

Office of International Education (OIE)

STEM OPT : 24 – Month Extension

➔ Your Email, Address and Phone in MyMav will be used to contact you. Please be sure your Email, Phone and Addresses in MyMav are current.

Initials

Date

UT ID #

Student Name

Birth Month/Day

24 month extension required information:

Expiration date of current OPT:

Applicant's Job Title:

Supervisor Name:

Supervisor Phone # :

Supervisor email:

Name of Employer:

physical address of employment:

Document Check-list

- Copies of the following

documents: o Passport

Identity page(s)

o I-94

o Any previously issued EAD cards(current or expired) o Job offer letter from E-verified employer

o Completed I-983

o Completed I-765

Do not transmit Form I-765 with Social Security number included (item 9.b.)

* #17 must also be fully completed

- Payment confirmation printout for \$175 Case Management Fee through MyMav (Refer to the following website for more info:http://www.uta.edu/oie/services/opt/Opt_management_fee.php)

- Signed 24 Month extension request

Procedure

- Submit all documents to OIE
(Refer to the "Mail-In Instructions" form if you reside outside of the DFW area and are unable to come to the office.)

- Within 7-10 business days, OIE will print a new I-20 and contact you to come and sign/pick-up new I-20.

- After you have signed the I-20, you will be responsible for mailing your application to USCIS. See the STEM OPT mailing Instructions for full details.

- USCIS will issue a receipt and then will make a decision on your application in approximately 2-3 months.

If approved, USCIS will issue your OPT card.

If you used our office address, we will contact you when the card arrives.

You can:

* Pick up the card yourself.

* Send an email authorizing a specific person to pick up the card for you.

* Provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope for us to mail the card to you.

STEM OPT Status Maintenance: 24-month extension

While participating in STEM OPT, a student is required to maintain legal F-1 status. The regulations for this period differ slightly from the normal regulations while a student is in school. **Please read through this document carefully and sign the statement of understanding at the end.**

Eligibility for the STEM OPT Extension:

To qualify for the 24-month STEM extension, you must:

- Have been granted OPT and currently be in a valid period of OPT;
- Have earned a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree from a school that is accredited by a U.S. Department of Education-recognized accrediting agency and is certified by [the Student and Exchange Visitor Program \(SEVP\)](#) when you submit your STEM OPT extension application.
 - **Current STEM degree:** If you are currently on post-completion OPT for a STEM degree earned at UT Arlington and you have never had a STEM extension at your current degree level, you are eligible to apply for a 24-month STEM extension.
 - **Previously obtained STEM degrees:** If you are an F-1 student participating in a 12-month period of post-completion OPT based on a non-STEM degree, you may be eligible to use a prior STEM degree earned from a U.S. institution of higher education to apply for a STEM OPT extension. You must have received both degrees from currently accredited and SEVP-certified institutions, and cannot have already received a STEM OPT extension based on this prior degree. The practical training opportunity also must be directly related to the previously obtained STEM degree.
 - *For example:* If you are currently participating in OPT based on a master's degree in business administration but you previously received a bachelor's degree in mathematics, you may be able to apply for a STEM OPT extension based on your bachelor's degree as long as it is from an accredited U.S. college or university and the OPT employment opportunity is directly related to your bachelor's degree in mathematics.
 - **STEM degrees you obtain in the future:** If you enroll in a new academic program in the future and earn another qualifying STEM degree at a higher educational level, you may be eligible for one additional 24-month STEM OPT extension.
 - *For example:* If you receive a 24-month STEM OPT extension based on your bachelor's degree in engineering and you later earn a master's degree in engineering, you may apply for an additional 24-month STEM OPT extension based on your master's degree.
- Work for an employer who meets all the requirements listed on [uscis.gov](#) (link to requirements?)
- Submit your application to USCIS up to 90 days before your current OPT employment authorization expires, and within 60 days of the date your designated school official (DSO) enters the recommendation for OPT into your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record.

