

OPT Filing: How to Fill in the I-765

This resource is meant to provide you with best practices in preparing an OPT application. Please note that this is not legal advice. You may choose to hire an immigration attorney to assist you with this process at any time. The information contained here is for general information purposes only. The U.S. government may make modifications to the I-765 form and instructions at any time without prior notice.

Do not submit your I-765 to USCIS until you receive the OPT recommendation I-20 and instructions from International Enrollment.

General Tips

We recommend you file the I-765 online. If you are interested in filing using a physical application via the mail, please consult our office first as there are some unique procedures and risks.

You can file the I-765 online by creating a USCIS account at https://myaccount.uscis.gov/. More information about filing online is available at https://uscis.gov/file-online.

- The online form is the same as the paper version, but the online form logic will show only the relevant questions based on your answers.
- Your answers are automatically saved when you go to a new section and draft forms are saved for 30 days from the last time you worked on your form.
- Remember to download a copy of your completed I-765 form for your records!





Filling in Form I-765 Online

Getting Started

Eligibility Code

Be sure to enter the correct eligibility category:

- Post-Completion OPT (c)(3)(B) (for after graduation or after finishing all coursework)
- Pre-Completion OPT (c)(3)(A) (used before graduation during your program)
- 24 month STEM OPT Extension (c)(3)(C) (for STEM degree holders after their first year of Post-Completion OPT)

Authorization

Cetting started

Basis of eligibility

(for after resework)

Jused before

About You

Evidence

Additional Information

Additional Information

Additional Information

Additional Information

Review and Submit

What is your eligibility category?

A You can file your request online only for certain eligibility categories

If your eligibility category does not appear on the drop-down list, you must file a paper Form 1-765. If you submit online and are not eligible for one of the listed categories, your application may be denied.

(c) (3) (C) (for Review and Submit

I-765, Application for Employment

Only STEM degree holders who <u>are already in their first year of OPT</u> and are applying for the STEM extension should enter (c)(3)(C)!

Premium Processing

Select whether you would like to request Premium Processing. If USCIS accepts the request, they will take action within 30 calendar days of receiving your application. The premium processing fee is charged in addition to the I-765 filing fee.

USCIS actions can be one of the following:

- An approval notice
- A denial notice
- A notice of intent to deny
- A request for evidence
- Opening an investigation for fraud or misrepresentation

As shown in the screenshot to the right, note that if you choose 'Yes' to this question, you will automatically be sent to Form I-907, 'Request for Premium Processing' after you finish submitting in the I-765 and will be charged the additional fee. You cannot go back and change your answer to this question after you complete the online I-765.

Reason for Applying

Choose 'Initial permission to accept employment' if you are applying for Pre- or Post-Completion OPT.

Only STEM degree holders who are *already in their first year of OPT* and are applying for the STEM extension should choose 'Renewal of permission to accept employment'.

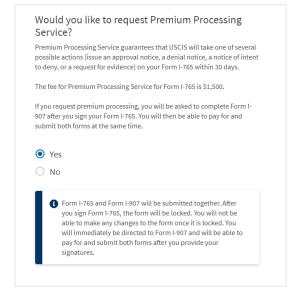
Previous I-765

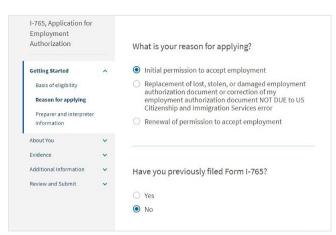
Answer based on your immigration history.

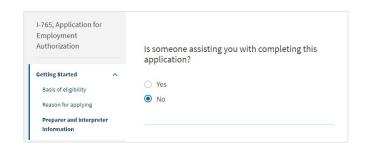
Preparer & Interpreter Information

Answer based on your situation.

Put "No" if you prepared the form yourself without an interpreter/preparer's assistance.







About You

Legal Name

Please put your name exactly as it shows on your passport. Do <u>not</u> enter N/A or Not Applicable if you have no middle/given name, just leave it blank.

Other Names

If you ever legally changed your name, click "Yes" and enter your past names. It's up to you if you want to share nicknames or aliases. Be consistent across all U.S. government applications!

