SIU Southern Illinois University

CARBONDALE

24 MONTH STEM OPT EXTENSION APPLICATION PACKET

Package includes:

- 24 Month OPT Extension Guidelines & Responsibilities
- Steps to Apply
  - Includes fillable links to forms I-765, I-983, and G-1145
- 24 Month OPT Extension Form

24 Month OPT Extension Guidelines & Responsibilities:

- ## "STEM" Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
  Check this list to make sure your major qualifies.

- ## OPT STEM Extension Period
  The employment authorization period for the STEM OPT extension begins the day after the expiration of the initial OPT employment authorization and ends 24 months later. Students will be allowed to apply for a STEM OPT extension twice in their F-1 academic career (speak to your DSO to determine eligibility). During the STEM OPT extension period, it is based upon a paid position of at least twenty (20) hours per week or more. No unpaid or volunteer positions are allowed. Students must work with an E-verified employer to remain eligible for the STEM OPT extension.

- ## Guidelines:
  1. You can submit your STEM Extension paper work to the Center for International Education (CIE) as early as 90 days prior to the end of your current OPT expiration date noted on your EAD. The application materials should be scanned and sent to ipsupdates@siu.edu at least three (3) weeks prior to your EAD expiration.
  2. CIE will evaluate your application and recommend you for the STEM OPT Extension. This recommendation will come in the form of a new I-20. You must have the I-20 recommendation to apply. You are then responsible for sending your completed application to USCIS withn 60 days from the date that your new STEM I-20 was created, and prior to the expiration on your EAD card.

- ## Student Responsibilities:
  1. Any change must be reported to the CIE office within 10 days. This includes:
     - Your current home address, phone number(s) and email address(es) AND
     - Your employer's company name, address, phone number, AND
     - Your supervisor's name, as well as, your employment start date for your current employer.
     - You must report termination of your employment to CIE within 10 days of the date when you are no longer employed.
       - It is also required to submit an updated Form I-983 (link included on next page) with the final evaluation portion completed, every time you end employment, to the CIE office.
     - You are required to report any new employment, with new employer information to CIE within 10 days of the change.
       - It is also required to submit a new Form I-983 (link included on next page) to the CIE office.
     - You are required to report any change in visa status to the CIE office.
  2. While you are on your STEM OPT Extension, you must validate the following information with the CIE every six months:
     - Your current home address, phone number(s) and email address(es) AND
     - Your employer's company name, address, phone number, AND
     - Your supervisor's name, as well as, your employment start date for your current employer.
  3. You are required to complete first "Evaluation of Student Progress" (page 5 of the Form I-983) within 10 days of your 12 month anniversary of the listed STEM OPT start date and submit it to the CIE office. The "Final Evaluation of Student Progress" (page 5 of the Form I-983) must be submitted within 10 days of the 24 month mark of your STEM OPT start date to the CIE office.
  4. You may not accrue a total of more than 150 days of unemployment during the 36 month period of OPT and the STEM extension combined (you can be unemployed a maximum of 90 days during your initial OPT).

Steps to Apply

1. Gather Required Documents for OPT Extension:

- Completed G-1145 form - https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf (Click the link to type into fillable form)
- Completed I-765 form - https://cie.siu.edu/_common/documents/Current-CIE-Docs/I-765.24.mo.STEM.pdf (Click the link to type into fillable form)
    o Your employer must enter the information from E-Verify.
- Completed I-983 form - https://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2016/i983.pdf (Click the link access form) to be completed by both you and your current employer. Guidance for completing this form is available at the following link.
- STEM OPT Extension Employment Information Form (Included in this Packet)
- Copy of current EAD (And any other previously obtained EADs)– front & back
- Copy of current I-94 card (From your most recent entry into the U.S.)
- Copy of current Passport – biographic information page including expiration date
- Copy of current Visa—expired or unexpired, visa you used the last time you entered the U.S.
- Copy of current I-20
- Proof of STEM degree in the form of an official transcript, unofficial transcript or diploma. This degree can either be:
  - A STEM degree on which your original OPT application was based

  OR

  - A STEM degree that you earned within the last 10 years and from which you have not yet benefited from a STEM Extension. If you are using a previous degree please complete the form available at the following link: (https://cie.siu.edu/_common/documents/current-cie-docs/previous-stem-degree-information.pdf)
- Processing fee of $410.00. Money Order or personal check MUST be made payable to (Do not abbreviate): **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** (see page 4 for instructions)
- 2 **NEW** Passport Photographs taken within the last 30 days (see page 4 for instructions)

