17-MONTH STEM EXTENSION
for OPT
INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR QUALIFIED F-1 STUDENTS

DEFINITION
The STEM extension extends the previous 12-month OPT limit an additional 17 months (for a total eligibility of up to 29 months) for students majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. The extension can only be granted in a 17 month period; the period cannot be “split” into multiple periods.

ELIGIBILITY
To be eligible, you must:
- currently be participating in and maintaining F-1 status on an approved period of post-completion optional practical training (OPT) in a field on the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List, as specified on your current I-20. Students on pre-completion OPT are not eligible for the extension.
- work for a U.S. employer in a job directly related to your major area of study in the STEM field.
- have a job offer from an employer registered with the E-Verify employment verification system at the time of application for the 17-month STEM extension.
- not have previously received a 17-month OPT extension after pursuing a STEM degree. There is a one-time limit of getting the 17-month extension, even if you pursue a second STEM degree.

E-Verify Employer List
Go to uscis.gov > E-Verify > About the Program > E-Verify Employers Search Tool
Or Google Search Everify list

WHEN TO APPLY
Applications for the 17-month STEM extension can be filed up to 120 days prior to the end of the regular period of post-completion OPT, but USCIS must receive and receipt the application before the current OPT expires. USCIS recommends filing the application between the 120th and 90th day before OPT expires. If the application is filed before the current OPT expiration date, the student can continue working until a decision is made (up to 180 days from the end of the current OPT expiration). You are strongly encouraged however, to apply at least 90 days before your current OPT expires to avoid possible driver’s license renewal issues.

EMPLOYMENT SPECIFICS
Students:
- must work in a position at least 20 hours per week for an E-Verify employer in a position directly related to the student’s STEM degree.
- may work multiple jobs, but all employers must be enrolled in E-Verify.
- are allowed to count volunteer or unpaid opportunities as employment as long as it is directly related to the student’s STEM degree, the employer is enrolled in E-Verify, and no labor laws are violated.

HOW TO APPLY

1. Complete **USCIS Form I-765**. Download from [https://www.uscis.gov](https://www.uscis.gov) under Forms > I-765. The ISS advisor does not endorse the I-765, but can review it for completeness. **DO NOT “File Online.”**

   a) Enter the eligibility code: **(c)(3)(C)** for the 17-month STEM extension in **Item 16** of the Form I-765.
   b) In **Item 17**, list the numerical CIP code next to Major in the “Program of Study” section on page 1 of your I-20 (example: 27.0101), your employer’s name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer’s E-Verify Number (which is **5-6 digits** – NOT the company’s Tax ID#).

2. Complete **USCIS Form G-1145** (Optional) Download from [http://www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) under Forms > G-1145. Allows you to receive an email or text message when your application is initially received by the U.S. government.

3. Complete the attached form **17-Month STEM OPT Extension Request for I-20 Recommendation**.

4. Complete and sign the attached form **Student’s Reporting Responsibilities While on OPT Extension**.

5. Have the employer complete the **Employer Agreement**.

6. Make an appointment and bring the following documents to ISS if you are still in the Lawrence area OR submit the following items to ISS by email or mail if you are out of town:
   - **Name of ISS Advisor** (with whom you made the appointment)
   - **International Student Services (OPT STEM Extension)**
     1450 Jayhawk Blvd, Room 2
     Lawrence, KS 66045
   1. Original ISS form **17-Month STEM OPT Extension Request for I-20 Recommendation**
   2. Original ISS form **Student’s Reporting Responsibilities While on STEM OPT Extension**
   3. Photocopy of completed USCIS Form G-1145 (optional), for email/text message notification of application receipt
   4. Photocopy of completed USCIS Form I-765, marked with eligibility code **(c)(3)(C)**
   5. Photocopy of completed Employer Agreement
   7. Record of dates of employment/unemployment ([https://iss.ku.edu/employment](https://iss.ku.edu/employment)), employer name and address, position/job title for initial 12 month OPT
   8. Photocopy of your degree (official or unofficial transcript or diploma with stated program of study)
   9. Photocopy of passport page(s) showing your name, photo, and expiration
   10. Photocopy of your I-94 card (front and back) or printout of your Electronic I-94 record ([https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov))
   11. Photocopy of visa (most recently used when last entering the U.S.)

7. An ISS advisor will review your request and determine your eligibility. If a STEM extension is warranted, an advisor will make his/her recommendation for an OPT extension in SEVIS which will generate a new I-20.

   1) If OPT extension requested through appointment, you will get a new I-20 during the appointment.
   2) If OPT extension requested by email or mail, a new I-20 will be mailed to you. Sign and date the new I-20. Then photocopy pages 1 & 2, which you will include in your STEM Extension application. You keep the original I-20.

8. **Mail the I-765 with supporting documents to the USCIS Lockbox serving the area for your current residence**, not necessarily where the first I-765 for regular OPT was filed. Submit the I-765 **within 30 days** of the issue date of the new I-20 **AND before your current OPT expires**. USCIS must receive and receipt the application before the current OPT expires. For further filing instructions and for the appropriate mailing address, consult the I-765 info page on the [www.USCIS.gov](http://www.USCIS.gov) website; specifically [http://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses](http://www.uscis.gov/i-765-addresses) (look under eligibility category (c)(3)(i) and click on the “See address below” link).

