



Cornell University
International Students
and Scholars Office

B-50 Caldwell Hall
 Ithaca, New York 14853-2602
 Telephone: 607.255.5243
 Fax: 607.255.2778
 Email: isso@cornell.edu
 Web: <http://www.isso.cornell.edu>

F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT)

STEP ONE:

- Read this OPT packet including the “frequently asked questions.”
- Fill in the ISSO Information Sheet (included in this packet).
- Download “form I-765” from www.uscis.gov and follow our directions on pages 2-3 to fill it in.

STEP TWO:

- If you **HAVE QUESTIONS** about the application or you would like to speak with an ISSO advisor, bring the items listed above to the ISSO and sign in to speak with the Advisor on duty,
- OR**, If you have **NO QUESTIONS** or you are not in Ithaca, **FAX** the “ISSO information sheet” to 607-255-2778 or email the pdf to isso@cornell.edu: an advisor will contact you within 3 business days regarding your new I-20 form
- The advisor will print out a new I-20 for you which will include our recommendation for your OPT on page 3. You will send a copy of this new I-20, after you **SIGN** it, with your application.

STEP THREE:

- Mail the documents listed below to the USCIS at one of the addresses listed below.* They must receive your application no more than 60 days beyond your graduation date or 60 days beyond the end date on your I-20 (whichever is **EARLIER**). You **MUST** send your application within 30 days the issue date (found on lower right of I-20) of the new I-20 from the ISSO.
- Be sure to keep copies of everything you mail for your own records!
- Graduate students should contact the graduate school to complete the appropriate paperwork.

For U.S. Postal Service deliveries including U.S.P.S. express mail	For (non-USPS) courier service deliveries (FedEx, UPS,DHL etc)
USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266	USCIS Attn: AOS, 2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067

(* see the next page for important instructions regarding your return address on the I-765)

- [] 1. Form I-765 (which you will download from uscis.gov) (follow instructions on pages 2-3)
- [] 2. A copy of page 1 and page 3 of the new I-20 that the ISSO advisor gives you with the recommendation for Optional Practical Training on page 3.
- [] 3. A copy of both sides of your I-94 Card **OR** print out of your I-94 from www.cbp.gov/i94
- [] 4. A copy of photo page (identification page) and expiration date page of your passport.
- [] 5. A copy of the F1 visa page of your passport (even if expired) (Canadians won't have this).
- [] 6. A copy of ALL previous I-20s that have been issued to you for your current degree program (if you do not have these, check with the ISSO advisor to get copies.)
- [] 7. A copy of your previous OPT card or other work card (EAD) if you have had one
- [] 8. **If you are applying for the 17 month extension** (see page 4 below), you must also include a copy of your transcripts or diploma as long as it states the degree field.
- [] 9. Two passport type photographs (See attached sample). Print your name and I-94 card number lightly in pencil on the back of each photo. Put the photos in an envelope and attach it to front of I-765. **DO NOT CUT THE PHOTOS!**
- [] 10. **Fee of \$380.** Checks may be made payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. You may send a money order or a personal check drawn on a U.S. bank, NO CASH. Attach the check to the front of the I-765.

Staple all above documents together and send by **certified mail** with a return receipt **OR federal express** (so that you have a tracking number). You will receive a receipt notice (Form I-797) from the USCIS.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT FORM I-765

(see completed example on the next page)

- ❑ **Check first box “permission to accept employment” or “renewal” if you are applying for a 17 month extension; fill out lines 1 through 16 (17 if applicable); sign and date:**

- ❑ **#3 Return Address:** This must be an address at which you can receive mail for at least the next 3 ½ months. You cannot put in a forwarding order on this address—the immigration service’s envelopes state “Do Not Forward.” If the card is sent to an address with a forwarding order, or if you cannot receive mail at the address you use, your card will be returned to the immigration service and destroyed. If you want to use a friend’s address, you need to make sure your name is on the mailbox. If you want your department to receive mail for you, check with your department first.

- ❑ **#3 Return Address:** Note: If the return mailing address you indicate on the I-765 is not located in New York, please check the chart on page 7 for the proper mailing address for your application.

