OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING (OPT)

What is OPT?

SUNY Oswego ISSS

www.oswego.edu/international/opt

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

If **F-1 visa holders** would like to work in the **United States upon graduation**, they must be **approved for OPT** and receive an **EAD** (Employment Authorization Document)!

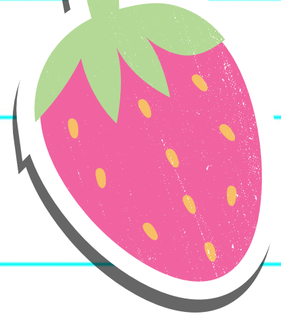
CPT vs. OPT

CPT

internship
co-op
practicum
training

part-time/
full-time job
upon
graduation

OPT

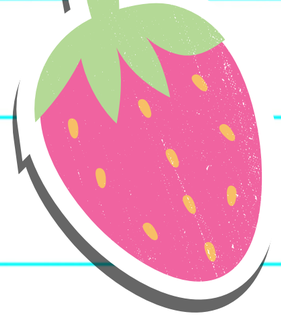


Conditions for OPT

per immigration regulations

The position must...

1. Be directly related to your major
2. Be at least 20 hours /week
3. OPT end date must be within 14 months from the graduation date



Things to remember about OPT

1. Students do NOT need to have a job lined up to apply for OPT!

2. Traveling outside the USA is NOT advised while OPT is pending

3. It can take 2 weeks to 5 months to receive your EAD card!

This is why it is important to apply for OPT as soon as possible!!

