



24-Month STEM OPT Extension– Application & Reporting Process

Students must contact ISSS for the 24-month OPT extension prior to the expiration of the first 12 months of “regular” OPT. The application must be received by USCIS prior to the expiration date of your OPT period in order to be timely filed. USCIS will not accept I-765 applications for STEM extensions any earlier than 90 days before the current (OPT) EAD expiration date.

STEP 1: PREPARE YOUR DOCUMENTS

ISSS Document Request Form: Please mark New I-20, Reason: STEM OPT

Completed Immigration Form I-765

Download the form by visiting the USCIS website at <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765> . Click on "Immigration Forms" and find Form I-765 by scrolling down the page. You should **TYPE** all information into the form and then print it out. Whenever you are unsure of an item/answer, please leave it blank. **Please use Black Ink to sign your application.**

Item #20: Specify the appropriate code for **OPT STEM Extension – (C)(3)(C)**

Item #21: Specify your Company’s E-Verify Number. Your current STEM OPT employer **MUST** be enrolled in E-verify in order to qualify as your STEM employer.

Completed Immigration Form I-983: Download the form by visiting the USCIS website at <https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/i983.pdf>. Complete with your employer (Pg. 1-4)

Completed Immigration Form G-1145

If you complete this form and include it with the application, you will receive updates directly from USCIS regarding the status of your application. Download the form at <http://www.uscis.gov>.

Two immigration photos taken within 30 days of application

Photos should be 2” x 2” (standard passport photos) and you should write your name and USCIS# or I-94# on the back of each photo using pencil or felt pen.

One set of photocopies of the following immigration documents:

1. Passport identification page. Passport page showing expiration date (if not included on identification page)
2. F-1 visa stamp OR Approval Notice of Change of Status to F-1
3. Form I-94: original I-94 card if you still have one OR a printout of your I-94 record at www.cbp.gov/i94 (NOTE: If you still have a paper Form I-94, you must copy both the front and back sides of the card.)
4. OPT EAD card (Front & Back)
5. Official Transcripts or Diploma

Money order or personal check in the amount of \$410.00

Make check payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security”.

STEM OPT Maintenance Fee in the amount of \$250.00 – Effective July 1st, 2018

One-time non-refundable compulsory maintenance fee required to process your STEM Extension OPT Application and maintain your F1 student record at FIU while you are in STEM OPT. Maintenance Fee can be paid online by visiting this website <https://globalaffairs.fiu.edu/product/test-product/>. **You must submit your confirmation email in order to process your STEM OPT application.**

STEP 2: SUBMIT YOUR REQUEST

You may submit your application by email or In-Person. Please note that **incomplete requests cannot be processed.**

- **Email:** Send request and attachments to iss@fiu.edu Subject line: STEM OPT Request. *In most cases your I-20 will be ready in 5-10 business days. We will notify you via email once it is ready.*
- **Schedule an Appointment:** Contact ISSS Office at MMC 305-348-2421 or BBC 305-919-5813 to schedule an appointment with an ISSS Advisor.

STEP 3: RECEIVE YOUR NEW I-20

ISSS will prepare a new I-20 for you. In most cases your I-20 will be ready in 5-10 business days. We will notify you via email once your I-20 is ready for pick up.

You may come to the office to pick up your new I-20 **OR** you may request **Eship Global**. In order to receive your new I-20 via courier, please visit <https://study.eshipglobal.com> to arrange shipping. You may need to create an account, pay shipping fees, and then our ISSS office will be notified to ship the requested document to you.

STEP 4: MAIL YOUR APPLICATION TO USCIS

Before sending your STEM Extension OPT application to USCIS, please follow the below instructions:

1. Arrange the following documents in this order (from top to bottom)
 - a. Form G-1145 (it is important that this form be on the top)
 - b. Form I-765 with money order/check and two photos stapled to it (*Make sure I-765, I-20 and Check are signed*)
 - c. Copy of new I-20 (*Sign and Date your new I-20*) and make a copy. Include a copy of the signed I-20 with your application. **DO NOT** send USCIS the original I-20.
 - d. Copy of passport (identification page AND expiration page if two separate pages)
 - e. Copy of F-1 visa
 - f. Copy of I-94 Arrival/Departure Record
NOTE: If you still have an I-94 card, include copies of both the front and back of the card; if you do not have a card because you have traveled since April 2013, go to www.cbp.gov/i94 to print your I-94 record – it must be included in the application.
 - g. Copy of current EAD (OPT card) and any previous EAD's, if applicable
 - h. Copy of diploma or transcript for most recent degree completed

NOTE: Please note that you do not need to send a copy of your I-983 form. It will stay in your file at the office of International Student and Scholar Services at FIU.
2. Place all documents in the above order into an appropriate envelope and seal the envelope.
3. We recommend mailing your application via US Postal Service (USPS) and using Certified Mail. Your U.S. mailing address in form I-765 determines where you should send your application (*Please see the below USCIS chart*). **Your application must arrive at USCIS within 30 days from when your DSO signed the STEM Recommendation I-20.**

USCIS Chart (Phoenix or Dallas Lockbox)

If you live in...	Mail your application to:	
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 Northern Mariana Islands.	<p>USCIS Phoenix Lockbox</p> <p>For U.S. Postal Service (USPS):</p> <p>USCIS P.O. Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036</p> <p>For FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:</p> <p>USCIS Attn: NFB AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034</p>	<p>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</p>
		<p>USCIS Dallas Lockbox</p> <p>For U.S. Postal Service (USPS):</p> <p>USCIS P.O. Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266</p> <p>For FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries</p> <p>USCIS Attn: NFB AOS 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067</p>

STEP 5: APPROVED STEM OPT APPLICATIONS

- **EAD CARD:** Per U.S. regulations 8 CFR 214.2(f)(11)(i)(C), “a student who has timely filed an application for a 24-month STEM OPT extension with USCIS may work for the STEM OPT employer while the STEM extension application is pending, for up to 180 days beyond the expiration of his or her prior post-completion OPT EAD”. If an application for a 24-month extension is **Approved**, USCIS will issue an EAD with a validity period that starts on the day after the expiration date stated on the 12-month OPT EAD. **You must provide ISSS with a copy of your STEM EAD Card to update your record.**
- **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**
 - **EVERY 6 MONTHS:** You are required to make a validation report to ISSS every six months starting from the date your 24-month OPT extension is approved. The report is due within 10 days of the required reporting date. Use the OPT validation form to submit your validation report. The validation report must contain the following information: Legal Name, Residential/ mailing address, Employer name, Employer address
 - **12 MONTHS:** Submit form I-983 (Pg.5) Evaluation of student progress*
 - **24 MONTHS:** Submit form I-983 (Pg.5) Final evaluation on student progress*

*When changing employers while in STEM OPT, Students must also submit Form I-983 (Pg.5) from former employer
- **INTERRUPTION OF EMPLOYMENT:** If you experience an interruption in employment, you must report it to ISSS.