Applying for OPT using the Online USCIS Portal

Rutgers Global–International Student and Scholar Services

global.rutgers.edu

Please note that this tutorial provides guided recommendations. All images used are samples. Information contained within should not be considered legal advice. Please remember that it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure the application materials you submit to USCIS are completed correctly.

This tutorial may change over time; please do not download this document, and instead access it newly each time at our website here with a cleared cache: global.rutgers.edu/OPT

If you are currently on an approved post-completion OPT period and applying for a STEM OPT Extension, instead follow the directions on our website here with a cleared cache: global.rutgers.edu/OPT-Extensions

STEP 1 - Attend the appropriate workshop on the RGlobal Portal: Post-Completion OPT Workshop, or Off-Campus Employment Workshop (for pre-completion OPT)

STEP 2 - Prepare all application materials (using this step-by-step tutorial)

STEP 3 – Create your USCIS Online Account (click link) following the instructions on their website

STEP 4 - **Begin** to fill out the online application through your USCIS account. Choose the Optional Practical Training category that applies to you. Fill out the questions until you can download the printable/electronic draft I-765. You will need to upload this draft I-765 to the "Review OPT Application Materials" e-form on the RGlobal Portal

DO NOT SUBMIT THE ONLINE APPLICATION OR PAY THE FEE ON THE USCIS WEBSITE YET! AS SOON AS YOU DIGITALLY SIGN THE USCIS ONLINE APPLICATION AND PAY THE FEE, YOUR APPLICATION IS CONSIDERED OFFICIALLY SUBMITTED. THIS IS INCORRECT!!! YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE INCOMPLETE IF YOU DO NOT UPLOAD AN OPT RECOMMENDED I-20 TO THE APPLICATION BEFORE SUBMITTING AND PAYING THE FEE. THIS WILL RESULT IN A DENIAL!

STEP 5 - Submit the Post-Completion OPT e-form request on the RGlobal Portal. Meet with an international student advisor (ISA) to review your application and request your new I-20 with OPT recommendation (appointment is optional but highly recommended)

STEP 6 - Receive your new I-20 with OPT recommendation (you will get an email saying it's ready)

STEP 7 - Upload New OPT I-20 and Review Application. If you are within the correct time frame to apply for OPT, login to your USCIS Online Account and upload the *NEW* OPT I-20 (signed by you), along with any needed supporting documents to the online application

STEP 8 - Submit the application and pay the filing fee

BEFORE YOU APPLY, PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

- Pick ONE method to apply for OPT. Either apply online OR through mail - **DO NOT** apply both ways

- Your post-completion OPT application should NOT be submitted to USCIS more than 90 days prior to the program end date on your new I-20 with OPT recommendation

- Your post-completion OPT application MUST reach USCIS before the end of your grace period

- Your pre-completion OPT application should NOT be submitted to USCIS more than 90 days prior to your requested OPT start date

- Your OPT application MUST reach USCIS within 30 days of the date your new I-20 with OPT recommendation was **issued**

- If approved, the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card will be sent directly to you at the address you provided to USCIS. USPS will not forward the EAD to another address once shipped. Once you receive the EAD card, you are authorized to work on OPT between the start and end dates listed on the card

- You cannot begin working until you have received your new EAD card and the start date has arrived

- You must be inside the U.S. to apply for OPT

- If you are applying for post-completion OPT based on coursework completion, you must obtain your degree **BEFORE** your OPT period ends. Otherwise you are considered out of status

- Be sure you understand the fees for the I-765 and premium processing, if needed

If you have completed your coursework or will soon be graduating, you must attend the Post-Completion OPT Workshop on the RGlobal Portal to receive important information to complete your OPT application and learn:

- What is Employment? Am I eligible for OPT? How can I apply for OPT?
- Defining Optional Practical Training
- OPT timeline scenarios
- Maintaining your status while on OPT and reporting requirements
- OPT Extensions

If you are looking for off-campus practical training work experience while you are still completing your degree requirements (CPT), you must instead attend the Off-Campus Employment Workshop on the RGlobal portal.

Go to: https://sunapsis.rutgers.edu/istart/controllers/start/StartEngine.cfm

Select: "Workshops" menu on the left

Navigate to the appropriate workshop

- ❏ 1. Form I-765 electronic copy/draft (this is obtained from the online application BEFORE you submit it)
- ❏ 2. One passport-style color photograph of you taken recently and not used before
- ❏ 3. Digital copy of your passport picture page
- ❏ 4. Digital copy of your most recent F-1 visa (or I-797C approval notice if status was changed in US)
- ❏ 5. Digital copy of your electronic Form I-94 OR digital copy of your paper Form I-94 (front and back)
- ❏ 6. Digital copy of unofficial full transcript that shows your name
- ❏ 7. Digital copy of all previous EAD cards (front and back) that have been issued to you, if applicable
- ❏ 8. Evidence of all previous CPT & OPT authorizations, if applicable (ex. digital copies of previous I-20s)
- ❏ 9. Digital copy of NEW I-20 with OPT Recommendation*
- ❏ 10. Credit card or ACH payment for I-765 fee

Submit your OPT Application materials for review on the RGlobal Portal e-form

* You will receive (9) your new I-20 with OPT recommendation after your application is reviewed by an international student advisor. You need this to apply for OPT.

