



# BUFFALO STATE

The State University of New York

## OPT Application Checklist – Online Filing I 765

**Step 1** Meet with academic advisor to complete application for graduation on banner.

**Step 2** Make sure address, phone and personal email information are correct on banner.

**Step 3** Gather all documents needed for I 765 application.

- Scan of 1 color U.S. passport-style photograph. Photos must be taken within the last 30 days, measure 2 inches by 2 inches, and have a plain white or off-white background.
- Scan of your passport identity page (and any renewal pages)
- Scan I-94 printout (<https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>)
- Scan of any previously issued I-20s if they show work authorization OR a different SEVIS ID (1st and 2nd page; do not copy instruction page).
- Scan of the front and back of any previous EAD cards (i.e. previously done OPT)

**Step 4** Make an appointment with **International Student and Scholar Services Office** to complete the application. This appointment will last roughly 30 minutes. You will be given the I-20 needed to complete your application at this appointment. **DO NOT submit your application without meeting with our office.**

**Step 5** Create an account at <https://myaccount.uscis.gov> **DO NOT SUBMIT your application until you meet with the International Student and Scholar Services Office**

**Step 6** Print and physically sign the I-20 sent to you showing your OPT recommendation. Upload a scan.

**Step 7** Review your application, ensure all required materials are uploaded, and submit within 30 days of receiving your new I-20.

### After Applying for OPT

You will receive notices from USCIS when there is movement on your case, including notification of when your EAD card is mailed.

**Notify the International Student and Scholar Services** immediately if your card is not received within 3 days of its expected arrival, according to the USPS Informed Delivery notice.

If you receive a **Request For Evidence (RFE)**, speak with us before responding.

### Approval

Email a copy of your EAD card and I-797 approval notice to our office.

**You may only begin work once you have received the card and the dates on the card have been reached.**

Maintain health insurance throughout process/OPT period!

### Report Employment

You must report any changes to your contact or employment information (including breaks in employment) within 10 days. To report changes, on the SEVP OPT Portal. You will be emailed login information AFTER your OPT has been approved and the start date has been reached.

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User Guide at <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/create-an-sevp-portal-account>.

## Unemployment

Your OPT will end if you accrue a total of 90 days of unemployment (counted from the start of your OPT period) or if you transfer your SEVIS record to another school.

## Travel on OPT

Please review the Travel Guidelines document BEFORE making travel plans.

## Denial of OPT

IF YOUR APPLICATION IS REJECTED OR DENIED FOR ANY REASON, CONTACT Our OFFICE IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT RE-APPLY ON YOUR OWN.

Online Filing <https://myaccount.uscis.gov/>

Remember, you first need to create an account at <https://myaccount.uscis.gov>. You may find it useful to review the help materials at <https://www.uscis.gov/file-online> before getting started.

Screenshots to Guide You Through the OPT Online Application Create your account at

<https://myaccount.uscis.gov>.

Official website of the Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

### Sign In

Email \*

Password \*

[Forgot your Password?](#) [Show Password](#)

[Sign In](#)

One account for all of your USCIS needs.  
[Create an account.](#)

**\*\*\*\*\*It is your responsibility as the applicant to ensure that all information on the application is correct and valid.**

General Information: Make sure to select that you are applying for (c)(3)(B) - Post-Completion OPT when starting your application.


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## Account Onboarding



Welcome to Your USCIS Account


Select what you want to do

- Add a paper-filed case**  
View your case status and case history by adding your case to your account
- File a form online**  
Start a new form, upload evidence, and pay and submit online
- Enter a representative passcode**  
Review and sign forms prepared for you by your attorney or representative
- Verify your identity**  
Answer questions about your immigration history to verify your personal identity

Once you have logged in, click on “File a form online” to begin your application process.

## Our Online Forms

- 11 forms available through USCIS online account
- Form I-765 is near the bottom of the list
- Note the eligibility categories



Select the form you want to file online.

- Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (I-90)
- Request for a Hearing on a Decision in Naturalization Proceedings (N-336)
- Application for Naturalization (N-400)
- Application for Replacement Naturalization/Citizenship Document (N-565)
- Application for Certificate of Citizenship (N-600)
- Application for Citizenship and Issuance of Certificate Under Section 322 (N-600K)
- Petition for Alien Relative (I-130)
- Application To Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status (I-539)
- Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)  
Only certain F-1 students seeking optional practical training (OPT) may file Form I-765 online. This includes:
  - Pre-completion OPT - (C)(0)(A) eligibility category;
  - Post-completion OPT - (C)(0)(B) eligibility category; or
  - a 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) - (C)(0)(C) eligibility category.

Select “Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)” from the drop down list.



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## Form Overview



### I-765, Application For Employment Authorization

Certain foreign nationals who are in the United States may file Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, to request employment authorization and an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). Other foreign nationals 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.

Foreign nationals may also apply for a Social Security number and card on Form I-765.

