

Filing Tips and Reminders**Pre-Filing Tips**

1. Check your I-20 with OPT recommendation for any errors. Sign and date your I-20. Make a photocopy of pages 1-3 to submit with your OPT application materials.
2. Submit your Form I-765 OPT application within 30 days of the OPT I-20 issuance date
3. Finalize your OPT packet, include two passport style photos and the \$410 application fee. See Step 4 of OPT I-20 request form for checklist of items to submit.
4. Optional. Attend an OPT Packet Review Workshop. Check ISSS calendar for dates.
5. Mail your application to USCIS Chicago Lockbox. Refer to USCIS I-765 [filing locations](#) for the mailing address.

Post-Filing Reminders**Application Receipt & Online Status Check**

- If you submitted Form G-1145 you will receive a receipt number by text message or email; such electronic notifications are considered unofficial communication. USCIS will still send you an official paper receipt in the mail.
- Online Status Check. Check on the status of your application with [USCIS Case Status Online](#). Enter your receipt number as listed on your I-797C Notice of Action.

While Waiting for Approval of Application

- If you are working on campus during your final semester of enrollment, you must stop working at end of the term.
- Contact ISSS if you do not graduate on time as expected.
- The USCIS application fee is not refundable. You may not withdraw the application if USCIS already approved the work permit (EAD).
- You may not begin working until you receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and its start date is current.

Reporting Requirements

- After you receive your EAD, check for errors (incl. name, DOB) and the work authorization dates on your EAD card (more/less than 12 months).
- You are responsible for reporting any changes to employment, address, and/or name within 10 days. Report employment information using the SEVP Portal. For more information visit [ISSS SEVP Portal FAQ](#).
- Alternatively, if the SEVP portal does not work for you, report employment changes using ISSS online [Employment Update Report](#) form.
- Work at least 20 hours/week in your major field of study. Includes unpaid/volunteer positions. You will be out of status after accumulating a total of 90 days or more of unemployment.

Other Reminders

- You cannot attend school full-time while on OPT.
- OPT is automatically terminated when you transfer to another school or you receive a new I-20 to begin study at another education level.