**Center for Global Education & Field Study**
International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS)
14 East Cache La Poudre Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
Tel: (719) 389-6024
Email: isss@coloradocollege.edu

# COLORADO COLLEGE

## 24-Month STEM OPT Application & Mailing Instructions

**A. Verify the information on your STEM OPT I-20.** *If any of the following is incorrect, obtain a corrected I-20 before mailing.*

- *Name.* The name on your I-20 should match the name in your passport.
- *Major and Degree.* The major and degree listed on page one of your I-20 should match your SEVIS degree name.
- *Length of OPT Extension Period.* The OPT STEM Extension start date on page 2 of your I-20 should reflect the day after your initial period of OPT ends. The end date should be 24 months later.

**B. Assemble your STEM OPT application.** *Collect the documents listed and put them in the order listed. You can request the OIP review your application before sending. It is recommended that you make a copy of your complete application.*

- *Form G-1145* (Optional). Authorizes USCIS to send you application processing updates via email/text. If this is desired, paper clip completed form on top of application packet.
- *Original Form I-765.*
- *2 U.S. size passport photos. No Glasses Allowed.* Lightly write name and I-94 number on back of each photo in pencil. Attach photos to top, left corner of Form I-765 with paper clip.
- *$410 check or money order.* Make payable to "Department of Homeland Security" and print I-94 number at top of check.
  May also use Form G-1450, Authorization for Credit Card Transactions.
- *Copy of OPT Extension I-20.* Pages 1 and 2. I-20 must be less than 60 days old and signed by you and an ISSS advisor.
- *Copy of passport ID page.* Showing picture and expiration date.
- *Copy of your current I-94 admission record.* Can be obtained at www.cbp.gov/i94.
- *Copy of your current EAD card* (front & back).
- *Copy of your official diploma indicating the degree level and STEM field of study* or Colorado College official or unofficial transcript showing degree conferred.

**C. Mail your application.** *USCIS must <u>receive</u> your application before the expiration of the current period of OPT, or within 60 days of the I-20 issuance date, whichever comes first.*

| *If the address you put on the I-765 is in*: AL, AR, CT, DE, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MS, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, PA, PR, RI, SC, OK, TN, TX, VT, VA, WV | | *If the address you put on the I-765 is in*: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, MT, NE, NV, ND, OH, OR, SD, UT, WA, WI, WY | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *U.S. Postal Service* | *Express mail or courier* | *U.S. Postal Service* | *Express mail or courier* |
| USCIS P.O. Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266 | USCIS Attn: AOS 2501 S. State Hwy 121 Bus, Ste 400 Lewisville, TX 75067 | USCIS P.O. Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036 | USCIS Attn: AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034 |

Keep your receipt notice: USCIS will mail a receipt notice to the address on the I-765, usually 2-3 weeks after receiving the application. You can use the receipt number to speak with USCIS about your application or to get status updates.

## D. Maintain your status while on STEM OPT.

*Maintain appropriate STEM OPT employment.* The Department of Homeland Security instructions regarding acceptable OPT employment may be found at https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/stem-opt

- Employment must be for at least 20 hours a week
- All employment must be compensated. You may not volunteer for an employer during the STEM OPT extension.
- The employment must be directly related to the STEM degree that the work authorization was based upon. You and the employer make the determination of whether it is directly related.
- All employment must be with E-Verified employer.
- The employment must include a legitimate employer, employee relationship.
- Maintain the training plan as indicated by Form I-983.
- You may change employers as long as each job is directly related to the STEM degree that the work authorization was based upon. Please note that any new employment will require a new Form I-983 Training Plan and 24-Month Reporting Form.
- You are allowed to work for multiple employers while on a period of STEM OPT, however each employment must meet all of the student and employer requirements outlined above.

*Stay within unemployment limits*
- F-1 alumni on post-completion OPT are allowed a maximum period of 90 days of unemployment.
- Students on the 24-month STEM OPT extension are allowed an additional 60 days of unemployment for a maximum period of 150 days of unemployment.
- Each day (including weekends) during the period when STEM OPT authorization begins and ends that you do not have qualifying employment counts as a day of unemployment.
- STEM OPT authorization begins on the employment start date shown on your EAD.

*Submit the 6-Month Validation & 12-Month Evaluations to OIP*
- Updates must be reported within 10 days of the start of your STEM OPT work authorization and within 10 days of any subsequent change.
- While on STEM Extension, you must validate your employment every 6 months by submitting the STEM OPT reporting form.
- You are required to update Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students, 12 months from your STEM EAD start date and include a progress report on accomplishments and skills or knowledge obtained. Employers must sign the 12 month evaluation as well.
- If you add or change employers you must submit a new Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students to the ISSO.
- You and your employer must report material changes to or deviations from the student's formal training plan on Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT outlined above.
- You and your employer must complete and submit to OIP a concluding 24 month evaluation on Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students.
- If you neglect to submit Form I-983, Training Plan for STEM OPT Students to ISSS within 10 days of the conclusion of the reporting period you will be in violation of your F-1 status.

*Employer's Reporting Requirements*
If your employment is terminated for any reason, your employer is required to notify ISSS at Colorado College within 5 days. You must inform your employer of the reporting requirements at the end of your employment. As them to email ISSS at isss@coloradocollege.edu with the following text in the subject line of the email: OPT Employment Termination. Your name, your SEVIS ID number and the start and end date of the STEM employment must be included in the email message.