If you are a lawful permanent resident, a conditional permanent resident, or a nonimmigrant only authorized for employment with a specific employer under a CFR 274a.12(b), do not use Form I-765.

Learn more about [employment authorization](#).

#### Before You Start Your Application

##### Eligibility

Only certain F-1 students seeking optional practical training (OPT) may file Form I-765 online. This includes:

- Pre-completion OPT - (c)(3)(A) eligibility category;
- Post-completion OPT - (c)(3)(B) eligibility category; or
- a 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) - (c)(3)(C) eligibility category.

- Eligibility
- Application fee
- Required evidence
- Biometrics requirements
- How to track your case
- Requests for evidence
- Getting a decision

Review the information on this page carefully. It will tell you everything you need to file online. **Make sure you have all the items on the list of required evidence prepared before starting your application.** Answer the form questions in order – do not skip ahead. The form has conditional logic that will display the next set of questions according to your answers. **Go in order so that you only see the questions you need to complete. The form will autosave your answers in each section.**

## Filling Out the Form—Getting Started



### Who Can Submit Form I-765 Online?

Initial release of online I-765 is limited to students in these categories:

- (c)(3)(A) Student Pre-Completion OPT
- (c)(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT
- (c)(3)(C) STEM Extension

What is your eligibility category?

- c(3)(A) Student Pre-Completion OPT
- c(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT
- c(3)(C) STEM Extension

All other categories **must submit a paper** form I-765

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You will be applying for **(c)(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT**. Make sure that you select this category.



## Filling Out the Form—Getting Started

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

What is your reason for applying?

- Initial permission to accept employment
- Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to US Citizenship and Immigration Services error
- Renewal of permission to accept employment

Have you previously filed Form I-765?

- Yes
- No

- Why are you applying?
- Did you submit Form I-765 previously?

You must select **“Initial permission to accept employment.”** If you have ever filed form I-765 before (even if it was denied), you must say Yes.

**Remember:** you can only apply for OPT if you have not already done OPT at this or a higher educational level. **If you have already done OPT at the same level (i.e. certificate or associates), or have done OPT previously at a higher level, do not apply. You are not eligible and will not be refunded.** If you did not disclose this to our office and have already received your OPT I-20, please contact us immediately to cancel your recommendation and discuss your next steps.

Part 1: Select 1.a. “Initial permission to accept employment”

You must select “Initial permission to accept employment.” If you have ever filed form I-765 before (even if it was denied), you must say Yes. Remember: you can only apply for OPT if you have not already done OPT at this or a higher educational level. If you have already done OPT at the same level (i.e. certificate or associates), or have done OPT previously at a higher level, do not apply. You are not eligible and will not be refunded. If you did not disclose this to our office and have already received your OPT I-20, please contact us immediately to cancel your recommendation and discuss your next steps.

Part 2: Name: Please write your name exactly as it appears on your I-20. If your name will not fit, fill it in as much as possible and then upload a page as “other evidence” spelling your name correctly. If you used previous names, including nicknames in official records or documentation, complete these sections on the application as needed. Do not list nicknames that you did not use on official records.

Address: Your US Mailing Address is where the receipt notice and EAD card will be mailed. This address must be valid for at least 3 months and may be a P.O. Box address. If you are using a friend or family’s address, indicate the person’s name in the In Care of Name line. This person must be listed with the US Postal Service as living at that address. If you listed a mailing address that is NOT your current physical living address, then you must indicate this, and provide your current physical address in the appropriate section.



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Viewing Janna Evans (IG...)

## Filling Out the Form— Your Immigration Information

- Country of citizenship/nationality
- Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record number
- Last arrival date in U.S., port of entry & status
- Current passport/travel document number, expiration date, issuing country
- Current immigration status
- SEVIS number
- A-Number
- USCIS Online Account Number

U.S. Customs and Border Protection Securing America's Borders	
Get I-94 Number	I-94 IAG
Admission (I-94) Number Retrieval	
Admission (I-94) Record Number:	8920088062
Admit Until Date (MMDD/YYYY):	10/10/2012
Details provided on Admission(I-94) form:	
Family Name:	LI
First (Given) Name:	LYDA
Birth Date (MMDD/YYYY):	04/05/1990
Passport Number:	P12325213
Passport Country of Issuance:	Mexico
Date of Entry (MMDD/YYYY):	04/11/2012
Class of Admission:	B1

The next sections in the application will ask information about you. You will need your [I-94](#), passport, and I-20 to complete the immigration information section. You will generally not have A-Number or USCIS account number. It is ok to leave these blank.

Social Security Number. If you already have an SSN indicate this and provide the number. If you do not already have an SSN, indicate this, then select “yes” to both follow up questions to give USCIS the ability to share your information with the Social Security Administration and create your card. You will need to provide your mother and father’s names as well. Information About Latest Arrival. Complete this section using information from your I-94, passport, and I-20. Note that your SEVIS number is found at the top of your current I-20.

## Filling Out the Form— Your Immigration Information

Do you want the Social Security Administration to issue you a Social Security card?

