24-Month STEM OPT Extension
Request Form

Please complete this form after reading the instructions in the following pages. Submit required materials in their entirety to ISSSOffice@rpi.edu. Please allow up to two weeks processing time.

Name (Last, First, Middle): _____

RIN:_____   SEVIS:N_____

Non-RPI Email:_____   Phone #:_____

Personal Address: _____
                            Number   Street   Apt. #

                        _____
                            City   State   Zip Code

Employer Name:_____

Employer Address: _____
                            Number   Street   Suite. #

                        _____
                            City   State   Zip Code

Employment Start Date:_____

Employer EIN: ____-_____   Employer e-Verify #: _____

Are you self-employed?: ☐Yes   ☐No   Hours per week:_____

Job Title:_____   Supervisor:_____

Supervisor Phone #:_____Supervisor email:_____

Please briefly explain how this employment is directly related to your course work at
Rensselaer:_____
_____
_____

I certify that the above information is true and correct, and that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the information on the following pages, including updating the ISSS Office of any changes to personal information, employer information, and status within 10 business days.

Signature_____ Date: _____

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24-month STEM OPT Extension

Who is eligible for the 24-month extension?

You can apply for OPT extensions if you meet ALL of the following criteria:

1) You are an F-1 student currently authorized for 12-month OPT
2) You graduated with a degree in certain "STEM" fields, as defined by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Under the new 24 month STEM ruling, this may include previously issued STEM degrees as well. Please contact ISSS for more information regarding previously earned degree:
   http://www.ice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Document/2014/stem-list.pdf
3) Your employment is directly related to the STEM field, your employer is e-Verified, you will be full-time (20+ hours per week), and you and your employer have successfully completed the *Form I-983: Training Plan for STEM OPT Students*

Students with Pending 17-month STEM extension on May 10, 2016
You will be issued an RFE (Request for Evidence) by USCIS. You will need to submit this request form, along with a completed I-983, to the ISSS Office so that we can issue you a new I-20 recommended 24 month STEM extension. You will then be required to submit a photocopy of the new I-20 along with an updated I-765 to USCIS in response to the RFE.

Students with Approved 17-month STEM extension on May 10, 2016
If you are currently in an authorized 17-month STEM extension on May 10, 2016, you may be eligible to apply for an additional 7 months. To be eligible, students must have at least 150 calendar days remaining in their 17-month OPT period at the time the additional 7 month request is filed with USCIS. The process will be as follows:
   - Starting May 10, 2016, eligible students can request a new I-20 from ISSS recommending the additional 7 month STEM extension. Students must submit all forms as outlined in these instructions, including the completed form I-983
   - Student must submit all required documents to USCIS no earlier than May 10, 2016 and no later than August 8, 2016 and/or 150 days before current STEM EAD expires, whichever comes first

When do I apply?

USCIS must receive your application no earlier than 90 days before your current OPT EAD end date, and no later than the end date. Currently, the ISSS Office requests you allow 2 weeks processing time for our office to review your documents and process a new I-20 with 24-month STEM recommendation.

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How do I apply?

Step 1

Before submitting anything to USCIS, you must request a new I-20 with 24-month STEM recommendation from the ISSS Office. To do so, please submit the following documents via email for review:

1. *Completed 24-Month STEM OPT Extension Request Form-* page 1 of this packet
2. *Completed Form I-983: Training Plan for STEM OPT Students-* available online at https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/stem-opt-hub
3. *Letter from your employer for USCIS-* The letter should include:
   a. Description of how the employment directly relates to the STEM degree
   b. Statement that employer will report your termination or departure from company to ISSS Office
   c. Should be on company letterhead
4. *Completed Form I-765*
   a. Check the box for **"Renewal of my permission to accept employment"**
   b. #10. Put either your I-94 number or the A# listed on your current EAD card.
   c. #11. Check "Yes." For which USCIS office, write the name of the service center that processed your first OPT (ex: Vermont Service Center). For "Date(s)," write the start on your EAD card.
   d. #16. Eligibility Categories: write **(c) (3) (C).**
   e. #17. For degree, write the level and CIP STEM major code on your I-20 (ex: PhD 00.0000). You **must** write your employer's e-Verify number on your I-765 in order for your application to be approved.
5. *Photocopy of current EAD card-* front and back

Step 2

The ISSS Office will review your documents. You will receive a notification once the STEM I-20 has been printed and mailed to your personal address. Our office mails standard USPS (~3 to 10 business days).