Your Contact Information

Fill in your contact information.

U.S. Mailing Address

Put a U.S. address where you can receive mail after graduation. If it is not the place where you are currently living, please put your physical address as well. <u>USCIS will not mail anything to you abroad.</u>

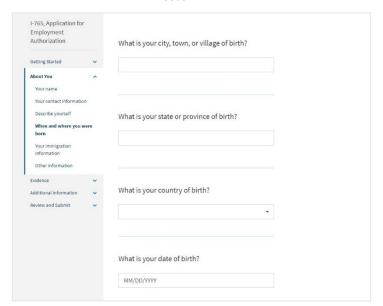
<u>Changing your address while your OPT is pending is not</u> recommended! Do not use an on-campus address, as Residence Life will not receive/hold your mail after graduation.

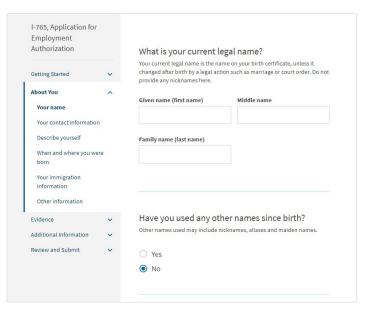
Physical Address

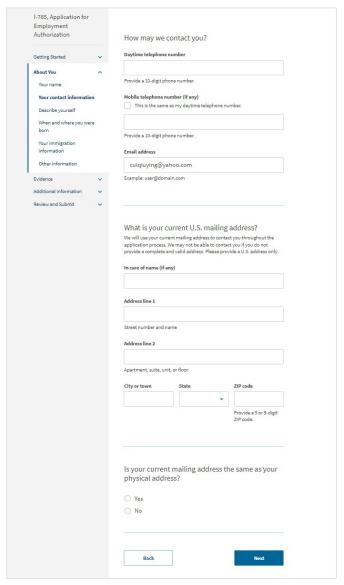
If the same as mailing address, click "Yes". If different, click "No" and enter where you are currently physically living at the time of submitting this form.

Describe Yourself & When and where you were born

Make sure all information is accurately entered. Dates MUST be in mm/dd/yyyy format!







Citizenship

If you have dual citizenship, please put both countries.

I-94 Arrival Information

You can find your I-94 record number and date/place of last entry at: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94. Click 'Get Most Recent I-94' (look at travel history to see place of arrival).

Passport Number

Put the passport number of your most recently issued passport.

Travel Document

Most F-1 students don't have a travel document.

Passport Expiry & Issuing Country

This is your country of citizenship. Don't put the U.S. even if you renewed your passport in the U.S.

Current Status

Choose F-1 student.

SEVIS Number

This is listed on your I-20 at the top. If you have multiple SEVIS numbers, please enter the current one here.

Alien Registration Number

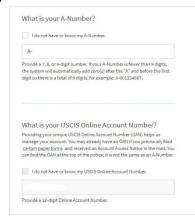
If you have applied for OPT before or other immigration benefits, please put the USCIS number (9 digits) from your EAD.

Have you been issued a Social Security card?

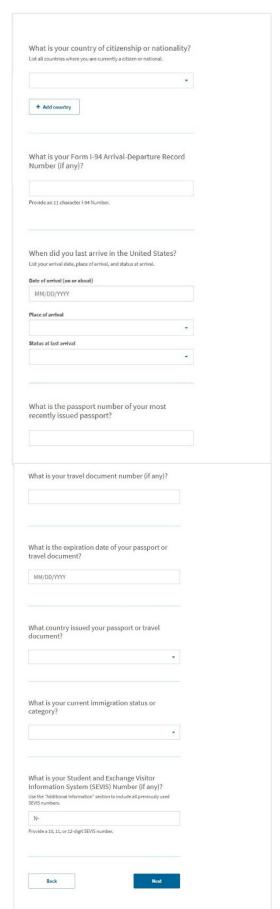
Click "Yes" and enter your SSN if you have one. If you don't have a SSN check "No".

Do you want SSA to issue a Social Security card?

