

Maintaining Visa Status While on OPT

Optional Practical Training

Reporting

All OPT Students

Within 10 days of each change, you are required to report the following:

- Current U.S. address
- Start or end of employment
- Change of your employer's address
- Change of your employer's name
- Change of your employer's address/phone number/e-mail
- A statement on how the position relates to your degree
- Change of your official name

OPT STEM Extension Students

You are required to report all the above, plus the following:

- Employment status, 6 months after your extension start date, even if your information has not changed.
- Employment status, 12 months after your extension start date, even if your information has not changed.

How to Report

Students are responsible to report changes and updates to the SEVP Portal by visiting <https://sevp.ice.gov/opt/#/login>. Please also visit the SEVP Portal Help at <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevp-portal-help> for additional information and resources. If your account is locked, you need to contact International Student Services at iss@csustan.edu to have it unlocked.

STEM Extension and the Portal

STEM Extension students can use the portal to update existing employment. STEM Extension students cannot add or delete employers. If you need to submit a modified Form I-983, you need to send those updates to International Student Services at iss@csustan.edu.

Acceptable Employment

DHS has ruled that acceptable employment during OPT can include standard employment, contract employment, self-employment and volunteer positions. All employment must be appropriate to your degree and average at least 20 hours per week.

Appropriate STEM Extension Employment

Self-employment does not constitute a qualifying job for purposes of a 24-month STEM OPT extension. According to DHS, volunteer or unpaid positions do not constitute qualifying jobs for purposes of a 24-month STEM OPT extension.

Unemployment Limits

Students in Initial OPT Period

Maximum of 90 days unemployed allowed during the 12-month OPT period.

Students with an OPT STEM Extension

An additional 30 days applies, for a maximum of 120 days allowed during the 36-month OPT period.

NOTE: It is crucial that you report all periods of employment to avoid unnecessary accrual of unemployment days.

H-1B CAP GAP

An F-1 student who has an H-1B petition filed by an eligible employer has an automatic extension of status while the application is pending. Students on approved OPT also have an extension of work authorization.