

STEM OPT FAQs and Reporting Requirements

ELIBILITY + FILING

How do I know if I am eligible for STEM OPT?

You are eligible if your major(s) is on the [STEM Designated Degree Program list](#). Look for the CIP code on your I-20 or ask Sarah Sculley. (For example, the CIP code for Computer Science is 11.0701)

You must also be employed in a paid job that is directly related to the STEM major that qualifies you for the extension and working 20+ hour per week.

The employer must be enrolled in E-Verify.

When can I file my application for STEM OPT?

You can file no earlier than 90 days before the expiration date on your current OPT EAD card. Your application **must** be submitted before the expiration date on your current OPT EAD card and must be submitted within 30 days of receiving the I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation from ISSE.

How can I file?

You can file through the mail or use the new online filing option.

Can I continue working while the extension is processing?

Yes, you can continue working while the STEM OPT extension is processing for up to 180 days beyond your post-completion OPT expiration date.

Can I travel outside the United States with pending STEM OPT application?

It is best to avoid travel outside the US with a pending application, especially if your previous EAD card has already expired. For reentry at any point with pending or approved STEM OPT, you will need: the STEM OPT EAD card (or OPT EAD card with STEM extension receipt notice), your valid passport, unexpired F-1 visa, and I-20 with a travel signature.

Can I study while on STEM OPT?

No. If you plan to begin a new degree program, you must transfer your SEVIS record to the new institution, which effectively ends your STEM OPT. Any unused time does not rollover to be used later.

Can I work for multiple employers?

You may only work for multiple employers if both roles meet the eligibility requirements: related to your STEM eligible major, with an E-Verify employer, and working at least 20+ hour per week for **each employer**. You must also have completed I-983 forms for each employer.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

In addition to reporting any changes in address or contact information within 10 days, there are regular reporting requirements to fulfill:

- Every 6 months you must confirm your address and employment information with Sarah Sculley or Younes Majid Alaoui. You will be prompted by an email from SEVP. You can log into your portal and check or edit your information and then email ISSE confirming it is correct and requesting us to submit the validation report.
- After 12 months, you must complete a self-evaluation. The self-evaluation is found on the last page of the I-983 form you submitted for the initial extension application. You must submit this, as well as confirming your address and employment information, via email ISSE, who will then submit the validation reports.
- At the end of your STEM extension period OR if you end your employment with an organization OR if you change your visa status, you must complete the final evaluation found on the last page of the I-983.
- If you change or add employers, you must submit a new I-983 for each new employer and following the regular requirements for each.