OPT and STEM Applications:

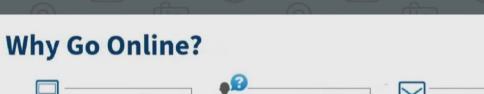
Online I-765 Walkthrough

Last Updated: February 2024

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Why file online?

The USCIS online form allows students to easily manage their OPT application throughout its life cycle. Through the online form, students can:

- Reduce fees, mailing costs, and delivery times
- Have fees deducted from credit cards or bank account immediately
- Access and respond to USCIS notices quickly
- Send secure messages to USCIS or request corrections



Change of Address

If you have previously filed an application with USCIS, we recommend that you update your address with USCIS before you begin your OPT application!

File the <u>E-COA</u> with USCIS before you file for your OPT



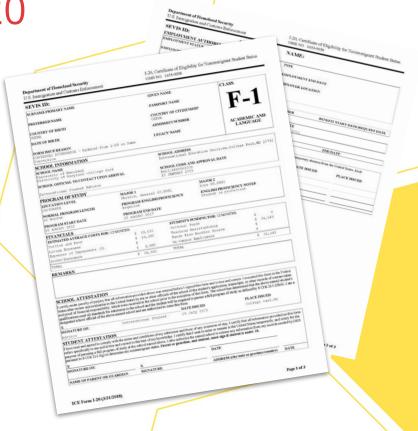
Getting Prepared: OPT I-20

Complete the correct iTerp **e-form** and wait for its approval. Fill out the following iTerp form based on your application type:

- Pre-completion OPT: Request (Pre-Completion)
- Post-Completion OPT: I-20 Request
- STEM **STEM OPT Request**

You will receive your new I-20 with the OPT or STEM recommendation on the second page.

Do not begin your online application until you have your I-20 with the OPT/STEM recommendation.





	Enforcement		OMB NO. 16	cate of Eligibility for N 653-0038		
SEVIS ID:						
SURNAME PRIMARY NAME			GIVEN NAMI	6	CLASS	
PREFERRED NAME			PASSPORT N	AME		1
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ENTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS FO	OR: 12 MONTHS		STUDENTS	FUNDING FOR: 12 MON	THES	
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Living Expenses				Lesistantship	6	34, 543
Expenses of Dependents (0)				Another Source	5	
Books/Insurance				Employment		
TOTAL		1 10,333	TOTAL			34,543
REMARKS						
SCHOOL ATTESTATION I certify under penalty of perjury that all States after review and evaluation in the and proof of florancial responsibility, wh	United States by me-	or other officials o	of the school of the sti	adent's application, transcript	ts, or other records	of courses taken
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ICE Form I-20 (3/31/2018)

OPT/STEM I-20

- Please note: Your online application materials must be submitted to USCIS within 30 days of the creation of the OPT I-20 and 60 days of the creation of the STEM I-20.
- Make sure to sign your I-20 in blue ink in the Student Attestation box!

Do this before scanning a copy for your online submission.

Department of Homela U.S. Immigration and Co			I-20, Certifica OMB NO. 165		nimmigrant Student Status
SEVIS ID:	(F	-1)	NAME:		
EMPLOYMENT AUT	HORIZATION				
EMPLOYMENT STATUS			TYPE		
EMPLOYMENT START D.	ATK		EMPLOYMEN	END DATE	
EMPLOYER NAME			EMPLOYER L	CATION	
COMMENTS					
CHANGE OF STATUS	SCAP-GAP EXTEN	SION			
REQUESTED VISA TYPE	REQUESTRATIT	IONSTATUS REC	TERT NUMBER	BENEFITS	TART DATE:ROQUEST DATE
EVENT HISTORY					
EVENT NAME			EVENT DATE	700	
Registration.			24 AD9807 3	112	
OTHER AUTHORIZA	TIONS				
AUTHORIZATION		STAI	T DATE	END	DATE
TRAVEL ENDORSEN	TENT				
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SCHOOL OFFICIAL	TITLE	SIGNATU	RE	DATE ISSUED	PLACE ISSUED
		x			
		x			
		x			3.53
		x		201	1500

ICE Form 1-20 (3/31/2018) Page 2 of 3



OPT I-20

For pre- and post-completion
 OPT only: Once you apply for
 OPT, the dates you requested
 as your start and end dates are
 written on your new I-20. SEVIS
 does not allow these dates to be
 changed/updated.

