

**Office of International Programs  
Elizabethtown College**

**F-1 Student**

**Application for Occupational Practical Training**

**Guideline**

## General Information

The Office of International Programs at Elizabethtown College assists students in completing the application required for Optional Practical Training (Application I-765), which may lead to them obtaining an Employment Authorization Card through the U.S. Department of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

This document has been created as a guideline to assist students with the process and help them to prepare for the various items involved. As such it is not meant to be, nor should it be regarded as, a legal authority. As always, students are responsible for being aware of the requirements for their visa. It is highly recommended that before proceeding, students review the [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) website.

## Definition and General Parameters of OPT

OPT, Optional Practical Training is the opportunity provided by the U.S. Federal government to current F-1 visa students who are in active status to pursue a period of employment after they've completed their program at an authorized institution.

### Capabilities

1. OPT may be experienced for up to 12 months for each academic level (undergraduate, graduate)
2. OPT may be pursued by 1-year non-degree students
3. OPT may be experienced during a period of time up to 14 months after completion of a program (i.e. program end date 5-15-2006, complete OPT by 7-14-2007)
4. Students may stay in-country while their OPT is being processed – without work
5. Students may travel on an OPT if the I-20 has a current signature on the 3<sup>rd</sup> page.

### Limitations

1. OPT must be applied for **before the program completion date** (i.e. if the program completion date is 5-15, the application and DSO recommendation must take place by 5-14).
2. OPT may only be used to receive work experience that is directly related to the student's course of study during the program completed. (i.e. if a student studied/ majored – minored in political science, they may not work as an assistant to a medical doctor.)
3. OPT must be completed 14 months after completion of the program.
4. Work off-campus, thus OPT, may only be pursued by students who've experienced one full academic year in the United States.
5. If a student has pursued at least 12 months of CPT full time, this will be deducted from their OPT experience (i.e. if 13 months of CPT are completed only 11 months of OPT may be pursued).

### Fee

A fee of \$180.00 is required by USCIS to apply for OPT. The fee is submitted to USCIS upon application submission, and is required to begin the approval process for OPT.

## Completing the Application for OPT

There are two ways of applying for OPT through form I-765. The application may be completed by printing the form and submitting it with payment and supporting documentation to USCIS. The application may also be completed electronically. Payment is made electronically at the time of application. Supporting documentation is then forwarded to the USCIS. Regardless of how the application is filed, the following steps must be completed to assure processing: (1)File for I-765; (2)Apply for SEVIS Recommendation; (3)Photo, Fingerprint, Signature; (4) Submit Documents; (5) Wait and Follow-through

Adapted from [www.USCIS.gov](http://www.USCIS.gov) website 2/3/2006

Marcie A. Bahn, Associate Director Office of International Programs

## Step 1 – File for I-765

Filing for the I-765 may take place electronically or by using a paper method. The OIP has found that it is best to use the electronic filing method whenever possible. This section will cover what is needed to prepare for and complete the application process.

### Know When Your Program Ends: Program End Date and H1-B Issues – Needed for Step 2

Before beginning the application process be certain to have the following items available to you.

1. Know your “End of Program Completion Date”. This date is the last *date coursework is submitted* to complete the last course required for your program.
  - For **graduates** who are not early participants, this is the last day of finals for your final semester.
  - For **early participants** (someone who needs one or two more course, but not a full semester) this is the last date you hand in your final coursework. For online courses, this might be June 15. See Marcie Bahn to determine your “End of Program Completion Date”.
2. Know the date you wish to begin your OPT.
  - Keep in mind, you have a grace period of 60 days before and after your OPT during which time you may be in-country but not working as long as your I-20 is still valid.
  - Keep in mind, H1-B visas applications are accepted April 15 before they are active the following October 1<sup>st</sup>. For May graduates pursuing H1-B during their OPT, you may want to wait until August 1 to complete your program. See Marcie Bahn if you are thinking of pursuing H1-B after this undergraduate OPT experience.

