

MTU STEM OPT USCIS E-Filing Guide

e-Filing Guide

IPS provides general guidance on your OPT/STEM OPT application based on information obtained from reliable sources and reflecting our years of experience in working with students. We make every attempt to ensure that we provide you with the most up to date information available. Any advice provided to you by our office (as well as the information in this packet) does not constitute legal advice, however. The OPT application is a personal application for which you are responsible; the application preparation and USCIS case decision will vary depending on the facts at issue in your particular case. IPS does its best to provide you with the most current guidance, but please be mindful that USCIS may change its interpretation of these policies, procedures, regulations, and eligibility requirements at any time. IPS office is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from USCIS.



- Students <u>MUST</u> first request their I-20 with a STEM OPT recommendation from IPS.
- **DO NOT** proceed with USCIS OPT e-Filing without the **new** STEM OPT Form I-20!
- You MUST be physically present in the U.S. to file your STEM OPT application!
- If you e-File your STEM OPT application **DO NOT** mail an application to USCIS!
- Instructions on how to request an I-20 with a STEM OPT recommendation and general OPT Instructions can be found here:

https://www.mtu.adu/international/students/resources/ampleyment/ent/extension/

- Go to USCIS https://ww w.uscis.gov/ i-765
 - **USCIS** recommends using the latest version of Google Chrome, Firefox, Edge, Firefox, or Internet **Explorer 11**
- Click "File Online"

USCIS Response to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

An official website of the United States government Here's how you know >

Search our Site

Topics

orms

Home > Forms > All Forms > Application for Employment Authorization

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OHIIIS

All Forms

Explore My Options Filing Guidance

Filing Fees

Forms Updates

Department of State (DS) Forms and Other Non-USCIS Forms I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

• ALERT: For certain applicants who electronically filed Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, based on a pending Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal, the receipt notice did not include language about the <u>540-day automatic Employment Authorization Document (EAD) extension</u>. On or before the week of March 20, we will send these applicants an email or text notification instructing them to sign into their USCIS online account. Once signed in, they will find their corrected receipt notice. We will also send corrected paper receipt notices by mail. Please note that if you are eligible for the 540-day automatic EAD extension, any USCIS receipt notice for your Form I-765, together with your expired EAD, will serve as acceptable proof of employment authorization and EAD validity during the automatic extension period.

Alert: We recently updated the filing location for Special Immigrant Juveniles filing Form I-360, Petition for Amerasian, Widow(er), or Special Immigrant, or Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status.

See more 🗸

Alert: To improve efficiency and reduce Form I-765 processing times for Form I-485 applicants, USCIS
may decouple Forms I-765 from Forms I-131 filed at the same time.

See more 🗸

Alert: As of April 1, 2022, we will no longer accept a single, combined fee payment for the filing of Form I-539, Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status; Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization; or Form I-824, Application for Action on an Approved Application or Petition, together with a Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker.

See more v

• Alert Afghan Parolee: If you are an Afghan national paroled into the United States and you are applying for employment authorization, you will need a Social Security number (SSN) to work in the United States.

See more v

Certain noncitizens who are in the United States may file Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, to request an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). Other noncitizens whose immigration status authorizes them to work in the United States without restrictions may also use Form I-765 to apply for an EAD that shows such authorization.

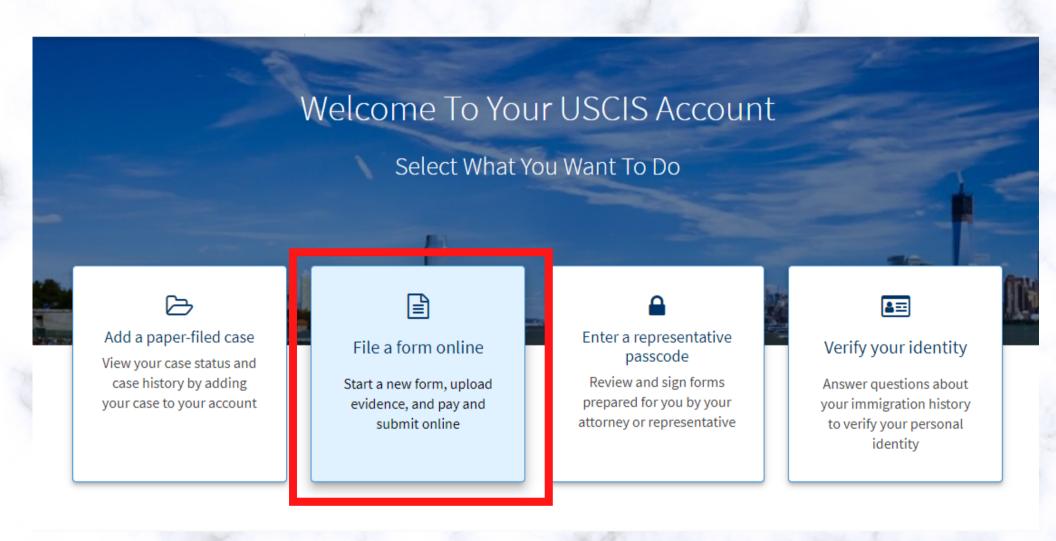
File Online

- Create a USCIS Account if you do not already have one.
- The USCIS system will ask for two-step verification for security purposes upon every sign-in. Security code messages may go into your spam/junk folder!
- Keep your account information secure as you will need to return to your account to finish the application and to view updates once you have submitted your application.