Getting Prepared: Organize your Files

We suggest making an electronic copy of all materials and save them as **separate files** in the **same folder** on your computer.

Please check:

- Are your files in the correct format?
- Are they clearly labeled so you can quickly see which file is which?
- Do the file names meet the standard (no special characters or foreign language characters)?
- Are the file sizes less than 6MB each?



Filling Out the Form—Formats



- Photos: JPG, JPEG, or PNG
- Documents: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- Foreign language documents must have English translation
- Maximum size: 6 MB per file



Filling Out the Form—Formats



The only characters allowed in document file name are:

- English letters
- Numbers
- Spaces
- Periods .
- relious.
- Hyphens -
- Underscores
- Parentheses ()
- ***Do NOT use special characters



Getting Prepared: Required Materials (all application types)

These are the documents you should save together on your computer:

- Passport style photograph
 - We recommend https://tsg.phototool.state.gov/photo to create your photos
- <u>Electronic I-94 record</u> (or hard copy I-94)
- Current passport (biographical page)
- Current F-1 visa (optional)
- New I-20 with OPT recommendation on 2nd page (make sure to sign it!)
- Copies of any previous I-20s with CPT or OPT recommendations only
 - o Include any copies with CPT or OPT from previous degrees, too!
 - Not required for STEM applications
- If applicable: Copies of any prior EAD card(s)

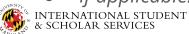
Documents you may need

Most applicants must upload:

- A copy of your Form I-94, Nonimmigrant Arrival-Departure Record (front and back), a printout of your electronic Form I-94 from www.cbp.gov/i94, passport, or other travel document.
- A copy of your last EAD (front and back). If you were not previously issued an EAD, you must submit a copy of a government-issued identity document (such as a passport) showing your picture, name, and date of birth; a birth certificate with photo ID; a visa issued by a foreign consulate; or a national ID document with photo and/or fingerprint. The identity document photocopy must clearly show your facial features and contain your biographical information.
- · A color passport-style photograph of yourself taken recently.

We will automatically inform you which documents and additional evidence you may need to provide as you fill out your application. These recommendations for additional information will be based on the information you provide in the application, such as your personal history and circumstances.

Any document containing foreign language submitted to USCIS must be accompanied by a full English language translation that the translator has certified as complete and accurate, and by the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate from the foreign language into English.



Getting Prepared: Required Materials (**Pre-completion only**)

For **Pre-completion OPT applications only:**

- Proof of enrollment
 - Request from <u>TESTUDO</u> using the Transcript Ordering link

For full-time pre-completion OPT during the semester only:

 Copy of academic advisor's letter certifying that only the thesis/dissertation remains





The following interactive web services are available 24 hours

Deactivate ID Card

Graduation Application & Diploma Status

Diploma Remake Request

Institute of Applied Agriculture Transcripts

Schedule of Classes

Transcript Ordering

Grades



Getting Prepared: Required Materials (**STEM Extension only**)

For **STEM Extension applications only**:

- Copy of your diploma or transcript from your STEM degree
- Evidence that your school is currently accredited by U.S. Department of Education
 - If you are applying based on a University of Maryland degree, <u>download and save</u> this accreditation file or use https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/institution-profile/120218
 - If you are applying based on a degree from another school, visit <u>https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home</u> to search for your school.



Getting prepared: Payment methods

Before you begin your online application, think about how you will pay for the application and have that information available. You can pay by:

- Credit card or debit card
- ACH from checking or savings account (automatic withdrawal from a bank account)
 - Have bank routing number and account number available

Important!

To pay by credit, debit or ACH withdrawal from a bank account, the credit/debit card or bank account needs to be associated with a **US** address. It does not need to be your own account or credit card.



- Once you start the online form, it will be saved for 30 days, or from the last time you worked on the form.
 - Remember to file your application within 30 days of the OPT I-20 issuance and within 60 days of the STEM I-20 issuance. Contact an ISSS advisor before filing online if you have exceeded these dates.
- This is a personal application. You are solely responsible for the content of your I-765 application, accuracy of information, and submission of all required materials.