- ❑ **#10 Alien Registration Number:** in most cases you will use your I-94 number found on the upper left side of the I-94 card or print out from www.cbp.gov/i94 that you received when you entered the US (small white card in your passport). It is usually an 11 digit number – sometimes the last two digits are separated by a space.

- ❑ **#11 Previous employment authorization:** The answer is “no” unless you have previously applied for an OPT card at this or any other institution. It is “no” even if you have had CPT or an H1B visa. If you are applying for a 17 month extension, please answer “yes” and complete the related information.

- ❑ **#16 Eligibility Categories:** For F-1 OPT, fill out as follows:
 - **For summer OPT PRIOR to graduating: (c) (3) (A)**
 - **For POST – Completion (after graduating) OPT: (c) (3) (B)**
 - **For the 17 month extension of OPT (see FAQ #10 below): (c) (3) (C)**

- ❑ **#17 If you are applying for the 17 month extension, you must also complete this section with your degree field and your employer’s “E-Verify” number.**

- ❑ **Certification:** Remember to sign and date the I-765

REMINDERS: REGULATIONS WHILE ON F-1 "OPT"

- ❑ **REQUIRED UPDATES (ADDRESS AND EMPLOYMENT).** Immigration regulations REQUIRE that while you are on OPT, you **MUST** notify the Cornell ISSO when you change your address AND/OR when you are NOT employed by filling out our OPT update form on the web at: <http://www.isso.cornell.edu/immigration/f1/optreport.php>

TRAVELING ABROAD WHILE ON PRACTICAL TRAINING:

- ❑ In order to re-enter the U.S. while you are on Optional Practical Training, you must have a valid passport, current F-1 visa stamp, I-20 signed within the last six months, the EAD (OPT work card) or the receipt notice for you OPT application **AND your job offer letter.**

- ❑ **NEVER ENTER the U.S. in any VISA STATUS OTHER THAN F-1** while on your OPT (it will invalidate your OPT!)

see instructions for anything marked with " → " or " ← "

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

I-765, Application For
Employment Authorization

Do not write in this block.

Remarks	Action Block	Fee Stamp
A#		
Applicant is filing under §274a.12 _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Application Approved. Employment Authorized / Extended (Circle One) until _____ (Date). Subject to the following conditions: _____ (Date). Application Denied. <input type="checkbox"/> Failed to establish eligibility under 8 CFR 274a.12 (a) or (c). <input type="checkbox"/> Failed to establish economic necessity under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(14), (18) and 8 CFR 214.2(f)		

I am applying for: Permission to accept employment.
 Replacement (of lost employment authorization document).
 Renewal of my permission to accept employment (attach previous employment authorization document).

1. Name (Family Name in CAPS) (First) (Middle) Which USCIS Office? Date(s)

POOH, Winnie The

2. Other Names Used (include Maiden Name) Results (Granted or Denied - attach all documentation)

3. Address in the United States (Street Number and Name) (Apt. Number)

House at Pooh Corner

(Town or City) (State/Country) (ZIP Code)
Ithaca NY 14850

12. Date of Last Entry into the U.S. (mm/dd/yyyy)

1/20/2013

13. Place of Last Entry into the U.S.

JFK, New York

14. Manner of Last Entry (Visitor, Student, etc.)

Student

4. Country of Citizenship/Nationality

United Kingdom

15. Current Immigration Status (Visitor, Student, etc.)

F-1

5. Place of Birth (Town or City) (State/Province) (Country)

Tunbridge Wells, Kent, UK

6. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy) 7. Gender

04/15/1973

Male Female

8. Marital Status Married Single Divorced Widowed

16. Go to the "Who May File Form I-765?" section of the instructions. In the space below, place the letter and number of the eligibility category you selected from the instructions. (For example, (a)(8), (c)(17)(iii), etc.).

(C) (3) (B)

9. Social Security Number (include all numbers you have ever used) (if any)

[If you do not have one, leave blank]

10. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or I-94 Number (if any)

[I-94 Card #]

11. Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from USCIS?