upuates t	Thee you have sui	Jillitted you
Sent: Friday, Novem To:	Ouscis.dhs.gov < MyAccount@uscis.dhs.go ober 12, 2021 2:50 PM o-step verification notification	<u>'ov</u> >
You have requested	a secure verification code to log into yo	our USCIS Account.
Please enter this see	cure verification code: XXXXXXXX	
If you are not attem	pting to log into USCIS, please go to htt	ps://myaccount.uscis.g
Please be aware tha	at this update might require your immed	liate attention.
PLEASE DO NOT RE	PLY TO THIS MESSAGE	
	Enter your verification code	
	A verification code has been sent to jessica_heffernan@harvard.edu. Please enter the code that you received. If you do not receive the code in 10 minutes, please request a new verification code.	
	If you have lost access to jessica_heffernan@harvard.edu, enter your backup code instead, or Contact Us.	
	Secure verification code	

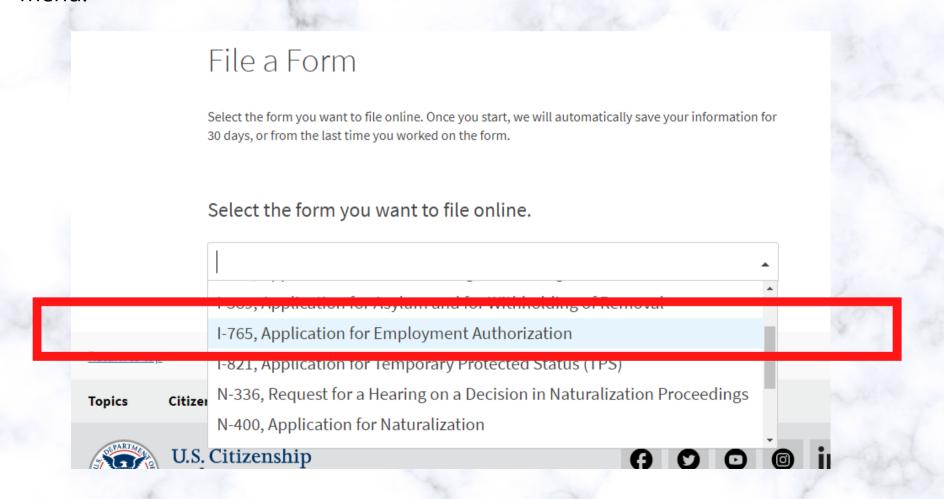
When you log into your USCIS Account, click "File a Form Online"





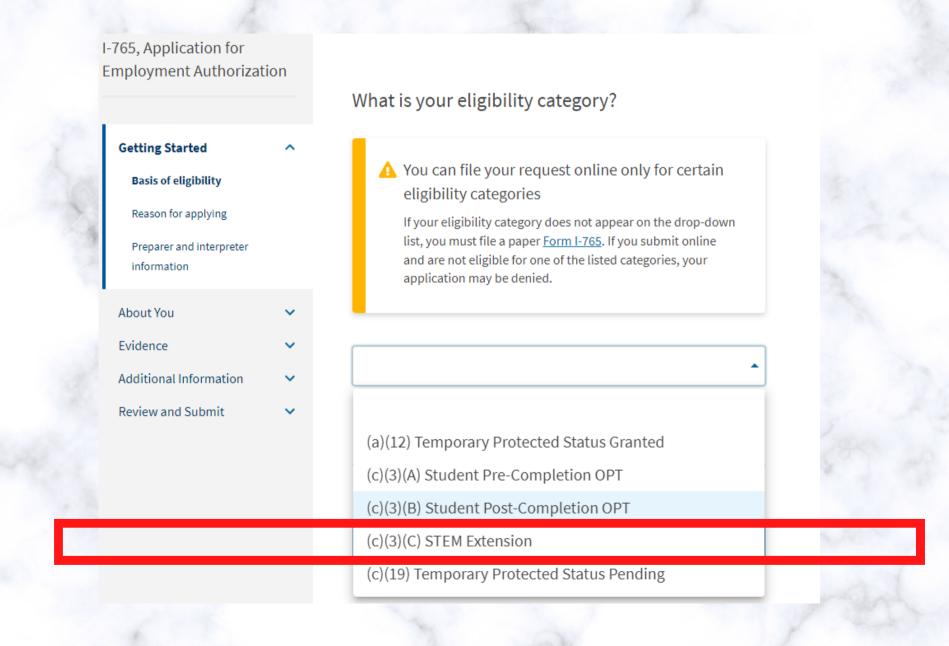
- E-file option is only available for OPT and STEM OPT applications.
- <u>DO NOT USE</u> the e-File option for <u>F-1 Work permission with International</u> <u>Organizations</u> OR for F-1 Work Authorization for <u>Economic Hardship</u>.

Select "I-765, Application for Employment Authorization" from the drop down menu.



