
Regulatory Requirements for F-1 students with approved OPT

You have applied for Optional Practical Training (OPT). Your EAD card allows you to have paid, unpaid or volunteer employment anywhere in the U.S. in a position directly related to your major field of study (listed in item #5 on your I-20). International Student Success recommends, if it is not obvious that you are working in your major field of study, that you ask your employer to write a letter on organizational letterhead explaining how your work duties are related to your major field of study.

OPT regulations continue to change. Contact International Student Success for current regulations. **Failure to follow F-1 regulations during your OPT could result in the lose of your OPT authorization and the termination of your F-1 SEVIS record and your F-1 status.** The regulatory requirements and other important information are outlined below:

(Place your initials next to each item)

_____ 1. You are allowed to purchase the Maryville University sponsored health insurance plan on a semester basis during your post-completion OPT. Because health insurance is required in the U.S., International Student Success strongly recommends that you and your family members enroll in U.S. health insurance coverage during your entire time in the U.S.

_____ 2. If you have a Missouri Driver's License, you should report to the Missouri Department of Revenue to renew your license. Take your: (1) EAD, (2) I-20, (3) I-94, (4) passport and (5) a letter from International Student Success so a new Missouri Driver's License can be issued with an extended expiration date.

_____ 3. You are required to report your **employer** information within 10 days of any change (start/end of employment). Report these changes to International Student Success at saraparrott@maryville.edu.

_____ 4. You are required to report your **personal address** information within 10 days of any change. Report these changes to International Student Success at rlane@maryville.edu.

_____ 5. You are allowed a sum total of (cumulative) **90 days of unemployment** (weekdays and weekends included) during your 12 month OPT. (180 days if you are on the STEM extension)

Full-time employment (for OPT purposes) is a "paid position, unpaid intern position, self-employed, or volunteer experience related to your program of study for a minimum of 20 hours per week". The record for paid employment will be reflected in your pay stubs/receipts. If you have an unpaid intern position, are self-employed or have a volunteer experience it is your responsibility to document your unpaid or volunteer 20 hours a week position. International Student Services recommends that you obtain a letter on organization letterhead as proof of your 20 hours a week position. If you are unemployed, we encourage you to find an unpaid intern position or volunteer position related to your degree program.

_____ 6. You are allowed to travel outside the United States during your OPT with: (1) a valid F-1 visa, (2) I-20 endorsed for travel by an Advisor in International Student Success and (3) a letter from your employer indicating that you will resume your work following your trip overseas. Submit copies of your new form I-94, visa and Port of Entry stamp upon your return to the U.S. Please scan/email/fax clear copies to International Student Success.

- Students without a training position **should not travel** outside the U.S. This travel time will count toward your unemployment days and you might not be allowed to re-enter the U.S. without an employment letter.

_____ 7. Submit verification of your new immigration status to International Student Success if you change your immigration status (i.e.: H-1B, H-4, F-2, Permanent Resident, etc.) within 10 days of the change. After we receive verification of your new immigration status, we will update your SEVIS and Maryville records.

Immigration regulations for F-1 students with OPT work authorization

- _____ 8. You may study part time during OPT either at Maryville or at another school.
- If you begin a new degree program at Maryville, your OPT authorization will automatically end on the day the new form I-20 is created for the new program.
 - If your SEVIS record is transferred from Maryville to another school, your OPT authorization will automatically end on the day your SEVIS record is released to the other school.

You are allowed to continue your education at Maryville or another U.S. institution following your OPT completion. Students who intend to transfer to another U.S. institution need to complete the Transfer Out form available from International Student Success. You must (1) apply, (2) be admitted and (3) receive an I-20 for your new program of study within 60 days following your OPT end date. You must begin studying in the new program of study within 5 months of your OPT end date or the next available academic term, whichever comes first. If you choose not to seek any additional education in the U.S. you have 60 days from your OPT end date to depart the U.S.

_____ 9. If you are in OPT after April 1 with a timely-filed H-1B petition requesting a change of status and an employment start date of October 1st with a cap-subject employer, you can have your F-1 status and your OPT work authorization extended until October 1st when the H-1B status begins. You should send a clear copy of your I-797 H-1B receipt notice to International Student Success to request an updated I-20 showing your OPT extension dates. **To qualify for the H-1B cap-gap extension:**

- You must be the beneficiary of an H-1B petition that:
 - has been timely filed;
 - that requests an employment start date of October 1 of the following fiscal year; and
 - that requests a change of status
- You must not have violated the terms or conditions of your F-1 status.
- The cap-gap extension terminates when USCIS rejects, denies, or revokes your H-1B petition.
 - However, you would have a grace period after the termination during which you are authorized to remain in the United States for up to 60 days to prepare for departure from the U.S., change degree level, transfer, change status, etc.
- The limits on unemployment continue to apply to F-1 students with the H-1B cap-gap extension.

_____ 10. You may qualify for an additional 24 months of OPT if your original post-completion OPT was granted to you on the basis of completion of a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) degree. To qualify for the 24-month STEM extension, you must currently be participating in post-completion OPT and working for an e-verify registered employer in a paid position directly related to the major field of study listed on your I-20. Students with the 24-month STEM extension are allowed a total of 180 days of unemployment during the 36 months (12 + 24 months) of OPT.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above information.

Name (Please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____