Tips for I-765 Completion for 24 Month STEM OPT Extension Application Mailed to USCIS

The instructions below are intended to act as a guide for you when applying for your 24-Month STEM OPT application by mail and to assist with the more difficult aspects of the paper I-765. Most of the questions you need to answer will be about your personal information and your immigration documents, but a few are specific to your situation.

These instructions are not intended for students applying for OPT. Please review the instructions on the IPO’s OPT website.

**DON’T FORGET!!! You must first follow the IPO’s STEM OPT I-20 request process to get the new STEM OPT I-20 to mail to USCIS. If you do not have the STEM OPT I-20 from the IPO, STOP. Return to the IPO’s STEM OPT I-20 Request Process to follow the process listed there. If you apply online with USCIS without the STEM OPT I-20, your STEM OPT will likely be denied.

If you already submitted the STEM OPT application to USCIS without the new STEM OPT I-20, contact your IPO advisor immediately.

Tips for completing the I-765:

- #1a: select ‘initial permission to accept employment’ (STEM OPT is technically a new type of work authorization, not a renewal of your OPT).
- #5: The mailing address on the I-765 should be valid and able to receive your mail for 3-5 months after submitting your application. If you are using a friend’s or relative’s address, add your name to their mailbox. If you choose to use IPO’s mailing address, use the following address:
#5.a: IPO, UMass Amherst
#5.b: 70 Butterfield Terrace
#5.d: Amherst #5.e: MA #5.f: 01003

- NOTE: If you use the IPO’s address to receive your I-797’s and EAD, we will request permission to open your mail in the STEM OPT I-20 Request E-Form. The IPO is not responsible for lost or damaged mail. Nor is the IPO responsible for postage errors or undeliverable mail. The IPO will contact you when your documents are received.

- NOTE: “In care of name (if any):” you need only put a name here if someone else is accepting mail on your behalf. If you live at the address where you are receiving the mail, you can leave this blank.

- #6: if you are using the IPO as the mailing address, select ‘no’ and add your physical address to #7

  - If you move while your STEM OPT application is still pending, you must update SPIRE. If you are potentially close to being approved, remember that if you update USCIS, they might not update the address in time and your card may not be delivered correctly. Consider using the IPO’s address if you might move prior to or near your approval. See our STEM OPT FAQs below for more information.

- #8/#9: you likely do not have an Alien Number or USCIS Online Account Number yet. Leave blank if you don’t know.

- #14 if you select ‘no’ you do not need to complete #15-17. If you select ‘yes’ since you need an SSN or a replacement SSN card, answer #15-17.

- #21a Find your I-94 number [here](#). (Go to “Get My I-94” at the top and input your personal details). Confirm the information is correct and print the I-94 to include as part of your application

- #26 Find your SEVIS number on the top left of your I-20; starts with N00...
• #27: write (C) (3) (C). If you put a different code, you are applying for the wrong type of work authorization. STEM OPT students need to put (C)(3)(C).

• #28a list degree and major (you will need to abbreviate i.e., PhD Chem Engr)
• #28b Employer’s name: you will need to ask your employer for this)
• #28c you will get this from your employer. This is not the same as the EIN (Employer Identification Number) listed on your I-983. The e-verify number is typically 4-7 digits.
• Complete Part 3 and use a real pen (not digital, etc.) to put a wet signature on the mailed I-765.
• You should not need to complete Part 4-5. Part 6 is only if you have additional information to add—this is your decision on what to put here. Additional information to add would be if your name didn’t fit into the application fields or there is something else to explain.
Submission

Make a copy of your entire STEM OPT application that will be mailed. This ensures you have this for your own records going forward.

Review the STEM OPT USCIS Application Submission by Mail section of our website to mail your application to USCIS.

Good luck!