Step 3

USCIS *must* receive your application *within 60 days* of when the I-20 with recommendation is printed by the ISSS office or before your current EAD expires, whichever comes first. USCIS cannot receive your request more than 90 days before your current EAD expires. Any applications which are not submitted in the proper time frame will be denied. After you receive your new I-20 from the ISSS Office, **sign the new I-20** and mail the following documents to the USCIS Service Center with jurisdiction over your residency area (more instructions will be included with your new I-20):

1. A **photocopy** of **ALL** previous I-20s that have been issued to you, including the new I-20 with STEM recommendation and any I-20s from schools that you transferred from. Please, **DO NOT** send originals to USCIS **(…continued next page….)**

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2. A copy of your transcript or diploma proving you graduated with a STEM eligible degree
3. Original Form I-765 with original signature **in ink**
4. Letter from employer
5. A photocopy of your current EAD card (front and back)
6. A printed out version of the electronic I-94 (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov) and/or a photocopy of your I-94 card (front and back) if you still have a paper I-94
7. A photocopy of the identifying page in your passport
8. A photocopy of your F-1 visa(s) in your passport, even if it has expired
9. Two passport photographs taken within the past 30 days. For picture requirements, go to: http://travel.state.gov/passport/guide/composition/composition_874.html. Write your name and I-94 number on the back of each picture
10. A check or money order for $380.00 made payable to the "U.S. Department of Homeland Security"

What are the reporting requirements while on STEM OPT?

Notify the ISSS Office *within ten days* when there is a change in:
- Legal name
- Address
- Email and/or Phone Number
- Employer/Company name
- Address of Employer
- Employer e-Verify number
- When employment changes or terminates (start and end dates)
- Changes in status (i.e. H1B, Permanent Residency, etc…)
- Material changes to I-983 Training Plan, including, but not limited to: *change in employer's EIN, reduction in student compensation that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked, any significant decrease in hours per week student engages in training opportunity, changes to the employer's commitments or student's learning objectives as documented on form I-983*. Student is required, with their employer's cooperation, to submit an amended I-983 reflecting these changes to the ISSS Office within 10 business days.

Frequently Asked Questions on 24-month OPT Extension

1. Can I continue working after the end date of the first OPT period if I applied for OPT extension but have not received a new Employment Authorization Document?

*Yes-- if USCIS received your application for the 24-month OPT STEM extension **before** the end date on your EAD you can continue employment while the STEM extension application is pending until a final decision is made **or** up to 180 days past your EAD end date, whichever comes first.*

2. Can I apply for OPT extension more than once?

Yes. Under the new ruling, students are eligible for up to two STEM extensions per lifetime so long as they earn another STEM-qualifying degree at an increasing education level (ex: one 24-month STEM extension for Bachelor's degree, additional 24-month STEM extension for Master's or Doctorate degrees)

3. Can I apply for 36-month OPT immediately instead of getting an extension later?

No-- you can only apply for 12-month OPT first and then apply for 24-month OPT extension later on.

4. Can I travel if I applied for OPT extension but have not received the new Employment Authorization Document?

No—USCIS advises that you only travel after you receive the new EAD card. You cannot travel in the time between when your initial EAD card expires and when you receive your new EAD card for STEM extension.

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

a) I-20 signed for travel by the ISSS Office within the last six months
b) New Employment Authorization Document (STEM EAD card)
c) Valid passport with valid F-1 visa
d) Job offer letter or proof of employment with e-Verified company

6. Can I hold more than one job while on a STEM extension?

Yes, but all of your employers must be e-Verified, and all must complete a Form I-983. Please notify our office of any additional employers and their e-Verify numbers.

7. What are the unemployment limits for 24 month STEM extension?

You are allowed a cumulative 150 days unemployment time between your initial 12 - month OPT and the 24 month STEM extension. This includes weekends. Students must report any unemployment to ISSS within 10 days