Final Reminders Before You File Online



Create or Sign into USCIS account

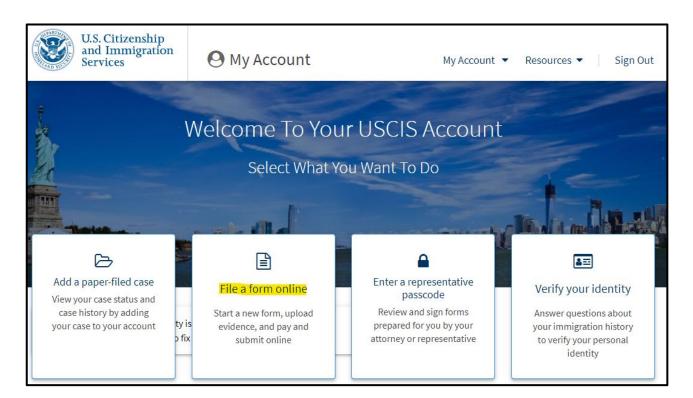
Visit https://myaccount.uscis.gov/ to create a new account or sign in to an existing account.

Helpful tip! The email address you use for this account does not need to be the same email address you have on TESTUDO and SEVIS. Use an email address that you will continue to check after your graduation from UMD.



Start I-765 Application

Once you are logged in, in the My Account section, select **File a form online**.



Start I-765 Application

Select Application for Employment Authorization (I-765) from the list of application types.

File a Form

Select the form you want to file online. Once you start, we will automatically save your information for 30 days, or from the last time you worked on the form.

Fee waiver: If you are requesting a fee waiver, you cannot file online. You must file a paper version of both the Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver and the form for the specific benefit you are requesting. You can review the fee waiver guidance at www.uscis.gov/feewaiver.

Select the form you want to file online.

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Use this form to request employment authorization and an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) if your immigration status allows you to work in the United States.



- (a)(12) Temporary Protected Status (You are submitting an initial Form I-821 or you have an approved Form I-821);
- (c)(3)(A) F-1 student, pre-completion OPT;
- (c)(3)(B) F-1 student, post-completion OPT;
- (c)(3)(C) F-1 student, 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics);
- (c)(8) Applicants for Asylum under the ABC Settlement Agreement;
- (c)(8) Application for Employment Authorization Based on Pending Form I-589, Application for Asylum or for Withholding of Removal;
- (c)(11) Parole:
- (c)(19) Temporary Protected Status (You have a pending Form I-821); or
- (c)(33) Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) (You must have a pending or approved Form I-821D in order to file Form I-765).

All other applicants must submit a paper Form 1-765.

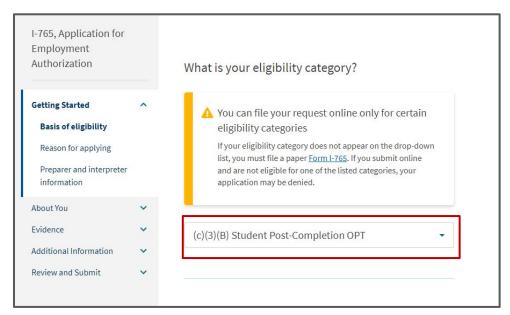
Concurrent filing available

You can file Form I-907, Request for Premium Processing Service, if you are filing under one of the eligible categories.

If you request premium processing, we will present Form I-907 for you to complete after you sign Form I-765. This will allow you to pay for and submit both forms at the same time.



Getting Started: Basis of Eligibility



Select your Eligibility Category from the dropdown menu:

- (c)(3)(A): Pre-completion OPT
- (c)(3)(B): Post completion OPT
- (c)(3)(C): STEM Extension OPT

Please note: other categories are not eligible to file online.

Double-check before you continue: Did you select the correct eligibility category for your application?

Getting Started: Premium Processing

As of March 6, 2023, F-1 students may now submit applications for premium processing of their OPT/STEM applications.

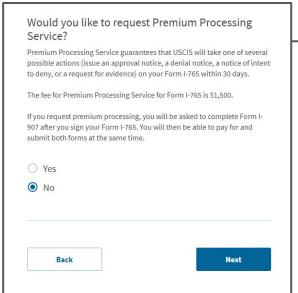
- \$1,500 fee (through February 25, 2024)
- \$1,685 fee (starting February 26, 2024)
- Form I-907
- USCIS will process in 30 calendar days or less
- Beginning April 3, 2023 applications for premium processing can be filed concurrently with I-765
- Make sure to check <u>USCIS Processing Times</u> first!

