Frequently Asked Questions

Am I eligible for OPT if I have engaged in Curricular Practical Training (CPT)?

Yes, as long as you have not engaged in 12 months or more of full-time CPT.

Should I keep a copy of my application?

Always keep copies of all official documents that you send through the mail. If your application is lost, you will have copies of your documents.

How can I check the status of my application?

On your receipt notice (Form I-797) you will receive a receipt number that begins with the letters “LIN”. You can use this “LIN number” to access information about your application by checking on-line www.uscis.gov, or by calling the USCIS Northern Service Center at (402) 323-7830.

If it has been more than 90 days since the "Receipt Date" listed on your receipt notice, you may be able to obtain a temporary EAD from the Columbus or nearest District Immigration office. The Columbus CIS office is located at 50 West Broad Street, 3rd floor, Leveque Tower. The Columbus CIS Office accepts appointments only for OPT. It is required that you make an appointment on-line by logging on to: infopass.uscis.gov.

Will I be able to travel outside of the U.S. while I'm on OPT?

Please click here for a response

If I work on OPT for a year after I finish my degree and then go back to school to study for a higher degree, will I...
get 12 more months of OPT when I finish my next degree?

Yes, you are eligible for 12 months of OPT after each degree obtained at a higher academic level. For example, if you complete your Bachelors degree and engage in 12 months of OPT, then you would be eligible for another 12 months of OPT after completing a Masters, and another 12 months after completing a PhD degree.

Can I get an extension of my OPT?

No, OPT is granted for a maximum of 12 months. This 12 month period of authorization must be completed within 14 months of graduation. The OPT recommendation written on page 3 of an I-20 gives CIS the flexibility to adjust the starting and ending dates of OPT in the event that an OPT application cannot be approved by the start date requested on the application.

How long am I allowed to remain in the U.S. after I finish OPT?

You may remain in the U.S. up to 60 days after completion of OPT as long as your passport is still valid.

What if I decide to pursue a new course of study?

If you want to study after completion of OPT, then you must be accepted by a new program and have your immigration record released from Ohio State to your new institution (even if it is still Ohio State) by the end of the 60-day grace period. If you are starting a new degree program at Ohio State, your I-20 will need to be updated to reflect your new degree program. The start date of the new program must be within five months of the last day of OPT authorization.

If you have further questions, please contact an Immigration Coordinator at (614) 292-6101; email iss@osu.edu; or come in during walk-in hours from 1 – 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.