

**Checklist for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT):  
Online and Paper-Based Applications**

**Step 1:** [Complete OPT Seminar](#)

**Step 2:** Complete online [Student Request for OPT](#)

**Step 3:** Get signatures on Program End Date Verification

- Receive the system-generated form in your email immediately after completing Step 2. The form is sent in an email format; no separate form download is required
- Can be printed and signed physically by academic advisor or emailed for digital signature
- Required before you can schedule an OPT appointment with an OISS Advisor
- Must be emailed to OISS upon request (for online OPT applications) OR presented to an OISS Advisor at your OPT appointment (for paper-based OPT applications)

**Step 4:** Complete I-765 and G-1145 Forms

- Complete I-765 form fully, according to the instructions [here](#) (I-765) or USCIS may deny your OPT application
- For online OPT applications: Complete and sign the I-765 form through your USCIS account, making sure to submit any other required documents listed in the [Instructions](#)
- For paper-based applications: Type your answers to Form I-765 and G-1145 – no handwriting. Make sure to include an email address that will remain valid throughout your entire OPT period.
- Note: The G-1145 Form is only required for paper-based OPT applications.

**Step 5:** Students applying for OPT via the paper-based application should purchase a money order for the amount of \$520

- Note: If you are applying for OPT online, omit this step. You will pay the \$470 fee online through Pay.Gov when you submit your OPT application. The online application will automatically direct you to the payment website.

- Make the money order for your paper-based OPT application payable to **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**
- On the memo line, indicate “I-765 fee”
- Include your SEVIS number on the money order

**Step 6:** Get 2 travel-sized photos

- See formatting instructions [here](#)
- Common places to purchase are US Post Offices or drugstores like Walgreens
- Online OPT applicants must upload a digital copy of their photograph

**Step 7:** Make copies of your immigration documents

- Online OPT applications: the following list of documents should be uploaded to your online Form I-765. Paper-based applications: Bring printed copies (single-sided) to your OPT appointment at OISS
  - Passport Bio page
  - Visa page
  - Arrival stamp for latest arrival (often opposite the visa)
  - I-94 (front and back if you have the card from an arrival prior to April 2013)
  - Copies of all previously issued I-20s
  - I-20s for any dependents in the United States
  - EADs from any previous employment authorizations, if applicable

**Step 8:** Schedule an OPT appointment by emailing [internationalservices@ualr.edu](mailto:internationalservices@ualr.edu).

- Note: This is not required if you are applying for OPT online.

**Step 9:** Receive an updated I-20 recommending you for OPT.

- Online OPT applications: This will be emailed to you
- Paper-based applications: You will receive this at your in-person OPT appointment

**Step 10:** Submit OPT application online or mail paper-based application packet to USCIS

### Important Considerations

- The window of time to apply for Standard OPT is 90 before your program end date and up to 60 days after your program end date.
- USCIS will usually make a decision on your application within 60-90 days from the date of receipt. Nevertheless, there are instances where the adjudication process may extend beyond the 90-day mark. Please plan your acceptance of employment accordingly.
- It is your responsibility to mail your OPT application or submit your application online to USCIS.
- You must file your Form I-765 within 30 days of the date that your DSO enters the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record. If you fail to do so, USCIS will deny your OPT request.
- If applying via the paper-based application: Submit clear photocopies of all required documents, according to the formatting requirements.
- If applying online: Make sure you have clearly scanned copies of all the immigration documents listed in Step 7 before working on Form I-765. This will help you upload the required documents and reduce the risk of a request for evidence, a request for information, or denial of your application.
- Keep a copy of your entire paper-based application for your future reference, or access your submitted online application and uploaded documents using your USCIS account.
- USCIS is not responsible for creating or maintaining your online USCIS account.

***Disclaimer:*** As a reminder, the advice given concerning your I-765 application does not constitute legal advice. Ultimately, it's up to the discretion of USCIS to approve or deny your OPT petition. If you need additional guidance, please refer to <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765> or an experienced immigration attorney. It is your responsibility to make sure that all parts of your OPT application are completely accurate.