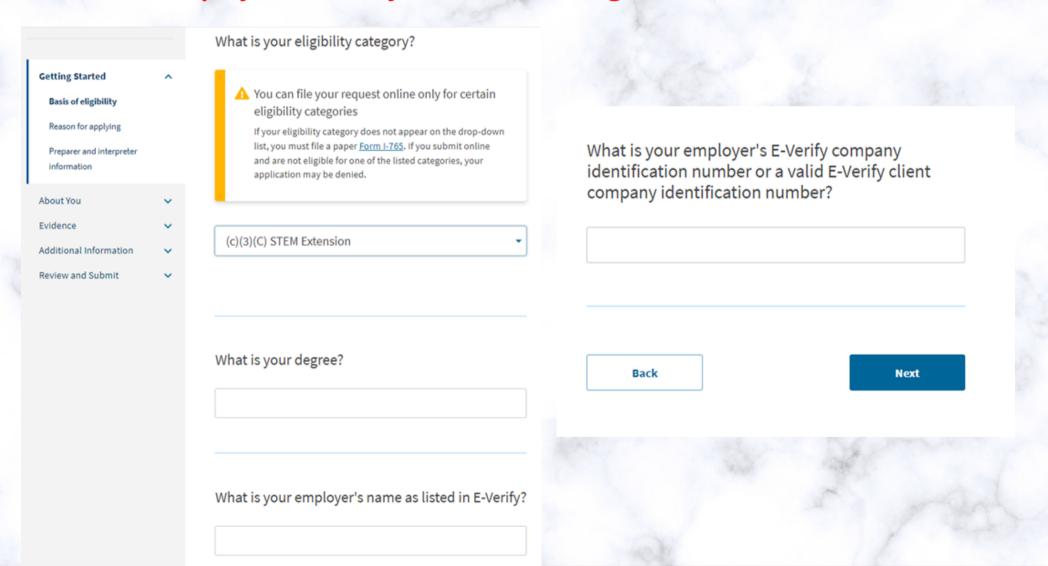
GETTING STARTED SECTION - Basis of Eligibility

- Select the type of OPT you are applying for:
 - ∘ (c)(3)(C) STEM OPT Extension



GETTING STARTED SECTION - Basis of Eligibility

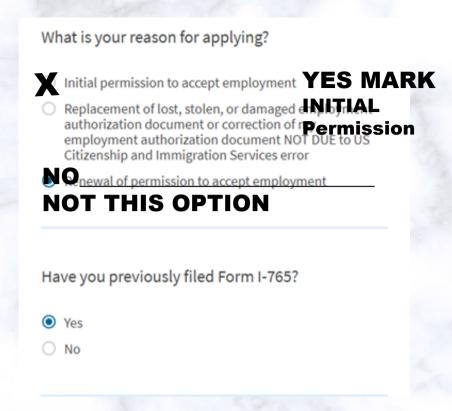
- Enter your CIP Code for your STEM Major in "What is your degree?"
- Enter your employer's **name** listed in E-Verify.
- Enter your employer's E-Verify number.
 - Please ensure that you check with your employer for the correct employer name and E-Verify number.
 - Your employer's E-Verify number is 5-7 digits. This number is NOT the EIN.



GETTING STARTED - Reason for Applying

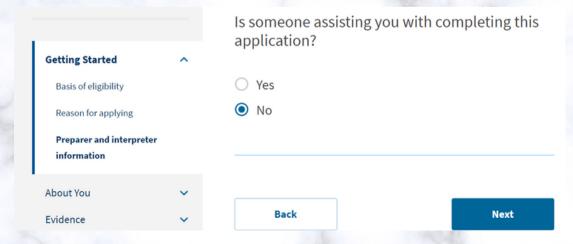
Select 'initial permission to accept employment.' This guidance is based on page 1 of the USCIS instructions for I-765 which indicate that the renewal option is for an EAD issued to an eligible applicant after the expiration of a previous EAD issued under the same category. STEM OPT extension (c)(3)(C) is a different category of

- employment authorization from post-completion OPT (c)(3)(B).
 - Select **"Yes"** to the question "Have you
- previously filed Form I-765".



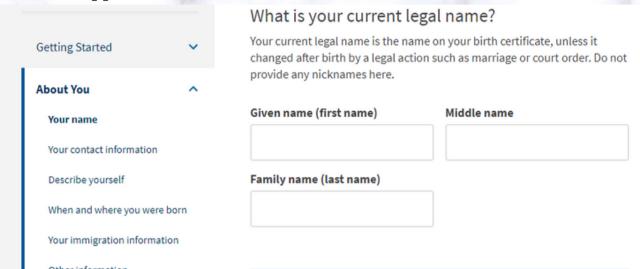
GETTING STARTED - Preparer and interpreter information

- Select "No"
- This is a personal application; even though IPS is involved, you are filing your own case. The first option, "Yes" is not applicable for MTU STEM OPT applications.



ABOUT YOU - Your Name

- Enter your legal name per your biographical passport page and Form I-20.
- If your name on your passport does not match your current I-20, use the same name used on your 12 month OPT application.



ABOUT YOU - Your Name

Select "Yes" if applicable and enter other names

Yes	
○ No	
Provide the other names you ha	ve used.
	ve used. Middle name
Given name (first name)	
Provide the other names you ha Given name (first name) Family name (last name)	

ABOUT YOU - Your contact information

• Enter your personal U.S. telephone number and primary email address

aytime telep	phone number	
Aohile telenh	one number (if any)	
nobite tetepii	one number (numy)	
This is the	e same as my daytime telephone number.	
This is the	e same as my daytime telephone number.	
This is the	e same as my daytime telephone number.	