Yes (If "Yes," complete below) No

17. If you entered the eligibility category, (c)(3)(C), in Question 16 above, list your degree, your employer's name as listed in E-Verify, and your employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number in the space below.

Degree: _____
Employer's Name as listed in E-Verify: _____
Employer's E-Verify Company Identification Number or a valid E-Verify Client Company Identification Number: _____

Certification

Your Certification: I certify, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, that the foregoing is true and correct. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services needs to determine eligibility for the benefit I am seeking. I have read the "Who May File Form I-765?" section of the instructions and have identified the appropriate eligibility category in Question 16.

Signature: Winnie The Pooh Telephone Number: 123-456-7891 Date: 3/1/2013

Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than Above: I declare that this document was prepared by me at the request of the applicant and is based on all information of which I have any knowledge.

Print Name Address Signature Date

Remarks	Initial Receipt	Resubmitted	Relocated					Completed	
			Received	Sent	Approved	Denied	Returned		



F-1 OPT – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is F-1 Optional Practical Training?

Practical training is the opportunity to apply knowledge gained in your degree program to off-campus work in your major field (not your minor). OPT is authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (U.S.C.I.S.). This authorization can take 2 to 3 months to obtain. The maximum amount of time granted to work on F-1 OPT status is 12 months per degree level plus a possible H1B cap gap extension OR a 17 month extension for those who qualify (see FAQ below). You may use some or all of the available 12 months of practical training during your course of study or save the full twelve months to use after you graduate.

2. What are the Eligibility Requirements for F-1 Optional Practical Training?

To be eligible to apply for optional practical training, you must: (1) have been a full time enrolled student in the U.S. for at least one academic year by the requested start date of your OPT, and (2) be in F-1 status when you apply.

3. If I complete one degree program, take 12 months of practical training, and then begin a second course of study, am I eligible for an additional 12 months of practical training?

Yes, you are eligible to apply for another 12 month period of Optional Practical Training after changing to a **higher degree level**. This does not apply to a second master's degree.

4. How can I use optional practical training while I am still in my program?

You may use OPT while you are still in your degree program as follows: (1) part-time while school is in session, (2) full-time during annual vacation periods, and/or (3) full-time after you completed all course requirements for the degree and have a thesis requirement remaining. These periods of OPT used before you graduate will be deducted from the total allowable period of 12 months. Part-time OPT will be deducted at one-half the full-time rate.

5. How long does it take to get authorization for OPT and when should I apply?

Authorization for OPT is granted by U.S.C.I.S. and can take 2 - 3 months to obtain. Therefore it is important that you apply 3 months before the date you wish to start working. You may apply for POST-graduation OPT up to 90 days before your completion date and **the immigration service MUST RECEIVE your application NO LATER THAN 60 days** beyond your completion date or 60 days beyond the end date of your I-20 (**WHICHEVER IS EARLIER**) or, if you are an advanced graduate student, **NO LATER THAN 60 days** beyond the last day that you are registered as a student or the end date of your I-20 (**WHICHEVER IS EARLIER**). You cannot apply **MORE** than 120 days before the start date you choose. You **MUST** send your application within 30 days of getting the new I-20 from the ISSO.

6. Do I need to have a job to apply for optional practical training?

You do **NOT need to have a job offer** before applying for the first 12 months of optional practical training. If your field qualifies you for the STEM extension, you **DO** have to have a job to apply.

7. Do I need to have a job while I am on optional practical training?

Yes. The regulations require that you do have employment while on your POST-graduation OPT period. You are only allowed to have a total of 90 days of unemployment in your 12 month period of OPT or 120 days if you apply for and receive the 17 month extension. While on POST-graduation OPT, you **MUST** update your employment information on the ISSO website: <http://www.isso.cornell.edu/immigration/f1/optreport.php>

8. Does the job I have while on OPT have to be paid employment, or can it be unpaid?

The employment does **NOT** have to be paid employment. Therefore, a student who is self-employed (including performance majors with regular “gigs”), interning or volunteering in a position directly related to the academic field would be considered “employed” for the purposes of OPT employment. If you are “self-employed,” keep careful records of all the work you do—it is supposed to be at least 20 hours per week.