### Gather Your Documents

Before beginning the application process have the following documents/information available

1. Passport – all
2. U.S. visa – all
3. I-94 (particularly 11 digit number)
4. Telephone number where you can be reached
5. Any prior Employment Authorization Cards or applications

### Eligibility of E-File:

- Students completing this online form have the eligibility code: **(3)(i) F-1 Student Seeking Optional Practical Training in an Occupation Directly Related to Studies**
- **You are not eligible to E-File this form if**
  - **Category 274a.12(c)** You live outside of the United States, Guam, Puerto Rico, or the US Virgin Islands.
  - You are applying for a waiver of the filing fee.
  - You are requesting that your case be expedited.

*NOTE: If you are applying for an EAD based on a category that is currently not eligible for E-Filing, please do not try to E-File Form I-765 under a different category, as that will slow down the processing of your application.*

Adapted from [www.USCIS.gov](http://www.USCIS.gov) website 2/3/2006

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**Fee: \$180.00**

- If filing for an initial EAD under one of these categories, no fee is required:
  - Refugee, asylee or paroled as a refugee;
  - N-8 or N-9 Nonimmigrant;
  - Citizen of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, or Palau;
  - Granted Withholding of Deportation;
  - Dependent of certain foreign government or international organization personnel;  
or,
  - Applicant for asylum (however, applicant filing under special ABC procedures must pay the fee).
  
- If filing for a replacement or renewal EAD under one of these categories, no fee is required:
  - Citizen of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, or Palau;
  - Granted Withholding of Deportation; or,
  - Dependent of certain foreign government or international organization personnel.
  
- If you are filing for a replacement EAD, and you are a dependent of certain foreign government or international organization personnel, no fee is required.

**Create a User name and Password:**

➤ Your User ID must contain from 6 to 16 alphabetic and/or numeric characters with no spaces.

➤ Your Password must:

- Contain from 8 to 16 characters
- Contain at least 2 of the following 3 characters: uppercase alphabetic, lowercase alphabetic, numeric
- Contain at least 1 special character (e.g., @, #, \$, %, & \*, +, =)
- Begin and end with an alphabetic character
- Not contain spaces
- Not contain all or part of your UserID
- Not use 2 identical characters consecutively
- Not be a recently used password

*Suggested password: 'Mailto#'+state your number in row of siblings+'child'+last letter of first and last names (i.e. – Joe Smith, #3 child = Mailto#3childeh)*

**Complete the I-765 Application – allow 45 minutes to 1 hour**

Go to the Following link

<https://efiling.uscis.dhs.gov/efile/>

**FOLLOW THE BELOW SAMPLE TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION ONLINE**

Complete BLUE highlighted Areas

Additional Explanations are highlighted in YELLOW

In order to electronically process your application, you must provide information for the items marked \* below.

**I am applying for: \***

- Permission to accept employment
- Replacement (of lost employment authorization document)
- Renewal of my permission to accept employment

Family Name: *	<input type="text" value="Select a BCIS Location"/>
Given Name: *	<input type="text"/>
Middle Name:	<input type="text"/>
Other Names Used: (Include <a href="#">Maiden Name</a> )	<input type="text"/>

**Address in the United States**

Use the address where you expect to be in 90 days, or use the address in the box

<a href="#">Number and Street:</a> *	<input type="checkbox"/>
<a href="#">Apt. Number:</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town or City: *	<input type="checkbox"/>
State: *	<input type="text"/>
Zip Code: *	<input type="text"/>
<a href="#">Country of Citizenship/Nationality:</a> As they appear on your passport	<input type="text" value="Select a Port of Entry"/>
<a href="#">Town or City of Birth:</a>	<input type="text" value="F1: STUDENT - ACADEMIC"/>
<a href="#">State/Province of Birth:</a>	<input type="text" value="F1: STUDENT - ACADEMIC"/>

Adapted from [www.USCIS.gov](http://www.USCIS.gov) website 2/3/2006

Marcie A. Bahn, Associate Director Office of International Programs

Country of Birth:

(c)(3)(i)STUDENT VALID FOR PRACTICAL TRAINING

Date of Birth: \*

Select a BCIS Location

I am currently in active F-1 visa status and expect to complete my program of study in May 2007. Work sought will directly correspond to my course of study to apply learned theory to practical s

MM

DD

Sex: \*

Back

Male

Cancel

Female

Marital Status:

Continue

Married

Single

Delete Form

Widowed

Cancel

Social Security #:

(Include all numbers you have ever used if any.)