ABOUT YOU - Your contact information

• Enter a U.S. Mailing Address. Must be valid for at least 5 months from date you submit your application. If you are unsure use friends/relative or IPS address USCIS will NOT forward the EAD card.

MAILING RECOMMENDATIONS



What is your current U.S. mailing address?

We will use your current mailing address to contact you throughout the application process. We may not be able to contact you if you do not provide a complete and valid address. Please provide a U.S. address only.

In care of name (if any) Insert Friend or Family Member Name Address line 1 1500 MASSACHUSETTS AVE Street number and name Address line 2 APT 1 Apartment, suite, unit, or floor City or town State ZIP code CAMBRIDGE Massachu... • 02138

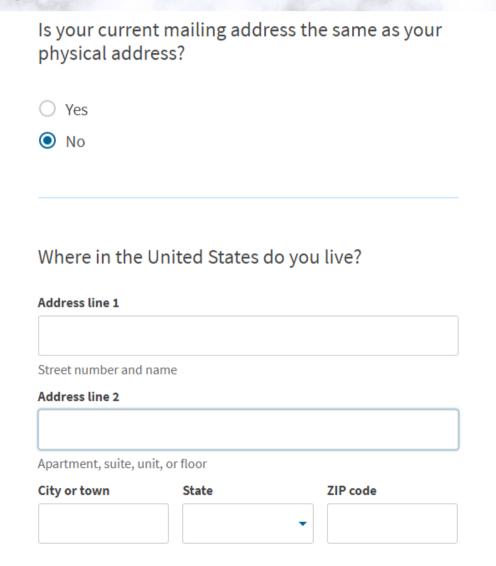
- EADs are considered government documents that cannot be forwarded by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).
- Your U.S. Mailing Address This is the address where you will receive your application receipt, approval notice, and STEM OPT EAD.
- If you will move from your current residence in less than 5 months, you should use the U.S. address of a reliable friend or relative who can receive the card for you.
- Attempting to change the address midway through the STEM OPT application process can cause delays and be extremely disruptive, resulting in lost, or returned STEM
- OPT EADs.

Alternatively, you may wish to consider using a U.S. Post Office address (known as a P.O. Box) if that is how you would prefer to receive your mail.

- Prior to completing your U.S. mailing address, verify your address with USPS: https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction_input
- Your U.S. Physical Address should be the address where you reside at time of application.

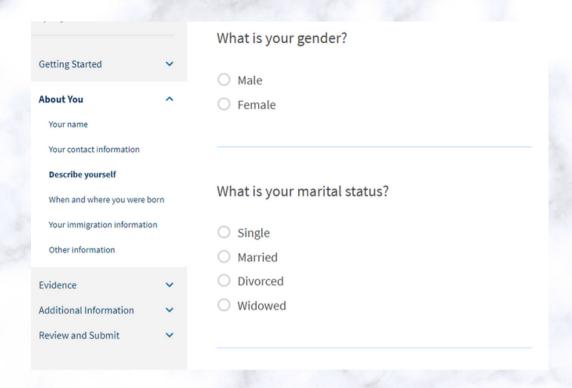
ABOUT YOU - Your contact information

- Select the accurate answer for you.
- Select "No" if your physical/residential address is different than the mailing address you listed in the prior section.
- Enter your residential address at time of application, if applicable (does not need to be valid for 5 months after submission date).



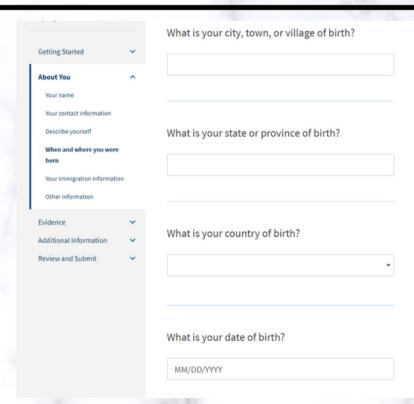
ABOUT YOU - Describe Yourself

• Select your gender and marital status.



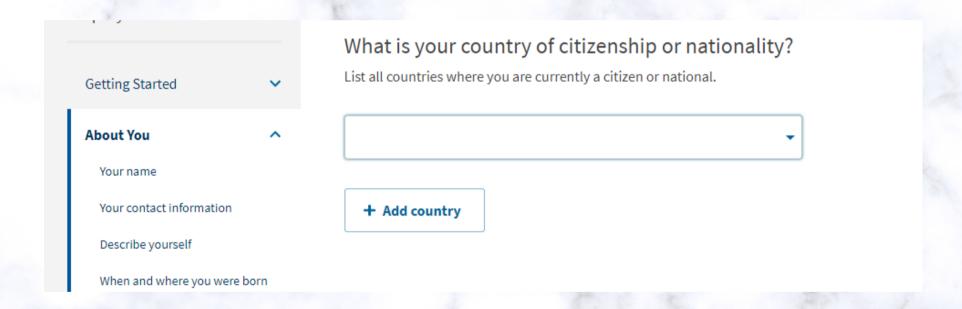
ABOUT YOU - When and where you were born

• Enter your information.



