



# Guide to the I-765

**For 12-month OPT only**

## **Detailed instructions for completing the I-765 application**

**You are responsible for the information in the OPT application.**  
This guide is being provided to assist you with completing the Form I-765.  
The information in the guide is dated material. Any missed deadlines,  
application errors, or missing documents are your responsibility.

# Key Points

**You must be physically present in the US to apply for the OPT EAD card.**

**USCIS regulations** state that 'certain noncitizens who are in the U.S. may file Form I-765.' The F-1 status is an U.S. immigration status. You are not in F-1 status if you are outside of the U.S.

**Your OPT period begins on the start date of your EAD card.**

You must have the EAD card in your hand, and the start date on the card has had to have arrived, to begin working.

**Travel while your application is pending is risky.**

USCIS recommends not travelling while the I-765 application is processing. Read more information about travelling on **U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)** website.

**Check USCIS processing times for up-to-date processing times.**

You cannot work until your application is approved and you have the EAD card in hand. You may request expedited services through **Premium Processing**.

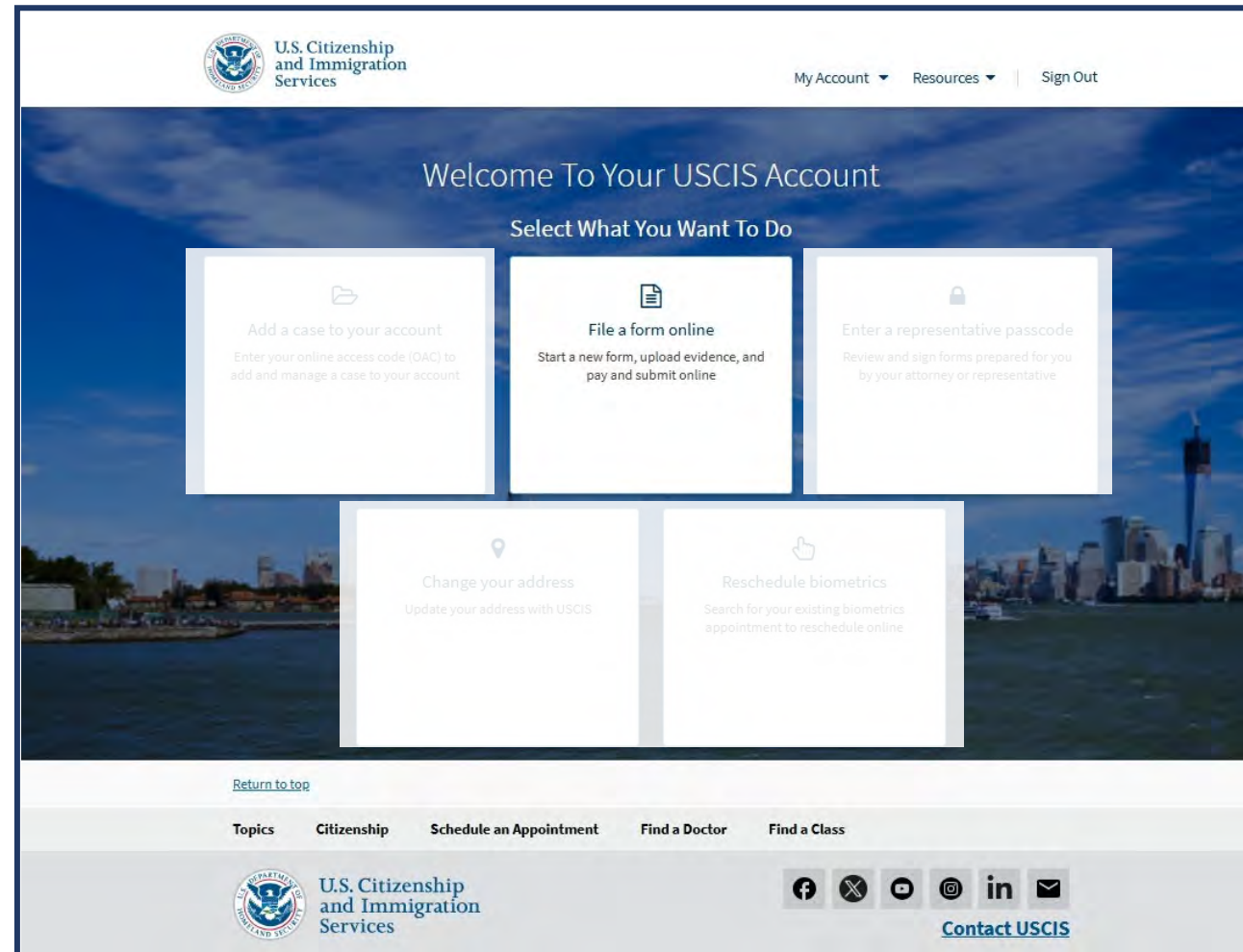
**The I-765 can be filed online or by mail.**

