

**APPLICATION FOR  
Optional Practical Training  
(OPT)**

**F-1 Student Visa**

**February 14, 2017**



DIVISION OF GLOBAL DIVERSITY,  
INCLUSION & INTERCULTURAL AFFAIRS  
**LAMAR UNIVERSITY**  
Office of International Student Services

PO Box 10263  
Beaumont, TX 77710  
Phone: 409-880-8349  
Fax: 409-880-8414  
Email: [international@lamar.edu](mailto:international@lamar.edu)

## F-1 EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURES

**Revised: February 17, 2017**

**GENERAL INFORMATION:** Optional Practical Training (OPT) is temporary employment authorization that is related to an F-1 student's academic program. The work done does not count towards course credit; therefore it is the student's option to engage in employment. OPT may be used during a degree program (not recommended) as well as after completion of course requirements. **The application process takes a minimum of three months** for both initial applications and renewals. If applying for OPT based on graduation, the **OPT application must be submitted to USCIS before the official completion/graduation date.** An F-1 student is eligible for a **MAXIMUM OF 12 MONTHS** of this type of training. While on OPT, individuals are still considered to be F-1 students at Lamar University even though they may be working elsewhere in the United States.

**YOU MAY NOT APPLY FOR OPT PAST YOUR GRADUATION DATE.** The International Office recommends that you not apply for OPT until you are certain of your graduation date. Students are urged to apply as early as possible, but not later than the last day to apply according to your graduation date.

### **To be eligible for Optional Practical Training:**

- The student must have been in full-time status for the 12 months of full time enrollment preceding the OPT application.
- The student must not have worked in the United States without authorization from the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services.
- The student must be in valid F-1 status at the time of application.
- Apply up to 90 days prior or no later than 30 days after degree completion date (see LU calendar for dates).

### **Bring the following to the Office of International Student Services:**

- Completed Form I-765.
- Optional Practical Training Application – must be fully completed.
- Academic advisor Recommendation form.
- Optional Practical training waiver form.

**After reviewing the documents listed above, the DSO at the OISS will determine if you are eligible for OPT. If you are eligible, you will be issued a new I-20 with recommendation for OPT employment authorization.**

You will be contacted by email to come to the OISS to do the following:

- To sign and collect your I-20 and instructions for submitting your petition for OPT employment authorization to USCIS.

Students may not legally begin working until an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Card has been issued by USCIS- TSC according to the dates on the EAD Card.



## OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING APPLICATION

Revised: February 14, 2017

You must complete **ALL OF THE FOLLOWING** information in order for your application for Optional Practical Training to be processed:

**(PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY) Failure to print each letter so that it is readable may result in delaying your OPT recommendation.**

Lamar University ID#:

SEVIS No:

Name:

Last/Family

First

Middle

US Street Address, Apt #, City, State, Zip:

Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY):

Gender: Male Female

Birth Country:

Citizenship Country:

Driver's License No:

Issued by State of:

Telephone No:

Social Security No:

Degree Level: Bachelors Masters Doctor Phd

Field/Branch of study:

Lamar Email:

Personal Email:

My degree completion date is(MM/DD/YYYY):

Requested Employment Start Date:

End Date:

**Requesting Post-Completion** (may be authorized for a maximum aggregate period of 12 months per educational level). A student becomes eligible for another 12 months of practical training when the student changes to a higher educational level. Although students may engage in OPT both before and after completion of their studies, the maximum amount of time that can be granted is 12 months per level. This option must be requested prior to the completion of all course requirements for the degree or prior to the completion of the course of study and must be received and accepted at the Texas Service Center before my completion of studies.

I understand that I am eligible to remain in the U.S. up to 14 months from my graduation date if I apply and be approved for OPT. Hence, if I choose that my OPT start date be other than the standard graduation date, I am responsible to do the following:

- **Post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) must be completed within 14-month period following the graduation date.**
- **If my EAD is approved more than 60 days after the graduation date, a full 12 months OPT will not be granted and my OPT period will be truncated to fit into the 14 month window.**
- **Begin work only on or after my approved EAD start date.**
- **If I start employment before I receive my EAD card and/or the start date on the EAD card has not been reached I will be immediately out-of-status, and subject to deportation proceedings.**
- **After the completion of my authorized OPT employment period, I must make arrangements to remain inside US within the 60 days grace period following employment authorization end date.**

