

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Ability to Extend OPT from 12 to 29 Months

1. Who qualifies to extend his/her OPT? (You may not get 29 months to begin with. You may only be eligible to extend your existing OPT)

To qualify to extend OPT, an F-1 student must:

- Currently possess an approved "post graduate" OPT (OPT issued pursuant to completion of all academic degree requirements)
- Must have graduated with a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) included in the DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List from a college or university approved by the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Student and Exchange Visitor Program.
- Currently work for a U.S. employer in a position that is related to the student's major area of study.
- Work for or have a job offer with an employer enrolled in the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services' E-Verify program which verifies eligibility for employment.
- Legally maintain F-1 status/OPT status (you may not qualify to extend if you were unemployed for more than 90 days during your OPT period). Also, one may file for OPT extension during his/her 60 day grace period even after the OPT period has expired.

2. For how long can I extend my OPT?

Qualified applicants may extend their OPT for up to 17 months AND continue to work beyond the expiration of their current OPT while the extension is pending, until a decision or 180 days, whichever occurs first.

3. Which academic fields are covered under STEM?

The STEM academic fields are listed below. :

- Actuarial Science. NCES CIP Code 52.1304.
- Computer Science. NCES CIP Codes 11.xxxx (except Data Entry/Microcomputer Applications) and NCES CIP Codes 11.06....
- Engineering. NCES CIP Codes 14.....
- Engineering Technologies. NCES CIP Codes 15.....
- Biological and Biomedical Sciences. NCES CIP Codes 26.....
- Mathematics and Statistics. NCES CIP Codes 27.....
- Military Technologies. NCES CIP Codes 29.....
- Physical Sciences. NCES CIP Codes 40.....

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- Science Technologies. NCES CIP Codes 41.....
- Medical Scientist (MS, PhD). NCES CIP Code 51.1401

YOU MAY CHECK IF YOUR MAJOR FALLS INTO THE LIST ABOVE AT
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/cip2000/>

4. SEVIS REQUIREMENTS TO EXTEND - Before you file to extend your OPT, you MUST inform and provide the designated school official of the following information prior to and for every 6 months after, the issuance extension of any OPT. The designated school official must in turn provide the same information to SEVIS.

- Your current residence address
- Your current mailing address
- Your employer's name and address

SHOULD YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT US AT (212)239-8008 OR AT
INFO@ILAWUS.COM.