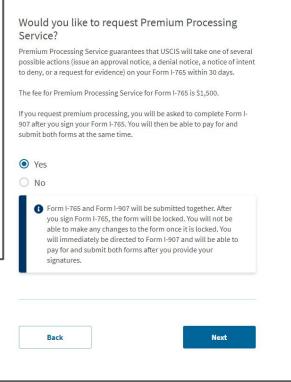
For more information, see our <u>FAQs on premium processing</u>. Schedule an <u>appointment with an advisor</u> if you are interested in filing with premium processing.



Getting Started: Premium Processing

- Select "Yes" or "No"
- If you select Yes, you will be directed to Form I-907 (application for Premium Processing) directly after you sign Form I-765

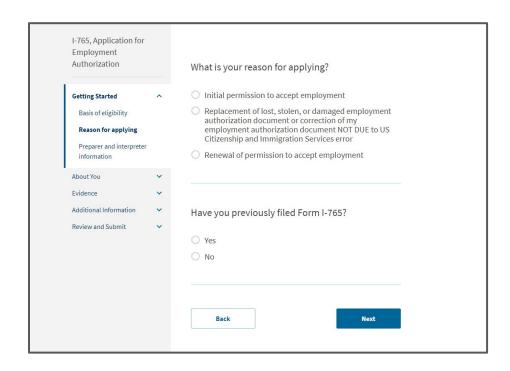




Getting Started: Reason for Applying

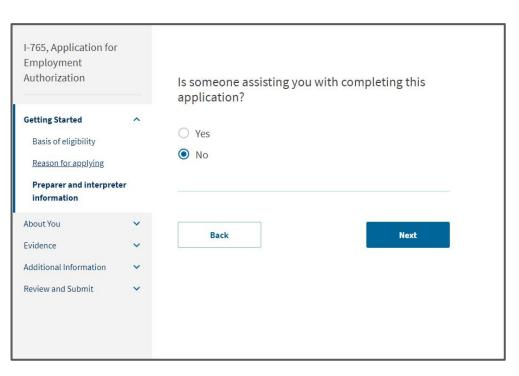
Select:

- 'Initial permission...' if it is your first time applying for OPT on your current degree level
- 'Renewal of permission' if you have had OPT previously on your current degree level



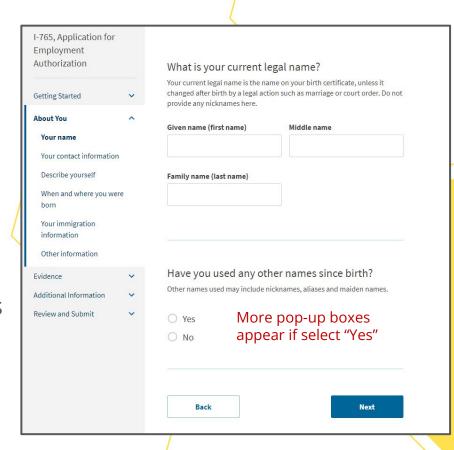
Getting Started: Preparer and Interpreter Information

 Mark 'No' for the question on whether someone is assisting you



About You: Your Name

- Please enter your legal name. If your name does not fit in the boxes allotted, enter it on the 'Additional Information' page at the end
- If you do not have a first, middle, or last name, please leave the text box blank
- Proceed to the demographic questions





About You: Your Contact Information

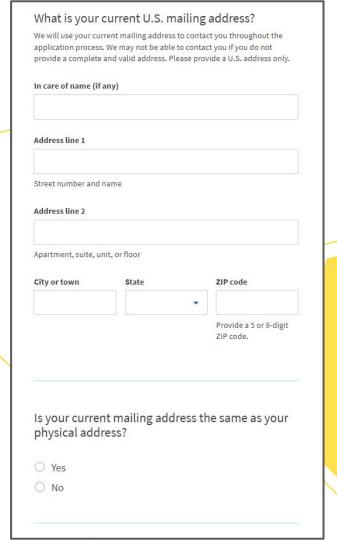
- Please enter your phone number and email address
- Use an email address that you will not lose access to after you graduate

Daytime	telephone number	
Provide a	10-digit phone number.	
Mobile to	elephone number (if any)	
This	is the same as my daytime telephone number.	
Provide a	10-digit phone number.	
Email ad	dress	
Example	user@domain.com	