Confirm your academic plans with your Academic Official
  Undergraduate students: this is your **Academic Dean/Advisor**
  Graduate students: this is your **Graduate Program Director**
  RBHS students: this is your **Registrar**

You and your academic official need to confirm the following academic dates, as they will impact your OPT eligibility dates. Your academic official will provide confirmation of this to our office via the OPT I-20 Request e-form in the RGlobal portal.

- Date 1: Completion of all **coursework** (regular classes not including research/thesis work)

- Date 2: Completion of all **degree requirements** (including non-coursework requirements such as thesis/defense)

    - If you are applying for post-completion OPT, this date will likely be the new <u>program end date</u> on your I-20.

    - That is also the last day you can work on-campus and on CPT (if applicable); however, you may be paid following that date for work already completed.

POST-COMPLETION OPT
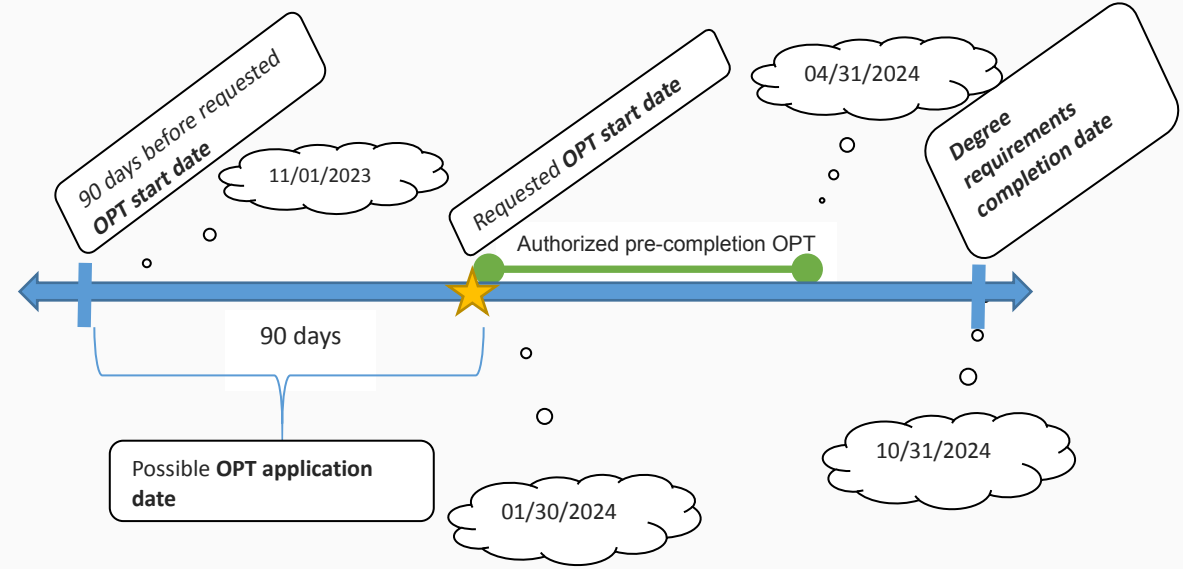**SCENARIO 1: APPLYING FOR OPT AFTER COMPLETING ALL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The OPT application can be received by USCIS no earlier than 90 days before your degree completion date. You can start preparing your application materials before this, but cannot submit it to USCIS before the 90 days.

The earliest possible requested OPT start date is the day after degree requirement completion date; the requested OPT start date must fall within 60 days of degree requirement completion date. On-campus work and CPT must end by the degree completion date

*degree requirement completion date is determined by your academic official; generally this date is earlier than your current I-20 Program End Date

Applying for **post-completion OPT** on the basis of having completed all **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

