

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)

VS.

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

WHAT IS IT?

Work authorization which allows you to accept employment **directly** related and integral to your academic program.

- ★ You must be in valid non-immigrant status for one academic year prior to requesting CPT.

Work authorization which allows you to accept employment **directly** related to your academic program before (pre) or after (post) completion of studies.

- ★ You must be in valid non-immigrant status for one academic year prior to requesting OPT.

ELIGIBILITY

- Must attend a CPT Workshop, or submit proof of understanding of the topics covered in the presentation.
- Maintaining good academic standing and sufficient GPA
- Enrollment in an approved internship course for the semester in which the CPT is request.
- Employment is directly related to your major field of study.

- Must attend a OPT Workshop, or submit proof of understanding of the topics covered in the presentation.
- Maintaining good academic standing and sufficient GPA
- Employment is directly related to your major field of study.

PROCESS

Submit the Curricular Practical Training request in accessVIS, indicating:

- Employer's contact information
- Employment start/end dates
- Uploading proof of employment

Submission of the request will trigger an email to your academic advisor/graduate program director requesting confirmation of how the proposed employment relates you to academic program.

1. Submit BOTH forms within the Optional Practical Training request in accessVIS, indicating preferred start/end dates. If approved, an I-20 recommending OPT will be issued by VIS
2. Attend OPT Part II session.
3. Mail completed I-765 application, required fee, and I-20 issued by VIS and to USCIS to secure OPT work authorization.

DURATION

Employment dates must correspond with the university's academic calendar. CPT is typically authorized on a part-time basis during fall and spring semesters, and full-time during vacation periods (summer and winter break).

Part-Time \leq 20 hours/week

Full-Time \geq 21 hours/week

You are eligible for up to 12 months of OPT which may be authorized prior to, and/or upon completion of a degree program. STEM majors may be eligible for an additional 17-months if the employer is e-verified.

Pre-Completion: May work \leq 20 hours/week while school is in session or $>$ 20 hours during the summer/winter session.

Post-Completion: Must work full time (\geq 21 hours/week)

EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS

Issue an Offer Letter and/or job specifications which verify the following points:

- Description of specific duties
- Dates of employment (start & end dates)
- Number of hours of work per week
- Physical address of the employment
- Name of supervisor

OPT can be granted to you with or without an offer of employment.

PROCESSING TIME

Processing and approval of requests take 10 business days.

VIS processes all requests within 10 business days.

USCIS processing time takes an average of 60-90 days.

We encourage you to begin the Post-Completion OPT application process as early as 90 days prior to graduation.

COST

No cost to you or your employer.

- \$410 USCIS Processing Fee
- \$100 International Student Fee payable through SOLAR

PROOF OF AUTHORIZATION

The employer and dates for which you are authorized will be printed on page 2 of your new Form I-20.

Employment Authorization Document (EAD card) issued by USCIS.

EAD specifies the dates of authorized employment. You may not begin working until you have received your EAD and the start date listed on the card has been reached.