

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).

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

- Lasell OPT Recommendation Form, available for download on the “Applying for OPT” webpage.
- Go to <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765> and click on the “Sign In” button. Create an account for yourself and write down your password for later. Wait to do the application with Maria.
- New I-20 recommending OPT (*this you will receive during our meeting*)
- All I-20s that show work authorization for CPT or OPT (*save as pdf to your desktop*)
- Electronic I-94 (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>) (*save as pdf to your desktop*)
- Color copy of your most recent U.S. F-1 visa (not applicable for Canadian citizens and if you changed your status in the States, this would be your approval notice) (*save as pdf to your desktop*)
- Color copy of passport biographical page (*save as pdf to your desktop*)
- Copies of issued Employment Authorization Documents (EAD cards), if applicable (*save as pdf or jpg to your desktop*)
- 1 standard (2” x 2”) passport-sized, recent, color photos. (*save as jpg to your desktop*)**
- Credit card or bank information to pay \$470 United States Dollars (USD). Note: premium processing for faster service is an extra \$1,685.
- Social Security number (SSN) if you have one. A copy of the SSN Card is not needed, just the number. If you do not have a SSN already, please have your mother and father’s full name available.

**Note on passport photo: Do not get one at CVS, try this Passport Photo App (USA Passport Photo): <https://www.usapassportphoto.com/> (costs about \$16-\$20 dollars). Request digital passport photo. Or use the [Passport-Photo Online](#) app. Both of these work well.

Step 1: Make an hour-long appointment with the Office of International Services to receive an I-20 with OPT recommendation. Have all documents ready to go on your desktop and bring your laptop. Make sure to bring your power cord and that you can connect to the university Wi-Fi.

Step 2: Submit the online form to the USCIS.

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 submitting your OPT application to USCIS, you will receive a receipt notice. Save this somewhere safe for your records.**
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.**
 - You should receive a Request for Further Evidence (RFE) from USCIS for your biometric passport photo to be taken at a USCIS site. They will send you a notice with information on where to go and what to bring with you at this appointment. They are often held in Revere, MA.
 - You may also receive a Request for Evidence for other missing items. If you receive such a request (normally you will receive an email with the request) reply immediately to USCIS with the requested document and upload it to your file in your portal.
 - If you do not understand the USCIS request, contact the Office of International Services.
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.

Office of International Services

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