Reporting Requirements:

- While on STEM OPT, students must report the following to OIE:

Physical Presence Address:

- This should be done through the MyMav system. Please keep your account current so that you can update any change in address. If you forget your password, please contact the Help desk at 817-272-2208 or helpdesk@uta.edu

STEM OPT Status Maintenance: 24-month extension (Continued)

Employment:

- Complete the "OPT Data form" found at: <http://www.uta.edu/oie/?page=forms&form=OPTprocess> to report the following:
 - Employer name
 - Employer address
 - Loss of employment / Any change in employer
 - Changes in employment must be updated within 10 days of any change.
 - You must report every 6 months to confirm the information listed above, even if none of your information has changed.

Form I-983:

- Students must submit an annual self-evaluation and a Form I-983 signed by their employer annually to stemopt@uta.edu. More information about students and the Form I-983 is available here: <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students-and-the-form-i-983>
- The form I-983 must also be updated whenever there is a material change of employment, including but not limited to:
 - Any change of the employer's Employer Identification Number, (i.e., the company's Federal Tax ID number) resulting from a change in the employer's ownership or structure.
 - Any reduction in student compensation that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked.
 - Any significant decrease in hours per week that a student engages in a STEM training opportunity.
- Changes to the employer's commitments or student's learning objectives as documented on the Form I-983. So long as the STEM OPT student and employer meet the regulatory requirements and the modified Form I-983 meets the specified requirements, the student's employment authorization will not cease based on a change to the plan.

Reporting requirements end when the student's F-1 status ends, the student changes education levels at the same school, the student transfers to another school, or the 7-month STEM OPT extension ends, whichever is first.

Unemployment during the OPT period

You are allowed to be unemployed for up to 90 days on 12 month post-completion OPT, and additional unemployment days are granted when a STEM extension is approved.

If you received...	You may be unemployed for...	For a total of... (during the OPT period)
17-month STEM extension	An additional 30 days	120 days*
24-month STEM extension	An additional 60 days	150 days*

Type of acceptable work:

- All OPT employment must be in a job that is related to the student's degree program.
- Employers must meet all requirements listed on [uscis.gov](https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/stem-opt#STEM): <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/stem-opt#STEM>
- Self-employment and unpaid employment are not permitted.

STEM OPT Status Maintenance: 24-month extension (Continued)

H1B Cap-Gap Provision:

- Duration of status and work authorization will be extended for a student on OPT, who is the beneficiary of a timely filed H-1B petition requesting an employment start date of October 1 of the following fiscal year.
- The extension of duration of status and work authorization automatically terminates upon the rejection, denial, or revocation of the H-1B petition filed on the student's behalf.
- Refer to the H1B Cap-Gap application form for detailed information about extension validity dates and how to request a new I-20 to reflect your status during this period.

Travel while on STEM OPT:

- It is possible to travel while on STEM OPT. Plan to speak with an OIE advisor before you travel. You must take the following documents with you when you travel:

- Current EAD card.
- OPT I-20 with travel signature on Page 3.
- Signatures are only valid for 6 months while on OPT. Apply for a new signature at OIE.
- Valid Passport.
- Valid F1 Visa.
 - o If your visa is expired, it is risky to travel. Speak with an OIE advisor before planning any travel.
- Employment letter.
 - o Letter should state that you will be returning to "resume employment."

If your 12-month OPT has expired and your 24-month STEM OPT extension is pending, you should not travel.

After your authorized 24-month STEM OPT employment period ends:

Students receive a 60 day grace period at the end of their employment. During this time, the student must either:

- o Prepare to leave the US before the 60 days is up.
- o Receive a new I-20 from their current school for a new degree program.
- o Transfer to another university and receive a new I-20 from that school.

Note that STEM OPT is automatically canceled when you transfer schools or change education levels.

Statement of understanding:

I have read and understood this form and understand that I must follow the regulations and reporting requirements listed to maintain my F-1 status while participating in OPT. I will contact OIE if I have any questions. I verify that all contact and employer information provided on the STEM OPT 7-month extension request form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signed by _____ UT ID # Date

You may be entitled to know what information The University of Texas at Arlington (UT Arlington) collects concerning you. You may review and have UT Arlington correct this information according to procedures set forth in UTS 139. The law is found in sections 552.021, 552.023 and 559.004 of the Texas Government Code.