About You: Your Contact Information

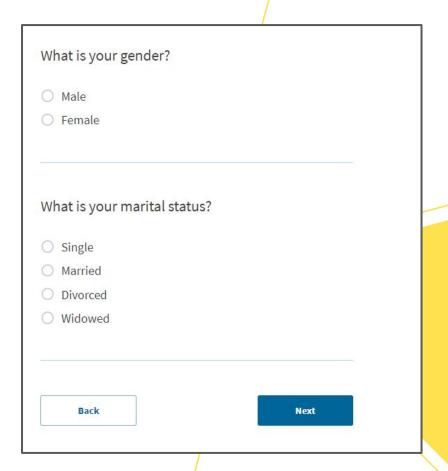
- Please enter your U.S. mailing address. This address is where your EAD will be sent.
 If you might move in the next 1-5 months, please use a friend's or family member's address.
- If your mailing address is not the same as your address of residence in the U.S., mark 'No' and enter your U.S. address of residence. Your EAD card will NOT be sent to this address





About You: Describe Yourself

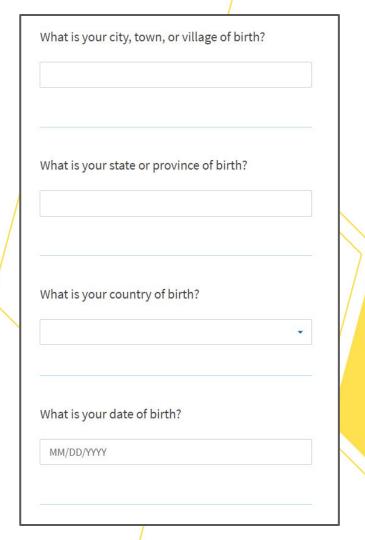
Select your gender and marital status





About You: When and Where you were born

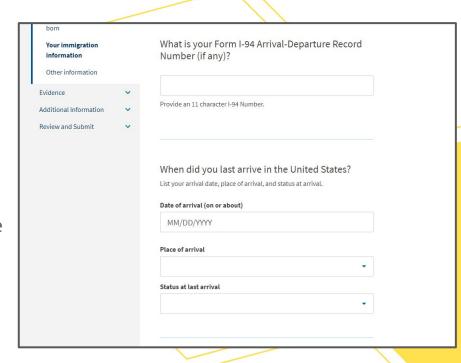
- Enter your city, town, or village of birth
- State or province of birth
- Country of birth
- Date of birth
 - Month/Day/Year
 - o Ex: December 31, 1999
 - 0 12/31/1999





About You: Your Immigration Information

- Select your country of citizenship or nationality
- Please enter your I-94 information
 - Electronic records can be found here: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov
 - You can find the last 'place of arrival' by selecting 'View Complete Travel History'
 - If you have a paper card, please record the requested information
- You will be uploading your I-94 later!
 Please have your I-94 record downloaded/scanned and ready to upload.





About You: Immigration Information (Continued)

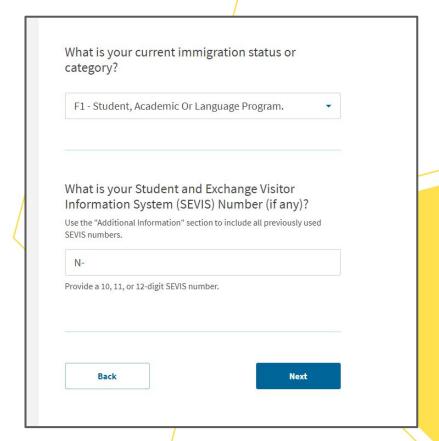
- Enter passport number of your
 most recently issued passport
- If you enter a passport number, leave the travel document number blank
- Expiration date of passport
- Country that issued your passport

Wł	nat is your travel document number (if any)?	
	nat is the expiration date of your passport or ovel document?	
tra		



About You: Immigration Information (Continued)

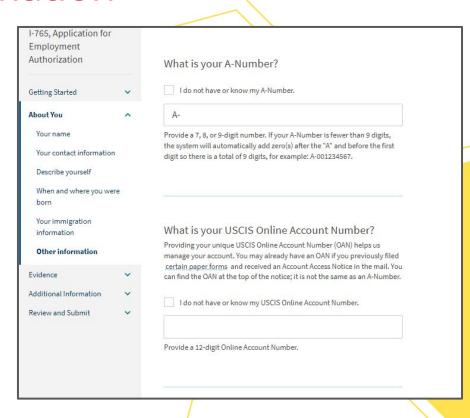
- For current immigration status or category, select "F1 - Student, Academic, or Language Program"
- Enter your SEVIS Number (at the top of your I-20)
- If you have had different SEVIS
 numbers in the past, add them in
 the "Additional Information"
 section at the end of the
 application





