F-1 OPT Application Checklist

REMINDER: The OPT application must be received by USCIS within 30 days of the date on which ISSS issues an OPT I-20. If filed with USCIS after 30 days of the OPT I-20 issuance date, your application will be denied.

To prepare the OPT application for USCIS, assemble the following documents:

- **I-765 Application Fee**
  - Currently the fee is **$410**; Please see [https://www.uscis.gov/i-765](https://www.uscis.gov/i-765) under Filing Fee.
  - Note, there is NO biometric fee for OPT.
  - Include a **personal check** or **money order** payable to “US Department of Homeland Security”. Refer to our [Tips for Writing a Check or Money Order page](#) for step-by-step guidance.
  - Do not use starter checks (those that do not have your name/address printed).
  - We do NOT recommend using the Credit Card form G-1450.

- **Two US Passport-Style Photos**
  - Taken recently (photos cannot be more than 30 days old). No selfies; no photo filters.
  - Lightly print your name on the back of each photo with a pencil.

- **Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance**
  - To receive an e-Notification when your Form I-765 has been accepted.

- **Form I-765**
  - Please refer to our sample OPT I-765 form for guidance [at this link](#).

- **Document Photocopies [Do not send originals. Can be in black and white or color.]**:
  - New OPT I-20 (make sure to sign and date before you copy)
  - Passport Identification or biographical page(s)
  - Most recent I-94 record, found at [www.cbp.gov/i94](http://www.cbp.gov/i94)
  - F-1 US visa (citizens of Canada and Bermuda are exempt)
  - All previous EADs (if applicable)
  - All previous I-20’s – see [https://global.upenn.edu/isss/f-1-opt-faqs](https://global.upenn.edu/isss/f-1-opt-faqs) if you are missing I-20’s.

**Final Steps**

1. Check all documents for completeness and accuracy. Refer to the USCIS [I-765 Instructions](#) and the [ISSS OPT I-765 Visual Completion Guide](#).
2. Keep a complete copy of your application express mail receipt and money order receipt, if applicable. All documents should be **single-sided**. Do not use staples. You may use paperclips or binders to secure pages.
3. **Mail completed application** to [Direct Filing Addresses for Form I-765](#) listed for foreign students under category for F-1 Optional Practical Training, (OPT). The current lockbox address can also be found on the ISSS website [on this page](#).
4. We recommend that you mail your application by express mail such as UPS, Federal Express or by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, so you will have a record of its delivery.
5. Finally, if you decide **NOT** to apply for OPT or use your OPT benefits, please notify your ISSS Advisor.