

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Application Checklist

Students applying for F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) can use this checklist when preparing an OPT application (pre-completion and post-completion OPT). **The Office of International Services strongly recommends students applying for OPT first watch the OPT Basics Tutorial and OPT Application Guide available on the website.**

To prepare the OPT application, first collect the following materials.

- Lasell OPT Recommendation Form, available for download on the “Applying for OPT” webpage.
- Original, completed, typed Form G-1145 (<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/g-1145.pdf>)
- Original, completed, typed and signed Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization. Handwritten I-765s will not be accepted. (<https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-765.pdf>)
- New I-20 recommending OPT
- Page 1 and travel signature pages of **ALL** I-20s that have been issued to you* Include all Lasell I-20s (CPT, other degree levels, etc.) AND all I-20s from previous institutions.
- Printed electronic I-94 (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>)
- Color copy of your most recent U.S. F-1 visa and ALL previous U.S. visas* (not applicable for Canadian citizens)
- Color copy of passport biographical page*
- Previously issued Employment Authorization Documents (EAD cards), if applicable*
- Change of status approval notice, if applicable.*
- 2 standard (2” x 2”) passport-sized, recent, color photos. Write your name, SEVIS ID number, and I-94 number in pencil on the back.
- Bank check or money order for \$410 United States Dollars (USD) made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
- OPT application cover letter (Optional, but required if you cannot locate previous I-20s, visas, or EAD cards). See sample cover letter on the website.

** Bring the original and one color photocopy to the OPT appointment. You will mail the photocopy to USCIS.*

Step 1: Make an appointment with the Office of International Services to receive an I-20 with OPT recommendation. Bring the original and one photocopy of all your application materials to the appointment.

Step 2: Mail your paper OPT application to USCIS. The application must be received by USCIS within 30 days of the issue date on your new OPT I-20.

(IMPORTANT: If you do not file the OPT application within 30 days, your application will be denied!)

Mail by U.S. Postal Service (USPS) (i.e. Certified Mail, USPS Priority or Express mail), send your application to the USCIS Chicago Lockbox:	Mail by private courier (i.e. UPS, FedEx, DHL), send your application to the USCIS Chicago Lockbox:
USCIS PO Box 805373 Chicago, IL 60680	USCIS Attn: I-765 C03 131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor Chicago, IL 60603-5517

Office of International Services

Arnow Campus Center 210, 1844 Commonwealth Ave., Newton, MA 02466
(P) 617-243-2398 (F) 617-243-2411 (Email) iss@lasell.edu

1. **After sending your OPT application to USCIS, you will receive a ‘Case was Received’ notification.**
 - If you applied with a [G-1145 form](#), USCIS will send you an email and/or text message within 1-2 weeks to notify you that your application was received. The message will include your case number (EAC#####) or (YSC#####), with which you can track the progress of your application on the USCIS [website](#).
 - You will also receive an **I-797 Receipt Notice** in the mail to the address on your I-765 within 4 weeks of receipt. This receipt is very important; you must keep it for your records. This is proof that USCIS has received your application. Make sure to check the spelling of your name. If you notice an error, contact the Office of International Services .

2. **Visit the USCIS website and check your status at <https://egov.uscis.gov>.**
 - This page will inform you when your OPT application was received, when it is approved and delivery information. Consider signing up for an account, as it will enable automatic email and mobile notifications when there is a change to your OPT application.
 - Processing time: USCIS processing of OPT applications averages 90 days

3. **Respond immediately to a Request for Additional Documentation if you receive one.**
 - Occasionally, a student will receive a Request for Further Evidence (RFE) from USCIS. These requests are typically because the application is missing a document or new photographs are required. If you receive such a request (normally a yellow sheet of paper) reply immediately to USCIS with the requested documents, including the original yellow sheet placed on top.
 - If you do not understand the USCIS request, contact the Office of International Services. Be sure to make copies of your materials before you mail them, and send the reply by courier mail.

4. **When Case Status Online Reflects “Approved”**
 - Take any steps possible to ensure delivery of your mail. If you live in an apartment complex, check that your name is on your mailbox. If you have roommates, alert them you are expecting something important.
 - If someone else is receiving the EAD on your behalf, alert that person that a piece of mail should be arriving soon and to notify you as soon as it arrives. Remind the person to put it in a new mail envelope rather than forwarding to you.
 - DO NOT notify USPS to hold mail, forward mail, or process a change of address until you receive the EAD.

5. **When You Receive the I-797 Approval Notice and EAD**
 - Make a copy of the Approval Notice and EAD (front and back) for your records
 - Scan and email a copy of the front and back of your EAD to iss@lasell.edu. We will keep a copy of the EAD in your record in the Office of International Services.
 - Remember: You are not authorized to begin employment until the start date on the EAD arrives, even if you have the card in hand.

6. **During your POST-completion OPT period, ALL students on OPT are required by law to report their address and employment information to the Office of International Services within 10 days of any change.**
 - Please fill out the [OPT Employment Information online form](#) on our website to update our office regarding your employment.

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