About You: Other Information

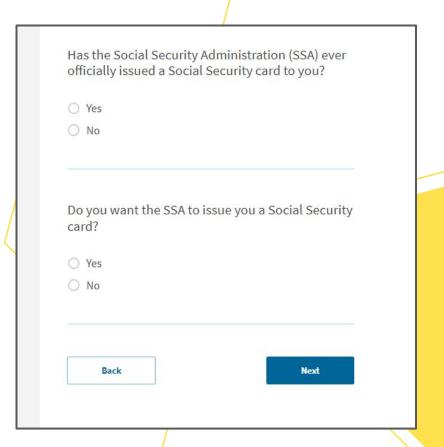
- If you have had an EAD card in the past, enter your A-Number
 - The A number can be found on prior EAD cards listed as the USCIS#.
 - If this is your first time applying for OPT, check "I do not have or know my A-Number"
- If you have filed an application with USCIS before, enter your USCIS Online Account Number.
 - The USCIS Online Account number can be found on your user profile page of USCIS' portal.
 - If this is your first time filing with USCIS, check "I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number"





About You: Other Information (Continued)

- If you have an SSN number please mark 'yes' and enter it here
 - An SSN is good for life; you do not need to request another
- If you do not have an SSN number please mark 'no' and answer the following question as to whether you would like a Social Security card to be issued to you
 - Complete the requested information





Evidence: 2x2 Photo of You

- Upload a passport style photo of yourself here
- We recommend you use this free tool to check your photos: https://tsg.phototool.state.gov/photo
- Pay attention to file size and titles



2 X 2 Photo Of You

Upload a recent color photograph of yourself that measures 2 inches by 2 inches, with your face measuring 1 inch to 13/8 inch from your chin to the top of your head. Your eyes should be between 11/8 inch and 13/8 inch from the bottom of the photo.

Make sure your whole face is visible, you are facing the camera directly, and the background is white or off-white. Your head must be bare, unless contrary to your religious beliefs.

If you need help understanding the photo requirements or want to resize, rotate, or crop your photo, you can use the Department of State's <u>photo composition tools</u>. Please note that we cannot approve your application without your photo.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, or PNG
- · No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- · Upload no more than one document at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 12MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload



Evidence: Form I-94 or Passport

- Upload your most recent I-94 record and most recent passport here
- If you have an electronic copy:
 - You only need to include the main page of your I-94 record
- If you have a paper card:
 - You must scan and upload both sides of the card



Form I-94, Arrival And Departure Record Or Passport

Upload a copy of one of the following:

- · Your Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record (front and back);
- A Property of the second of th
- · A printout of your electronic Form I-94; or
- · Your passport or other travel document.

If you were admitted to the United States by CBP at an airport or seaport after April 30, 2013, CBP may have issued you an electronic Form I-94 instead of a paper Form I-94. You may visit the <u>CBP website</u> to obtain a paper version of an electronic Form I-94. CBP does not charge a fee for this service. Some travelers admitted to the United States at a land border, airport, or seaport, after April 30, 2013, with a passport or travel document, who were issued a paper Form I-94 by CBP, may also be able to obtain a replacement Form I-94 from the CBP website without charge.

If your Form I-94 cannot be obtained from the CBP website, it may be obtained by filing Form I-102. Application for Replacement/Initial Nonimmigrant Arrival-Departure Record, with USCIS. USCIS does charge a fee for this service.

If you do not have and cannot get a required document, you must demonstrate this and provide secondary evidence. If secondary evidence does not exist or is unavailable, you must demonstrate both the unavailability of the required document and the relevant secondary evidence and submit two or more sworn affidavits by people not named on this application who have direct knowledge of the event and circumstances.