1. I understand I am responsible to submit my application to USCIS.
2. I understand that it is my responsibility to be aware of federal regulations for obtaining Optional Practical Training.
3. I must **fully** complete Form I-765.
4. I must be registered for required course work in the semester of graduation.
5. I understand that the Office of International Student Services will correspond with me using Lamar University email account until after graduation. **I also understand it is my responsibility to provide an additional personal email address to receive updates about my OPT application and other requirements regarding my SEVIS status while on OPT.**
6. I understand that, if I have worked in the United States without authorization from the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services, I may not be eligible for OPT.
7. I understand that I must inform the Office of International Student Services of my U.S. address during my OPT employment period.
8. I understand that I must inform the International Office of my Employer Information during my OPT employment period.
9. I understand that OISS address is c/o Office of International Student Services, Lamar University, P.O. Box 10263, Beaumont, TX, 77710 and I may choose to use this address on my I-765. I understand OISS will contact me through Lamar email address or my personal email address submitted when it is required for me to collect any documents, including my EAD Card.
10. I am aware that, if I request Pre-Completion OPT, the months will be subtracted from the 12-month total, that my employment will be part-time, and that I am eligible for OPT based on the level of my degree.
11. I am aware that, if I request six (6) months of Post-Completion OPT, I cannot file for an extension based on my level of degree, but I may apply the remainder of the six (6) months toward the same level and completion of the second degree.
12. In addition, I understand that after I have been contacted by email, it is my responsibility to report to the OISS to sign my SEVIS I-20 recommending OPT. Then submit the I-765 and supporting documents to USCIS-TSC within 30 days from the email notice date.
13. Upon receiving the I-797 Receipt Notice from USCIS Service Center, should I discover that my name is misspelled, I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the service center so that corrections may be made.
14. I am aware that if I have not obtained employment within 90 days of my OPT EAD Card start date, that on the 91<sup>st</sup> day I will be out of status with DHS and there is no grace period for departing the U.S.
15. I am aware that, if I depart the United States after I receive my EAD card, my SEVIS I-20 must be endorsed for travel for re-entry.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT ONLY:**

I certify that I understand the information on this application it is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Student's Printed Name

Student's Signature

Date

**DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE: (OFFICE USE ONLY)**

I certify that this student has been given a copy of this document.

P/DSO

Signature Date



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**Academic Adviser's Recommendation Form**  
**For F-1 Optional Practical Training - Graduation Verification**  
**Revised: February 14, 2017**

**NOTICE: If your Department Chair does not sign this form, your OPT Petition will not be processed.**

This form provides the information required by the United States Department of Homeland Security for the granting of employment authorization for practical training to an international student. The student's academic adviser/faculty and department chair must complete and sign the entire form. Please return the completed form to the student. Any questions can be directed to Marie Graham, Office of International Student Services. Thank you for your assistance.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ LUID \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Degree: \_\_\_\_\_ Field of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Required  Yes  No Thesis Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To the best of your knowledge, this student is eligible and scheduled to graduate as stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor's Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Chair Signature Date



**OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING WAIVER FORM  
& DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FEDERAL  
REGULATION RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS**

Revised: February 14, 2017

**PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY:**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last/Family First Middle

Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ OPT Request Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

It is the student's responsibility to complete an accurate OPT application. One small error can delay the OPT application process by MONTHS! **Please initial each sentence, sign, and date this form.**

- \_\_\_ I understand that as the applicant I am fully responsible for this application. By signing page one of my SEVIS I-20, I have verified that the information entered by a DSO on page 2 is correct.
- \_\_\_ I understand that the Office of International Student Services will only correspond with me using Lamar University email account.
- \_\_\_ I also understand that it is my responsibility to provide an additional email address to receive updates regarding my OPT petition and other important information regarding my SEVIS status after graduation.
- \_\_\_ I understand that if I transfer or move to a higher degree level during the duration of my OPT; my employment authorization will be canceled on the day I start my new program.
  