USCIS recommends the online application. However, you may **file by mail** if you prefer. This guide pertains to the online application process.

## **Required documents**

- U.S. issued credit card or checking account (I-765 Filing Fee)
- 1 digital passport sized photo
- OPT I-20 (signed IN INK)
- **Most recent I-94**
- Copy of valid passport
- CPT/Previously issued OPT I-20s (if applicable)
- EAD card (if applicable)
- Previously issued I-20 w/different SEVIS ID (if applicable)

Create an **USCIS account**. Log in and go to 'my USCIS.' Choose 'File a form online' and select I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, from the dropdown menu.



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Select the form you want to complete.

## File a Form

Select the form you want to file online. For some forms you will have the option to either fill out your form online or upload a completed form. Once you start, we will automatically save your information for 30 days, or from the last time you worked on the form.

**Fee waiver:** Fee waivers can be requested online only when submitting certain benefit requests using the PDF filing option. If your desired benefit request is not eligible for PDF filing, you must file a paper version of both the Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver and the form for the specific benefit you are requesting. You can review the fee waiver guidance at [www.uscis.gov/feewaiver](http://www.uscis.gov/feewaiver).

Select the form you want to file online.

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

What is your eligibility category?

If your eligibility category is not listed in the drop down menu, you can submit a paper form by mail.

(c)(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT

Use this form to request employment authorization and an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) if your immigration status allows you to work in the United States.

**Note:** You may apply online if your eligibility category is:

- (a)(12) - Temporary Protected Status (You are submitting a approved Form I-821);
- (c)(3)(A) - F-1 student, pre-completion OPT;
- (c)(3)(B) - F-1 student, post-completion OPT;
- (c)(3)(C) - F-1 student, 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics);
- (c)(8) - Applicants for Asylum under the ABC Settlement Agreement;
- (c)(8) - Application for Employment Authorization Based on Pending Form I-589, Application for Asylum or for Withholding of Removal;
- (c)(11) - Parole;
- (c)(19) - Temporary Protected Status (You have a pending Form I-821); or
- (c)(33) - Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) (You must have a pending or approved Form I-821D in order to file Form I-765).

All other applicants must submit a paper [Form I-765](#).

### Concurrent filing available

You can file Form I-907, Request for Premium Processing Service, if you are filing under one of the eligible categories.

Select your eligibility category. If you are not currently on OPT, DO NOT choose STEM Extension. You must complete 12-month OPT to be eligible for STEM OPT.

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## Basis of eligibility

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Preparer and interpreter  
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What is your eligibility category?

You can file your request online only for certain  
eligibility categories.If your eligibility category does not appear on the drop-down  
list, you must file a paper [Form I-765](#). If you submit online  
and are not eligible for one of the listed categories, your  
application may be denied.

(a)(12) Temporary Protected Status Granted

(c)(3)(A) Student Pre-Completion OPT

(c)(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT

(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension

(c)(11) Parole

(c)(19) Temporary Protected Status Pending

Select your eligibility category. If you are not currently on OPT, DO NOT choose STEM Extension. You must complete 12-month OPT to be eligible for STEM OPT.

### Would you like to request Premium Processing Service?

Premium Processing Service guarantees that USCIS will take one of several possible actions (issue an approval notice, a denial notice, a notice of intent to deny, or a request for evidence) on your Form I-765 within 30 days.

The fee for Premium Processing Service for Form I-765 is \$1,500.

