

Apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT)

- I. International students are eligible to apply for an off-campus work permit for conducting optional practical training (OPT) to work full-time for 1 year after graduation. You may apply for post-completion OPT up to 90 days before your program end date and up to 60 days after your program end date.
- II. The student may apply for a work permit for OPT at each degree level – at associate degree, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, and doctoral degree levels. International students pursuing language study only are not eligible for OPT.
- III. If an international student wishes to conduct OPT before graduation, the student may only work half-time before graduation. The time used for OPT before graduation is counted as half of full-time.
- IV. It takes approximately 3 months for the USCIS to process your request. At the end, you will receive a work permit card called Employment Authorization Document (EAD).
- V. Read the following instructions and see NPU’s Designated School Officer (DSO) Bill or Jessie in the administration office to proceed with your application. Obtain a new I-20 form from Bill or Jessie for your application for OPT. Fill out form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization); Bill or Jessie will help you check the data on your I-765 form.
- VI. Submit the following documents to USCIS (refer to item VII):
 1. Form I-765 (the original, completed form as stated in the above item V.)
 2. The new I-20 form (as stated in the above item “V”) with the DSO’s recommendation for optional practical training
 3. Photocopies of the following:
 - Your passport (the photo page), visa, I-94 (both sides), and all your previous I-20s (If no photo page is available in your passport, then a photocopy of your pictured ID, e.g. driver’s license)
 4. A check of **\$340** payable to “Department of Homeland Security” (application fee)
 5. Two photos. Write your name in pencil on the back of the photos.
- VII. Mail out (certified mail is recommended) your application (please refer to the next page for instruction)
- VIII. You will receive a “Notice of Receipt” from the USCIS a few weeks after your submission of the application which has a WCxxxx number for you to check the status of your OPT application. It takes an average of 2-3 months before you will receive your EAD (work permit card).

Important Notices:

1. You need to decide when to start the actual employment (work) regardless whether you will be employed or not. The work starting date can not be later than 60 days after your degree completion date. The work period is no more

than a total of 12 months working full-time. (Engineering students see item 8)
You must complete the OPT within 14-month from your degree completion date.

2. You may not begin the OPT until the date indicated on your employment authorization document (EAD), Form I-766 or Form 688B, i.e. you may not accept employment until you have been issued an EAD.
3. If the application is denied, you may not appeal the decision.
4. You need to update your employment information to school DSO (Bill or Jessie) within three month after your EAD starting date. You may lost your OPT if you failed to do so.
5. You are required to report any change of name or address, or interruption of employment to the DSO at NPU (Bill or Jessie) for the duration of the authorized training - you may lost your OPT (and F-1) status if you failed to do so.
6. If you leave the U.S. during your OPT period, you may not be allowed to return if you don't have job yet. If you are employed during your OPT and you need to take an overseas trip, then you will need the following valid documents for reentry to the U.S.: (a) a valid EAD, (b) valid passport, F1 visa, and I-20, (c) an employment letter issued by your employer.
7. At the end of your OPT, you are given a 60-day grace period to prepare for either (a) departure from the U.S., or (b) maintaining your F1 status by starting a new degree program- you must receive the new I-20 within the grace period or earlier, or (c) changing to another status.
8. Student with engineering degree may apply for 17 months extension of OPT. A detailed rules is in the 'FAQ for OPT' in school's website: LRC – Student Request Forms - OPT

Mailing Instruction:

A. If you live in:

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

Mail your application to: USCIS Phoenix Lockbox

A.1 For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:
USCIS, PO Box 21281, Phoenix, AZ 85036

A.2 For Express mail and courier deliveries:

USCIS, Attn: AOS, 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S, Suite 100, Phoenix, AZ 85034

B. If you live in:

Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia

Mail your application to: USCIS Dallas Lockbox

B.1 For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:

USCIS, PO Box 660867, Dallas, TX 75266

B.2 For Express mail and courier deliveries:

USCIS, Attn: AOS, 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business, Suite 400, Lewisville, TX 75067

- C.** E-Notification: If you want to receive an e-mail and/or a text message that your Form I-765 has been accepted at a USCIS Lockbox facility, complete Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance and clip it to the first page of your application.