ISSO STEM OPT Extension Application Checklist

Students applying for STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT) can use this checklist when preparing an OPT application.

Step 1: Submit the ISSO online STEM OPT application:
- Complete the I-983 Training Plan with your employer.
- Log in to the ISSO Portal with your Brandeis credentials.
- Click on the Control Center tab, then click STEM OPT Extension Request. Please note that you may only access the STEM OPT Extension Request within 90 days of your post-completion OPT end date.
- Complete the STEM OPT Request form, including the questionnaires, file uploads, and electronic signature documents.
- Click “Submit” (NOT “Save”) to submit the STEM OPT request.

Step 2: Sign and make a copy of new STEM OPT I-20, issued by ISSO within 10 business days (Keep the original I-20)

Step 3: If you are filing online, upload all documents in the appropriate locations. If applying by mail, prepare and assemble your paper STEM OPT Application in this order, from top to bottom:
- Photos and check/money order paper-clipped to the I-765 (photos and check/money order should be separate)
- Form G-1145 (optional but recommended). Fill out to request email or text notification when USCIS accepts your application.
- Original signed form I-765. USCIS’ website includes instructions that you should refer to in order to complete the I-765. Please also check the ISSO supplemental instructions. Typing is preferred, but you may handwrite in areas that you cannot complete on the electronic form.
- Two (2) standard (2” x 2”) passport-sized photos (write your name and date of birth lightly in pencil on the back of the photos). Photos must be less than 30 days old and must not be used for any other applications. The ISSO recommends that you visit the Department of State website for details on photo requirements.
- Check or money order for the STEM OPT application fee of $410. Checks should be made payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Use our sample check for guidance. While a check or money order is the recommended method of payment, you also have the option to fill out Form G-1450 to pay with a credit card. You may pay using a credit card, debit card, or bank transfer if you apply online. The card must be issued by a U.S. bank.
- Photocopy of pages 1-2 of new STEM OPT I-20 from ISSO (DO NOT mail the original). Make sure you have an I-20 with your E-Verify employer listed.
- Photocopies of ALL other I-20s for which you have received work authorization (CPT/OPT) (from the most recent to the oldest)
- Electronic I-94 OR copy of paper I-94 card
- Photocopy of most recent Passport Entry Stamp (may be on same page as visa)
- Photocopy of U.S F-1 Entry Visa
- Photocopy of your Passport Photo ID Page and Passport Expiration Page (may be same page)
- Photocopy of previously issued Employment Authorization Documents (OPT cards)
- Photocopy of Brandeis diploma

Step 4: Mail your paper STEM OPT application or submit your online application to USCIS. They must receive it within 60 days of the date on your new STEM OPT I-20 and I-765, and before your current OPT period ends. You will receive 3 notices from USCIS: a Receipt Notice, an Approval Notice, and your STEM OPT EAD card.

Please visit the I-765 Addresses page of the USCIS website for the most up-to-date mailing address for your application. You can find the information for F-1 STEM OPT in the “Foreign students” box.