If you request premium processing, you will be asked to complete Form I-907 after you sign your Form I-765. You will then be able to pay for and submit both forms at the same time.


- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

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You may request Premium Processing after submitting the application if you choose 'No.' However, if you choose "Yes," you cannot change your answer after signing the application. You must pay the additional fee.

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What is your reason for applying?

☐ Initial permission to accept employment

☐ Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to US Citizenship and Immigration Services error

☐ Renewal of permission to accept employment

Have you previously filed Form I-765?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Select "Initial permission to accept employment."

Select "No" if this is your first time filing form I-765.



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**Your name**

Your contact information

Describe yourself

When and where you were born

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What is your current legal name?

Your current legal name is the name on your birth certificate, unless it changed after birth by a legal action such as marriage or court order. Do not provide any nicknames here.

Given name (first name) Middle name

Family name (last name)

Have you used any other names since birth?

Other names used may include nicknames, aliases and maiden names.

☐ Yes

☐ No

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Type your name as it appears in your passport.

Additional fields will open for you to provide information.

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How may we contact you?

Daytime telephone number

Mobile telephone number (if any)

☐ This is the same as my daytime telephone number.

Email address

What is your current U.S. mailing address?

We will use your current mailing address to contact you throughout the application process. We may not be able to contact you if you do not provide a complete and valid address. Please provide a U.S. address only.

In care of name (if any)

Address line 1

Street number and name

Address line 2

Apartment, suite, unit, or floor

City or town

State

ZIP code

Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

☐ Yes☐ No

Provide a U.S. telephone number and your PERSONAL email address.

USCIS will send notices/EAD card to the mailing address. Be sure to provide an address that will be valid for at least 90 days.

The physical address should be where you are living at the time you submit the application

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What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

What is your marital status?

☐ Single

☐ Married

☐ Divorced

☐ Widowed

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USCIS will accept a self-identified gender marker. The gender you select does not need to match the gender indicated on your passport.

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What is your city, town, or village of birth?

What is your state or province of birth?

What is your country of birth?

What is your date of birth?

MM/DD/YYYY

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Provide the city, state (if applicable), and country of your birth.

Type your date of birth. Be sure to use the U.S. dating system: Month-Day-Year.

Choose your nationality. If you have dual citizenship, click the “Add Country” button to add your second nationality.

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What is your country of citizenship or nationality?  
List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national.

+ Add country

What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)?

When did you last arrive in the United States?  
List your arrival date, place of arrival, and status at arrival.

Date of arrival (on or about)  
MM/DD/YYYY

Place of arrival

Status at last arrival

What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?

What is your travel document number (if any)?

The I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number is the Admission Number on your I-94 record.

Select your port of entry (place you went through customs).

Choose your status at the time of your arrival.

Choose your nationality. If you have dual citizenship, click the “Add Country” button to add your second nationality.

This date can be found in the Travel History section of your I-94 or on the customs stamp in your passport.

Provide the number of your UNEXPIRED passport.

Choose your nationality. If you have dual citizenship, click the “Add Country” button to add your second nationality.

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What is your travel document number (if any)?

You do not need to answer this question.

What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?

Expiration date of your UNEXPIRED passport.

MM/DD/YYYY

What country issued your passport or travel document?

Select the country that issued your passport.

What is your current immigration status or category?

Select your CURRENT immigration status.

What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?

The SEVIS ID can be found on the TOP of your I-20.

Use the "Additional Information" section to include all previously used SEVIS numbers.

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What is your A-Number?

☐ I do not have or know my A-Number.

What is your USCIS Online Account Number?

Providing your unique USCIS Online Account Number (OAN) helps us manage your account. You may already have an OAN if you previously filed certain paper forms and received an Account Access Notice in the mail. You can find the OAN at the top of the notice; it is not the same as an A-Number.

☐ I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number.

Has the Social Security Administration (SSA) ever officially issued a Social Security card to you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

What is your Social Security number (if known)?

Do you want the SSA to issue you a Social Security card?

☐ Yes

☐ No

The A-number is on the EAD card. First-time OPT applicants likely do not have one, so type 'N/A.'

