

# STEM - OPT

## 24-month extension of OPT for majors in Science-Technology-Engineering-Math ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

There are several important rules and procedures that must be followed before and after applying for STEM OPT. Complying with these rules and procedures is necessary to maintain lawful F-1 immigration status. Your wet signature confirms that you have read and understand what you are required to do. This form will be kept in your file, and you should make a copy for your records.

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Applied for STEM OPT previously:      Yes                  No

**Please read the following and acknowledge with your signed (not typed) signature on page 2.**

1. **60 day filing deadline:** Your STEM OPT application (and all supporting documents) must be received by USCIS Service Center no later than 60 days from the date of your new STEM OPT Form I-20 is issued by the International Office
2. **Mailing address:** You are responsible for reporting to an International Student Advisor if you move from the address listed on your I-765 application. Report should be made within 10 days of moving. Failure to make such report may result in delays in receiving notifications and/or your EAD card. **(Official USCIS mail is not forwarded even if you put in a change of address at your local post office.)**
3. **STEM OPT start date:** You are allowed to continue working for up to 180 days beyond your original OPT end date while your STEM OPT application is pending with USCIS.
4. **Limits on future periods of STEM OPT:** If you have already obtained one STEM OPT extension, you will be eligible for a second STEM OPT extension at a higher degree level. You are only eligible for a total of **two** STEM OPTs.
5. **STEM OPT on previous STEM degree:** You may use a previously obtained US-earned STEM degree as a basis to apply for a STEM OPT extension, even if it did not serve as the basis for your standard 12-month post completion OPT.
6. **Employment related to STEM OPT:** The 24-month STEM OPT employment or internship opportunity must be directly related to your STEM OPT degree.
7. **Form I-983:** Form I-983 needs to be completed and signed by both you and your immediate supervisor.
8. **Self-Evaluations:** You must complete **two** self-evaluations during the course of your STEM OPT period: the first evaluation must be completed within 12 months of the STEM OPT start date and a second, concluding evaluation at the end of your STEM OPT. Evaluations must be signed by yourself and your immediate supervisor, and then submitted to an International Student Advisor. You will need to submit a self-evaluation at the conclusion of any employment, regardless of how long you have been with that employer. Your evaluation must include:
  - a. An assessment of your overall performance using the measures identified in the agreed training plan.
  - b. An evaluation of your success in applying and acquiring the new knowledge, skills and competencies that were previously identified in the plan.

- c. A discussion of your accomplishments, successful projects, overall contributions, etc., that occurred during the specified review period.
  - d. A statement addressing any modifications to the objectives and goals for projects or new areas for skill and competence development.
9. **Cannot be volunteer and self-employed:** A volunteer/unpaid position cannot support a STEM OPT extension. In addition, self-employment does not constitute employment in the context of a STEM OPT extension.
  10. **E-Verify and EIN numbers:** The employer you work for must be enrolled in the E-Verify program as evidenced by a valid E-Verify company or client company ID number and an employer identification number (EIN) used for tax purposes.
  11. **Submission of EAD:** You are required to e-mail or bring a copy of your STEM OPT Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to International Office as soon as you receive it from USCIS.
  12. **Reporting Requirements:** In order to maintain your immigration status while on post-completion STEM OPT, you must:
    - 1) Report with any change in telephone number or address to the International Office and SEVP Portal within 10 days of change.
    - 2) Report with any change in employment within **10 days** to the International Office by submitting/emailing a self-evaluation of the previous employer, a new I-983 Form of the new employer, and a new offer letter for the International Office to generate an updated I-20.
    - 3) Report to your assigned International Student Advisor **every 6 months** to confirm if your Mailing Address, Employer name and address, Status of current employment remain the same or has updated.
    - 4) Complete 2 self-evaluations during the course of 24-month STEM OPT period: the first one within 12 months of the STEM OPT start date; and a second, concluding evaluation at the end of his or the STEM OPT period. Evaluations must be signed by student and student's immediate supervisor, and then submitted to the International Office
  13. **Periods of unemployment during STEM OPT:** You may not accrue an aggregate of no more than 60 days of unemployment while on STEM OPT. You are required to keep thorough and accurate records of your employment and request an updated Form I-20 each time you change employer, and any period of unemployment. If you accrue more than 60 days of unemployment while on STEM OPT, your SEVIS record may be **terminated**.
  14. **60 "grace" period after STEM OPT:** You are permitted a 60-day grace period to remain in the U.S. following the end date on your STEM OPT/EAD card. You are not permitted to work during this period.

**Acknowledgement:** *My signature below indicates that I have received and read the information presented above.*

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Student Signature

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Date

**For questions regarding the STEM OPT application, please contact Fresno State, International Office**  
[international@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:international@mail.fresnostate.edu)

Reviewed March 2026