9. Can I begin working before I receive the Employment Authorization Document?

You may **NOT** begin employment before you receive your EAD from U.S.C.I.S.; working before practical training has been authorized by the U.S.C.I.S. constitutes illegal employment that will jeopardize your legal status in the U.S.

10. Do I have to do anything with the ISSO while I am on OPT?

Yes! Immigration regulations **REQUIRE** that while you are on POST-graduation OPT, you **MUST** report your employment and address information to the Cornell ISSO by filling out our OPT update form at: <http://www.isso.cornell.edu/immigration/f1/optreport.php>

11. Can I extend my OPT after the 12 months?

There are two types of extensions available: 1) a 17 month extension for those in certain fields (discussed below) and 2) an “H1B Cap Gap Extension” which extends your work authorization through to the start of your cap subject H1B visa if your OPT ends after your cap subject company has applied for a H1B for you but before the H1B starts on the following October 1st. This cap gap extension is available to all F-1 students using OPT in any field, as long as you have a pending or approved “cap subject” H1B application and the employer applied for in with a request for change of status as part of the application. The extension is automatic, you do not have to do anything at all to get the extension. “Cap Subject” refers to any H1B application that must be counted against the quota on H1B applications.

INFORMATION ON THE 17-MONTH “STEM” EXTENSION:

12. What is the 17 month STEM extension of OPT?

The “STEM Extension” allows F-1 students on OPT who have received a degree in the fields listed below, referred to as “STEM” fields (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics), to apply for a one time 17-month extension of their regular 12 month OPT period. **You will NOT apply for 29 months up front.** The 17 month extension will allow students to have extended work authorization in case they do not get an H1B visa in their first year after graduating. Students who timely file an application for the 17-month OPT extension will be able to continue employment while the extension application is pending, until a final decision on the I-765 or for 180 days, whichever comes first.

13. I think I qualify, how do I apply for the 17 month extension?

FIRST: Students graduating now with degrees in these fields will first apply for the regular 12 month period of OPT as usual.

THEN, WITHIN 3 months of the end of your first 12 months of OPT: If you meet the following criteria, you can apply through the ISSO office for your 17 month extension of your OPT during your first 12 months of OPT.

CRITERIA FOR THE 17 MONTH EXTENSION:

- Your employer must be enrolled in the “E-Verify” program (see information links below).
- You must have graduated in and be working in one of the fields listed below referred to as “STEM” fields
- You must have maintained status while on OPT

14. What are the “STEM” fields?

Actuarial Science, Computer Science Applications, Engineering, Engineering Technologies, Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics, Military Technologies, Physical Sciences, Science Technologies, Medical Scientist (MS, PhD) For more info see our website at: <http://www.isso.cornell.edu/immigration/fl/flnewoptreg.php>

15. What is “E-Verify”?

E-Verify is an Internet-based system operated by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA). E-Verify is currently free to employers and is available in all 50 states. E-Verify provides an automated link to federal databases to help employers determine employment eligibility of new hires and the validity of their Social Security numbers. More information is available at: www.uscis.gov.

16. Are there any other requirements while I am on the 17-month extension?

In addition to filling out the OPT report form for changes in address or employment, students on the 17 month extension of OPT will have to complete a report to the school every six months while on the 17 month extension. We will send out email reminders. You will report to us using the OPT report form at: <http://www.isso.cornell.edu/immigration/fl/optreport.php>

TRAVEL and OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

17. Now that I've turned in my application, can I travel outside the U.S. while I wait for the card to come?

After you graduate, in order to re-enter the U.S. you must have the following: OPT card (or receipt notice for the OPT application), your valid passport, a **current F-1 visa stamp**, I-20 signed within the last six months, **AND your job offer letter or proof of employment.**

Before you graduate, you should be able to get back in to the U.S. without the OPT card as long as it is still long enough in advance of your graduation (at least one month). If you are within a month of the end date of your I-20, be prepared to show all the documents you would need for OPT (listed above and in number 19 below).

18. I want to leave the U.S. for a short time while my OPT application is in process, but I need to return before the card will arrive. I have a tourist visa (B2) that is valid for 10 years. Can't I just enter the U.S. on my tourist visa while I'm waiting to get the EAD card, then start work with the card once I get it?