90 days before **degree requirement completion date***

05/15/2024

Degree requirement completion date***

60 days after **degree requirement completion date***

02/14/2024

07/13/2024

90 days

60 days

Possible requested **OPT start date**

Possible **OPT application date**

Download OPT Dates Worksheet
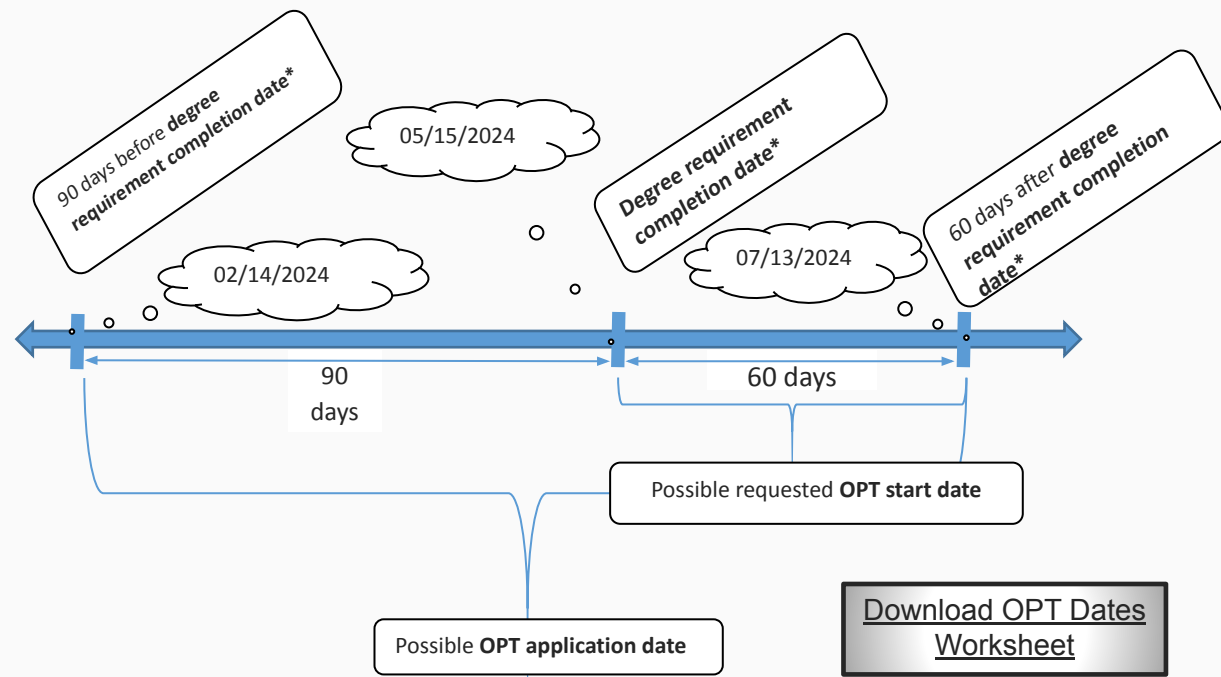
POST-COMPLETION OPT
SCENARIO 2: APPLYING FOR OPT AFTER COMPLETING ALL COURSEWORK (only for students who have a non-coursework degree requirement and plan to start OPT before completing degree requirements)

The OPT application can be received by USCIS no earlier than 90 days before your expected completion date. You can start preparing your application materials before this, but cannot submit it to USCIS before the 90 days.

The earliest possible requested OPT start date is the day after coursework completed (if one-year requirement is met). The day before the requested OPT start date will be the new program end date on your I-20; that is the last day you can work on-campus and on CPT. F-1 status ends at the end of OPT employment authorization; students who choose this option MUST complete all degree requirements and graduate within the period of authorized employment

Applying for **post-completion OPT** on the basis of having completed all **COURSEWORK**

90 days before requested **OPT start date**

Coursework completion date

Requested **OPT start date**

05/15/2024

Degree requirements completion date

Authorized post-completion OPT

90 days

09/02/2023

12/01/2023

Possible **OPT application date**
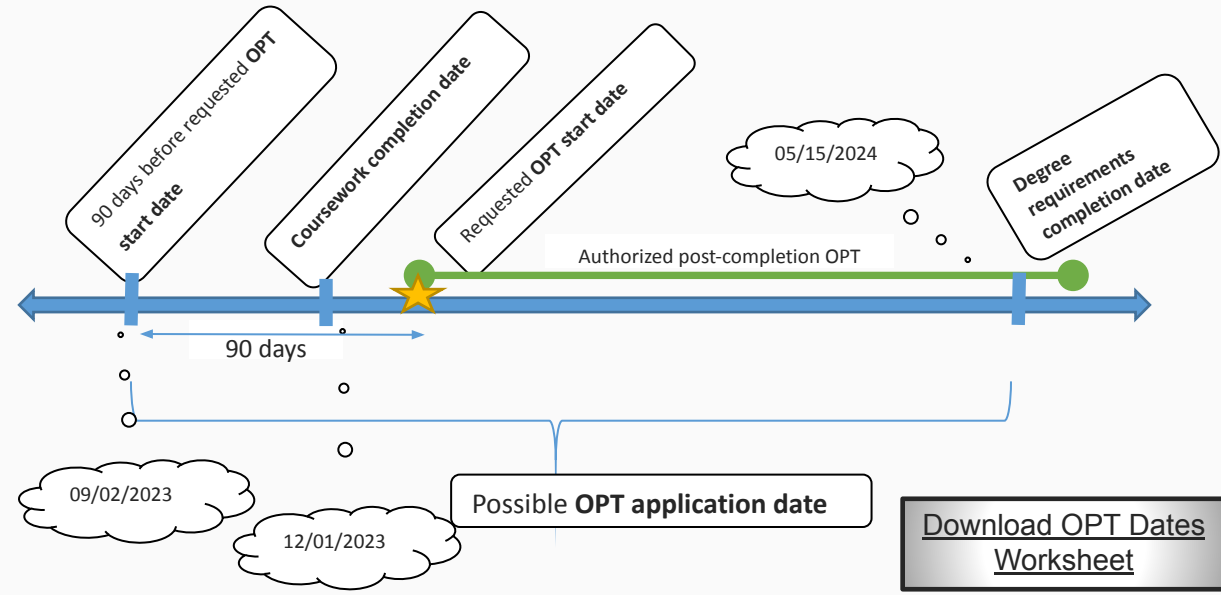
Download OPT Dates Worksheet

