

Maintaining Your Visa Status While on Optional Practical Training

Optional Practical Training (OPT) is an important opportunity for many F-1 students. To maintain F-1 status during OPT you must comply with U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) employment and reporting requirements. The UT Dallas ISSO provides the following information to assist you in meeting those requirements.

F-1 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES – REPORTS YOU MUST MAKE TO HOMELAND SECURITY

ALL F-1 STUDENTS – Within 10 days of each change, you are required to report the following:

- Current U.S. address

ALL F-1 STUDENTS ON OPT – Within 10 days of each change, you are required to report the above, plus the following:

- Start or end of employment
- Change of your employer's address
- Change of your employer's name
- Change of your official name

ALL STUDENTS WITH AN OPT STEM EXTENSION – You are required to report all the above, plus the following:

- Employment status, 6 months after your extension start date, even if your information has not changed.
- Employment status, 12 months after your extension start date, even if your information has not changed.

HOW TO REPORT

To report a change of address or employment complete an ISSO OPT Report Form and submit it via email, fax or in person to the **UT Dallas ISSO**. The ISSO will report your changes to Homeland Security.

Form: <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/forms/index.html>

Email: ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu Fax: 972-883-4010

Note: Changes of address reported on the OPT Employment Report Form affect only the SEVIS immigration system. To update your address in the school information system (Orion) do so through the Registrar's Office.

ACCEPTABLE EMPLOYMENT

DHS has ruled that acceptable employment during OPT can include standard employment, contract employment, self-employment and volunteer positions. All employment must be appropriate to your degree and average at least 20 hours per week. For more details: <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/current/optReportingInstruction.html>.

UNEMPLOYMENT LIMITS

STUDENTS IN INITIAL OPT PERIOD – Maximum of 90 days allowed during the 12-month OPT period.

STUDENTS WITH AN OPT STEM EXTENSION – An additional 30 days applies, for a maximum of 120 days allowed during the 29-month OPT period.

NOTE: It is crucial that you report all periods of employment to avoid unnecessary accrual of unemployment days.

H-1B CAP GAP

An F-1 student who has an H-1B petition filed by an eligible employer has an automatic extension of status while the application is pending. Students on approved OPT also have an extension of work authorization. Find more information at <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/current/h1bcapgap.html>.

MORE INFORMATION

Updates: <http://www.utdallas.edu/student/international/current/typesoft.html> Questions: issocurrent@utdallas.edu

OPT REPORTING

As of April 8, 2008, the Department of Homeland Security requires students to report to their schools all periods of employment and unemployment while authorized for OPT. This is in addition to the ongoing F-1 requirement of supplying changes of address. **Updates must be reported within 10 days of any change.** Please use the [reporting form](#) as often as is necessary to make sure the UT Dallas ISSO has your most current information.

Please direct any questions regarding OPT reporting to ISSOcurrent@utdallas.edu.

Type of Employment	Instructions
Single Employer	Provide the employment dates and your employer's name and address.
None - Actively Seeking Employment	<p>If you have been unemployed for more than 10 days since your OPT start date, indicate those dates. <u>To remain in the U.S., you must be actively looking for relevant employment.</u></p> <p>In order to maintain your visa status, you must limit unemployment while on OPT to a total of 90 days or 120 days if you have been approved for the 17-month OPT extension.</p>
Work for Hire (contract employment)	<p>Provide the employment dates and your employer's name and address.</p> <p>If requested by DHS, you must be able to provide evidence that you worked an average of at least 20 hours per week.</p>
Unpaid Volunteer or Intern	<p>Provide the employment dates and your employer's name and address.</p> <p>If requested by DHS, you must be able to provide evidence that you worked an average of at least 20 hours per week and that the work was related to your OPT degree.</p>
Self-Employed U.S. Business Owner	<p>List your company's name or print "Self-Employed" and the business address. This location may be the same as your personal address, if appropriate.</p> <p>If requested by DHS, you must be able to provide evidence that you have proper business licenses, the business is related to your degree and that the business keeps you full-time employed.</p>
Self-Employed in Performing Arts (short-term gigs)	<p>Provide employment dates and locations.</p> <p>If requested by DHS, you must be able to provide a list of all gigs and dates of employment.</p>



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
 International Student Services
 800 W Campbell Road SSB34, Richardson, Texas 75080-3021
 (972) 883-4189 Fax (972) 883-4010

STUDENT REPORT – OPT EMPLOYMENT

INSTRUCTIONS

- Complete, print, sign and date form
- Make a copy for your records
- Send form to UT Dallas ISSO via email at ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu or fax at 972-883-4010
- Processing time is 3 business days from the date of receipt. You will receive an email when processing is complete.
- If you have any questions about reporting requirements or other immigration-related issues, contact an international advisor via email (ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu), appointment (972-883-4189) or in person during walk-in hours (M-TH 10:30- 5:00, F 10:30-4:00).

REASON FOR REPORT

- Employment/unemployment change
- Address change
- Extension validation report (due every 6 months from extension start date, even if information is unchanged)

Student Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Student Residential Address: _____

Current email address: _____

___ I received my EAD card. The authorization dates on the card are _____ to _____.

NOTE: If you did not use the UT Dallas ISSO address on your I-765 form, you must provide a copy of your OPT EAD to the ISSO. If you have not already done so, submit a copy by fax (972-883-4010), email (ISSOCurrent@utdallas.edu) or in person.

CHECK AND COMPLETE ALL THAT APPLY (Please print clearly.)

___ I am currently employed. (Supply employment dates, employer name and employer address.)
 _____ to _____
 Employer name and address

___ I am not employed, starting from _____ to _____.

___ I will discontinue OPT in order to begin a new academic program on _____.

___ I have changed visa status to _____, with the I-94 effective date of _____. Submit a copy of the approval notice/I-94 to the UT Dallas ISSO by email, fax or in person.

___ I have decided to leave the U.S. and discontinue OPT, departing the U.S. on _____.

___ I am currently “employed” as an unpaid volunteer or intern in my major field of study. Supply employment dates, employer name and employer address.
 _____ to _____
 Employer name and address

___ I am self-employed. Provide your business address: _____

I agree for the UT DALLAS ISSO to report the above information to the Department of Homeland Security on my behalf.

Student Signature _____ Date _____