Learn more about Primary and Secondary evidences.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- · No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- · Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 12MB per file

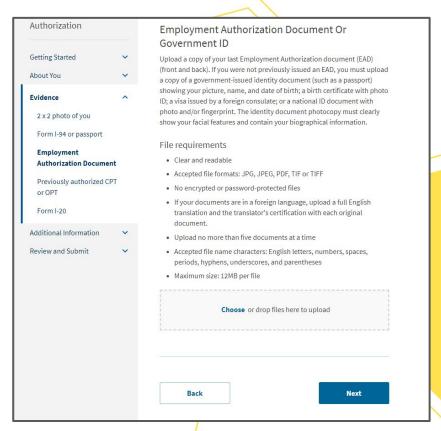
Choose or drop files here to upload



Evidence: Employment Authorization Document

 If you have previously had OPT, please upload a copy of your EAD card

 If you have not previously had an EAD card, upload a copy of a government-issued identity document such as your Passport or F-1 visa





Evidence: Previously Authorized CPT or OPT

Note: this screen is available on pre- and post-completion OPT applications only. STEM applicants are not required to upload copies of past CPT or OPT I-20s.

- Upload a copy of any I-20s you had previously with CPT or OPT.
 If you do not have prior i20s with CPT/OPT you may skip this step!
 - Go past the warning message
- This does NOT include your new OPT/STEM I-20 - you will upload that in the next step.

Post-Completion CPT Or OPT

Upload evidence of any previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.

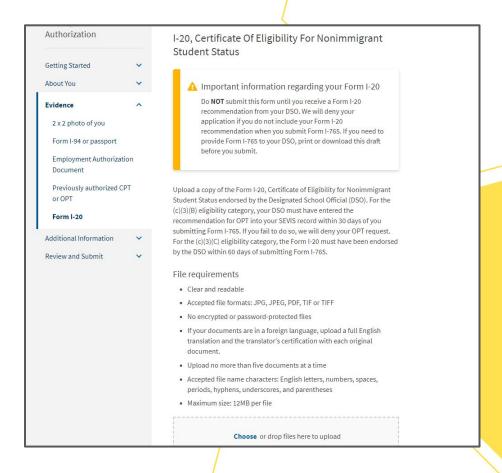
File requirements

- · Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file



Evidence: Form I-20

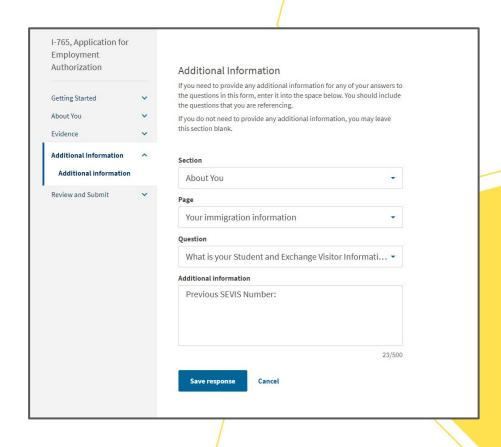
- Please upload your I-20 with the new OPT/STEM recommendation (make sure you signed it!)
 - You must upload your I-20 with the OPT recommendation from ISSS within 30 days of receiving it
- Pay attention to file size and title





Additional Information

- Use this section to add any explanations or additional information to previous sections
 - Example: Name Issues, I-20 Issues
 Explanations
- If you have had an alternate SEVIS number in the past, please provide it here.
 - Choose Section: About You
 - Page: Your Immigration Information
 - Question: What is your SEVIS #?
 - Additional Info: Put your previous SEVIS numbers here!





Evidence: Proof of Enrollment

Pre-Completion Only

- For Pre-Completion only:
 - Use the Proof of Enrollment
 Section to upload your transcript.
 - Reminder: Request this document from <u>TESTUDO</u> using the **Transcript Ordering** link
 - If you are requesting full-time pre-completion OPT during the semester, you may also upload the advisor's letter here.

Proof Of Enrollment

Upload evidence of having 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 (ICE) Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) for attendance by F-1 foreign students.

File requirements

- · Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- · No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file



Evidence: College Degree STEM Extension Only

- For **STEM Extension** only:
 - Use the College Degree section to upload your transcript or copy of your diploma from the STEM-eligible degree.

College Degree

Upload evidence the degree that is the basis for the STEM OPT extension is in one of the degree programs currently listed on the <u>STEM Designated Degree Program List</u> or a copy of your prior STEM degree.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- · No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file



Evidence: Institution Accreditation

STEM Extension Only

• For **STEM Extension** only:

 Use the Institution Accreditation section to upload evidence that the school you earned your
 STEM-eligible degree is accredited.