Certify Forms



YOUR NAME

LEAVE BLANK

A#:

OR

I-94#:

What is an I-94#?

Include in this box the 11 digits that appear on the top of your I-94 card

In order to electronically process your application, you must provide information for the items marked \*.

Back

Cancel

Continue

Please read our [Secure Site Statement](#).

For assistance or questions regarding this form, please call our National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 [TDD 1-800-767-1833].

In order to electronically process your application, you must provide information for the items marked \* below.

Have you ever before applied for employment authorization from BCIS? Only check yes if you've applied for employment due to hardship



Yes



No

If yes, which BCIS office?

Select a BCIS Location

Date for application:

MM / DD / YYYY

MM DD YYYY

Results:



Granted



Denied



Pending

Adapted from www.USCIS.gov website 2/3/2006

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If you have made multiple applications for Employment Authorization, please give details.

BCIS office:

Date for application:

 /  / 

Results:

 Granted  Denied  Pending

BCIS office:

Date for application:

 /  / 

Results:

 Granted  Denied  Pending

**Date of Last Entry into the U.S.:**

This will be noted on your I-94

 /  / 

**Place of Last Entry into the U.S.:**

This will be noted on your I-94

**Manner of Last Entry into the U.S.:**

(Visitor, Student, etc.)

**Current Immigration Status:**

(Visitor, Student, etc.)

**Please select your eligibility status: \***

**For (c)(9) eligibility status only**

Please select the location where your I-485 is pending: **Do not answer this section**

**Please provide information concerning your eligibility status:**

Type the words that appear in the box

I am currently in active F-1 visa status and expect to complete my program of study in May 2007. Work sought will directly correspond to my course of study to apply learned theory to practical skill.

**End of Primary I-765 Form**

You have reached the end of the I-765 form.

To continue with the application process, select **Continue** which takes you to the next step of the process.

If you would like to review information entered in this form, select **Back** to navigate through the form.

To cancel and exit this e-filing process, select **Cancel**.



Please read our [Secure Site Statement](#).

For assistance or questions regarding this form, please call our National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 [TDD 1-800-767-1833].

## Form Checklist

Below is the fee/fees for all forms currently in your application.

Form	Description	Fee
I-765 – YOUR NAME	I-765 Application Fee	\$ 180.00
<b>Total due from filer:</b>		<b>\$180.00</b>

### I-765 –YOUR NAME

I-765 – YOUR NAME

**Add New Form** by selecting hyperlinked form preceeded by Add.

**Review or Edit a Form** by selecting the hyperlinked form number.

**Delete a Form or Forms** Select checkbox for a form or you select multiple boxes for more than one form, then select the delete button. **Note:** that if you delete a form that has any affiliated forms, those forms will also be deleted.

**Certify Forms** you can go ahead and certify if the information in all the forms is correct,



## Certify

Please review the information below. If you wish to edit any form information, either select the Form Checklist link or the **Back** button. **If the information is correct, you must certify it. Once you certified and selected the "I agree" button, you cannot edit the forms.**

### Your Certification

Read the information on penalties in the instructions before completing this section. If someone helped you prepare this petition, he or she must complete Part 9.

#### Certification: \*



I certify, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, that this petition and the evidence submitted with it are all true and correct. I authorize the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services to release to other government agencies any information from my BCIS (or former INS) records, if the BCIS determines that such action is necessary to determine eligibility for the benefit sought.

**Print Name:**

**Title:**

**Date** (mm/dd/yyyy):

**Daytime Phone Number** (Area/Country Code):

Use your cell phone number

**E-Mail Address:**

Use your E'town email address

**Do not complete.** Please note: If you do not fully complete this form or fail to submit the required documents listed in the instructions, a **final decision on your petition may be delayed or the petition may be denied.**



I declare that I prepared this petition at the request of the above person and it is based on all information of which I have knowledge.

