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.

ISSA·Supporting International Students

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**.

PennState Global
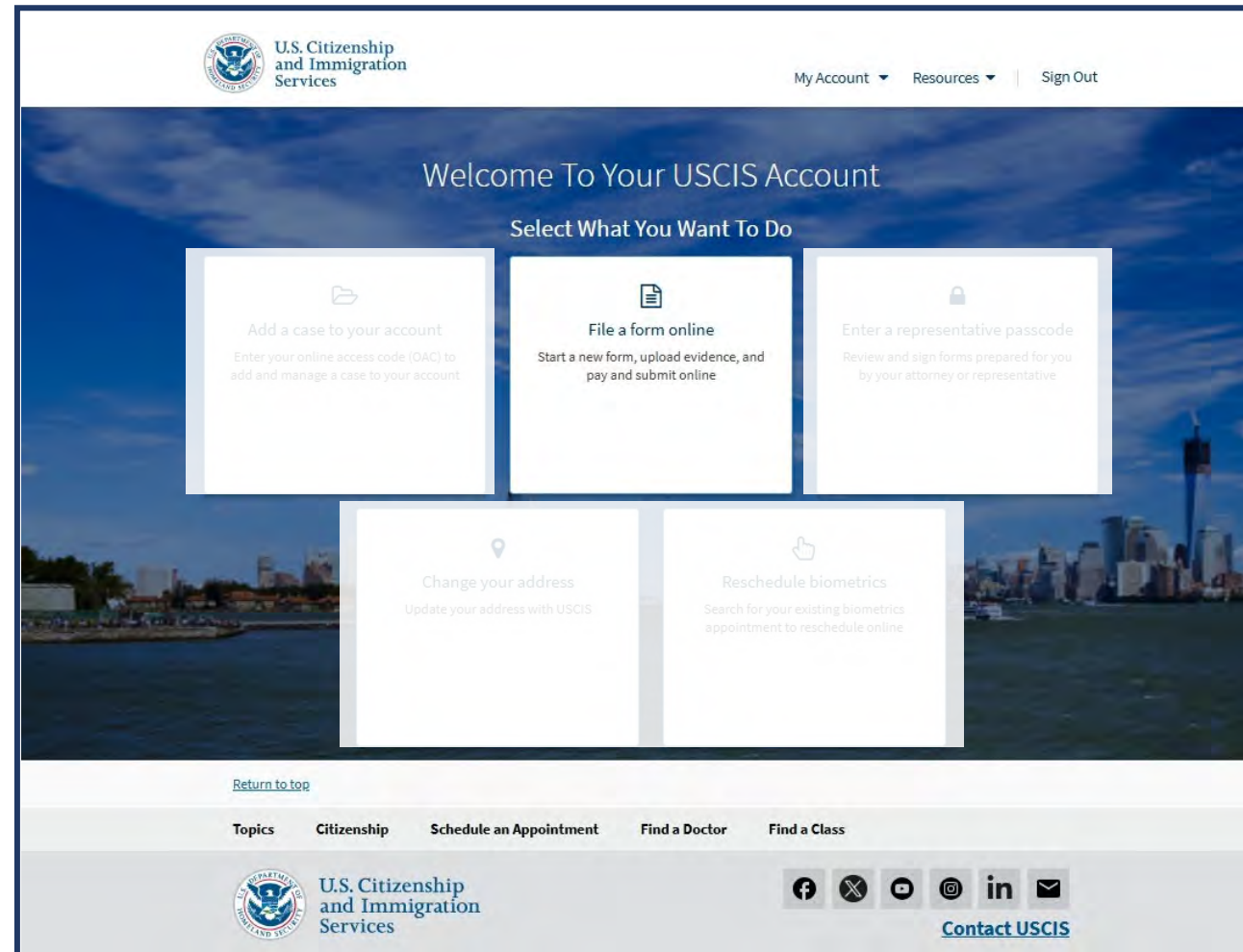
International Student & Scholar Advising

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)

ISSA·Supporting International Students

PennState Global

International Student & Scholar Advising

Create an **UStCIS 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.

Select the form you want to complete.

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.

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.

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.

PAGE 2

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ∧

Basis of eligibility

Reason for applying

Preparer and interpreter information

About You ∨

Evidence ∨

Additional Information ∨

Review and Submit ∨

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.

PennState Global

International Student & Scholar Advising

PAGE 3

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

Back   Next

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.

PennState Global

International Student & Scholar Advising

PAGE 4

Select "Initial permission to accept employment."

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

PAGE 5

An official website of the United States government Here's how you know ∨

U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

My Account ▾   Resources ▾ | Sign Out

I-765, Application for
Employment
Authorization

Getting Started ∨

About You ∧

Your name

Your contact information

Describe yourself

When and where you
were born

Your immigration
information

Other information

Evidence ∨

Additional
Information ∨

Review and Submit ∨

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

[Back]   [**Next**]

Return to top

Type your name as it
appears in your passport.

Additional fields will open
for you to provide
information.

PennState Global

**International Student
& Scholar Advising**

PAGE 6

Employment Authorization

Getting Started ⌄

About You ⌃

Your name

Your contact information

Describe yourself

When and where you were born

Your immigration information

Other information

Evidence ⌄

Additional Information ⌄

Review and Submit ⌄

How may we contact you?

Daytime telephone number

Mobile telephone number (if any)

☐ This is the same as my daytime telephone number.

Email address

Provide a U.S. telephone number and your PERSONAL 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**

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.

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

○ Yes
○ No

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

PAGE 7

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

PAGE 8

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.

PAGE 9

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started

About You

Your name

Your contact information

Describe yourself

When and where you were born

Your immigration information

Other information

Evidence

Additional Information

Review and Submit

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)?

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

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.

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.

PennState Global

International Student & Scholar Advising

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

PAGE 10

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?

MM/DD/YYYY

Expiration date of your UNEXPIRED passport.

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)?

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

N-

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

Back

Next

PennState Global

International Student & Scholar Advising

PAGE 11

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started

About You

Your name

Your contact information

Describe yourself

When and where you were born

Your immigration information

Other information

Evidence

Additional Information

Review and Submit

What is your A-Number?

☐ I do not have or know my A-Number.

A-

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

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.

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

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

○ Yes
○ No

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

What is your Social Security number (if known)?

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

○ Yes
○ No

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**.

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

Upload a copy of your EAD card or passport.

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

PAGE 15

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

PAGE 16

An official website of the United States government   Here's how you know ⌄

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

My Account ▾   Resources ▾   Sign Out

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ⌄

About You ⌄

Evidence ⌃

  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

Back   Next

PennState Global

International Student & Scholar Advising

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

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

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

My Account ▾   Resources ▾   Sign Out

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ▾
About You ▾
Evidence ▾
Additional Information ▾

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.

Back   Next

PennState Global

Download a copy of your application for your records.

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

PAGE 20

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

PAGE 21

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

PAGE 22

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

PennState Global

International Student & Scholar Advising

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.

ISSA·Supporting International Students