- If yes, you need to give us authorization to submit your request to SSA
- Enter your father’s first and last name, and your mother’s first and last name

If you do not have a social security number (SSN) already issued, you can apply for it at the same time as you apply for your EAD card!

**Note: do not say yes if you were already issued an SSN and have simply misplaced your card. Contact your local Social Security Office to apply for a replacement document (non-citizens must apply for replacement cards in person).**



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Note: do not say yes if you were already issued an SSN and have simply misplaced your card. Contact your local Social Security Office to apply for a replacement document (noncitizens must apply for replacement cards in person).

## Filling Out the Form—Evidence



### All F-1 I-765 applicants must provide:

- Passport-style photograph
- I-94 card, travel document, or electronic I-94
- Most recent EAD, if you have one, or government-issued photo ID
- Proof of enrollment at SEVP-certified school



\*\*\*Other evidence depends on student's category. See this checklist for details:

[www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-guidance/checklist-of-required-initial-evidence-for-form-i-765-for-informational-purposes-only](http://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-guidance/checklist-of-required-initial-evidence-for-form-i-765-for-informational-purposes-only)

### Post-completion OPT (c)(3)(B)

- All prior SEVIS numbers and proof of previously authorized CPT / OPT and corresponding academic level—include under **Additional Information**
- DSO must enter OPT recommendation in SEVIS within 30 days before you submit I-765, if not, we will deny OPT request

For the government-issued photo ID, upload your passport picture page. You will see it listed that your “DSO must enter OPT recommendation in SEVIS within 30 days before you submit I-765” – this will be done at your OPT appointment. **Do not submit your application until then. You will be preparing a draft of your I-765 for review at this time.**

You will be given an I-20 showing your OPT recommendation after your appointment. **Your I-20 must be printed and physically signed (in ink) before uploading.** Do not electronically sign or insert a digital signature on an I-20. This must be uploaded or your application will be denied.

**Review the formatting requirements required for your uploads (see next page). It is your responsibility to format your documents properly for USCIS, according to their instructions.**

Review the formatting requirements required for your uploads

Documents must be in PDF, JPG/JPEG, or TIF/TIFF formats only. Photos taken with a camera must be formatted as a JPG/JPEG or PNG only. When naming your documents, use English only. Characters in other language will cause your file to be rejected. The only characters accepted in your titles are periods [.] , hyphens [-] , underscores [\_] or parentheses [( )] . Do not use any special characters. Examples of proper formatting are: FamilyName\_FirstName\_OPTI20.pdf FamilyName\_FirstName\_Passport.jpg It is highly recommended that you do not take pictures. We recommend scanning your documents from a scanner/copier machine and uploading “clean” clearly-legible PDFs, free of shadows, and with nothing in the “background” – no fingers, tabletops, other paperwork, etc.



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## PAYMENT

OPT Online Application Before moving to payment, the application will check for errors and notify you if you may need to edit your response. Errors will NOT be checking your answers for accuracy – you must make sure that the data you provided in your application is correct. An “error” simply means you may have missed something on the application or formatted something incorrectly. If an error is highlighted in red, it must be corrected before you can submit your application. A “yellow” error calls your attention to something that may need correction. Review it to make sure your information is correct. If it is, you can submit without changing your response.

You may pay by bank transfer (ACH) or via a debit/credit card issued by a US bank. The US billing address provided must match the details on your bank/credit card account.



**STOP: DO NOT** move to the next step of payment and submission of your application until after you have had your OPT appointment, received your OPT I-20, and uploaded this evidence to your application.

A confirmation will be displayed on the screen, and you will immediately get a receipt notice with your case number. Click on “Go to my cases,” then click on “Documents,” to download and keep a copy of your receipt

Additional Information – **MUST** be completed if you had been issued a different SEVIS ID previously AND/OR completed practical training (CPT/OPT). It is recommended that the cover letter on page 3 be attached. • Page, Part & Item Number. o If you are asked to reference a page number, write “3” in the space provided. o If you are asked to reference a part/section number, write “2” in the space provided. o If you are asked to reference an item number, write “26” in the space provided. • Explanation of previous work. List all SEVIS ID numbers, level (i.e. associates or bachelors), and whether CPT or OPT was done. If CPT or OPT was done, explain the opportunity.

Example 1: Student studied for bachelor’s degree but did not do practical training. Returned to US later to study at Buffalo State and has done CPT. Answer would look something like: “Previous SEVIS ID N00XXXXXXX, bachelor’s degree, no CPT or OPT. Current SEVIS ID N00XXXXXXX, associate degree, CPT from 5-1-18 to 8-30-18, at (Company Name) for internship requirement, 40 hr/wk.”

Example 2: Student studied at Buffalo State and has done CPT practical training. Answer would look something like: “SEVIS ID N00XXXXXX, bachelor’s degree, CPT internship requirement, 5-1-18-8-30-18, Company Name, 20 hrs/wk.”

Final Reminder: **DO NOT submit your application without meeting with our office.**

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