**Attorney or Representative:** In the event of a Request for Evidence (RFE) may the CIS contact you by Fax or E-mail?



Yes



No

**Print Name:**

**Date** (mm/dd/yyyy):

**Firm Name:**

**Firm Address:**

**Daytime Phone Number** (Area/Country Code):

**Fax Number** (Area/Country Code):

E-mail Address:

By selecting **I Agree**, your application and payment (if applicable) will be sent to the BCIS. Please select **I Agree** only once.

I intend to mail supporting documentation for this application.

Please read our [Secure Site Statement](#).

For assistance or questions regarding this form, please call our National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 [TDD 1-800-767-1833].

## Payment Summary

### Payment Summary - Filer

Listed below are the fees that are to be paid by filer in this application.

Form	Description	Fee
I-765 – YOUR NAME	I-765 Application Fee	\$ 180.00
<b>Total due from filer:</b>		<b>\$180.00</b>

### Payment Method

Please select method of payment: **International credit cards do not work**

Credit Card  Electronic Checking or Savings

Please read our [Secure Site Statement](#).

For assistance or questions regarding this form, please call our National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 [TDD 1-800-767-1833].

Bottom of Form

Adapted from www.USCIS.gov website 2/3/2006

Marcie A. Bahn, Associate Director Office of International Programs

## Payment Summary

Form	Description	Fee
I-765 – YOUR NAME	I-765 Application Fee	\$ 180.00
<b>Total due from filer:</b>		<b>\$180.00</b>

## Credit Card Information

In order to electronically process your application, you must provide information for the items marked \* below.

Cardholder First Name: \*

Cardholder Middle Initial:

Cardholder Last Name: \*

Billing Address 1: \* Address where bills are sent

e.g. 123 Main Street

Billing Address 2:

City: \*

State: \*

Zip or Postal Code: \*

Cardholder Phone Number: \*

 -  - 

Card Number: \*

[Select here for an example](#)

Type of Card: \*

- Visa
- Mastercard
- American Express
- Discover

Expiration Date: \*

 

Security Indicator: three digits on back

Pursuant to Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 103.7 and Section 103.2 respectively, filing and fingerprint service fees associated with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services applications, where applicable, "are **non-refundable** and must be paid when the application is filed."

**No refunds or returns will be honored in the event of an application cancellation, user error, or withdrawal request.** A charge in the amount of \$30.00 will be imposed on the Payor of a filed application if the total amount due cannot be honored by the respective bank or cardholder on which the funds are drawn. This charge is separate from any other bank or credit card penalty charges that may be imposed by the issuing Payor bank or credit card merchant.

[◀ Back](#)   [Cancel](#)   [Submit Payment ▶](#)

Please read our [Secure Site Statement](#).

For assistance or questions regarding this form, please call our National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 [TDD 1-800-767-1833].

**Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services**  
I-765 Form: Application for Employment Authorization

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### Confirmation Receipt List

#### Your Application Has Been Submitted.

Do NOT file the same application again.

**Please make a note of your Receipt Number(s) listed below.**

- To view the **web version** of your Confirmation Receipt Notice, select the **form link**.
- To view the **PDF version** of your Confirmation Receipt Notice, select the **Finish button**.

Form	BCIS Receipt Number	Filing Fee
<a href="#">I-765 – YOUR NAME</a>	EAC*****	\$ 180.00
<b>Total Amount Paid:</b>		<b>\$ 180.00</b>
<b>Payment Date:</b>		<b>MM/DD/YYYY</b>

[FINISH](#)

## Step 2 – Apply for SEVIS Recommendation and Start Date Selection

After submitting the I-765 and before submitting your documentation (STEP 4), it is necessary to request from the Elizabethtown College SEVIS PDSO (Marcie Bahn) a SEVIS recommendation and request for OPT approval. To do this, make an appointment with Marcie Bahn to determine your Program Completion End Date, that date you wish to begin your OPT, and whether or not you'll pursue H1-B.

