

HIO Request for OPT STEM Extension Recommendation

Eligibility Criteria

You must have completed a degree in a STEM field. Review the list of STEM designated [degrees](#) to confirm your eligibility. You can identify your degree (CIP) code from the "Program of Study" section of your Form I-20. Once you have verified your eligibility, you must also review the degree definition as listed at this U.S. Department of Education [site](#). You must relate your prospective STEM employment with the CIP code definition of the degree to qualify for the STEM extension.

For the HIO to issue a Form I-20 for the STEM OPT extension, please submit the following documents:

The HIO mailing address is: *1350 Massachusetts Avenue, 864 Smith Campus Center, Cambridge, MA 02138*

- A completed HIO [STEM Extension Request Form](#);
- A completed [Form I-765 \(guide & instructions here\)](#)
- A photocopy of your current EAD card
- A printout of your most [recent I-94](#).
- Completed [I-983 Training Plan \(instructions\)](#).
- A \$300 personal check or money order of made payable to Harvard University

****STEM Payment:** This is a one-time non-refundable fee for Harvard to continue maintaining your SEVIS record after you are no longer a fee-paying student. You will also maintain full access to HIO advising and resources. This fee is wholly separate from the USCIS application filing fee.

While waiting for your new Forms I-20 you should begin preparing the following materials that you will submit to the USCIS:

- Copy of your academic transcript and diploma in a STEM field – Do not use a computer printout of grades
- A \$410 personal check or money order made payable to "U.S. Department of Homeland Security".
- Two recent identical U.S. passport-size photographs not used for a previous passport or U.S. visa application (photos must be taken within the past six months)
- Photocopies of immigration documents: all of your previous Forms I-20; front and back of your current OPT EAD; [I-94](#) printout; biographical page of your valid passport; F-1 visa stamp (not applicable to Canadians)

STEM OPT Extension Reminders:

- ✓ **DO NOT** submit your completed application to USCIS until you receive your new Forms I-20 from the HIO.
- ✓ You may submit the STEM application up to 90 days prior to the end of your current OPT EAD card.
- ✓ Submit your application to USCIS no later than two weeks prior to the end of your current OPT EAD card.
- ✓ Your STEM extension request will be denied if USCIS receives your application after the end date of your current EAD.

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Employee/Student Information

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Residential Street address: _____ Apt. #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Harvard School and Degree Program: _____

E-Mail _____

After reviewing the [CIP code definition](#) of your degree, please describe how the position draws on knowledge gained and developed during your academic program in 2-3 sentences. For example, you may cite specific coursework; dissertation or thesis research; or lab work that has provided you with fundamental knowledge you use in your job duties. ***NB: The HIO is required to enter this information in your SEVIS record. Failure to provide adequate information in this section will delay the issuance of your Form I-20 for the STEM extension.***

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I must only engage in employment reflected on the Form I-983 Training plan on which this STEM OPT extension application is based. Failure to comply with the STEM OPT rules and reporting requirements may constitute a status violation; such violations may have negative consequences for my current immigration status or result in delays and denials of future immigration benefits.

- I will comply with the [mandatory federal reporting requirements](#) while on STEM OPT: *6 month reporting, evaluation on student progress, and final evaluation on student progress.*
- I will update the HIO within 10 days of any change(s) outlined below – contact your HIO advisor with questions:
 - Any [material changes or updates](#) to the information on the I-983 Training Plan (i.e. employer’s address, reduction of hours, etc.)
 - Any changes of employers
 - Any changes of my address (where I physically reside)
 - End of employment or any change of my immigration status (e.g., F to H or J, etc.)
- I will thoroughly review all STEM OPT instructions provided to me by the HIO and will review HIO e-mails so that I remain informed about my STEM OPT and how to properly maintain my F-1 status during the OPT period.
- I authorize my employer to complete the information and agreement below so that I may apply for an extension of my current Optional Practical Training (OPT) employment authorization.

Once this request is processed, you will be issued two new Forms I-20.

- I will pick-up new Forms I-20 at the HIO. You will receive an email notification when they are ready.
- I want my new Forms I-20 sent to me via Fedex. There is no UPS or DHL service at the HIO.
 1. Create a Federal Express a pre-paid shipping label via [eShipGlobal](#).
 2. Select **Harvard International Office** from the department selection section
 3. Confirm the eShipGlobal 9-digit order number: _____

Student/Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Employer Reporting Requirements (To be completed by employer; please print clearly and legibly):

There are numerous employer requirements to which you must adhere. Some of those requirements are enumerated here, but you should pay particular attention to the attestation on page 2 of the I-983 Training Plan and the employer information located at <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/employers-and-the-form-i-983>. General employer requirements include being registered with the E-Verify program and ensuring that hiring an international student with STEM employment will not displace a U.S. worker.

Form I-983 Training Plan

Any material changes to the Form I-983 Training Plan submitted to the HIO must be reported within 10 days of any change to avoid invalidating the student’s STEM OPT employment authorization. Material changes or deviations may include, but are not limited to:

- Any change of the employer’s Employer Identification Number, (i.e., the company’s Federal Tax ID number) resulting from a change in the employer’s ownership or structure
- Any reduction in student compensation that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked
- Any significant decrease in the student’s working hours per week as listed on the Form I-983 Training Plan
- Changes to the employer’s commitments or student’s learning objectives as documented on the Form I-983 Training Plan

As long as the STEM OPT student and employer continue to meet the regulatory requirements and the modified Form I-983 Training Plan meets the specified requirements, the student’s employment authorization will not cease based on a change to the plan.

End of Employment

Per 8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(ii)(C)(4) - The employer agrees to [report the termination or departure of an OPT](#) employee to the DSO at the student’s school if the termination or departure is prior to the end of the authorized period of OPT. Such reporting must be made within 48 hours of the event. An employer shall consider a worker to have departed when the employer knows the student has left the employment or if the student has not reported for work for a period of 5 consecutive business days without the consent of the employer, whichever occurs earlier. Please send the report to internationaloffice@harvard.edu.

Employee's Position Title: _____ Start Date: _____

Employer (Organization) Name as listed on the I-983 Training Plan: _____

Worksite (site) Location from the I-983 Training Plan: _____

Employer's EIN#: -

E-Verify Employer #:

Older numbers are five digits and newer ones are six digits

Supervisor Name as listed on the I-983 Training Plan: _____

Supervisor Tel.: _____ Supervisor Email: _____

Authorized Signer Name: _____ Title: _____

Authorized Signer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note to the Employer:

Per 8 CFR 274a.12 (b)(6)(iv) a person granted OPT may continue to work for up to 180 days following the expiration of the original OPT while the STEM extension is pending. The U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) agency will issue Form I- 797 to acknowledge receipt of the extension application. USCIS processing for the extension may take approximately 90 to 120 days.