- \_\_\_ I understand that, even while participating in an OPT program, I am still an F-1 student and as such must maintain my F-1 non-immigrant status.
- \_\_\_ I understand that traveling internationally during the period of my OPT is not recommended by Lamar University Designated School Officials, especially traveling without proof of employment.
- \_\_\_ I understand that I am responsible for updating my information (address, phone, email, current employer) with the LU OISS for the duration of my OPT.
- \_\_\_ I understand that I am responsible by Federal Regulations to report my employer's information to the OISS as soon as I obtain and/or change employment and/or changes in employer's information occurs. I also understand that I must use the F-1 Employment Information Waiver form to report such changes to the OISS.
- \_\_\_ I understand that I must communicate any approved change of status (Example: F-1 to H-1B) during the duration of my OPT.
- \_\_\_ I understand that I can accept only employment that is directly related to my field/branch of study.
- \_\_\_ I understand that I am responsible to submit my application to USCIS.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Student's signature Date Designated School Official Date

**UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION SERVICES**  
**PHOTO GUIDELINES FOR VISA APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS**  
**THAT REQUIRE PHOTOS**

Beginning September 1, 2004, applications to USCIS requiring passport photos must be accompanied by the same style of full face photograph as is used for visa applications, as describe below. The photographs submitted to USCIS must be color photographs. The photos must be on white background and be less than 30 days old.

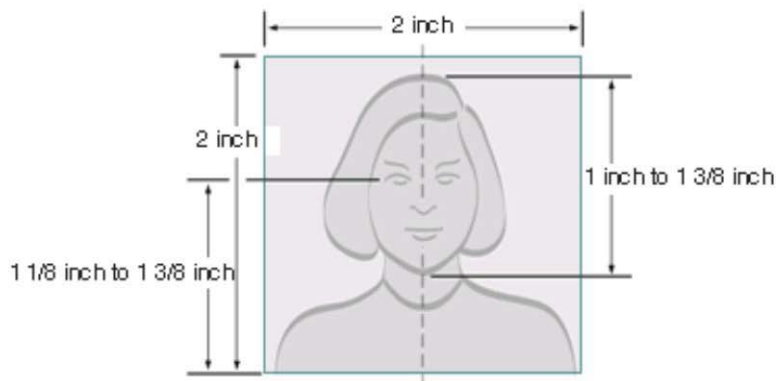
**Photo composition template**

Make sure the photo presents the full head from the top of the hair to the bottom of the chin

Center the head within the frame

The person in the photo should have a neutral expression and be facing the camera

**Paper Photo Head Size Template**



- Photo must be 2 inches by 2 inches
- The height of the head (top of hair to bottom of chin) should measure 1 inch to 1 3/8 inches (25 mm - 35 mm)
- Make sure the eye height is between 1 1/8 inches to 1 3/8 inches (28 mm - 35 mm) from the bottom of the photo

**Well Composed Photo Composition Examples**



# **NOTICE:**

**Form I-765 Application Fee is \$410.00**

**Payment must be made ONLY with:**

**PERSONAL CHECK**

**Or**

**MONEY ORDER**

**Payable to:**

**US DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

**United States Citizenship & Immigration Services**

**Website for Submitted Application Status**

- 1. Go to: <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>**
- 2. On the right hand side click: My Case is Pending**
- 3. On the right hand side click: Case Status Online**
- 4. Click: Online**
- 5. Type your SRC Number – Do not include dashes or spaces**





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**REPLACEMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR  
OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING  
EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENT  
(EAD CARD)  
TEXAS SERVICE CENTER (USCIS+  
Hgd t wct { '16, 2019**

The Texas Service Center (USCIS) requires all students that are applying for a replacement EAD Card to submit the following documents with the International Office:

- Form I-765 - Re-file a new Form I-765 & indicate “REPLACEMENT” on form.
- \$410.00 Application Fee for Form I-765 (Cashier’s Check or Money Order to be made payable to Department of Homeland Security)
- 2 Passport photos
- Submit all documents to appropriate USCIS Lockbox address.

