

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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## Am I allowed to work in the United States on an F-1 student visa and get paid?

- Yes - allowed to work on-campus (job must be 3 or more days in duration).
- Yes - allowed to do an internship (Curricular Practical Training - CPT) that relates to your degree.
- Yes - allowed to work up to 1 year\* after graduation (Optional Practical Training - OPT) in positions that are related to your degree \*if your degree is STEM-related you may qualify for an extension.
- Appropriate paperwork must be filled out with International Advising to complete CPT or OPT.

## Can I get a Social Security Number (SSN) with work authorization?

- If you have an **internship or job offer**, you may apply for a SSN with the nearest [Social Security Office](#).
- Documents needed: offer letter, enrollment verification, SS-5 form, I-20, I-94, passport and visa.
- A receipt from the Social Security Office is required to begin working, your SSN once received is required to continue working.

## CPT - paid internship or unpaid internship for course credit:

You must have a CPT Request Form approved by your Department Chair and DSO/Alia Saeed at One Stop. See Dashboard [portal.otis.edu > International Students > Employment](#) > **CPT Request Form**.

Employer needs to provide an internship or job **offer letter** for the CPT application (see example on CPT Request Form), including:

- Company Letterhead
- Addressed to student
- Job Title/Position
- Description of Job Duties
- Address of Employer and Worksite Location (if different)
- Specify Hours per Week ("part-time" is a maximum of 20 hrs/wk)
- Specify EXACT Start and End Date of Employment (start date should be 2 weeks out to leave enough time for CPT processing)
- Employer's Signature

If you do not yet have an SSN, bring the required documents to the Social Security Office. Provide SSN receipt or SSN once acquired to Otis DSO and the HR department at the company where you're interning. You must receive an updated I-20 from the DSO, and you can only work for that employer during the specified time period.

If the internship is unpaid, you must also get approval for an internship course/independent study through your academic department.

## **OPT - work for 12 months after graduation:**

An employer does not need to be identified in advance, and you can work for one or multiple employers or start a business.

- Apply for OPT 90 days before graduation and no later than 60 days after graduation.
- Must be employed at least 21 hours per week.
- Can volunteer as long as this does not violate labor laws. (Cannot “volunteer” for a position that would otherwise be paid.)
- Limited to a total of 90 days of unemployment while on OPT.
- To work longer than one year, you must have an employer sponsor you for a work visa (usually an H1-B visa). You could also pursue other visa types, such as an O-1 visa. Visa options should be discussed with an immigration attorney.
- Some jobs related to Digital Media may be eligible for STEM-OPT, which is a 2-year extension of standard OPT. Discuss details with DSO Alia Saeed in OneStop.
- If OPT is expiring, you may consider continuing your education with an advanced degree, which will grant you another year of OPT after graduation. (Starting a new degree will terminate any existing OPT.)

## **How to find an internship or job:**

The process of searching for an internship or job is the same for international students as it is for domestic students. Please utilize the [Career Services website](#) to learn about job search strategies, job search resources, career workshops, and career counseling. Otis uses the career portal [Handshake](#) to post any on or off campus jobs. You can also review tips for [Discussing Work Sponsorship with an Employer](#) on Handshake.

## **Questions about CPT, OPT, or student visas:**

International student questions related to CPT/OPT eligibility or student visas should be handled by One Stop/Alia Saeed. Information, as well as the link to schedule an “Appointment with a DSO,” can be found on the Dashboard [portal.otis.edu > International Students > Advising and Appointments](#) or by emailing [international@otis.edu](mailto:international@otis.edu).

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is associated with internships related to a student’s program of study, which take place with a specific employer during a specific period of time while enrolled. Current students must complete one full academic year to be eligible. See [Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\)](#) on the Dashboard.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is typically utilized after graduation to work for up to one year with one or multiple employers in jobs related to your degree. If OPT is not started within 60 days after graduation, it is

forfeited. If employment does not start within 90 days of OPT approval, it is also forfeited. See [Optional Practical Training \(OPT\)](#) on the Dashboard.

Students should attend workshops on CPT, OPT, or other related topics offered for international students by One Stop/Alia.

## **Resources:**

[O-1 Visa: Individuals with Extraordinary Ability or Achievement | USCIS](#)

[H-1B Specialty Occupations, DOD Cooperative Research and Development Project Workers, and Fashion Models | USCIS](#)

[Getting a Job in the U.S. After Graduating From a U.S. College](#)

[Employment Authorization Application \(EAD Card\) - FileRight](#)

<https://www.calawyersforthearts.org>

<https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/h-1b-employer-data-hub>

<https://www.myvisajobs.com>

<https://www.upwork.com>