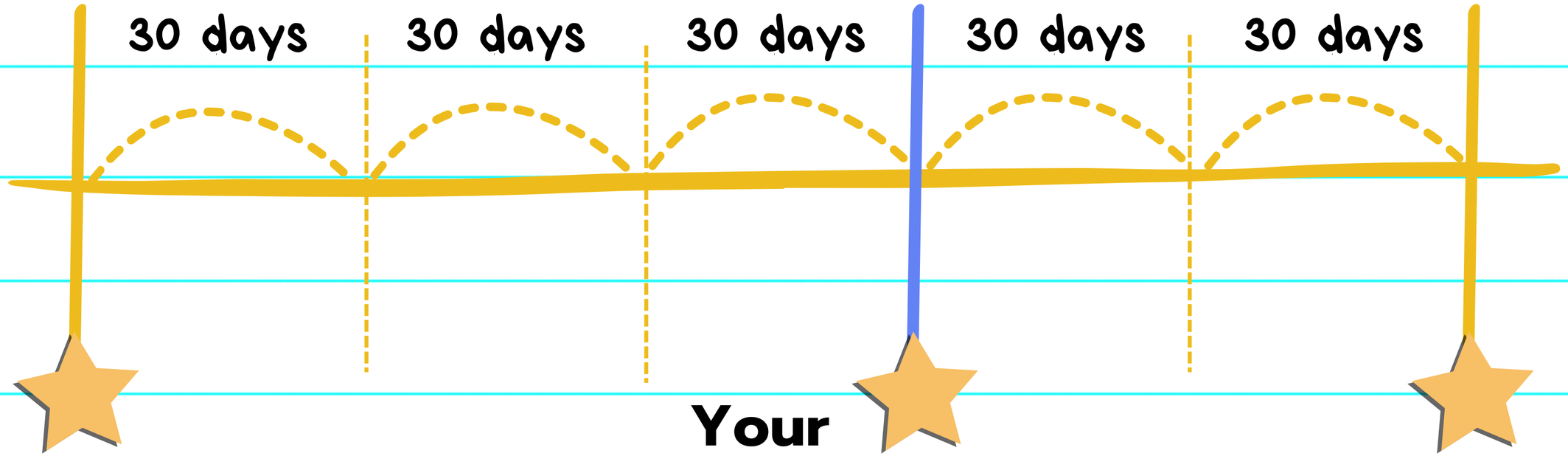
OPT Timeline

Graduation date - 90 days = The earliest date you can apply for OPT

Graduation date + 60 days = The last date you can apply for OPT

Submit the OPT app within 30 days from the OPT I-20 issued date

OPT Timeline

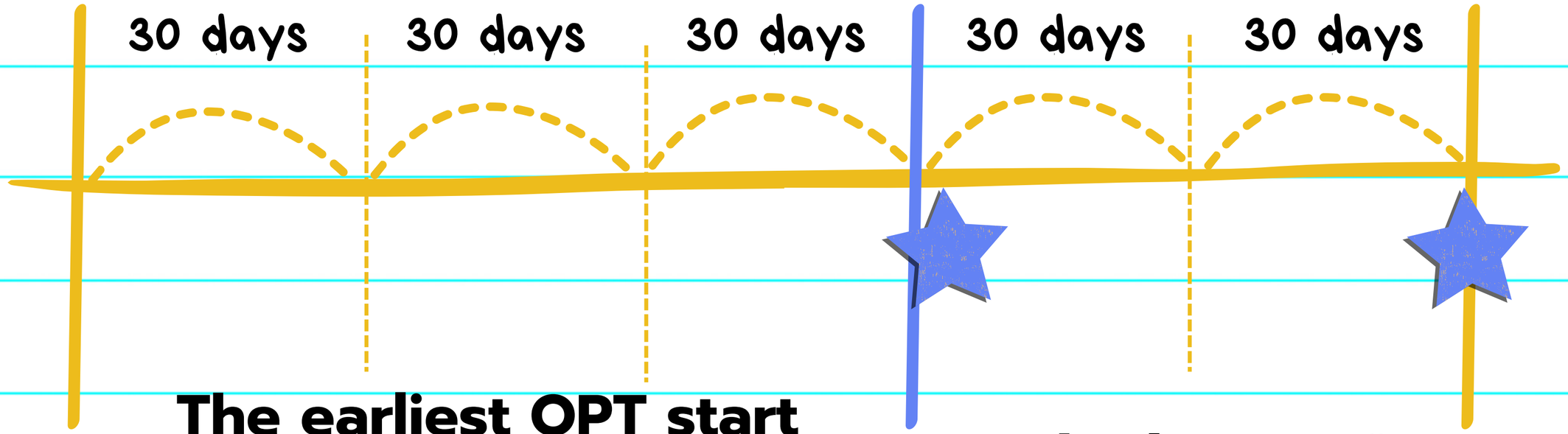


The earliest date you can apply for OPT

Your graduation date

The last date you can apply for OPT = grace period end date

OPT Timeline



The earliest OPT start date you can claim = graduation date + 1 day

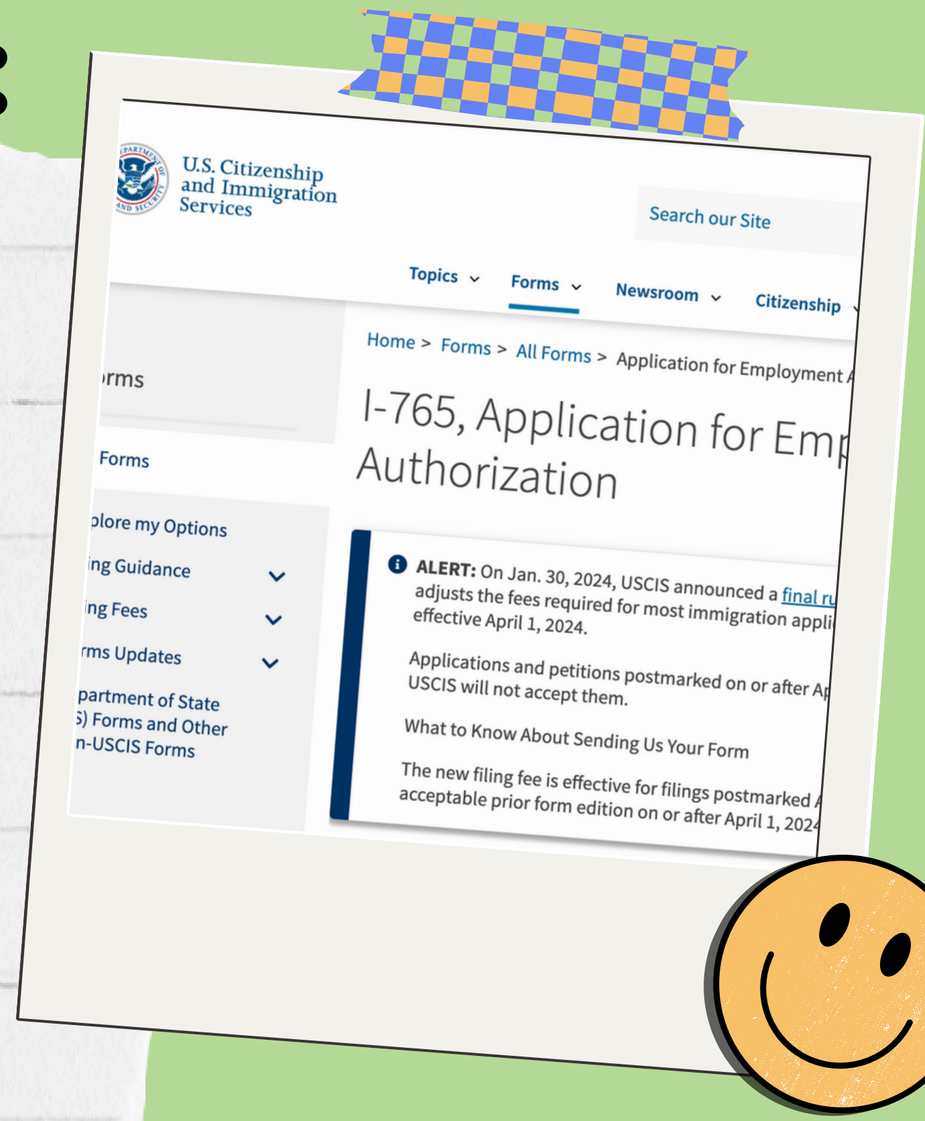
Your recommended OPT start date is NOT the same as the USCIS-approved OPT start date!

The lastest OPT start date you can claim = graduation date + 60 days

Application process:

Go to www.oswego.edu/international/opt and complete the "OPT Final Meeting Eligibility Form"

OPT applicants must **meet with the ISSS Office** and receive the **OPT-recommended I-20** before submitting the **I-765, Application for Employment Authorization** (= OPT application) to **USCIS** (www.uscis.gov/i-765).