NO!! If you intend to continue working on your OPT, **NEVER** enter in any other immigration status except F-1. If you leave the U.S. and re-enter with a B status, and you will have lost your F-1 status and your OPT will be **invalid!**

19. What documents do I need to re-enter the U.S. while on OPT?

You will need your I-20 that has been endorsed on the travel line by the ISSO within the last 6 months; the OPT card from the U.S.C.I.S. (or the receipt notice for your OPT application), your valid passport, a **current F-1 visa stamp**, **AND your job offer letter or proof of employment.**

20. What if I have applied for the 17 month extension but I have not yet received the card, can I travel out of the U.S.?

No, the immigration service advises that while you are waiting for the approval of the 17 month extension, you should NOT try to re-enter the country until you RECEIVE the new OPT card.

21. The visa stamp in my passport has expired, but I need to travel outside the U.S. while on OPT. Do I need to get a new visa stamp at an embassy?

If you are going to Canada or Mexico, and staying for less than 30 days, you could re-enter the U.S. on your expired F-1 visa stamp, with your I-94 card, a valid passport, your EAD card (or receipt notice), an I-20 that has been signed by the ISSO within the last 6 months, **AND your job offer letter or proof of employment** as long as: 1) you do not apply for a visa while in Canada and 2) you are NOT a national of Iran, Syria, Sudan, Cuba or North Korea. **If you are traveling elsewhere**, you will need to go to a U.S. embassy or consulate and seek a new visa stamp. **Please come in to the ISSO** to discuss your visa application with an advisor as the consulates often change the requirements for visa applications for students on OPT.

22. In what ways is my application to the embassy for a new visa stamp affected by being on Optional Practical Training?

The risk of denial of an application for a renewed visa stamp for Optional Practical Training is somewhat higher than while you are in your active student program. The F-1 student visa requires that the applicant must intend to return to the home country at the end of the program, and if the embassy official is not convinced of your intention to return home, the visa application will be denied. It is possible and many students on OPT get their F-1 visa stamps renewed. You do have to be careful to demonstrate non-immigrant intent. Please see an ISSO advisor to discuss in more detail.

23. What documents do I need to show at the embassy for a new visa stamp under OPT?

You need to take a valid passport, the EAD card or receipt notice for your application, an I-20 created by the ISSO for your OPT application, **AND your job offer letter or proof of employment.** The official job offer letter should sound temporary and not permanent. You should also be prepared to discuss how this job experience will apply to the job market in your home country, and how you intend to apply it there.

24. Do I still need to get the travel line on my I-20 signed by the ISSO during the year of OPT?

Yes, during the OPT year, if you travel outside the U.S., you need to have the travel line signed every six months. If you are not located in Ithaca, mail the original I-20 to the ISSO for endorsement, leaving plenty of time for mailing delays both ways.

Where to File:

<p><u>If you live in (return address on I-765):</u></p> <p>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</p>	<p><u>Mail your application to USCIS Dallas Lockbox:</u></p> <p>For U.S. Postal Service deliveries: USCIS PO Box 660867 Dallas, TX 75266</p> <p>For Express Mail: USCIS, Attn: AOS 2501 S. State Hwy, 121, Business Suite 400 Lewisville, TX 75067</p>
<p><u>If you live in (return address on I-765):</u></p> <p>Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington (state), Wisconsin, Wyoming, or Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands</p>	<p><u>Mail your application to USCIS Phoenix Lockbox:</u></p> <p>For U.S. Postal Service deliveries: USCIS PO Box 21281 Phoenix, AZ 85036</p> <p>For Express Mail: USCIS, Attn: AOS 1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S, Suite 100 Phoenix, AZ 85034</p>

ISSO Information Sheet for OPT Application

Follow the directions in STEP TWO of this OPT packet after you have completed this form. We will enter our ISSO advisor recommendation for your OPT in the SEVIS database and print out a new I-20 with our recommendation and your requested dates printed on page 3. If you are submitting this application by fax, an advisor will contact you within a few days. We need the following information:

