OPT Application Guide

Use this guide to compile a complete OPT Application to mail to USCIS

Last updated: 3/13/2020
What is in an OPT Application?

Prepare Your Application Materials

- Optional: Form G-1145 to receive e-Notification of receipt from USCIS
- Check for $410 Fee
- Original Form I-765
- Photocopy of OPT I-20
- Photocopy of passport biography page
- Photocopy of most recent U.S. visa
- Form I-94
- 2 U.S. Passport photos

*Please note: You may need to include other documents in addition to those listed above, depending on your responses in the I-765. See the I-765 Guide for details.

All documents must be printed single-sided on standard 8.5”x11” white paper.
What is in an OPT Application?

- Optional: Form G-1145 to receive e-Notification of receipt from USCIS

  - Use this form to request a text message and/or email when USCIS accepts your form.
  - Form G-1145 can be found on the USCIS webpage: [https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145](https://www.uscis.gov/g-1145).
What is in an OPT Application?

☐ Check for $410 Fee
  ☐ Fee can be paid by a personal check, money order, or cashier’s check.
  ☐ It is okay if the name or address in the top left is not the same as the applicant’s information.
  ☐ The check should be made payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security.”

☐ The “memo” or “for” section should state “I-765 OPT Application.”

☐ Write your SEVIS Number anywhere on the front of the check.

Be sure you have enough funds in your account to avoid a bounced check. Bounced checks can result in Rejection or Denial of an OPT Application by USCIS.
What is in an OPT Application?

- Original Form I-765

- Please refer to the “Form I-765 Guide” located on the OPT webpage (same drawer as this “OPT Application Guide”) for step-by-step instructions for how to complete Form I-765.

- The guidance provided within the “Form I-765 Guide” is an interpretation by ISPO Advisors of the instructions published within the USCIS Instructions for Form I-765. As this guide is a supplement we have created to answer any questions that may arise while completing the Form I-765, we urge all students to also review the guidance provided by USCIS.
What is in an OPT Application?

- Photocopy of OPT I-20
  - Include copies of all three pages.
  - Sign and date the original I-20 but mail the copy.
  - Check requested OPT start and end dates on page 2 for accuracy.

Remember…
- USCIS **must receive** your OPT Application within 30 days of the Date Issued on page 1 of your OPT I-20.
- USCIS **must receive** your OPT Application within your 5 months window (no earlier than 90 days before your program end date and no later than 60 days after your program end date).
What is in an OPT Application?

- Photocopy of passport biography page

Be sure the entire MRZ Code is visible.
What is in an OPT Application?

- Photocopy of most recent U.S. F-1 Visa

  - Visa does not need to be valid.
  - Visa may or may not have UC San Diego under “Annotation.”
  - Be sure the entire MRZ Code is visible.
What is in an OPT Application?

Form I-94

- If you have not travelled into the USA since April 2013 OR if you entered at a land border (such as the land port of entry at Tijuana), then you will have a paper I-94 (example to the left).

- If you travelled into the USA after April 2013 and entered by air or sea, you will have an electronic I-94 record (example to the right). You can retrieve your electronic I-94 record here: www.cbp.gov/i94.

Note: Beginning May 2019, I-94s will follow the format of 9 digits followed by a two-character alphanumeric series: [9-digit sequence] + [1 letter] + [1 digit].
What is in an OPT Application?

- **2 U.S. Passport Photos**
  - Photo must be taken within the last 30 days.
  - Photo must be 2”x2”. For exact specifications, visit the [U.S. Department of State webpage](https://travel.state.gov).  
  - Lightly print your full name (pen or pencil) AND your SEVIS Number (N000…) on the back of each photo.
  - Photos must be professionally taken.
    - UCSD Mail Services has a [Passport Acceptance Office](https://mail.ucsd.edu) that will take passport photos for a fee (no returns).
    - There are many off-campus locations that offer passport photo services. Please confirm these services follow the [U.S. Department of State](https://travel.state.gov) regulations.
Please return to the OPT webpage for information regarding the timeline and instructions for mailing your OPT Application to USCIS.