What is EAD card?

This is the card that **USCIS** issues you when your **OPT** has been **approved**!

NOTE: There's the application fee associated with Form I-765 (= OPT application) and it goes to the USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services).

What is EAD card?

"**Valid From**" date=

actual OPT start date

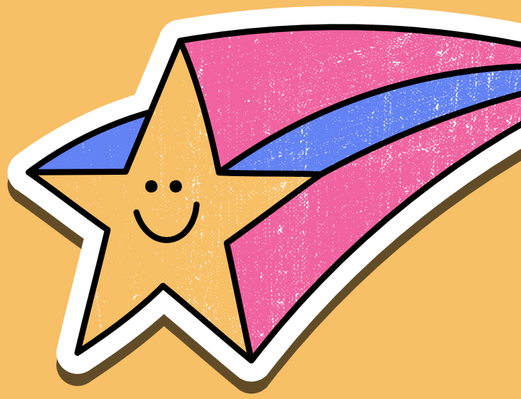
"**Card Expires**" date =

actual OPT end date

When can I start working?

On and after your **approved OPT start date** as long as **your EAD card has arrived**!

Important OPT rules!



OPT participants cannot accrue more than 90 days of unemployment!

Payment: can be paid or unpaid (some volunteering counts)

OPT students may be self - employed. Make sure to update the SEVP portal!

OPT students may work for multiple employers as freelancers. Make sure to update the SEVP portal!