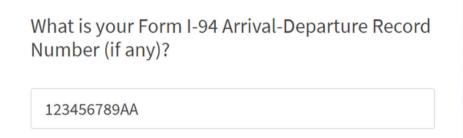
ABOUT YOU - Your immigration information

- Enter the information per your passport and Form I-20.
- Click "Add country" if you have a second country of citizenship.



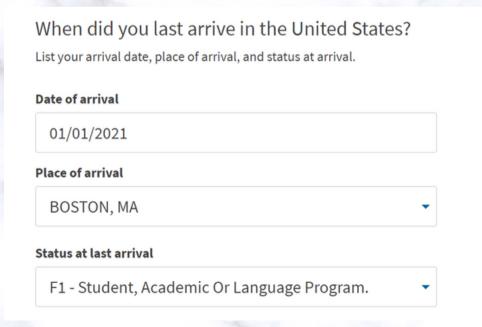
ABOUT YOU - Your immigration information

- Go to https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/ to access and download your I-94 Arrival Record.
- Enter the eleven (11) digit number from your most recent I-94 record.
- See online directions provided if having issues.



ABOUT YOU - Your immigration information

- Enter the date of your most recent arrival per your I-94 record.
- Select place of arrival from drop-down menu.
- Select Status from Last Arrival.
 - Unless you had a change of status, you should select *F-1 Student, Academic, or Language Program*



ABOUT YOU - Your immigration information

- Enter your passport number.
- Leave "What is your travel document number (if any)?" blank.
- Enter the expiration date of your passport, and the country which issued your passport (country of citizenship).
- Select F-1 Student, Academic, or Language Program for current immigration status.

What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?	What country issued your passport or travel document?
	•
What is your travel document number (if any)?	What is your current immigration status or category?
What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?	

ABOUT YOU - Your immigration information

• Enter SEVIS Number from top left-hand corner of your current Form I-20.

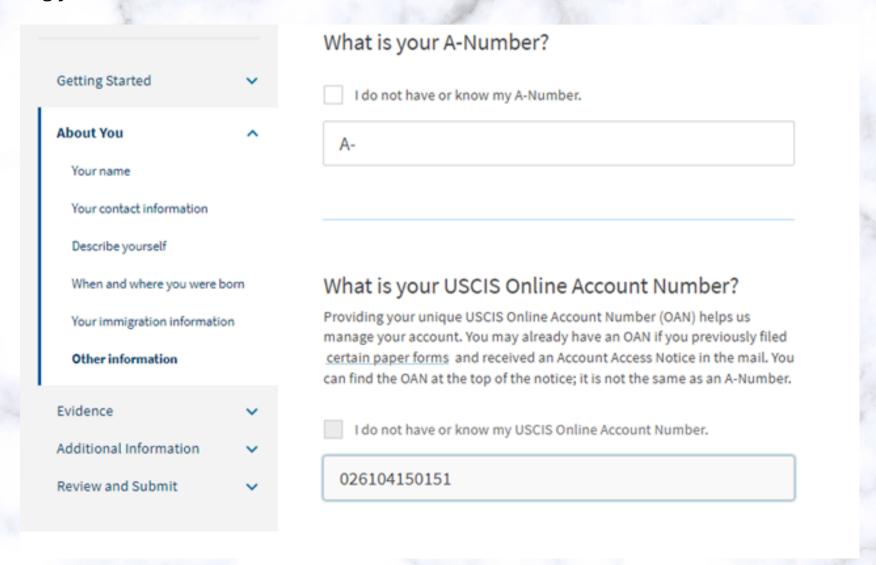
What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?

Use the "Additional Information" section to include all previously used SEVIS numbers.

N- 00100224512

ABOUT YOU - Other information

- Enter your A-Number. This can be found on your post-completion OPT card and is listed as the "USCIS Number".
- Your USCIS Online Account Number will pre-populate if you have already used your USCIS Online Account before.
 - Check "I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number" if this is the first time you are using your USCIS Online Account.



ABOUT YOU - Other information

• While on Post-Completion OPT, you should have been issued an SSN (Social Security Number). If so, select "Yes" and enter your SSN number. If you have your SSN card, select "No" to the question "Do You want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?"

What is your mother's birth name?

Family name (last name)

Given name (first name)

s form) to

•	If you do NOT have an SSN, IPS highly	recommends t	hat you use th	ne I-765 (this fo	
	apply for your SSN.		D		
•	Select the following options below		card?	issue you a Social Security	
	"Yes" to apply	5° M	Yes		
	 "Yes" to disclosure 	1000	O No		
			You must agree to the If you answer "Yes", you mu for Disclosure.	e Consent for Disclosure ust also answer "Yes" to the Consent	
	Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?		ior disclosure.		
	Yes		Consent for Disclosure:	I authorize disclosure of	
	○ No			pplication to the SSA as se of assigning me an SSN I Security card.	
			Yes		
	What is your Social Security number (if known)?	70	○ No		
			What is your father's bir	rth name?	
			Given name (first name)	Family name (last name)	
		-			

EVIDENCE - 2 X 2 Photo of You

- Upload recently taken passport sized photo.
- **DO NOT USE** photo from recent passport renewal, U.S. visa application, or prior OPT/EAD application.
- Upload a digital version of a passport style photo.
- Use U.S. Department of State photo composition tool https://tsg.phototool.state.gov/photo

Evidence 2 x 2 photo of you Form I-94 **Employment Authorization** Document Form I-20 College degree Institution accreditation

2 X 2 Photo Of You



Upload a recent color photograph of yourself that measures 2 inches by 2 inches, with your face measuring 1 inch to $1\,3/8$ inch from your chin to the top of your head. Your eyes should be between $1\,1/8$ inch and $1\,3/8$ inch from the bottom of the photo.



