WARNING FOR OPT APPLICANTS: REJECTIONS AND DENIALS

OPT application denials by USCIS are increasing due to the following reasons:

1) USCIS received OPT application more than 30 days after OPT I-20 issuance date
   - Check Date Issued under School Attestation on Page 1 of your OPT I-20 – if USCIS receives your application more than 30 days after this date, your OPT will be denied

2) Application fee payment issues
   - Follow the payment instructions carefully
   - Send only one form of payment

If your application is returned or rejected by USCIS for any reason, or if you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE) or a Denial Notice...

DO NOT RESEND THE APPLICATION WITHOUT CHECKING WITH OIS!

Visit https://ois.usc.edu/employment/employment-f1/opt/post-completion-opt/ for the following:
- OPT Application Checklist
- OPT Instructions: Employment & Reporting Requirements, International Travel

If your OPT application is returned to you or rejected by USCIS for payment issues or any other reason, you must contact OIS to request a new OPT I-20. Resending your application with an expired I-20 will cause your OPT to be denied.

USCIS must receive your OPT application within 30 days of Date Issued date on Page 1 of your OPT I-20. OPT applications received more than 30 days after Date Issued will be denied by USCIS.

Sign and date here. Mail copy of signed I-20 to USCIS; keep original.
The Office of International Services has updated your I-20 reflecting our support of your petition to file for OPT. It is your responsibility to complete the required application and mail it to USCIS in a timely manner.

**USCIS Application Checklist**

Assemble application materials in the order indicated below. Paperclip payment and passport photos on top.

- **Form G-1145** ([https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145](https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145))
  - Typed, not handwritten

- **Original, Signed Form I-765** ([https://www.uscis.gov/i-765](https://www.uscis.gov/i-765))
  - Starting on April 20, 2020, USCIS will only accept OPT applications filed with the 12/26/19 edition of the Form I-765. Applications received by USCIS before April 20, 2020 can use the 5/31/18 edition of the Form I-765.
  - Be sure to download most recent version of form and instructions from the USCIS link above to prevent OPT denial
  - For guidance on how to complete the I-765, refer to USC’s [Sample OPT I-765](https://www.uscis.gov/i-765)
  - Typed; for sections that cannot be typed, handwrite neatly in black ink
  - Signature: Use black ink to sign name in the signature box. Ensure the signature stays within the box.

- **Photocopy of Passport Page**
  - Page that includes photo, passport number and expiration date
  - Must be valid for at least 6 months from application date

- **Printout of Most Recent Electronic Form I-94** ([https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home](https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home))

- **Photocopy of Complete OPT I-20**
  - Sign and date the “Student Attestation” section

- **Two (2) U.S. Style Passport Photos**
  - Write your name and I-94 number on the back of each photo
  - Do not use photos from your home country
  - Passport photos must be 2"x2" with proper facial dimensions of U.S. Style passport photos
  - See Slide 43 of [OPT Instructions](https://www.uscis.gov/portal/server.pt/community/education_and_training/education_and_training) for further instructions

- **$410 Application Fee Payment**
  - Refer to Slides 44-46 of [OPT Instructions](https://www.uscis.gov/portal/server.pt/community/education_and_training/education_and_training)

If applicable, include:

- **Photocopies** of all previously issued EAD cards, CPT I-20s and OPT I-20s

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**WARNING:** Check **Date Issued** and **Program End Date** on **Page 1** of your **OPT I-20**. If your application is received by USCIS more than 30 days after Date Issued and/or more than 60 days after Program End Date on **Page 1**, your **OPT** will be denied.

*Contact OIS before mailing your application to USCIS if you are at risk of missing either deadline.*
MAILING INSTRUCTIONS:
1. Make photocopies of the entire application for your records.
2. Mail application packet by certified US mail to the appropriate USCIS Lockbox Facility—see address below.

**WARNING:** Check Date Issued and Program End Date on Page 1 of your OPT I-20. If your application is received by USCIS more than 30 days after Date Issued and/or more than 60 days after Program End Date on Page 1, your OPT **will be denied**.

Contact OIS before mailing your application to USCIS if you are at risk of missing either deadline.

If you currently live in:
Alaska, Arizona, **California**, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands

Mail your application to:

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:
USCIS
P.O. Box 21281
Phoenix, AZ 85036

For FedEx, UPS, and DHL Deliveries:
USCIS
Attn: NFB AOS
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S, Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034

If you currently live in:
Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia

Mail your application to:

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:
USCIS
P.O. Box 660867
Dallas, TX 75266

For FedEx, UPS, and DHL Deliveries:
USCIS
Attn: NFB AOS
2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business, Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS WHILE ON OPT

All students on OPT are required to report any change of the following to OIS via the **SEVP Portal** within 10 days:

- Legal name
- Employer name and address
- Changes in employment
- Personal contact information

Refer to **OPT Instructions** for additional guidance on OPT employment and reporting requirements.