

# Instructions for Completing Your OPT Application for USCIS

**Step 1:** Submit Edgewood College OPT application to the Center for Global Education

**Step 2:** Receive approval from Center for Global Education and new I-20 with OPT recommendation

» **Step 3:** Submit USCIS OPT application materials (Meet with Sara to review application BEFORE mailing)

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will review your application and, if approved, issue an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). Processing may take between 2-4 months at USCIS.

## Application Deadlines:

### Standard Pre-Completion OPT

- Can apply up to 90 days before being enrolled for 1 full academic year; \*employment cannot begin prior to completion of full academic year\*
- Students who have met the 1 academic year requirement may apply up to 90 days before the requested employment start date; CGE recommends applying as early as allowed.

### Standard Post-Completion OPT

- Can apply up to 90 days before program end date on your I-20 & up to 60 days after program end date.
- USCIS must receive your application no later than 30 days after Sara makes the OPT recommendation in SEVIS. CGE recommends applying as early as allowed.

## Your application must include (in this order):

- \$410 personal check or money order payable to the “U.S. Department of Homeland Security.”
  - Must be from a bank or other financial institution located in the U.S. and must be payable in U.S. \$\$
  - Spell out U.S. Department of Homeland Security; do not use the initials USDHS or DHS.
- Two identical color photos of yourself with a white background taken within 30 days of submitting your application to USCIS. The photos should meet the regulations for U.S. passport photos (<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports.html>) . Lightly print your name on the back of each photo with a pencil or felt marker. We recommend you place both photos in a small plastic bag or envelope so they don't get lost in the rest of the application.
- Form G-1145. It is recommended that you elect to receive an email and/or text message notifying you that your application has been accepted. To receive the email/text notification complete Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance, and clip it to the first page of your application. To download a copy of Form G-1145, click on “FORMS” on [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)”.
- Completed Form I-765 <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765.pdf> (see attached for detailed instructions)
- Photocopy of pages 1 and 3 of your new I-20 produced for the purpose of recommending OPT.
- Photocopies of any previous I-20s produced for the purposes of recommending CPT or pre-completion OPT at your current degree level.
- Copy of Form I-94 printed from website or copies of both sides of cardstock I-94 <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home> .
- Color photocopy of your passport identity, expiry and visa pages, **and** any previous EAD cards (front & back side).

**All of the above should be mailed to one of the following addresses:**

**If sent through the US Postal Service (USPS):**

USCIS  
P.O. Box 21281  
Phoenix, AZ 85036

**If sent through a service like FedEx:**

USCIS  
Attn: AOS  
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S  
Suite 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85034

When sending your application through the US Postal Service, we recommend that you use a confirmation service, such as *Return Receipt* or *Certified Mail*.

You should also receive a **Receipt Notice** from the Service Center acknowledging your application within 2-8 weeks. With your Receipt Notice, you can check the status of your application online at <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/jsps/index.jsp>. This site also provides information about processing times which is more accurate than the estimated time given on the Receipt Notice.

**We advise you to make copies of all of the above before mailing.  
Also, keep all your mail receipts and USCIS Service Center Return Receipt.**

## A Guide to Completing USCIS Form I-765

\*\*TYPE your responses using the fillable form available online at: <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-765.pdf>  
If you make an error, start over with a clean form.

Just above #1: **I am applying for:   X   Permission to accept employment**

BLOCK	WHAT YOU SHOULD WRITE
1	Your legal name as it appears on passport FAMILY, First Middle
2	Other legal names you may have used—if none, leave it blank
3*	This is where the USCIS will mail your EAD card! See note below about addresses.
4	Country of Citizenship
5	The name of the town, state/province and country where you were born
6	Your birth date (mm/dd/yyyy)
7	Gender
8	Current marital status
9	Has the US Social Security Administration ever issued you a Social Security Number (SSN)? Yes or no.
10*	If you do not have an SSN, you can use this Form I-765 to apply for a Social Security card at the same time you apply for employment authorization. If “yes” (you want to apply for an SSN), provide the required information for #11 - 13b. If “no” (you don’t need to apply for an SSN because you already have one), skip to #14.
11	If you indicate Yes to step 10, you must indicate Yes to authorize SSA to issue you a Social Security card
12	Father’s Name (only if you answered “yes” to #10)
13	Mother’s Name (only if you answered “yes” to #10)
14	<b>Write your I-94 number</b>
15	If you have applied for economic hardship, OPT, have had an H-I-B visa or have otherwise applied for work permission from USCIS, indicate YES, and furnish required information in the two lines below. <b>CPT does not count since permission is granted by Edgewood.</b>
16	Give the date of your <b>last entry</b> to the US. See your I-94 record.
17	Give the name of the city where you went through immigration upon entry to U.S. This should match what is on your I-94 card.
18	Indicate if you arrived as student, visitor, etc. (write “F-I Student” unless you have changed your status while in the U.S.)
19	Your current status: <b>“Student, F-I”</b>
20	Pre-completion OPT <b>(C) (3) (A)</b> ; Post-completion OPT <b>(C)(3)(B)</b>

Answer all questions fully and accurately. State that an item is not applicable with “N/A.” If the answer is none, write “None.”

**DO NOT FORGET TO SIGN YOUR NAME** - Sign your name using black ink. Make sure your signature does not go outside of the lines of the signature box because USCIS will scan this signature box and this will become the signature on your EAD.

### **\*Permanent Address on I-765**

You are required to use a permanent address on line three of the I-765 at which you can receive mail for approximately six months from the time of submitting your application. Federal mail cannot be forwarded; therefore, requesting forwarding service from the US Postal Service will not result in your USCIS mail being rerouted to your new address.

You may provide the Center for Global Education (CGE) address for your correspondence with USCIS. The Edgewood Mail Center or CGE will contact you via **Edgewood email** when we receive mail from USCIS. Once we notify you that we have received mail, you may pick it up in our office, ask us to forward your mail to your current address, or give us permission to release your mail to another individual. CGE is not responsible for mail lost via post.

### **If using CGE's office address, complete as follows:**

Number 3: U.S. Mailing Address  
(Street Number and Name) 1000 Edgewood College Drive  
(Apt. Number): c/o CGE  
(City, State, Zip Code): Madison, WI 53711