Make sure your whole face is visible, you are facing the camera directly, and the background is white or off-white. Your head must be bare, unless contrary to your religious beliefs.



If you need help understanding the photo requirements or want to resize, rotate, or crop your photo, you can use to the Department of State's <u>photo composition</u> tools. Please note that we cannot approve your application without your photo.

- · Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, or PNG
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

EVIDENCE - Form I-94

• Go to I-94 website to access and download your most recent entry record.



Evidence

2 x 2 photo of you

Form I-94

Employment Authorization

Document

Form I-20

College degree

Institution accreditation

Form I-94, Arrival And Departure Record Or Passport

Upload a copy of one of the following:

- Your Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record (front and back);
- · A printout of your electronic Form I-94; or
- · Your passport or other travel document.

If you were admitted to the United States by CBP at an airport or seaport after April 30, 2013, CBP may have issued you an electronic Form I-94 instead of a paper Form I-94. You may visit the <u>CBP website</u> to obtain a paper version of an electronic Form I-94. CBP does not charge a fee for this service. Some travelers admitted to the United States at a land border, airport, or seaport, after April 30, 2013, with a passport or travel document, who were issued a paper Form I-94 by CBP, may also be able to obtain a replacement Form I-94 from the CBP website without charge.

If your Form I-94 cannot be obtained from the CBP website, it may be obtained by filing Form I-102, Application for Replacement/Initial

Nonimmigrant Arrival-Departure Record, with USCIS. USCIS does charge a fee for this service.

If you do not have and cannot get a required document, you must demonstrate this and provide secondary evidence. If secondary evidence does not exist or is unavailable, you must demonstrate both the unavailability of the required document and the relevant secondary evidence and submit two or more sworn affidavits by people not named on this application who have direct knowledge of the event and circumstances.

Learn more about Primary and Secondary evidences.

- Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- · No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- · Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- · Maximum size: 12MB per file

EVIDENCE - Passport Biographical Page

- All applicants must upload a copy of their CURRENT 12-mos POST-OPT EAD Card
- Additionally, we recommend that you upload a clear picture of your biographical page of your current passport





Employment Authorization Document Or Government ID

Upload a copy of your last Employment Authorization document (EAD) (front and back). If you were not previously issued an EAD, you must upload a copy of a government-issued identity document (such as a passport) showing your picture, name, and date of birth; a birth certificate with photo ID; a visa issued by a foreign consulate; or a national ID document with photo and/or fingerprint. The identity document photocopy must clearly show your facial features and contain your biographical information.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- . Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- . Maximum size: 6MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

DO NOT FILE WITHOUT THE STEM OPT I-20

FVIDENCE - Form 1-20

- Upload a **SIGNED** copy of the most recently issued STEM OPT I-20 from IPS.
- You should print, sign, and upload signed STEM OPT I-20 you received from IPS.

Evidence

2 x 2 photo of you

Form I-94

Employment Authorization

Document

Form I-20

College degree

Institution accreditation

FROM IPS



I-20, Certificate Of Eligibility For Nonimmigrant Student Status





⚠ Important information regarding your Form I-20

Do NOT submit this form until you receive a Form I-20 recommendation from your DSO. We will deny your application if you do not include your Form I-20 recommendation when you submit Form I-765. If you need to provide Form I-765 to your DSO, print or download this draft before you submit.

Upload a copy of the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status endorsed by the Designated School Official (DSO). For the (c)(3)(B) eligibility category, your DSO must have entered the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record within 30 days of you submitting Form I-765. If you fail to do so, we will deny your OPT request. For the (c)(3)(C) eligibility category, the Form I-20 must have been endorsed by the DSO within 60 days of submitting Form I-765.

- · Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- · No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- · Upload no more than five documents at a time
- · Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- · Maximum size: 12MB per file

EVIDENCE - *College Degree*

• Upload a picture of your diploma and **official** University transcripts from your STEM degree program.



Evidence

2 x 2 photo of you

Form I-94

Employment Authorization

Document

Form I-20

College degree

Institution accreditation

College Degree

Upload evidence the degree that is the basis for the STEM OPT extension is in one of the degree programs currently listed on the <u>STEM Designated Degree Program List</u> or a copy of your prior STEM degree.

- · Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- · Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

EVIDENCE - Institution Accreditation

- ONLY REQUIRED IF YOU ARE APPYING FOR STEM OPT BASED ON PRIOR DEGREE PROGRAM
- Create and upload a cover letter applying for STEM OPT based on prior degree Upload evidence your prior degree was issued by an **accredited institution**
- •
- o 1. Search and confirm Prior School's Accreditation Info here: https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home
- 2. Upload PDF of confirmation page.
- Upload evidence your prior degree program in the U.S. is <u>certified by SEVP</u>
 - Search and confirm your school's information in SEVP here: https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/school-search
 - Upload PDF of confirmation page

Evidence

2 x 2 photo of you

Form I-94

Employment Authorization

Document

Form I-20

College degree

Institution accreditation

Institution Accreditation

Upload evidence that the institution that granted your STEM degree is currently accredited by the U.S. Department of Education and certified by the Student Exchange and Visitor Program (SEVP), if this STEM OPT extension is based on a previously earned STEM degree.