• Reminder:

- o If you are applying based on a University of Maryland degree, download and save this accreditation file or use https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/institution-profile/12
 0218
- If you are applying based on a degree from another school, visit https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home to search for your school.

Institution Accreditation

Upload evidence that the institution that granted your STEM degree is currently accredited by the U.S. Department of Education and certified by the Student Exchange and Visitor Program (SEVP), if this STEM OPT extension is based on a previously earned STEM degree.

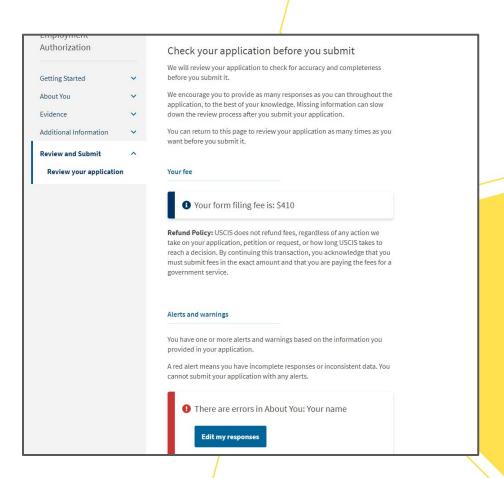
File requirements

- Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- · No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- · Maximum size: 6MB per file



Review and Submit

- Please review your application before submitting
 - You cannot make further changes once you submit your application!
- If Alerts/Warnings are present, you must address them before moving forward with your application





Filling Out the Form—Paying the Fee



- After you agree to the applicant statement, you will be directed to <u>pay.gov</u>, a secure government portal
- · Pay by ACH withdrawal, or debit or credit card



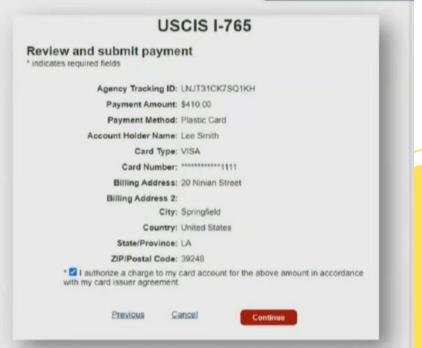
Remember to use an account associated with a US address!



Filling Out the Form—Paying the Fee



- Enter payment information
- Note the form type and agency tracking ID at the top
- When you hit "Continue" to pay the fee, your form will be submitted



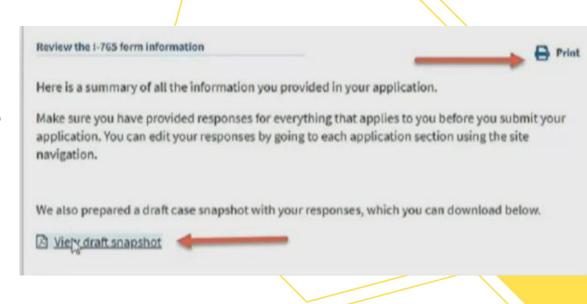


Warning - this is the final step before submitting! You cannot modify your application after hitting continue.



Download and Save Your Application

Print or view the draft snapshot and **save a copy for your records.** We would suggest saving it in the same folder with the files you uploaded.

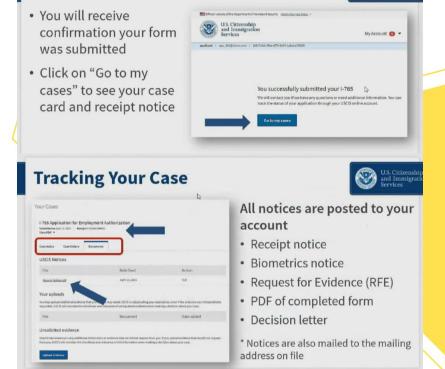




View/Save Your Receipt Notice

You can immediately view your receipt notice and any future documentation about your case.

Note: All documentation will be mailed to the address you provided; however, you can log in to this portal to view and download any notices in advance.



Filling Out the Form—After You Submit



Questions?

If you have questions about your OPT application or materials, please contact ISSS.

It is recommended that you contact ISSS **before** uploading additional documentation to your USCIS application or making any correction requests.

We are here to support you during the application and while you are on OPT/STEM. Good luck with your OPT/STEM application!

How to contact us:

Schedule an appointment
Chat with ISSS
E-mail an ISSS advisor