OPT vs. Volunteering

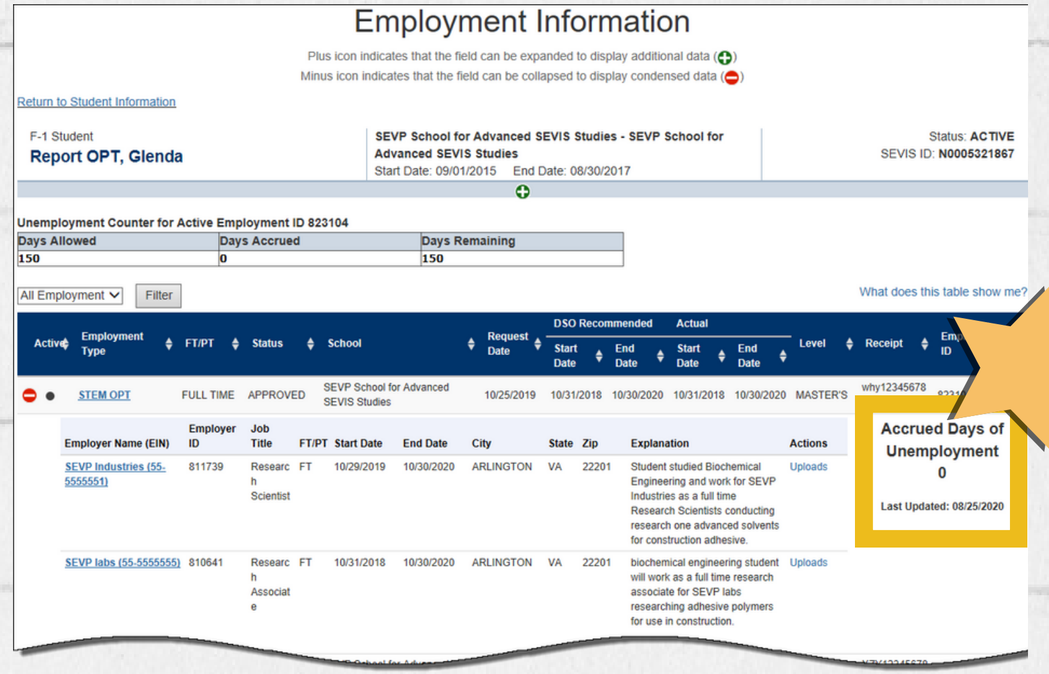
True volunteer work is **donating** your time to an organization whose primary purpose is **charitable** or **humanitarian**, **without remuneration (pay) or any other type of compensation**.

If the position meets this volunteering requirement AND is directly related to your major, you can volunteer through OPT!

How do I report my employment?

You will receive an **activation request email** from the SEVP portal around your OPT start date. For more information, please go to the **OPT webpage**!

Remember it is your responsibility to update the portal to STOP the unemployment clock!



Employment Information

Plus icon indicates that the field can be expanded to display additional data (+)
Minus icon indicates that the field can be collapsed to display condensed data (−)

Return to Student Information

F-1 Student
Report OPT, Glenda

SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies - SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies
Start Date: 09/01/2015 End Date: 08/30/2017

Status: **ACTIVE**
SEVIS ID: **N0005321867**

Unemployment Counter for Active Employment ID 823104

Days Allowed	Days Accrued	Days Remaining
150	0	150

All Employment | Filter | What does this table show me?

Active	Employment Type	FT/PT	Status	School	Request Date	DSO Recommended Start Date	DSO Recommended End Date	Actual Start Date	Actual End Date	Level	Receipt	Emp ID
●	STEM OPT	FULL TIME	APPROVED	SEVP School for Advanced SEVIS Studies	10/25/2019	10/31/2018	10/30/2020	10/31/2018	10/30/2020	MASTER'S	why12345678	

Employer Name (EIN)	Employer ID	Job Title	FT/PT	Start Date	End Date	City	State	Zip	Explanation	Actions
SEVP Industries (55-5555551)	811739	Research Scientist	FT	10/29/2019	10/30/2020	ARLINGTON	VA	22201	Student studied Biochemical Engineering and work for SEVP Industries as a full time Research Scientists conducting research one advanced solvents for construction adhesive.	Uploads
SEVP labs (55-5555555)	810641	Research Associate	FT	10/31/2018	10/30/2020	ARLINGTON	VA	22201	biochemical engineering student will work as a full time research associate for SEVP labs researching adhesive polymers for use in construction.	Uploads

Accrued Days of Unemployment
0
Last Updated: 08/25/2020

What if I don’t find a job?