- Clear and readable
- · Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- · No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- · Maximum size: 6MB per file

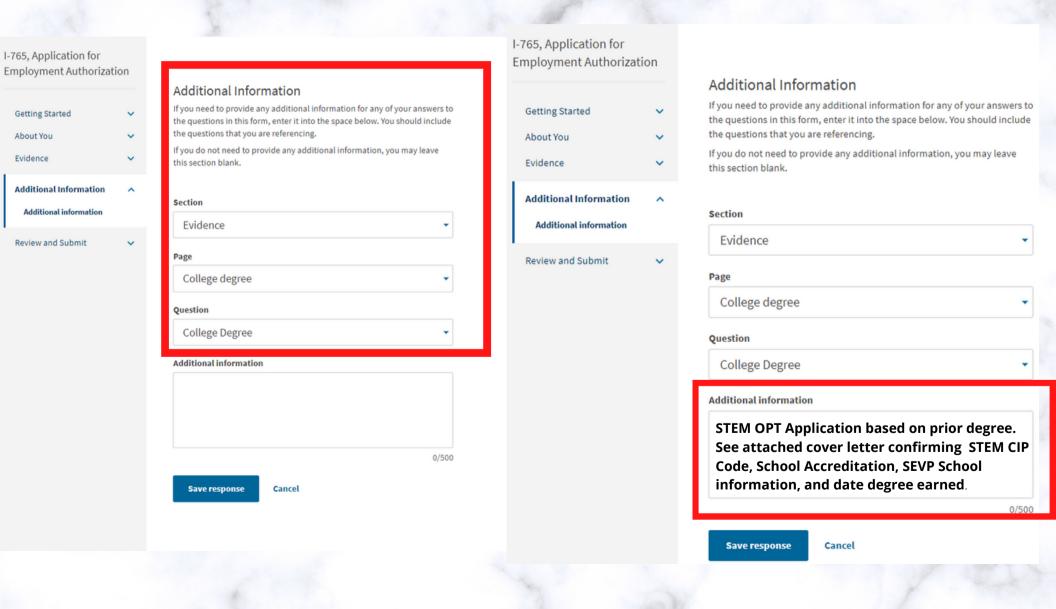
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION - Previously issued SEVIS ID Numbers

- Click "Add Response."
- Select option from drop-down menu.
- <u>TYPE</u> Answer/Explanation you will <u>NOT</u> be uploading any documents in this section.
- <u>For example:</u> Some students may have been issued more than one SEVIS ID during their time in the U.S. Many students who took a leave of absence will have 2 or more SEVIS IDs.

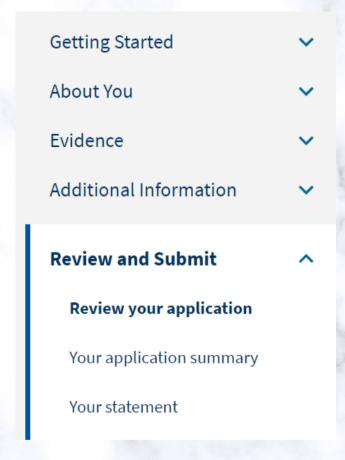
See example below: Additional Information Additional Information If you need to provide any additional information for any of your answers to If you need to provide any additional information for any of your answers to the questions in this form, enter it into the space below. You should include **Getting Started** the questions in this form, enter it into the space below. You should include the questions that you are referencing. the questions that you are referencing. About You If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave Evidence this section blank. this section blank. Additional Information Section Section Additional information About You About You Review and Submit Page Page Review your application Your immigration information Your immigration information Question Question What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Informati... What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Informati... issued passport? What is your travel document number (if any)? Additional information **Previous SEVIS ID:** What is the expiration date of your passport or travel SEVIS ID:NXXXXXXXXXXX document? **Program Start Date - Program End Date** What country issued your passport or travel document? Degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, PhD, etc.) What is your current immigration status or category? What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information You must provide a response. 0/500 System (SEVIS) Number (if any)? Save response Cancel

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION - Prior STEM OPT Degree Applicants

- Click "Add Response."
- Select option from drop-down menu.
- TYPE Answer/Explanation you will NOT be uploading any documents in this section.
- **For example:** Some students may be applying based on prior degree. Use this function to alert USCIS about the cover letter and additional information attached to application evidence section.



REVIEW AND SUBMIT - Review your application



Check your application before you submit

We will review your application to check for accuracy and completeness before you submit it.

We encourage you to provide as many responses as you can throughout the application, to the best of your knowledge. Missing information can slow down the review process after you submit your application.

You can return to this page to review your application as many times as you want before you submit it.

Your fee



Refund Policy: USCIS does not refund fees, regardless of any action we take on your application, petition or request, or how long USCIS takes to reach a decision. By continuing this transaction, you acknowledge that you must submit fees in the exact amount and that you are paying the fees for a government service.

