

F-1 PRACTICAL TRAINING OVERVIEW

Practical training provides F-1 international students with experience in their field of study during or upon completion of a program in the United States. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) authorizes some forms of practical training.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) for F-1 Students:

Form of training which directly relates to a student's program of study and can take place during their program of study (precompletion) or after finishing their program of study (post-completion).

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for F-1 Students:

Alternative work/study, internship, cooperative education or other type of required practicum that a sponsoring employer offers through agreements with a student's college, university, seminary or conservatory.

STEM OPT for F-1 Students:

24-month extension of post-completion OPT for qualifying students with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) degrees.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Type	When It Occurs	Length Requirements	Employer Requirements
OPT	<p>Pre-completion OPT: Occurs before a student's program end date.</p> <p>Post-completion OPT: Occurs after a student's program end date, or after completion of all course requirements.</p>	<p>Pre-completion OPT: Up to 12 months; eligible for an additional 12 months when a student changes to a higher education level.</p> <p>Post-completion OPT: Up to 12 months; periods of pre-completion OPT will be deducted from the overall 12-month allotment.</p>	Student can work for any employer, but the training must directly relate to the student's major course of study.
STEM OPT	Occurs after regular post-completion OPT.	24 months; students can participate in two separate STEM OPT extensions under certain circumstances. Student may have multiple, concurrent employers. Periods of STEM OPT authorization cannot overlap.	Student must work a minimum of 20 hours per week. Employer must be enrolled with E-Verify.
CPT	Occurs before a student's program end date.	No length requirement; one year or more of full-time CPT impacts eligibility for OPT. Student can have more than one CPT authorization at the same time.	Employment must be offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school.

For more information, visit the [Training Opportunities in the United States](#) page.