Provide the USCIS Account Number IF you have PREVIOUSLY created an account.

Choose "YES" if you have a social security number and provide the number in the next field.

Select "Yes" if you don't have a social security card and would like to apply for one.

Upload one (1) digital passport photo of yourself. The picture should be recent, taken within the last 30 days.

**Photo specification requirements.**

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**2 x 2 photo of you**

Form I-94

Employment Authorization Document

Previously authorized CPT or OPT

Form I-20

Additional Information ▾

Review and Submit ▾

**2 X 2 Photo Of You**

Upload a recent color photograph of yourself that measures 2 inches by 2 inches, with your face measuring 1 inch to 1 3/8 inch from your chin to the top of your head. Your eyes should be between 1 1/8 inch and 1 3/8 inch from the bottom of the photo.

Make sure your whole face is visible, you are facing the camera directly, and the background is white or off-white. Your head must be bare, unless contrary to your religious beliefs.

If you need help understanding the photo requirements or want to resize, rotate, or crop your photo, you can use the Department of State's [photo composition tools](#). Please note that we cannot approve your application without your photo.

**File requirements**

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, or PNG
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than one document at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 12MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

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## Upload your I-94 Record. Do not upload the Travel History.

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2 x 2 photo of you

**Form I-94**

Employment Authorization Document

Previously authorized CPT or OPT

Form I-20

Additional Information

Review and Submit

### I-94, Arrival And Departure Record

Upload a copy of one of the following:

- Your Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record (front and back);
- A printout of your electronic Form I-94; or
- Your passport or other travel document.

If you were admitted to the United States by CBP at an airport or seaport after April 30, 2013, CBP may have issued you an electronic Form I-94 instead of a paper Form I-94. You may visit the [CBP website](#) to obtain a paper version of an electronic Form I-94. CBP does not charge a fee for this service. Some travelers admitted to the United States at a land border, airport, or seaport, after April 30, 2013, with a passport or travel document, who were issued a paper Form I-94 by CBP, may also be able to obtain a replacement Form I-94 from the CBP website without charge.

If your Form I-94 cannot be obtained from the CBP website, it may be obtained by filing [Form I-102, Application for Replacement/Initial Nonimmigrant Arrival-Departure Record](#), with USCIS. USCIS does charge a fee for this service.

#### File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 12MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

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Upload a copy of your EAD card or passport.

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**Evidence**

2 x 2 photo of you

Form I-94

**Employment Authorization Document**

Previously authorized CPT or OPT

Form I-20

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Review and Submit

Employment Authorization Document Or Government ID

Upload a copy of your last Employment Authorization document (EAD) (front and back). If you were not previously issued an EAD, you must upload a copy of a government-issued identity document (such as a passport) showing your picture, name, and date of birth; a birth certificate with photo ID; a visa issued by a foreign consulate; or a national ID document with photo and/or fingerprint. The identity document photocopy must clearly show your facial features and contain your biographical information.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 12MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

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## Upload a copy of a PREVIOUSLY issued CPT or OPT I-20s.

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2 x 2 photo of you

Form I-94

Employment Authorization Document

**Previously authorized CPT or OPT**

Form I-20

Additional Information ▾

Review and Submit ▾

Previously Authorized CPT Or OPT

Upload evidence of any previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 12MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload.


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Upload the copy of your OPT I-20. Check your I-20 to make sure that you have signed it IN INK before uploading.

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- 2 x 2 photo of you
- Form I-94
- Employment Authorization Document
- Previously authorized CPT or OPT
- Form I-20**

Additional Information ▾

Review and Submit ▾

### I-20, Certificate Of Eligibility For Nonimmigrant Student Status

Upload a copy of the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status endorsed by the Designated School Official (DSO). For the (c)(3)(B) eligibility category, your DSO must have entered the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record within 30 days of you submitting Form I-765. If you fail to do so, we will deny your OPT request. For the (c)(3)(C) eligibility category, the Form I-20 must have been endorsed by the DSO within 60 days of submitting Form I-765.

#### File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 12MB per file


[Choose](#) or drop files here to upload

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Complete this section if you have something in your immigration history that requires more explanation.