Alerts and warnings

We found no alerts or warnings in your application

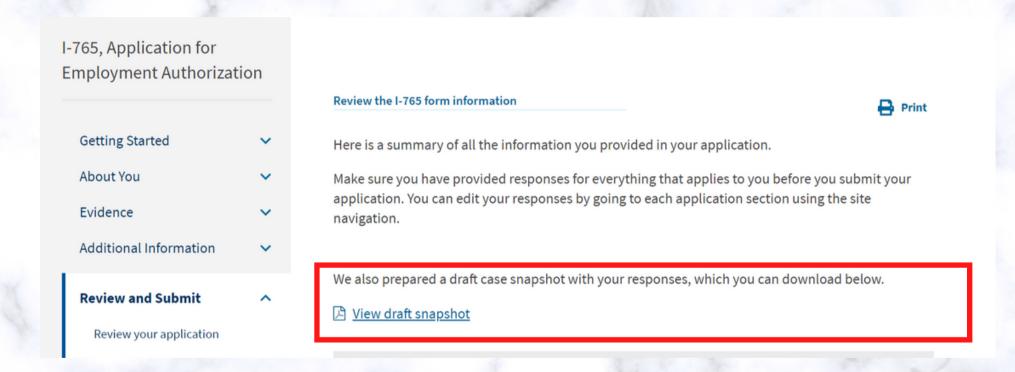


DO NOT FILE WITHOUT THE STEM OPT I-20 FROM IPS



REVIEW AND SUBMIT - Review your application

- Select "View draft snapshot" to download and review for accuracy.
- IPS recommends saving I-765 PDF for your records.





SUBMITTING PAYMENT = FILING YOUR CASE WITH USCIS

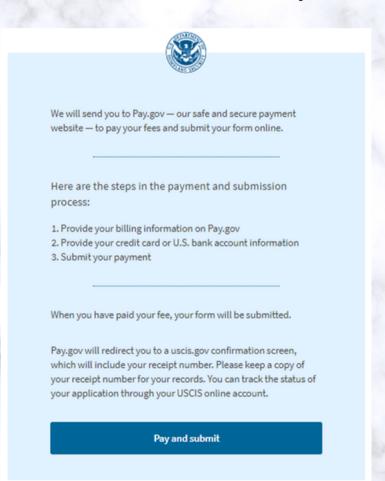


Submit Payment

IMPORTANT: Once your payment has been successfully received, your application will be filed!!

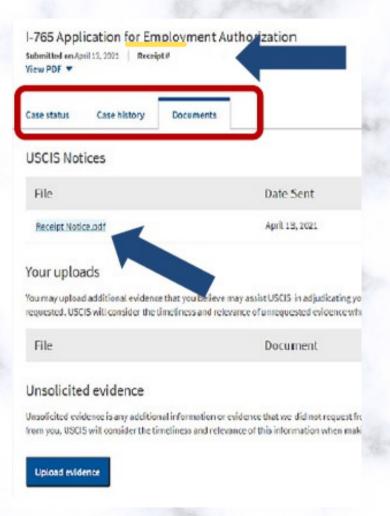
- You cannot change or edit your I-765 application responses after payment has been submitted.
- The USCIS fee is non-refundable.
- Once you are ready, the system will direct you to Pay.gov, a US government payment site.
 - You will be able to pay the application fee using a US credit / debit card or through an ACH transfer (direct withdrawal) from your US checking account.
 - Make sure to double check that you have entered your debit/credit card number correctly.

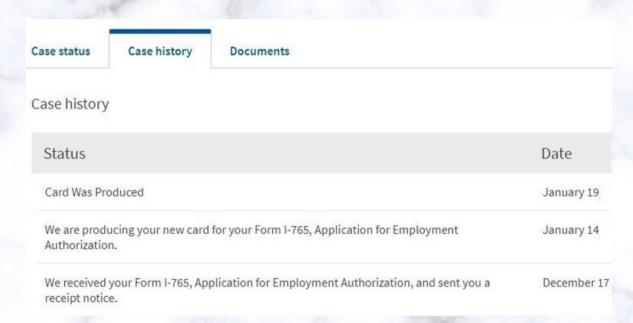
Finish and continue to pay and submit By finishing this form, your Form I-765 will be locked and no further changes can be made. Please make sure that the information on your Form I-765 is complete and accurate before continuing. If you need to make any edits after finishing, you will need to create both a new Form I-821 and a new Form I-765. Next, you will continue to the pay and submit page where you can pay for and submit both your Form I-821 and Form I-765 at the same time. Back Continue



TRACK CASE & STATUS UPDATES

- You will receive your USCIS receipt number shortly after paying and submitting your case.
- Log-in to your USCIS account for all case updates.
 - You will also receive the official USCIS receipt notices via the USPS mail service.
 - Contact USCIS if you do not receive your physical receipt notice within 60 days.





The HIO provides general guidance on your OPT/STEM OPT application based on information obtained from reliable sources and reflecting our years of experience in working with students. We make every attempt to ensure that we provide you with the most up to date information available. Any advice provided to you by our office (as well as the information in this packet) does not constitute legal advice, however. The OPT application is a personal application for which you are responsible; the application preparation and USCIS case decision will vary depending on the facts at issue in your particular case. The HIO does its best to provide you with the most current guidance, but please be mindful that USCIS may change its interpretation of these policies, procedures, regulations, and eligibility requirements at any time. The HIO is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from USCIS. a subheading