What is Optional Practical Training?

Optional Practical Training, also known as OPT, is defined as temporary employment for practical training directly related to the students major area of study.

- Up to 12 months of full-time work (or part time while still in school)
- Available before (Pre-Completion) or after graduation (Post-completion)
- Requires USCIS approval

OPT Types

There are three kinds of OPT: pre-completion OPT, post-completion OPT, and extensions of post-completion OPT for STEM students.

Pre-Completion OPT	This type of OPT can begin while attending your program of study. Time utilized during this OPT will be deducted from your TOTAL 12 month OPT eligibility. Requires DSO recommendation and USCIS approval.
Post-Completion OPT	This type of OPT begins after completing all program requirements. You must apply within the OPT application window. Earliest- 90 days before your program end date. Latest- 60 days after program completion.
Post-Completion OPT STEM Extension	This type of OPT begins only after completing your 1st year of OPT. Must have a **STEM-eligible degree** and meet certain employer criteria.

OPT Application Timeline

USCIS Processing Time for OPT application can range from approximately 2-3 months.

Once processed, you will receive an EAD (Employment Authorization Document).

Cannot start working until EAD is received and start date arrives.

Limits to Be Aware Of

You **cannot** exceed 90 days of unemployment on Post-OPT.

Time used during Pre-Completion OPT is subtracted from your **12 month total.**

Cannot start working until EAD is received and start date arrives.

OPT Eligibility Checklist

Enrollment for at least **one full academic year as an F-1 Student**

Must be currently in valid F-1 Immigration Status

Must receive a new I-20 with OPT recommendation from ISSS

Apply to USCIS with FORM I-765

OPT Application Process

Submit all required documents to the ISSS office

DSO will review the documentation, submit the OPT recommendation, and issue a new OPT requested I-20

The student will receive the reviewed I-765 draft and the new I-20 via E-mail

Student must **submit the OPT application to USCIS within 30 days from the DSO recommendation date**

Fall 2025 Virtual Sessions

Friday, September 12, 2025

Monday, October 20, 2025

Friday, November 07, 2025

Thursday, December 11, 2025

Our Contact Information

J.C. Kellam Administration Building, Room 314
601 University Dr.
San Marcos, TX 78666
Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Tel: (512) 245 7966
Fax: (512) 245 8264
Email: inational@txstate.edu

INTERNATIONAL.TXST.EDU

READ ME FIRST (DELETE BEFORE PRINTING)

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE ONLINE

- A PDF of this document should not be posted or distributed online.
- Documents posted on Texas State University websites must meet accessibility requirements. PDFs created in Canva will not meet these requirements.

CHECK YOUR SPELLING AND GRAMMAR

- Check the spelling, grammar, and style of your document.
- Please refer to the Editorial Style Guide for writing guidelines.
- Ensure the information in your publication — including phone numbers, email addresses, and dates — is accurate.

TO POST ON CAMPUS

- To post flyers or posters on campus, get a date stamp from Student Involvement on the fourth floor of the LBJ Student Center.
- Review UPPS 07.04.02 for more information about posting literature on campus.

WHICH STATEMENTS DO I USE?

- You are required to use certain statements in your publications. See our Statements and Inclusions page to review the statements and when they should be used.
- The most common statements are already included on the templates.