

Pre-Completion OPT Checklist

As of April 12, 2021, students applying for Pre-Completion OPT employment authorization may electronically file their Form I-765 through <https://www.uscis.gov/>. USCIS guidance for filing online is available at <https://www.uscis.gov/file-online/tips-for-filing-forms-online>.

You may file your I-765 up to 90 days before being enrolled for one full academic year provided that the employment period will not start until after you have completed one full academic year. However, you must file within 30 days of DSO recommendation in SEVIS. **Please file as early as possible to allow for USCIS processing time.** Once your application is approved, USCIS will send your EAD card to you. **You may not begin working until the start date listed on your EAD card, AND you have received your EAD card.**

****Please complete the following steps to electronically file your Form I-765****

Step 1: Create an account with USCIS at https://myaccount.uscis.gov/users/sign_up. You can securely and directly send messages to and receive messages from USCIS, track your case, upload your documents, and receive status notifications through your USCIS account.

Step 2: Select “File a Form Online.”

Step 3: Complete all sections of the I-765. USCIS may deny your form if you leave a field blank or if you do not sign your form. Be sure to list your eligibility category as (c)(3)(A) for Pre-Completion OPT.

Step 4: Upload the following documents in either .jpg, .jpeg, .pdf, .TIF, or .TIFF format. Each file must be no more than 6MB in size. The passport photo must be 600 x 600 pixels. Make sure that each document you submit is clear and that all text is legible. Any document that is not written in English must also have an English translation. Do not encrypt or password protect your files. **Do not submit a document for which USCIS does not ask.**

- One 2" x 2" U.S. passport-style photograph of you taken within the last 6 months
- Copy of your valid passport (photocopy of bio page, renewal documentation if original has expired, and pages showing amendments such as name changes, corrections, etc.)
- Copy of your most recent Form I-94: current electronic version (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>) or front and back of paper card
- Letter from the Registrar confirming your major, current degree level, and graduation semester
- Copy of your official transcript(s) to show that you have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis for one full academic year at a college, university, conservatory, or seminary approved by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Student and Exchange Visitor Program for attendance by F-1 foreign students
- All previously used SEVIS numbers (if applicable)
- Copy of any previously issued EADs (front and back)
- Copy of your new I-20 with OPT recommendation
- Evidence of any previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which each was authorized

Step 5: Review and digitally sign your form. You can view, save, and print a PDF draft of your application.

Step 6: Pay your filing fee at <https://www.pay.gov>. You have the option to pay via ACH withdrawal (E-check) from a U.S. bank account or with a credit or debit card issued by a U.S. bank. **USCIS will consider your application "filed" once you pay your filing fee.**