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____

Cornell Student ID#: _____ DEGREE Level (Phd, MA, BA): _____

SEVIS ID# (upper right hand corner of your I-20, starts with "N"): N _____

Major Field of Study (OPT **only** authorizes you to work in your field of study): _____

Program Completion date**: _____

This is your graduation date if you are registered up until your graduation date. If you are an advanced PhD student, and you will stop registering before you graduate, the "program completion date" is your last date as a registered student. [Graduation Dates**: Spring 2014=05/25/2014; August 2014=8/25/2014; Fall 2014=01/20/2015]

OPT START DATE: _____ * OPT END DATE: _____

*Please read the information on the next page on choosing your start date. (This date is not needed for 17 mo. extensions.)

Email Address that you will keep while on OPT: _____

Additional Information NEEDED ONLY if you are applying for the 17-month extension of OPT (for info on 17-month extension see OPT FAQ in this packet):

End date of Current OPT card: _____ Your Job Title: _____

Name of Employer: _____

Address of Employer: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____ Supervisor's phone or email: _____

Choosing your Start Date

(see OPT time-line illustrated below)

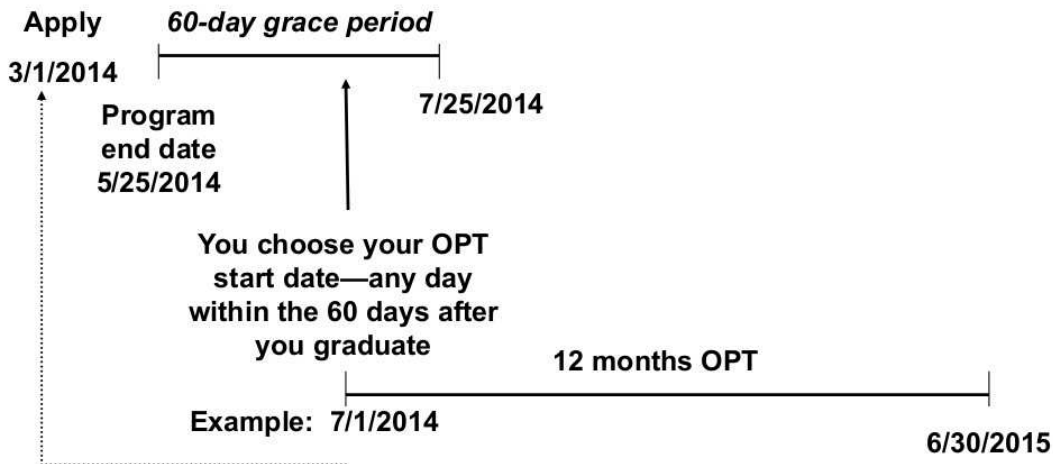
You are allowed to pick a start date any time within the 60 days following your graduation date or your last day of registration (whichever is earlier). There is some leeway if you finish your coursework and need an earlier start date. There are many overlapping time constraints which effect your OPT application (see OPT time-line illustrated below). When choosing the start date for your OPT card, the most important priorities to weigh are:

1. **Choose the earliest day that you might want to start working (you cannot begin working BEFORE the start date on the OPT card and until you receive the card).** What if someone offers you a job with the stipulation that you start the day after graduation? Plan for any possibility. [PLEASE NOTE: on campus work authorization ends when your registration ends, so if you want to continue in an on campus job once you are no longer registered, that job must be in your field, and you must have received your OPT card.]
2. **If you want the latest possible day to start your work authorization,** the latest day you may choose as your start date for the OPT card is 60 days after your graduation or last day of registration (whichever is earlier). For January 2014 graduation, the latest OPT start date you can choose is March 21, 2014. For an May 25, 2014 graduation the latest OPT start date is July 24, 2014.

REMEMBER: You may not change these dates after you apply for OPT.

Your OPT Time-Line

(For example only – your actual dates may be different than those listed here.)



Apply no more than 3 months before you graduate, not earlier than 120 days before your chosen start date, and no more than 60 days after graduation! Also, you must send your application within 30 days of getting the new I-20 from the ISSO.