# USCIS Lockbox address for submitting your application

## **If you live in:**

Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia

## **Mail your application to:**

### **USCIS Dallas Lockbox**

*For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:*

USCIS  
PO Box 660867  
Dallas, TX 75266

*For Express mail and courier deliveries:*

USCIS  
Attn: AOS  
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business  
Suite 400  
Lewisville, TX 75067

## **If you live in:**

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

## **Mail your application to:**

### **USCIS Phoenix Lockbox**

*For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:*

USCIS  
PO Box 21281  
Phoenix, AZ 85036

*For Express mail and courier deliveries:*

USCIS  
Attn: AOS  
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S  
Suite 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85034

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING YOUR OPT PETITION TO USCIS SERVICE CENTER

Effective October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the International Student Service Office will no longer submit OPT petitions to USCIS on behalf of students. **All students will now be required to submit their own OPT petitions to USCIS.**

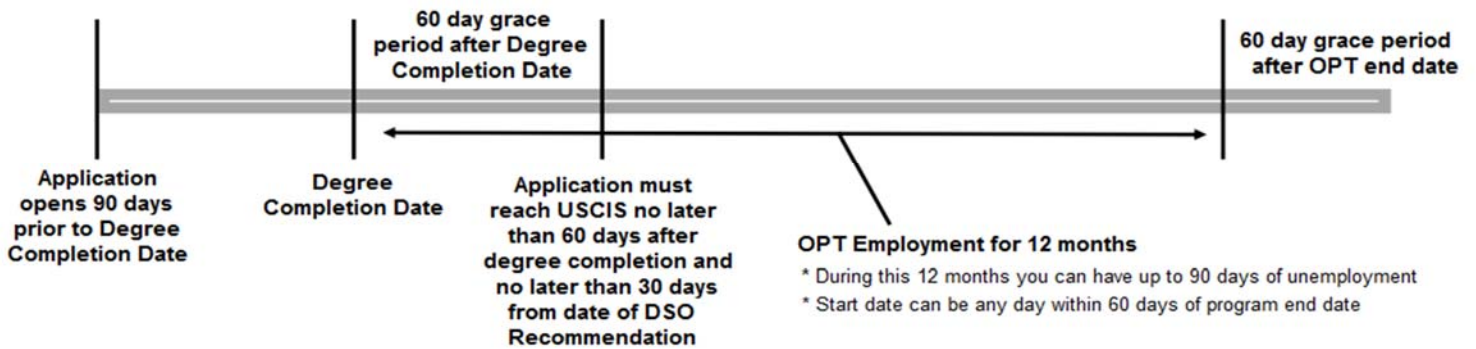
The I-765 and OPT I-20 must be received by USCIS no sooner than 90 days before the program end date, and no later than 60 days after the program end date. In addition, the Form I-765 and supporting documentation for post-completion OPT must be received by USCIS **no later than 30 days after the DSO updates SEVIS with the OPT recommendation.** The following documents should be sent:

- Form I-765, current version, completed and signed by the student, marked with the appropriate code (**C3B**) at item 16.
- Copy of SEVIS I-20 with the OPT recommendation, signed by the DSO and student.
- \$410.00 I-765 filing fee in the form of a check or money order payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security".
- 2 identical immigration-style photos taken within 30 days of filing Form I-765.
- Photocopies of all prior Forms I-20, especially those on which CPT or OPT was granted previously, so that all prior periods of CPT and OPT, and whether they were for full-time or part-time training, can be reviewed by USCIS.
- Photocopies of any previous employment authorization documents (EAD cards).
- Photocopy of Form I-94 (both sides of cardstock I-94 or copy of electronic Form I-94 printout).
- Photocopies of the following passport pages:
  - Passport ID pages: photo page, page with passport validity dates, including renewal page if original has expired, and pages showing amendments such as name changes, corrections, etc.
  - F-1 visa page (if any)
- Mail all of the above to the [USCIS Lockbox Facility with jurisdiction over the student's place of residence](#). The Lockbox will then forward the application to the proper USCIS Service Center for adjudication.

## **NOTE:**

USCIS announced on March 28, 2016, I-765 lockboxes began sending to the Potomac Service Center all newly filed Form I-765s filed by F-1 and M-1 students seeking Optional Practical Training (OPT). When the lockbox sends an OPT application to the Potomac Service Center, it will send the applicant a notice with a receipt number that begins with YSC, which is the prefix used to identify cases adjudicated by the Potomac Service Center. The filing location and instructions for Form I-765 will not change. Applicants should continue to file the form at the address listed under Where to file in the Form I-765 instructions and on the [USCIS I-765 web page](#). See back page for details.

# OPT Timeline



## Timeline of Events after Submitting Documents to USCIS

1. USCIS sends Receipt Notice informing you they have received your request
2. If approved, USCIS sends I-797 Approval Notice
3. USCIS sends Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Card

*\*You should receive a decision within 90 days from the receipt date on your Form I-765.\**

