



Colorado Heights University

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Where do I obtain a Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization?

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) website - **Form:** <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765.pdf> and

Instructions: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765instr.pdf>. Complete the form online, print your responses, and bring the document to your appointment with the CHU Registrar.

- a. What is the answer to item #16 on the Form I-765? (c)(3)(A) if you are applying for **pre**-completion and **(c)(3)(B)** for **post**-completion OPT.
- b. What address should I list on the Form I-765? It is recommended that you use the CHU Registrar address: **Colorado Heights University, Office of the Registrar, 3001 S. Federal Blvd, Denver CO 80236**. If you choose to use your own home address on the form I-765, make sure you will remain at the address you list for at least the next 3-4 months, as the US Postal Service **will not** forward the OPT receipt or approval notice (EAD). If the EAD card is mailed directly to the student the Registrar must be notified immediately of the card receipt.

2. When Should I Apply?

Maximum of **90 days prior** to the intended employment start date or program completion date. USCIS processing can take 2.5 - 4 months. The Employment Authorization Document (EAD), which is the OPT card, must be in your possession before you can begin to work. If the application is for post-completion OPT the final acceptable submission date is 60 days after the degree program completion.

3. What is my program completion date?

Program completion is the last day of the semester in which all course requirements are completed. The program completion date is not necessarily the date of graduation. If you do not complete program requirements and will be required to enroll in the next semester you must contact the Registrar immediately.

4. How will I know USCIS received my application?

USCIS will send a **receipt notice** with a receipt number (**LIN#**) and the date they received your application. Use the LIN# to check the application status at: <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/Dashboard.do>. You may also submit a Form G-1145 (<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/g-1145.pdf>) if you want to receive email or text message notification.

5. What do I have to report to CHU after approval?

Student is required to report in the following information immediately to the Registrar (Registrar@chu.edu):

- Any change in name or address;
- The name and address the employer;
- Employment start and end dates;
- Your employer name and address each time you change employers;
- Any interruption of employment (i.e. you quit, or get laid off); and
- A change of immigration status.

FAQ Continued...

6. What if I cannot find work?

Post-completion OPT may not accrue an aggregate of more than **90 days** of unemployment. The student will be in violation of status if not employed for more 90 days and the F-1 visa will be terminated. You must report any period, including start and end dates, of unemployment to the CHU Registrar. Unpaid or volunteer employment may be used to maintain status. Unpaid employment must be reported to the CHU Registrar, it must still be in your field of study, and you must work at least 21 hours per week for it to count as full time employment.

7. What if my address changes after I submitted my application?

Call **1-800-375-5283** USCIS National Customers Service Center immediately.

8. What if I want to travel outside the U.S. while on OPT?

If you leave the U.S. while on OPT, you should carry the following with you:

- Your I-20, signed for travel by the CHU Registrar on page 3 within the last 6 months
- The Employment Authorization Document (OPT card)
- Valid passport
- Valid F-1 visa
- Proof of employment or job offer letter
- OPT Travel Support Letter from CHU
- A copy of the following Department of State cable explaining the expired Form I-20 dates:
http://travel.state.gov/visa/laws/telegrams/telegrams_1444.html
- **PLEASE NOTE:**
 - a. **If you do not have a job**, we recommend you do not travel out of the U.S. as you may not be allowed to re-enter.
 - b. **If you are gone for more than 5 months**, even if you have a job offer, your absence will not be considered “temporary” and you may be denied entry to the U.S.
 - c. **Do not travel if you have a change of visa status pending.**

9. What if I enroll in a new program of study at CHU or a different school?

OPT employment will automatically terminate when you transfer to a new program/school or begin a new level of study. Consult with the Registrar to plan the timing of the transfer and beginning new levels of study.

10. What if I want to apply for an H-1B Visa while on OPT?

Regulations extend the "duration of status" (D/S) for an F-1 student on OPT when their OPT end date expires before the H-1B start date, until October 1 of that year, including the extension of your work permission under OPT **ONLY IF ALL** the following conditions are met:

- a. You are the beneficiary of an H1b petition
- b. An H1b petition has been timely filed for you
- c. The employment start date of the H1b petition filed on your behalf has a start date of October 1 of that year
- d. The petition was filed for a change of status (**not** consular notification)
- e. You have not violated the terms of your F-1 visa status, including immediately reporting the information listed in question 6
- f. **PLEASE NOTE:** Your F-1 status will be automatically terminated if the H-1B petition is rejected, denied, or revoked

11. What if I have a question not listed on this Q&A?

If you have any further questions about OPT, your immigration status, or SEVIS, please contact the Registrar at Registrar@chu.edu or 303-937-4280.