1. Change/ Transfer your educational level

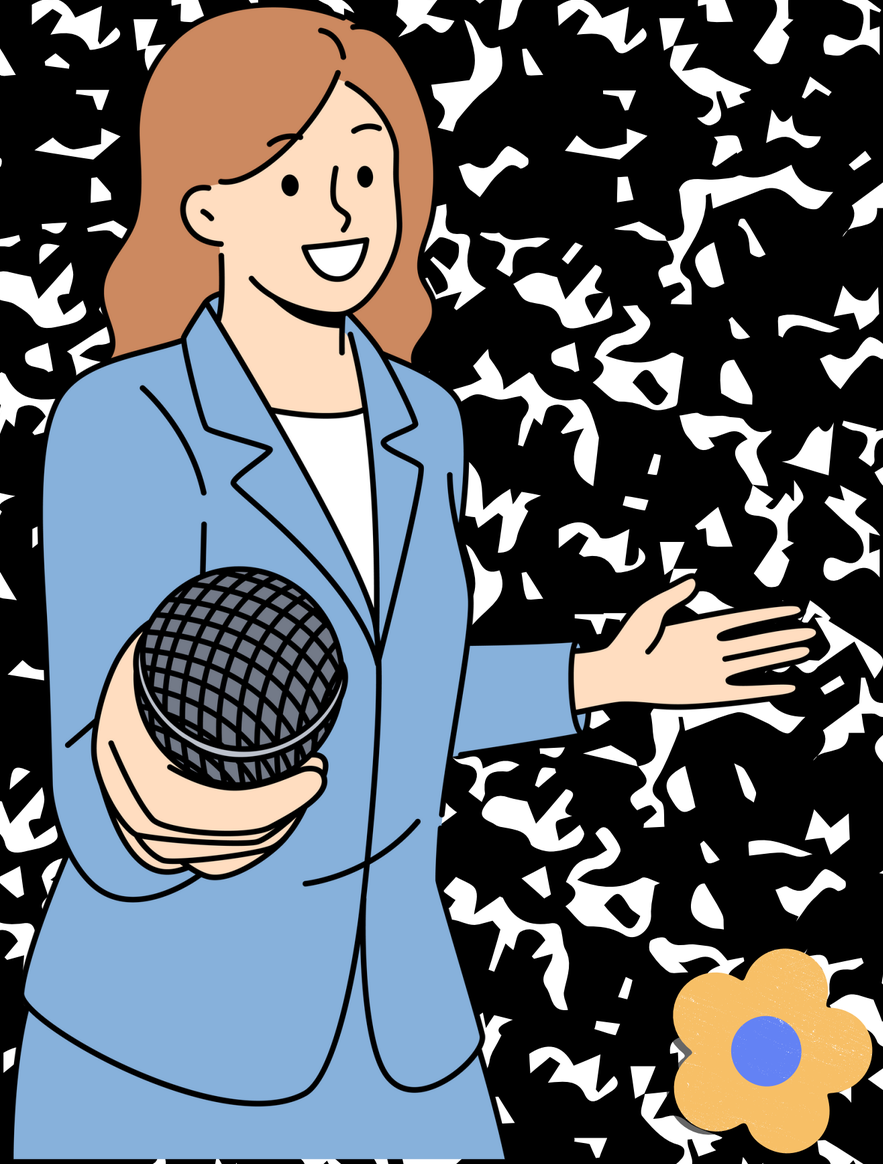
2. Leave the United States

3. Change to another visa status (consult with immigration attorney!)

Educate your employer!

If your **supervisor/employer** is **not** familiar with the OPT process or **has questions regarding your OPT** participation, please share the URL of the webpage titled "**Employer's Guide for Hiring International Students**."

www.oswego.edu/international/hiring-international-students

Thank you!

Do you have any questions?