

Palo Alto University

Palo Alto University Pre-Completion Optional Practical Training for F-1 Students

Pre-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) is a work authorization benefit while you are an enrolled student. The proposed employment must be directly related to your area of study. You are eligible for OPT if you are in F-1 status and have been studying full-time for at least one academic year.

A job offer is NOT required in order for you to apply for or be granted optional practical training.

Pre-Completion OPT can be used only during the following times:

- During your annual vacation and at other times when school is not in session if you are currently enrolled and intend to register for the next session; or
- While school is in session, provided that the OPT, in combination with any other authorized employment, does not exceed twenty hours a week.

You must apply for OPT authorization to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). You may not begin any employment without USCIS authorization.

WHEN TO APPLY: Starting **90** days before you want your work authorization to begin. You will specify what start date and end date on this application form.

PLEASE NOTE:

Twelve months or more of full-time Curricular Practical Training (CPT) disqualifies you for any Optional Practical Training. On-campus employment does not reduce the amount of available Optional Practical Training.

You must submit documentation to the Director of Academic Operations before you submit it to USCIS. She will update your I-20, and review all documentation in your application. You will then submit all paperwork (including a copy of the new I-20) to USCIS.

How to Apply:

Do NOT apply 'online'! Doing so will cause more delay. Submit the following **completed** documents to the Director of Academic Operations at PAU:

- A completed I-765 Form (Application for Employment Authorization):
<https://www.uscis.gov/i-765> . You may enter data on this form electronically, but must save it to your computer and print out a copy for submission. For step by step instructions on how to fill out the I-765, click here:
https://www.paloaltou.edu/sites/default/files/i-765_with%20comments.pdf

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DO NOT submit the notes and instructions version to USCIS, be sure to submit the official form!

- Pre-Completion Optional Practical Training Application Form, with faculty advisor recommendation (last page of this document).
- Photocopy of current I-20
- Photocopy of any previous employment authorization documents (EAD)

After receiving these documents, you will be issued a new I-20 form. **You must send your complete Practical Training application to the USCIS within 30 days of the date on the new OPT – endorsed I-20**

The Complete Application includes:

- Form I-765 Application for Employment Authorization
Online fillable form: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>
- Form I-20

A photocopy of the new I-20 with Optional Practical Training endorsement located on page 3. Photocopies of all your previous I-20s including the original one that you used to enter into the U.S.

- Photocopy of your passport photo page
- Photocopy of your F-1 Visa
- Photocopy, back and front, of your I-94. Download this form if you don't already have it, at i94.cbp.dhs.gov
- Fee for processing Form I-765 (Currently it is \$410.00). The check is payable to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Place it in a small envelope with the photographs described below.
- Two identical full-frontal color passport photographs measuring 2” by 2”. The head of the image should measure between 1” and 1 3/8” and it should be a full face, frontal view on a white to off-white background. Your head must be bare unless you are wearing a headdress as required by a religious order of which you are a member. Using pencil or felt pen, lightly print your name and Alien Receipt Number on the back of the photo. Place the photos in a small envelope or plastic bag and staple the envelope or plastic bag containing the pictures to the front page of Form I-765.

Mail all documents by “certified mail with a return receipt.” This will cost extra at the post office but the return receipt will provide you with evidence that USCIS received your documents.

Where to Mail your Application for OPT

Lockbox locations for filing the I-765 for F-1 Optional Practical Training applications are as follows:

USCIS Phoenix and Dallas Lockbox facilities

If you live in:

Alaska, Arizona, **California**, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Guam, or the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

Mail your application to:

USCIS Phoenix Lockbox

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deliveries:

USCIS

PO Box 21281

Phoenix, AZ 85036

For Express mail and courier deliveries:

USCIS Attn: AOS

1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S Suite 100

Phoenix, AZ 85034

If you live in:

Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, or West Virginia

Mail your application to USCIS Dallas Lockbox

For U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Deliveries:

USCIS

PO Box 660867

Dallas, TX 75266

For Express mail and courier deliveries:

USCIS

Attn: AOS

2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business

Suite 400

Lewisville, TX 75067

After Mailing Your Application

Approximately 2-4 weeks after you mail your application to USCIS, you should receive a “Notice of Action” (form I-797) stating that your documents have been received, and that the “processing time is approximately 90 days from the date of this receipt notice.” Current processing time varies between 60-90 days. Employment is permitted only after you receive the EAD (Employment Authorization Document) card, and only during the period specified on the card.

You may check the current processing times for your OPT application by going to:
<https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/jsps/index.jsp>

Please check your EAD to ensure that the information is correct. Send a photocopy of your EAD to the Director of Academic Operations at PAU.

Time Period in Which to Complete Pre-Completion Practical Training

You cannot begin OPT employment until the start date indicated on the EAD issued by USCIS. The effective date of the EAD for pre-completion OPT will be either the start date requested by the student (and appears on the new I-20), or the date USCIS approves the application for work authorization, whichever occurs *later*. The EAD end date is the employment end date that appears on your new I-20.

Reporting Requirements

It is your legal responsibility to provide the Director of Academic Operations with the following information:

- Any change in your residence address or name within 10 days of the change occurring.
- The name and address of your employer as soon as you accept the job offer. If you change jobs, you must report the change and the new employer’s name and address.
- Please remember to email/fax a copy of your EAD.

Questions? Contact international@paloaltou.edu

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Palo Alto University Pre-Completion Optional Practical Training Application Form

Name: _____ PAU # _____

Program: ___Ph.D. ___Psy.D. ___Business Psychology ___Psychology & Social
Action

Expected Graduation date from PAU _____

OPT Start Date: _____ OPT End Date: _____

___Part-time (up to 20 hours/week) or ___Full-time (more than 20 hours/week) List all
periods of *previously* authorized employment for practical training:

Practical Training	Start/Ending Dates	Degree	Major Field of Study
a. Curricular			
b. Pre-Completion			
c. Post-Completion			

I certify that the above information is complete and correct

Signature of Student : _____ Date: _____

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### **FACULTY ADVISOR, PROGRAM DIRECTOR, DCT RECOMMENDATION FOR PRE-COMPLETION OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING**

I confirm that the above named student is in good academic standing. I support this  
application for pre-completion Optional Practical Training.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director of Training/Faculty Advisor:

\_\_\_\_\_ Director of Training/Faculty

Advisor: (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to [international@paloaltou.edu](mailto:international@paloaltou.edu)