b> during OPT)</li><li>• USCIS receipt notice</li><li>• Proof of employment (if applicable) or proof of job search.</li><li>• I-94 record</li></ul>
<b>Students with Approved OPT Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passport valid 6 months into future</li><li>• Valid visa</li><li>• Form I-20 with valid travel signature (valid for <b>six months</b> during OPT)</li><li>• EAD card</li><li>• Proof of employment (if applicable) or proof of job search.</li><li>• I-94 record</li></ul>

---

---

# Questions?

*Upcoming Workshops:*

**02/25/2022: Academic Internships During an F-1 Academic Program**

**03/11/2022: Understanding the F-1 OPT STEM Extension**

**<https://iso.rochester.edu/events/upcoming.html>**

---

---