

F-1 OPT Application Checklist

Students applying for F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) may use this list when preparing a post-completion OPT or pre-completion OPT application. **The ISSO strongly recommends all students interested in applying for OPT first [watch the ISSO OPT videos online](#).** *Please note, the ISSO OPT videos do not yet include information about the new online I-765 application.

Step 1: Submit the ISSO online OPT Application:

- Log in to the [ISSO Portal](#) with your Brandeis credentials.
- Click on the **Control Center** tab, then click **OPT Request**.
- Complete the OPT Request form, including the questionnaires, file uploads, electronic signature documents, and Academic Advisor Approval section.
- Click "Submit" (NOT "Save") to submit the OPT request.

Step 2: Receive an email from the ISSO to pick up your new OPT I-20 within 10 business days. At the same time that you obtain your new I-20, prepare:

- Photocopy of page 1 and the travel signature page of **new OPT I-20 from ISSO** (Keep the original I-20)
- Two (2) standard (2" x 2") **passport-sized photos** and **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 **OPT application fee of \$410**. Checks should be made payable to 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.

Step 3: If you are filing online, upload all documents in the appropriate locations. Please do not begin your application until you receive the OPT I-20 from the ISSO. **Filing online prior to obtaining the OPT I-20 will lead to the denial of your petition.**

If mailing in your application, finish assembling your **paper OPT application** in this order, **from top to bottom**:

- [Form G-1145](#) *optional but recommended*
Fill out to request email or text notification when USCIS accepts your application.
- Photos and check/money order paper-clipped to the I-765
- 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. **Please ensure the date 08/25/2020 is present in the bottom left corner of the Form I-765 you will submit.**
- Photocopy of page 1 and the travel signature page of new OPT I-20 (DO NOT mail the original)
- 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 any previously issued Employment Authorization Documents (OPT cards), if applicable to you

Step 4: Mail your paper OPT application or submit the online application to USCIS within 30 days of the date on your I-765 and new OPT I-20.

- 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 OPT in the "Foreign students" box.