

Southern Connecticut State University

International Student Services

Adanti Student Center, Room 231

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F-1 Full-Time Post Optional Practical Training Checklist

An F-1 student who desires to work full time in the in the U.S. after completion of all degree requirements may apply for practical training in their field of study. **F-1 students who participated in Full-time curricular practical training (alternate work/study, internship, co-operative, education, or practicum) for one year or more are ineligible for optional practical training.** An F-1 student who has used 12 months of the OPT is eligible for another 12 months after changing and completing another higher education level.

Procedure:

1. F-1 visa holders may apply after being in student status for 12 consecutive months.
2. The application period is 90 days before the date of completion of all degree requirements.
Student can also apply 60 days after graduation.
3. Academic advisor completes Graduation Verification form stating the student's anticipated degree completion date.
4. Student completes and signs form I-765.
5. An F-1 student applying for Optional Practical Training should send to the Vermont Service Center the following documents:
 - a. Two color passport photographs
 - b. \$340.00 in the form of a check or money order made to "USCIS"
 - c. I-765 completed and signed.
 - d. Graduation Verification form

- e. Photocopy of the SEVIS I-20 with OPT recommendation. (*will be issued by International Advisor*)
- f. Photocopy of all the previous I-20s from SCSU and other schools attended in the U.S.
- g. Photocopy of I-94 (front and back).
- h. Photocopy of any previous Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) (*if applicable*)
- i. Photocopy of the most recent visa.
- j. Photocopy of bibliographical page(s) of the passport (with expiration date).

All documents are to be sent certified mail or express mail to:

Vermont Service Center
Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services
75 Lower Welden St.
St. Albans, VT 05479-0001

Note: Please make a copy of all your paperwork for your records before you mail it.

Important Information:

- A. If approved by the Vermont Service Center they will issue an Employment Authorization Document (EAD)-Form I-688B. Normal processing time ranges from six to eight weeks and at times even longer.
- B. Once you receive the EAD card you will need to submit a copy to the International Office immediately.
- C. You do not need to show that you have a job at the time of the application. However, once you start your employment, you are required to indicate the name and address of the company and your residence address to the Designated. Any changes in companies or residing addresses must be reported to the DSO at International Office as soon as possible.

Note: The International Advisors at the International Office are the Designated School Officials (DSOs).

- D. You can only start work after receiving the EAD card.
- E. Authorization to engage in practical training is automatically terminated when the student transfers to another school or begins study at another educational level.
- F. If you have not already obtained a U.S. Social Security number, you have to apply by going in person with the passport, I-20, I-94 card and your employment letter to the Social Security Office.
- G. Under certain circumstances F-1 student employees who have been in the U.S. less than five years are exempt from Social Security (FICA) withholding. See social security administration publication SSA 78-10056, "Social Security Coverage for Foreign Students and Exchange Visitors" for further information.

Note: F-1 students are subject to federal and State income taxes.

- H. If you do not receive your EAD card 90 days after you have received your 'notice of receipt' from USCIS, you might be able to apply for a temporary EAD card. For more information please contact the Hartford INS office at (860) 240-3050.

Traveling outside of the United States while on OPT

You will need to show the following:

- 1) An I-20 signed by your International student Advisor for travel
- 2) An approved EAD card for OPT
- 3) A valid Passport and Visa

4) Proof of job offer in the United States

Note: To gain reentry into the U.S. is not a guarantee. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will determine your eligibility for reentry.