If you already have the SSN, click "No". If you need a SSN for the first time or lost your SSN card, click "Yes". USCIS will send your information to SSA once they approve your OPT application. The SSN will be issued and mailed to the address you put on the I-765. You should receive the SSN within 7 business days after you receive your EAD. You can also choose to apply for a SSN after you receive the EAD.



officially issued a Social Security card to you?	
○ Yes	
○ No	
Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Secu card?	urity
○ Yes	



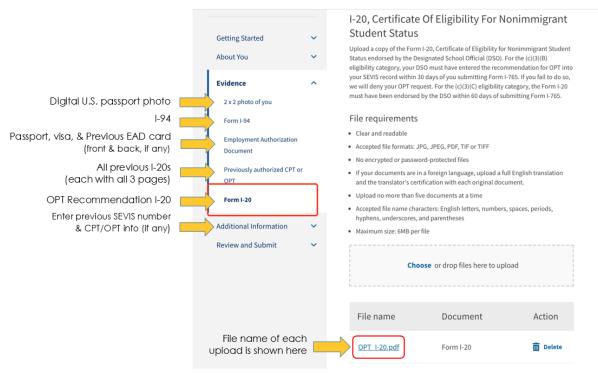
Evidence

When filling in the online form and uploading documents, please note:

- These file formats are accepted: JPG, JPEG, PNG, PDF, TIF, TIFF
- These file formats are NOT allowed: DOC, BMP, XLSX
- Maximum file size is 6 MB per file.
- Foreign and special characters are not allowed.
- The only characters allowed in document file names are: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, parentheses.
- Foreign language documents must have a certified English translation.
- Make sure any PDF files are not password protected/encrypted

5 upload files are allowed per section. We recommend naming and uploading each evidence type separately (e.g. Passport copy file named 'passport.pdf' uploaded separately from visa and I-94 files, not combined).

The screenshot below shows where to upload each piece of evidence.



Passport Photo of You

- 2 in x 2 in U.S. style passport photo taken within 3 months with white background (note: don't wear glasses).
- Purchase at local pharmacies ask for a digital photo if possible.
- For digital passport photos, you may also use this website: https://tsg.phototool.state.gov/photo

I-94

You can access your I-94 record at https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/194/#/home. Click 'Get Most Recent I-94' in the top menu. Enter your name and birth date exactly as it appears in your passport, and your passport number. Click the 'Next' button to access your I-94 and download the PDF.



Previously Authorized CPT or OPT

- Include all 3 pages of each previous I-20 (including schools other than Hofstra).
- You MUST include those with CPT/OPT, but may want to provide all I-20s just to be safe.

Form I-20

- Upload the OPT recommendation I-20 here. Don't forget to include it, or your application will be automatically rejected!
- Note your application must be received by USCIS before your grace period ends <u>and within 30 days of the</u> <u>date when your OPT I-20 was issued</u>, whichever is earlier.

Additional Information

If you had any CPT or OPT before, you need to provide that information in the 'Additional Information' section. Choose the Section, Page, and Question that refers to the eligibility category question as seen in the screenshot to the right.

Then, in the text box enter your CPT/OPT details using the format shown in the example. List the type of work authorization, degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate, etc.), start and end dates, and part-time/full-time. If you had OPT before, also include the USCIS number on your previous EAD card.

If you haven't had CPT or OPT before and don't have employment information, you don't need to fill this in.

If you had a different SEVIS number before, you need to choose the Section, Page, and Question that refers back to the question that asked you for your SEVIS number. In the text box, list your previous SEVIS number, the dates during which you used that number, and your degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate, etc.) at the time you used that SEVIS number.

Review and Submit

Review your entries carefully before you pay the filing fee. Once you submit payment, you cannot make corrections. When you review your form before submission, print or download a draft snapshot for your records. Double check you uploaded all the materials!

To pay the filing fee you will be directed to Pay.gov, a secure government portal where you can pay by ACH withdrawal from a U.S. bank account, or a U.S. debit card, or accepted credit cards as listed on Pay.gov.

After you pay the fee, your form will be submitted to USCIS. You will receive confirmation the form was submitted. Click on "Go to my cases" to see your case card and receipt notice. All notices will be mailed to the mailing address you provided in the I-765 form and posted to your account, including any requests for evidence (RFE) and decision letter.