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#### Additional Information

If you need to provide any additional information for any of your answers to the questions in this form, enter it into the space below. You should include the questions that you are referencing.

If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave this section blank.

**Section**

**Page**

**Question**


**Additional information**

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Check your application for errors. If you chose Premium Processing in the beginning, you cannot change your mind after clicking “Next” on this page.

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**Review and Submit ▴**

**Review your application**

Your application summary

Your statement


### Check your application before you submit

We will review your application to check for accuracy and completeness before you submit it.

We encourage you to provide as many responses as you can throughout the application, to the best of your knowledge. Missing information can slow down the review process after you submit your application.


You can return to this page to review your application as many times as you want before you submit it.

#### Your fee

 Your form filing fee is: \$410

Refund Policy: USCIS does not refund fees, regardless of any action we take on your application, petition or request, or how long USCIS takes to reach a decision. By continuing this transaction, you acknowledge that you must submit fees in the exact amount and that you are paying the fees for a government service.

#### Alerts and warnings

 We found no alerts or warnings in your application.

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## Download a copy of your application for your records.

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Review your application

**Your application summary**


Your statement

### Review the I-765 form information

Here is a summary of all the information you provided in your application.

Make sure you have provided responses for everything that applies to you before you submit your application. You can edit your responses by going to each application section using the site navigation.

We also prepared a draft case snapshot with your responses, which you can download below.

[View draft snapshot](#)  Print

#### Getting Started

Basis of eligibility

What is your eligibility category? (c)(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT

What is your degree?

What is your employer's name as listed in E-Verify?

What is your employer's E-Verify company identification number or a valid E-Verify client company identification number?

Reason for applying

What is your reason for applying? Initial permission to accept employment

Have you previously filed Form I-765? No

#### Preparer and interpreter information

Is someone assisting you with completing this application? No

Is a preparer assisting you with completing this application?

Is an interpreter assisting you with completing this application?



READ and click the box if you agree to the statement.

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**Applicant's statement**

You must read and agree to the statement below.

☐ I can read and understand English, and have read and understand every question and instruction on this application, as well as my answer to every question.

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USCIS.gov  
An official website of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

National Terrorism Advisory System  
NTAS



**READ** and click the box if you agree to the statement.  
**You will not be able to make any changes once signed!**

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**Your signature**

### Applicant's Declaration and Certification

You must read and agree to the certification below. If you knowingly and willfully falsify or conceal a material fact or submit a false document with your application, we can deny your application and may deny any other immigration benefit. You may also face criminal prosecution and penalties provided by the law.

Copies of any documents I have submitted are exact photocopies of unaltered, original documents, and I understand that USCIS may require that I submit original documents to USCIS at a later date. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information from any and all of my records that USCIS may need to determine my eligibility for the immigration benefit that I seek.

I furthermore authorize release of information contained in this application, in supporting documents, and in my USCIS records, to other entities and persons where necessary for the administration and enforcement of U.S. immigration law.

I understand that USCIS may require me to appear for an appointment to take my biometrics (fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature) and, at that time, if I am required to provide biometrics, I will be required to sign an oath reaffirming that:

- 1) I reviewed and understood all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application; and
- 2) All of this information was complete, true, and correct at the time of filing.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that all of the information in my application and any document submitted with it were provided or authorized by me, that I reviewed and understand all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application and that all of this information is complete, true, and correct.

☒ I have read and agree to the applicant's statement

You must provide your digital signature below by typing your full legal name. We may deny your application if you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents. We will record the date of your signature with your application.

Submit payment. The checking account or credit/debit card must be from a U.S. bank.

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[Cancel](#)

## USCIS I-765

### Payment Information

Payment Amount \$410.00

### I want to pay with my

- ☐ Bank account (ACH)
- ☐ Debit or credit card

[Continue](#)

[Cancel](#)



# Congratulations!

You have filed the I-765 application. Review the ISSA website for important **OPT reporting requirements**.

If you have questions, please contact ISSA using the Submit a Question form in **iStart**.

Your Penn State User ID/email will expire about 6 months after graduation, but that does not affect your access to iStart. You can still access iStart after the User ID expires through the Limited Services Access link on the iStart website.