Optional/Recommended Documents:
- Pay stubs- **All** paystubs from for all paid employers (For Unpaid Work, submit a Log of Hours)
- Employer Letters (from **all** former and current employers) - Letters should include the following content:
    a. Start/End Dates
    b. Your Job Title/Position
    c. Location
    d. Pay Rate
    e. Detailed description of Job Duties and how they relate to your academic field of study
    f. Number of Hours Worked per Week

Please be advised, that unpaid internships and volunteer work will not be accepted by the Department of Homeland Security as approved employment for STEM OPT.

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2. Submit All Required Documents to the Center for International Education (CIE):

- After gathering the above required documents you must submit all forms/requirements to the CIE office for review and recommendation. At this time, this should be done via email. Please email all documents to ipsupdates@siu.edu. An advisor will follow-up with you via email.

- Once CIE reviews and recommends you for the STEM OPT Extension, you will make arrangements to have the application returned to you. The CIE advisor will email you shipping instructions via eshipGlobal (UEMS). You will need to pay for this shipment or make other arrangements. At that time, you will have further instructions like signing documents and keeping your new original I-20, etc.

3. Mail your application to USCIS:

- After receiving all documents from the CIE office, you will need to sign the I-20 copy in the packet, and then send your application for OPT to the USCIS Lockbox. The application <u>must</u> reach the USCIS office within <u>60 days</u> of the time that the I-20 is created, and prior to your initial post-completion OPT end date. Please remember to send your application through a trackable service. This is important so that you have proof of when it was received by USCIS.

RECOMMENDED SHIPPING METHOD

If you are sending your application through a courier service (such as **UPS or FedEx**) you must send it to the following address:

USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

If you are sending your application via the U.S Postal Service (**Certified, Express Mail**) you must send it to the following address:
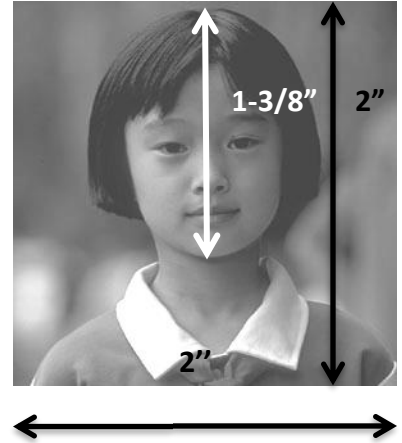
USCIS
PO Box 805373
Chicago, IL 60680

Additional Resources

Photograph Requirements:

Two (2) color full frontal face/passport photos with a white background.

Both photos must be of just you, and both photos must be identical. They should NOT be mounted or retouched, and they must be printed on thin-glossy paper. Your head should be bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order to which you belong. Eyeglasses are no longer permissible in passport style photos. Your photos should not be larger than 2 x 2 inches, with the distance from the top of your hair to just below your chin about 1-3/8 inches, lightly print your name, with a pencil, and your 11 digit admission number from your I-94 card on the back of each photo.

For more information on photo standards visit the Department of State website at:
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/requirements/photos.html

*Be sure your photo is exactly the size/dimensions stated above or USCIS will not accept it!

Your completed check should looks like this:

If this area is not already pre-printed with your information, please print your full name here.

DO NOT sign or write anything on the **BACK** of the check

STEM Extension Employment Information Form

STUDENT INFORMATION

SIUC STUDENT ID: _____ SEVIS ID: _____

H1b Receipt Number (if applicable):_____

Last Name:_____ First Name:_____

Current Address Line 1:_____

Current Address Line 2:_____

City: _____ State:_____ Zip Code:_____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Degree Earned: _____ Graduation Date: _____

EMPLOYER INFORMATION

Employer Name: _____

Employer's E-Verify ID: _____ EIN# (Employer Idenitification Number):* _____

Address Line 1: _____

Address Line 2: _____

City: _____ State:_____ Zip Code:_____

Job Title/Position: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____

Supervisor's Email Address: _____

Supervisor's Phone Number: _____Start date with this employer: _____

Print Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____

*Students are now REQUIRED to provide U.S Immigration with their company's Federal Employer Identification Number