Passport Photographs: Composition Checklist

(from http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/guide/composition/composition_874.html)

7 Steps to Successful Photographs:

- ✓ Frame subject with **full face, front view, eyes open**
- ✓ 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 inches (25 mm to 35 mm)
- ✓ **Center head** within frame (see Figure 2 below)
- ✓ Make sure **eye height** is between 1-1/8 inches to 1-3/8 inches (28 mm and 35 mm) from bottom of photo
- ✓ Photograph subject against a plain white or off-white **background**
- ✓ **Position subject** and **lighting** so that there are no distracting shadows on the face or background
- ✓ Encourage subject to have a **natural expression**

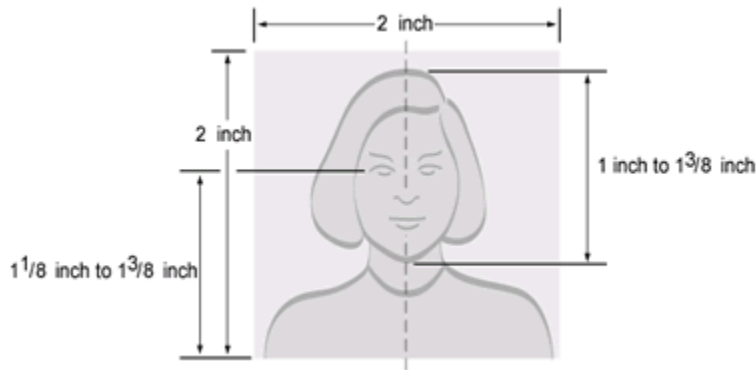


Figure 2. Head Position & Placement

Well-Composed Photos



Frequently Asked Questions about Passport Photographs

(from: http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/guide/faq/faq_881.html)

Do the photos have to be in color?

Yes, the photos must be in color.

How recent must the photos be?

The photos must be no older than 6 months.

What pose should the photos show?

The photo should show a clear, front view, full face of the customer. The customer should be in normal street attire, without hat or dark glasses against a plain white or off-white background. The customer should have a natural expression, mouth closed, and eyes open and looking directly ahead. Photos in which the face of the person being photographed is not in focus will not be accepted.

How big should the head be in the photo?

The customer's head, measured from the bottom of the chin to the top of the hair, should be between 1 inch and 1-3/8 inches. The head should be centered in the photo. The head of the person being photographed should not be tilted up, down or to the side. It should cover about 50% of the area of the photo.

Can hats or religious headgear be worn for the photo?

Unless worn daily for religious reasons, all hats or headgear should be removed for the photo. In all cases, no item or attire should cover or otherwise obscure any part of the face.

Can eyeglasses be worn for the photo?

Eyeglasses worn on a daily basis can be worn for the photo. However, there should be no reflections from the eyeglasses that obscures the eyes.

Can sunglasses or tinted glasses be worn?

Dark glasses or nonprescription glasses with tinted lenses are not acceptable unless you need them for medical reasons. A medical certificate may be required.

Can work uniforms be worn for the photo?

Uniforms should not be worn in photographs except in the case of religious attire that is worn daily. Otherwise, normal street attire should be worn.

Are photos that are copied from recent driver licenses or other official documents acceptable?

No, only original photographs are acceptable. Copied or digitally scanned photos of photos will not be accepted. In addition, photos must not be retouched to alter the customer's appearance in any way.

Are snapshots, magazine photos, or photos from vending machine acceptable?

No, snapshots, magazine photos, most vending machine prints, or full-length photographs are not acceptable.

May photos be taken with a digital camera?

If the digital camera has sufficient resolution — capable of capturing and storing images with 1 million pixels (megapixels) or more — it can be used to take the photos. However, printing of digital images is best done by professional photography processing labs because many off-the-shelf digital printers cannot achieve the image-quality required for passport and visa photographs. In any case, the image-quality criteria, described on this website, must be met in the submitted conventional film photo and/or the digital image printed photo.

Places to obtain Passport Photos

Fees are in the \$10-14 range

Student Agencies, Inc.
www.studentagencies.com
409 College Avenue
272-2000

AAA
1284 Dryden Road
273-6727

The Cornell Store