

AFTER ATTENDING A REVIEW SESSION

Mail your completed application within **no more than 30 days of I-20 issuance** to the appropriate USCIS Lockbox Facility. The exact address you mail to is currently based on one factor:

1) The courier service you use to mail your application (UPS/DHL/FedEx vs. USPS)

All OPT applicants must [visit the USCIS website to verify the appropriate mailing facility/address and mail accordingly](#) (under the “Foreign Students” tab)

OPT Application Checklist for USCIS

- Form [G-1145](#) (electronic notification from USCIS on receipt of application; www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/g-1145.pdf)
- Form [I-765](#) (signed within 30 days of mailing application to USCIS) (www.uscis.gov/i-765)
- \$410 money order (recommended) or personal check. **NO CASH**. Make payable to ‘**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**’.
- Two passport photos (2x2) with name and I-94 # written on back. Photos must be taken within 30 days of mailing your OPT application.
- ISSO Cover Letter
- Photocopy of form I-20 with ISSO advisor’s OPT recommendation (ISSO will provide the I-20 at review session)
- Include a photocopy of any I-20s issued for previous work authorization (CPT or OPT)
- Include a photocopy of your initial entrance I-20, I-20s from previous institutions (transfer students), or previous degree levels
- Printout of your I-94. You can access that form at: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/>
- Photocopy of passport ID page with current expiration date
- Photocopy of most recent U.S Visa
- Photocopy of previous EAD card(s) - if applicable

Disclaimer: The ISSO staff serve as student/scholar services professionals and are trained to advise on F-1 and J-1 immigration regulations for UNC Charlotte students and other relevant visa categories for UNC Charlotte foreign-born faculty members. While the ISSO advisors are highly knowledgeable in these areas, they are not immigration attorneys and therefore cannot assist petitioners with some complex immigration forms or processes. Furthermore, the content on the ISSO’s website is informational only and does not constitute official legal advice. Finally, students are solely responsible for submitting an accurate and complete I-765 and materials correctly to USCIS.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS BEFORE OR WHILE ON OPT

1. Here are some ways to track your application and EAD:
 - ✓ Use trackable mailing service (such as USPS Priority, FedEx, UPS, or DHL)
 - ✓ [G-1145](#) sends text or email once received (allow 10-20 days from mailing)
 - ✓ Monitor your payment for processing
 - ✓ Receipt notice (I-797) mailed to address on I-765
 - ✓ [Case status updates through USCIS](#) (once every two weeks)
 - ✓ Sign-up for [Informed Delivery](#) through USPS
2. Once USCIS has received your application, the EAD issuance will take 2-5 months, on average. A case inquiry can only be submitted once the USCIS "[Receipt Date for a Case Inquiry](#)" date matches your Receipt Date.
3. If you have an unexpected change of Mailing Address before you receive your EAD, report this using [Form AR-11](#).
4. Remember [what qualifies as 'employment'](#) during standard OPT:
 - a. Minimum 20+ hours/week. Can be more but not required; can also work multiple jobs.
 - b. Can be an internship (paid or unpaid) or permanent employment.
 - c. Working below 20 hours/week is allowed for up to 90 days; after that, work must be 20+ hours/week or you must exit the U.S.
 - d. ALL EMPLOYMENT MUST BE IN FIELD OF STUDY, AT LEVEL OF STUDY ON I-20!
5. Conduct an ethical job search by:
 - ✓ Withdrawing any outstanding applications once you accept an offer
 - ✓ Not renegeing on a job offer that you have already agreed to accept
 - ✓ Asking for more time to consider multiple offers, if any
6. Within 1-10 days of your issued EAD card start date, you will receive an SEVP Portal Invitation from do-not-reply.SEVP@ice.dhs.gov.
 - ✓ As soon as you receive this email, open a SEVP Portal account (do not delay; token expires quickly)
7. Throughout OPT, you must report changes to SEVIS using the [SEVP Portal](#) within ten days every time:
 - a. You change your residential address or personal phone number
 - b. You begin or end a job (provide the employer information)

*No new I-20 is generated, as reporting in the Portal updates information in your SEVIS record
8. [Travel and re-entry to the U.S.](#) requires an: EAD, offer letter, valid visa, passport, and I-20 with travel signature.
 - ✓ On OPT, travel signatures are only valid for 6 months from the date of signing
9. Read the [ISSO's OPT websites and Frequently Asked Questions page](#) before contacting the ISSO. Do not listen to friends/friends-of-friends regarding their situations. No one can predict processing for your case.
10. Leave us your feedback regarding your OPT Review Session at <https://tinyurl.com/vnehc8d>.