

# Bluegrass Community & Technical College International Student Services



## Request for Employment Authorization Document for Optional Practical Training

### WHAT IS OPT AND WHEN CAN I APPLY?

Optional Practical Training, or OPT, is designed to provide F-1 international students with the opportunity to gain employment experience in their chosen profession. Students are permitted to take part in OPT for a maximum initial period of 12 months. Students may choose to participate in “pre-completion OPT” before graduating or “post-completion OPT” after graduating.

#### ***In order to be approved for OPT, an F-1 student must:***

- Receive a job offer from a company within their field of study
- Receive a recommendation from the ISS Office for OPT, no more than 90 & no fewer than 30 days before the job start date
- Submit the I-765, Request for Employment Authorization, within 30 days of the recommendation submission
- Receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) before beginning work
- During OPT, a student is expected to complete a check-in form each semester and keep the ISS Office updated with any phone number, address, or possible employment changes

### CHECKLIST TO APPLY FOR EAD & OPT:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Make an appointment with the International Student Services Office (OB 202A)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete the I-765 form ( <a href="http://www.uscis.gov/i-765">http://www.uscis.gov/i-765</a> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student's I-94
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student's Passport
<input type="checkbox"/>	Two identical color photographs of yourself taken within 30 days. Photos must have a white background and be printed on glossy paper. The photo must be a “passport-style” photo measuring 2” by 2”. Passport photos can be taken at many stores in the area such as Wal-Mart, Walgreens, Rite-Aid, the Post Office, and more.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign the back of each of your photographs and write your SEVIS ID number in pencil.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Money order made out to “USCIS” for the amount of \$380.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Photocopies of any previous EADs, if applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Photocopies of any previous I-20s, if applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	New I-20, requesting OPT, signed by PDSO/DSO

## SUBMITTING MY I-765 APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT:

Students are responsible for mailing their completed request for reinstatement to the following address:

### USCIS Dallas Lockbox

#### IF USING US POSTAL SERVICE:

USCIS

P.O. Box 660867

Dallas, TX 75266

#### IF USING USPS EXPRESS MAIL/COURIER:

USCIS

ATTN: AOS

2501 S. State Highway 121 Business

Suite 400

Lewisville, TX 75067

## WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT NEXT?

- After you have submitted your request, you should expect to receive a **“Notice of Receipt/Action”** within a few weeks from the processing center. This does not mean that your reinstatement has been approved, it is simply notifying you that you the center has received your request.
- If the Service Centers requires further information, they will send something that is an **RFE or “Request for Evidence”**. *Should you receive this document, contact your PDSO immediately.* The International Student Services Office will need to assist you in gathering the needed information and it will need to be submitted in a timely manner.
- While your request is pending, **do not leave the country**. It is important to properly maintain your status even while your request is pending. For further questions about maintaining your status, contact the ISS Office.
- You will receive an **“I-797 Receipt Notice”** that will notify you of your approval/denial. If you are approved, please do the following:
  - Notify your PDSO that a decision has been made
  - Bring any communication from USCIS and your EAD to the ISS or email us a scanned copy
- ***Do not begin working until: (1) You have received your EAD (2) Your OPT start date on your I-20 and/or EAD is reached and (3) You have completed all requirements for your program of study/graduation***

***\*\*\*Please note that processing times vary throughout the year. The ISS office cannot control processing times from USCIS. Please be patient while your request is pending and if you receive any notification, contact the PDSO immediately.***

## HELPFUL TIPS

### GENERAL:

- Make a copy of your complete application before mailing it & keep the copy for your personal records.
- Keep a copy of your express mail or postal receipt with a tracking number.
- Once you receive your Notice of receipt, login to [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) to check the status of your case.

### I-765 APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT FORM:

- The ISS Office strongly suggests filling the form out on the computer and printing the document, rather than writing by hand
- In section #3, provide the mailing address where you can receive mail for at least 4 months from the date of submission. This will be the address that USCIS uses to communicate with you.
- In section #16, use the appropriate code based on your eligibility category:
  - Pre-Completion OPT: (c)(3)(A)
  - Post-Completion OPT: (c)(3)(B)
- Make sure to sign and date the form in blue ink. All unsigned documents will likely be rejected.