*This meeting must take place so a new I-20 requesting the OPT and showing your requested start date may be printed and included with all other supporting documentation sent to USCIS.*

## Step 3 - Submitting Supporting Documentation for OPT

Supporting documentation is the initial evidence that is required as proof of identification and as justification of eligibility for a benefit. **These documents are required for USCIS to make a decision on your application.**

### Supporting Documentation for F-1 Visa Students includes:

1. Original E-File Confirmation Receipt notice Cover Page
2. Copy of all I-20 forms, including one issued for OPT application
3. Copy of biographical pages of all passports
4. Copy of all U.S. visas
5. Copy of both sides of I-94
6. Copy of all Employment Authorization Cards (if applicable)

### Instructions for Submitting Supporting Documentation for E-Filed Applications Only

1. Gather your supporting documentation for your E-Filed application.
  - o **Cover Page.** Print a copy of your Confirmation Receipt notice and attach it as a cover page (or first page) to your supporting documentation package.
  - o **Originals and Copies.** In almost all cases, submit a photocopy of your supporting document to the USCIS. (If form instructions state that a copy of a document may be filed with an application and you choose to send USCIS the original, USCIS may keep that original for our records.)
  - o **Translations.** Any foreign language document must be accompanied by a full English translation that the translator has certified as complete and correct, and by the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate the foreign language into English.

#### **Cautions**

- o **DO NOT** include a copy of your E-Filed application with your supporting documentation.
  - o **DO NOT** include any paper-based applications or fees with your supporting documentation for the E-Filed application.
2. Make personal copies. Keep a copy of your Confirmation Receipt notice(s) and application(s) for your records, noting what supporting documentation you mailed and the date you mailed it. Make a copy of the entire package before mailing it. Submit an additional copy of all documents to Marcie Bahn SEVIS PDSO.

3. Mail your documents. Place all supporting documentation into one package and mail it to the address provided on the Confirmation Receipt notice..

Vermont Service Center  
Attn: E-Filed Premium Processing  
30 Houghton Street  
St. Albans, VT 05478-2399

***Failure to follow these guidelines may result in delays or denial of your application.***

## **Step 4 – Photo, Fingerprint, and Signature**

After e-filing, you will need to make an appointment to go to one of USCIS' Application Support Centers for the electronic capture of a photograph, fingerprints and signature.

### **How to make the appointment**

1. Wait for USCIS to mail to you an appointment date, or instructions to call for an appointment for the electronic photograph, fingerprint, and signature.
2. Ask a friend if they can give you a ride to York, PA and when is the best day of the week/time of the day for them. They will need at least 1.5 hours between 8:30 am and 4:00 pm Monday – Friday.
3. Be prepared to give a customer service representative several days/times
4. If requested to call the National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 (TTY 1-800-767-1833), and after keying through until you reach a Customer Service representative, you will be asked to provide:
  - **Your reason for calling**  
*Answer:* schedule an appointment for fingerprinting
  - Your EAC number  
*Answer:* EAC number on your e-file cover letter
  - **Your ASC code**  
*Answer is usually:* "2" – listed on your e-file cover letter
  - **Which Application Support Center you need to visit**  
*Answer:* York, Pennsylvania
  - **What day of the week/time of the day is best for you**  
*Answer:* Day/Time determined by you and your friend

### **What To Bring To Your Appointment at the Application Support Center**

1. Copy of your E-Filed application
2. Copy of your Confirmation Receipt notice
3. Copy of your appointment date
4. Passport, visa, I-94, I-20

***USCIS cannot process your application until you have appeared for your appointment at an Application Support Center.***

## Step 5 – Wait and Follow-through

From the point of e-filing (submitting your electronic application payment) to the point of receiving an Employment Authorization Card for OPT there is usually a gap of time equal to 90 days.

### Receipt of Documents while you wait

1. You will receive a “green” Receipt of Confirmation” notice in the mail. File it.
2. You might also receive a “green” document requesting more information. If you receive this green document, you must supply the information requested – *immediately*. Delaying will delay the approval of your employment card. Call or email Marcie Bahn 717-361-1594 [bahnm@etown.edu](mailto:bahnm@etown.edu) if you have questions.

### Things to do while waiting

1. Look for a job. – You can tell future employers that you’ve applied for OPT
2. Consult an immigration lawyer – If you wish to pursue H-1B, this consultation can help when approaching future employers
3. Make travel plans
4. Concentrate on your studies
5. Enjoy your last semester