



OPT Application Process

Milwaukee School of Engineering

STEM OPT Extension

Certain degrees at MSOE qualify for a [2-year STEM extension](#). If you have earned a degree that will allow you to extend your OPT:

General Instructions

- You may apply for OPT up to 90 days before your intended start date
- You MUST apply for STEM OPT before your OPT has expired
- The [form I-983](#) must be completed by you and your employer in order to receive the I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation from the DSO
 - This can take up to five business days to review
 - After form I-983 has been reviewed and accepted, you will be contacted via email. Following your response, your I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation will be generated (which may take an additional up to 5 business days)
- Do not apply for STEM OPT without an updated I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation
- You have 30 days to apply from the date that the I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation is issued
- The application process generally takes approximately three months
- More information on STEM OPT can be found at this [site](#)

Applying for STEM OPT

1. Complete the Form [I-983](#) training plan with your employer
2. Email the form I-983 to your [DSO](#)
3. Receive an email approving the form I-983, asking for specific information related to your employer
4. Respond to email, giving necessary employer information
5. Receive an updated Form I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation
6. Decide if you want to [Apply Online](#) (Recommended) or mail your documents
7. Helpful Information
 - a. SEVIS **School Code=CHI214F20242000**
 - b. Your **CIP code** is also found on your I-20 in the “Program of Study” box under “Major”
 - c. Answer for **number 27 is (c)(3)(C)**
 - d. You will need your company’s EIN and e-verification number*
8. Gather necessary documents*
 - a. Form [I-765](#) (Only if applying by mail)
 - b. Print out of I-94 arrival card
 - c. Copy of your passport biographical information page
 - d. 2 recent US passport-style pictures
 - e. Personal check made out to the *Department of Homeland Security*. See here for the most update information on the [I-765 filing fee](#)
 - i. If filing online, you may pay by credit card
 - f. Previous I-20s for OPT and CPT
 - g. Copy of previous EAD card(s)
 - h. Copy of diploma of STEM field degree.
 - i. [Form G-1145](#) for E-notification of acceptance of application (Only if applying by mail)



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*If applying online, some of these items will not be necessary

9. Apply online or Mail documents to USCIS Chicago Lockbox at:

U.S. Postal Service (USPS):

USCIS
PO Box 805373
Chicago, IL 60680

FedEx, UPS, and DHL deliveries:

USCIS
Attn: I-765 C03
131 South Dearborn - 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60603-5517

Waiting for and after Approval

- You can work on your prior EAD card for up to 180 days if you have applied before your post-completion OPT (EAD card) has expired
- You are allowed up to 90 days of unemployment once your STEM OPT application is approved (150 days of post-completion and STEM combined)
- You are responsible to keep up with reporting to your **DSO**, by sending an email with
 1. Your **address and employer information**, *every 6 months*
 2. Your **self-evaluation** on your progress regarding the goals on your I-983, found on pg. 5, at the *12-month* (top box) and *24 -month* (lower box) mark of employment, or when you finish working at a company
- Note: **travel signatures** are only valid for 6 months

*if the company you work is not e-verified, suggest that they become e-verified. [Here's how!](#)



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