Wesleyan University
Office of International Affairs

Procedures for Filing your OPT Application by Mail

Important: *OISA provides general guidance on your post-completion OPT application based on information obtained from reliable sources and reflecting our years of experience in working with F-1 students. We make every attempt to ensure that we provide you with the most up-to-date information available. **Any advice provided to you by OISA does not constitute legal advice.** The OPT application is a **personal application for which you are responsible**; the application preparation and USCIS case decision will vary depending on the facts of your particular case. OISA does its best to provide you with the most current guidance, but please be mindful that USCIS may change its interpretation of these policies, procedures, regulations, and eligibility requirements at any time. OISA is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from USCIS. Please reference the official [USCIS instructions for I-765](#) and [Checklist of Required Initial Evidence for Form I-765](#) if you have questions.*

The following guidance is for if you are submitting your OPT application to USCIS via mail. If you are applying online via the USCIS website, you must carefully follow the instructions to complete each part of your Form I-765 and submit the required materials and evidence.

Please send the following materials in the following order to the USCIS Lockbox in Chicago (see page 2):

1. The two identical passport-style photos must be 2 by 2 inches. The photos must be in color with a full face, frontal view, on a white to off-white background. Head height should measure 1 to 1 3/8 inches from the top of your hair to the bottom of your chin, and eye height is between 1 1/8 to 1 3/8 inches from the top of your eyes to the bottom of the photo. Your head must be bare unless you are wearing headwear as required by a religious denomination of which you are a member. Please be aware that: 1) photos cannot be more than **30 days old** when you send the application and, 2) you should write your name and SEVIS ID number on the back of each photo using a pencil or felt pen.

2. **$410.00** in the form of a bank check or money order made out to **U.S. Department of Homeland Security.** If you do not know how to complete a money order, check [the money order page on the OISA website](#).

3. OPTIONAL Cover letter (sample attached on page 3 of this document).

4. Original form I-765 (www.uscis.gov > FORMS > I-765). Completed and signed with a black ink pen. Ensure you use the most recent version of the form. Double check the edition date of the form on the day you plan to mail your application by visiting the USCIS website (www.uscis.gov/i-765 > Form Details > Edition Date)

5. OPTIONAL but highly recommended: To receive e-notifications by text message or email from USCIS when your I-765 is received please fill out form [G-1145](#) and clip it to the front of your package. (www.uscis.gov > FORMS > G-1145)

6. Copy of Form I-20 with OPT recommendation on page 2 (you keep the original). **PLEASE sign and date the bottom of the Form I-20 in the "Student Attestation" section before you photocopy it.**

7. Copies of all previous Forms I-20s for all schools attended. If you cannot find your old I-20s, use the missing I-20 template (sample attached on page 4 of this document).

8. Copy of current I-94: Print out of online admission record (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov) OR white card stapled to passport OR I-94 attached to I-797 approval notice (if you changed to F-1 from another visa category within the U.S.)

9. Copy of the most recent F-1 visa stamp, even if expired, and most recent entry stamp (the stamp given by immigration officers when you last entered the United States)

10. Copy of the passport ID page, showing expiration date (must be valid at least 6 months into the future at the time of the application).

11. (If applicable) Copies of any previous Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) issued to you.

Send all materials by certified mail with return receipt requested, or express mail, to the USCIS Lockbox

Please be advised that:

- USCIS will accept your application up to 90 days before and up to 60 days after your program end date, AND within 30 days of the DSO's signature date on page 1 of your OPT recommendation I-20. Your application will be rejected or denied if received outside of this filing window.
- ALL employment conducted while on OPT must be directly related to your field of study and suitable for your degree level.
- During post-completion OPT, you are allowed to have no more than 90 days of unemployment during the dates of your OPT authorization.
- Your application must be submitted within 30 calendar days of signature on the bottom of page 1 the OPT recommendation I-20.
- Remember to sign your I-20 and your Form I-765 in black ink!

Instructions for Mailing your OPT Application Package

We recommend that you mail your application via certified mail with a return receipt or tracking number, e.g. FedEx, UPS, USPS. For your convenience, we are able to offer a link to create a slightly discounted shipping label through eShipGlobal (see instructions below):

Optional: Creating a Shipping Label Through eShipGlobal
1. Register for an account with UEMS at https://study.eshipglobal.com/register/ if you do not already have an account.
2. Log into UEMS.
3. Click on the "OPT Application" image or the "Send Documents To USCIS" button.
4. Find your address already prepopulated in the "Sender Address.'' If you would like to change your address, simply enter your new address in the "Sender Address" fields.
5. Select appropriate USCIS Lockbox depending on where you live and shipping method (see chart below)
6. Select OPT Application, select the carrier, and enter your payment information.
7. Print your label, attach it to the shipping envelope and drop it off at the nearest shipping carrier location. If you don't have a shipping envelope, you can get one free of charge at the Office of International Student Affairs (outside of 023 North College).

Your application must be submitted within 30 calendar days of signature on the bottom of page 1 your OPT recommendation I-20.
- ✔ Mail your application to the address indicated below.
- ✔ Make a copy of the **entire application package,** including money order, and tracking number. Keep these documents for your records.

NEW Application Mailing Addresses:

U.S. Postal Service (USPS)	FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries
USCIS PO Box 805373 Chicago, IL 60680	USCIS Attn: I-765 C03 131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor Chicago, IL 60603-5517

Sample Cover Letter

[Your Full Name]
[SEVIS ID: Nxxxxxxxxxxxxx]
[I-94: xxxxxxxxxxxxx]

RE: Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (c)(3)(B), F-1 Student

[Date used on I-765; application date]

Dear USCIS Officer:

Post-Completion OPT Requested Dates [xx/xx/xxxx – xx/xx/xxxx]

This Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (c)(3)(B) application includes the following:

Section 1
- Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance
- Check or money order of $410 made out to U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- 2 passport-style photographs taken within the last 30 days with my name and SEVIS Number on the back of the photo in pencil or felt pen
- Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Section 2
- Copy of I-20 with OPT recommendation
- Copies of all previously issued I-20s

Section 3
- Copy of passport
- Copy of visa (remove this line if you are a Canadian citizen)
- Copy of most recent entry stamp
- Copy of most recent Form I-94

Section 4 (Use only if you have had a previous SEVIS number and/or missing any previous issued I-20.

Examples include: transferring your status at the same academic level; changing educational levels — e.g. Bachelor's to Master's; leave of absence)
- Statement explaining previous history. Be as detailed as possible.
- Documentation verifying statement above. Items include: EADs, I-20s with CPT, letters from previous school(s) verifying practical training authorizations.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

[Your Signature]

[Your Printed Full Name]

Missing I-20 Letter Template for OPT

[Date used on I-765; application date]

[Your Full Name]

[SEVIS ID: Nxxxxxxxxxxxxx]

[I-94: xxxxxxxxxxxxx]

Dear USCIS Officer:

I am applying for F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) in connection with my Wesleyan degree program, but I am missing some of my previously issued Form I-20s. I attempted to find the forms but was unable to locate copies for this application.

Below is a description of the missing I-20 forms:

I attended [insert name of school] for a [insert degree level or program type] from [insert start and end dates attended].

Only if applicable. This is not necessary if you did not have an CPT or OPT in the past or if you do have your CPT/OPT I-20s: I received [CPT or OPT] work authorization from [enter dates].

Sincerely,

[Your Signature]

[Your Printed Full Name]