   **See next page for a list of materials to include with your application.**
**Don’t forget to include the following in your mailing:**

1. $380.00 application fee (check or money order made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security)
2. 2 photographs, passport style, **taken within 30 days of filing your application** (gently print name on back, & place in a clear plastic, Ziploc-style bag)
3. Original Form G-1145 (optional) - typed and printed out
4. Original Form I-765 -typed, printed out, and signed
5. Copy of EAD for current OPT
6. Record of dates of employment/unemployment [https://iss.ku.edu/employment](https://iss.ku.edu/employment), employer name and address, position/job title for initial 12 month OPT
7. Copy of new I-20 with recommendation for STEM OPT extension
8. Copy of degree (e.g. official or unofficial transcript, or copy of diploma with program of study)
9. Copy of Employer Agreement
10. Copy of passport page(s) showing your name, photo, and expiration
11. Copy of visa (most recently used)
12. Copy of paper I-94 card (front and back) or Electronic I-94 printout [https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov)

ISS recommends that you mail your application packet in a verifiable manner (such as certified with proof of delivery receipt). Be sure to keep all documents sent to and received from USCIS.

**Photograph Requirements**

1. Frame subject with full face, front view, eyes open
2. Make sure photo presents full head from top of hair to bottom of chin; height of head should measure 1 inch to 1 3/8 inch (25 mm to 35mm)
3. Make sure eye level is between 1 1/8 inch to 1 3/8 inch (28 mm and 35 mm) from bottom of photo
4. Photograph subject against a plain white or off-white background
5. Must have been taken within 30 days of filing your application

**POST FILING TIPS—WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW**

- Students who have properly filed Form I-765 (for STEM OPT extension) prior to the end date of his/her current post-completion OPT will be able to continue employment while their extension application is pending, until a final decision is made on the I-765 or for 180 days, whichever comes first.

- The employment authorization period for the 17-month STEM OPT extension begins on the day after the expiration of the initial post-completion OPT employment authorization, and ends 17 months later, regardless of the date the actual extension is approved.

- A student may change employers during the 17-month extension, however, the new employer must also be an E-Verify employer and the job must be directly related to the student’s major. Students must report the change in employment on the ISS website.

- Do not travel outside the United States if your EAD is expired and the STEM extension request is pending. Wait until you receive the new EAD.

- The student is expected to maintain evidence for each job showing that it is directly related to the major. Keep evidence of: 1) the position held, 2) proof of the duration of the position, 3) job title, 4) contact info of supervisor, and 5) a description of the work. If it is not clear from the job description, get a signed letter from the hiring official, supervisor, or manager stating how the student’s degree is related to the work performed.

- The employer must agree to report to ISS any job termination or early departure. Please give the employer ISS’s handout about employer reporting responsibilities. The employer must consider a worker to have departed when the employer knows the student has left employment or if the student has not reported for work for a period of five consecutive business days without the employer’s consent.

- Know and comply with your reporting responsibilities (see “Student Reporting Responsibilities” form)!

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Photograph Requirements

1. Frame subject with full face, front view, eyes open
2. Make sure photo presents full head from top of hair to bottom of chin; height of head should measure 1 inch to 1 3/8 inch (25 mm to 35mm)
3. Make sure eye level is between 1 1/8 inch to 1 3/8 inch (28 mm and 35 mm) from bottom of photo
4. Photograph subject against a plain white or off-white background
5. Must have been taken within 30 days of filing your application

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Don’t forget to provide ISS with a copy of your new EAD card, issued for OPT extension!
# 17-MONTH STEM OPT EXTENSION
## Request for I-20 Recommendation

### Biographical Info

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname/Family Name(s):</th>
<th>Given Name(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(as it appears in your passport)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing Address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Street) (City) (State) (Zipcode)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telephone Number:</th>
<th>Other Phone Numbers:</th>
</tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>List any F-2 Dependent(s):</th>
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### Degree Info

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KUID:</th>
<th>Date of degree completion (if applicable)</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree and Major(s): e.g. Bachelors in Chemical Engineering</th>
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### Employment Info

Dates of employment authorization as listed on current EAD
(Please attach a copy of the EAD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEM Employer’s name as listed in E-Verify:</th>
<th>E-Verify Number (4-6 digits)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer’s Mailing Address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Street) (City) (State) (Zipcode)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours:</th>
<th>Full time: more than 20 hrs/wk</th>
<th>Part time: 20 or less hrs/wk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Explain how employment is directly related to your degree & coursework:

### Optional but recommended information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer EIN/Tax ID Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(usually written in the form 00-000000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-employed:</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor Last Name:</th>
<th>First Name:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I verify that the information above is accurate. I am requesting an ISS advisor to determine my eligibility for STEM OPT extension. I understand that all eligibility requirements must be met before an ISS advisor can make a recommendation in SEVIS for the STEM OPT extension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
STUDENT’S REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES
while on 17-month STEM OPT EXTENSION

