OPT 17 Month STEM Extension

- **17 Month STEM Extension** is a one-time extension of OPT to individuals that are engaging in Post-completion OPT and are in a DHS STEM Designated Degree Program List. STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

**Eligibility Requirements:**

1. The name of the student’s major must show in SEVIS on the STEM CIP list approved by Department of Homeland Security.
2. Student’s employer must be registered for E-Verify.
3. Recommended to apply 90 days before expiration date of OPT.
4. Student **MUST APPLY** before end of employment.

**Application Procedures:**

1. New I-20 from DSO with OPT extension listed (to be signed by DSO and student)
2. Completed I-765
   - Make sure line 17 is filled in with Degree, Employer’s E-Verify and Employer’s Identification #. (Usually a 5 or 6 digit number)
   - Line 16 reads: c 3 C
3. USCIS fee
4. Supporting documents
5. Student must have proof of graduation.

**Things to Consider:**

1. Student will get new EAD card and can continue working 180 days, while waiting for new card.
2. The start date is the day after OPT ends, regardless of approval date.
3. Student **must report every 6 months**, whether or not there has been changes:
   a. Legal name
   b. Residential & mailing address
   c. E-mail address
   d. Employer name and address
   e. Job title or position
   f. Supervisor’s name and contact info.
   g. Employment start and end date.
4. Students are allowed a total of 120 days of unemployment during OPT and the 17-month extension. You must work at least 20 hours per week.

5. USCIS must receive your paperwork no later than **30 days** after the date the DSO produced your new I-20 with OPT extension recommendations.

**OPT**

**17 MONTH EXTENSION**

**CHECK OFF LIST**

----- Form G-1145 (e-mail or text message from USCIS Lockbox facility when application is received.

----- Signed and dated I-765 with c3C at line 16

----- Name and E-Verify # of employer at line 17

----- New, signed and dated I-20 (be sure the DSO has signed on pages 1 & 3, and you have signed on page 1)

----- 2 passport photos

----- Check made out to US Department of Homeland Security/USCIS

----- Copy of Passport ID page

----- Copy of I-94, front and back

----- Copies of all previous I-20’s (pages 1 & 3)

----- Copy of Unofficial Transcripts or Copy of your Diploma

----- Copy of EAD (work permit)

----- Application fee

**Be sure to mail your application to the appropriate USCIS address based on the address at line 3.**

**The USCIS address can be found on page 10 of the instructions.**

1) **Website for information:**
http://www.nafsa.org/uploadedfiles/opt_policy_guidance_042010.pdf (# 8 on page 23 explains procedures)

www.uscis.gov (forms and instructions)