While engaged in a period of approved 17-month Optional Practical Training (OPT extension), I acknowledge that I must comply with the following reporting requirements to maintain my F-1 status:

All reporting while on OPT must be done through the iHawk website (https://ihawk.ku.edu)
1. Log in with your KU Online ID.
2. Go to F-1 Practical Training and select “OPT (Post-Completion)”.
3. Complete and submit the appropriate report. You can submit the same E-Form multiple times as needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you are required to report within 10 days</th>
<th>Which E-Form to submit in iHawk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEM OPT approved (upload OPT EAD card)</td>
<td>Upload OPT EAD card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change U.S. residential or mailing address*</td>
<td>Update U.S. Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer name and address, including the report of **</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• change of employment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• multiple employers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• loss or termination of employment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Validation report every 6 months from start of STEM OPT period (day after initial 12 month OPT expires)</td>
<td>OPT Add New Employer Info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Immigration status classification (ex. F-1 to H-1B)</td>
<td>Report Change of Status and Forfeit OPT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departing the U.S. and forfeiting the remainder of OPT</td>
<td>Report Leaving US and Forfeit OPT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Legal name (as it occurs in my passport)</td>
<td>Report Passport Name Change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ADDRESS CHANGES: If your OPT application is still pending, the post office will not forward EADs even if you filed a mail-forwarding request so you must report address changes through iHawk AND also
- Notify USCIS at http://www.uscis.gov/addresschange AND
- Notify the ISS advisor who processed your OPT in addition to the steps above.

ISS will report your information to the government. For your protection, please keep a record of all reports made to ISS.

Furthermore, I understand that:

- I will provide ISS a copy of the EAD once the OPT is approved.
- I will give my employer the handout titled “Employer Responsibilities.”
- Since F-1 status is dependent on employment, I may not accrue an aggregate of more than 120 days of unemployment during the total 29-month OPT period. If unemployment exceeds the limits outlined by U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security, they may deny me future immigration benefits or may terminate my SEVIS record.
- I am allowed 60 days after the expiration of the OPT EAD to remain in the U.S. for the purpose of preparing for departure, to change education levels at the same school, to transfer to another school, or apply for a change of status.
- Transferring to another school or beginning study at another education level automatically terminates any remaining portion of OPT.

I certify that I have read and understand the above stated responsibilities that are required of me while engaged in Optional Practical Training. I agree to provide to KU’s International Student Services Office the required information stated above and understand that failure to do so can result in a violation of F-1 status and subsequent termination of my SEVIS record.

Signature: ___________________________ Date: _______________ KUID: ____________________
Print Name: __________________________ Non KU Email: ____________________________

Important: Submit this original signed form to ISS and keep a copy for your records.
Employer Agreement

to Report Termination or Departure of an OPT Employee

Name of OPT Employee ____________________________________________

I agree to report the termination or departure of the above OPT employee to the International Student Services Office at The University of Kansas if the termination or departure is prior to the end of the authorized period of OPT. The reporting should be initiated by sending an email to iss@ku.edu, and then completed by submitting an E-Form.

I understand such reporting must be made within 48 hours of the event.

The employee is considered to have departed when the employer knows the student has left the employment or if the employee has not reported for work for a period of 5 consecutive business days without the consent of the employer, whichever occurs earlier.

__________________________________________  __________________________
Signature of Employer                        Date

__________________________________________  __________________________
Printed Name of Employer                    Office

__________________________________________  __________________________
Email address                             Phone Number

(This form to be submitted with I-765 application to USCIS)
~Please Give This To Your Employer~

Employer Responsibilities

for

Reporting on Students on a 17-month STEM Extension

of

Optional Practical Training

Federal law 8 CFR 214.2 (f)(10)(ii)(C)(4) requires employers to report the termination or departure of an OPT employee to the government’s Designated School Official (international student advisor at their previous school) within 48 hours of the event.

An employer shall consider a worker to have departed when the employer knows the student has left the employment or if the student has not reported for work for a period of 5 consecutive business days without the consent of the employer, whichever occurs earlier.

1. Please initiate the process of reporting the termination or departure of an employee who is on the 17-month STEM extension OPT, by emailing iss@ku.edu.

Provide the following in the email:

- Subject: "Employer Report (STEM OPT Employment Termination/Departure)"
- Body of email:
  - Employee’s full name and date of birth
  - Your name and email address.

2. Once we receive your email, we will send you an E-Form to complete the report for termination or departure of the employee. To complete the E-Form the employer will need:
  - Student’s Given Name
  - Student’s Surname
  - Student’s Date of Birth
  - Student’s SEVIS ID # (starts N00 and is at the top of pages 1 & 2 on the I-20)
  - Date of Termination or Departure
  - Company Name
  - Complete Mailing Address at the Work Site (not corporate headquarters)
  - Name, Department and Phone Number of Person Submitting Report

Should you have any questions, please email iss@ku.edu with "Employer OPT Reporting Question" in the subject line.