A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT APPLYING BASED ON COURSEWORK COMPLETION

Graduate students that have finished their coursework and are working on a thesis or dissertation may want to start OPT before completing their degree requirements, based on the eligibility of finishing their coursework.

However, there are some risks with this option.

Students who choose this option MUST complete all degree requirements and graduate within the period of authorized employment. In other words, you are expected to complete all of your degree requirements (defense, revisions, paperwork, etc) prior to your OPT expiring. This is especially important for students eligible for STEM OPT, as USCIS expects you to be able to show your current diploma in your STEM OPT applications.

Failing to finish all degree requirements prior to the end of your OPT authorized employment period could result in your losing future benefits.

Please make an **appointment with an adviser** if you have any questions about this option.

PRE-COMPLETION OPT
(only for students who have not yet completed degree or coursework requirements)

The OPT application can be received by USCIS no earlier than 90 days before your desired start date. You can start preparing your application materials before this, but cannot submit it to USCIS before the 90 days.

This option is rare. Most students use CPT instead. See more on CPT here.

The earliest possible requested OPT start date is the day after completing one full academic year (2 semesters) in full time student status; the requested OPT end date must be before degree requirement completion date

Download OPT Dates Worksheet

Applying for **PRE-COMPLETION OPT**

90 days before requested **OPT start date**

11/01/2023

Requested **OPT start date**

04/31/2024

Degree requirements completion date

Authorized pre-completion OPT

90 days

Possible **OPT application date**

01/30/2024

10/31/2024

RUTGERS GLOBAL–
International Student and Scholar Services

ONLINE I-765 APPLICATION PROCESS
Step 2 - Prepare Application Materials - Acceptable file formats and upload requirements

File Formats
Photos: JPG, JPEG, or PNG
Documents: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
Maximum size per file: 6MB

You can upload 5 documents at once, and there is no limit to the number of files you can upload in total

Foreign language documents must have official English Translation

Allowable Characters in file names
English letters
Numbers
Spaces
Periods .
Hyphens -
Underscores _
Parentheses ( )

****Do not use special characters

1 COLOR PHOTOGRAPH SPECIFICATIONS

You can either obtain a digital copy or image of a printed photo

The color photograph must have a white to off-white background and be printed on thin paper with a glossy finish—do not mount or retouch

The photograph must be sized at 2 inches by 2 inches and must be in full color with a frontal view of your full face

The head height in the photograph should measure 1 inch to 1 3/8 inches from top of hair to bottom of chin

Eye height in the photograph should be between 1 1/8 inch to 1 3/8 inches from top of eyes to bottom of photo

Your head must be bare unless you are wearing headwear as required by a religious denomination of which you are a member

Resources:
Dept of State Photo Requirements
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/photos.html

Dept of State Photo Cropping Tool:
https://tsg.phototool.state.gov/photo
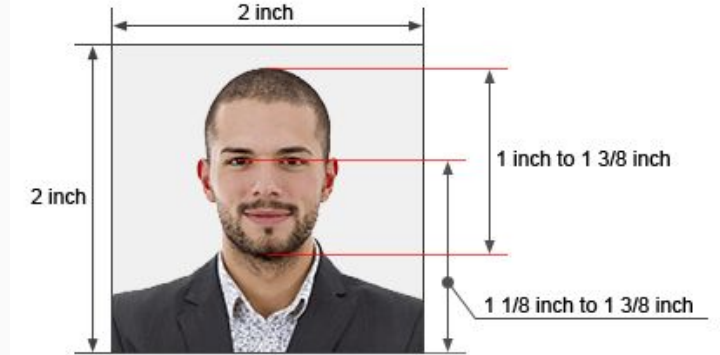
Photographs must be taken recently (within 6 months of the application date) and not been used before on another application (i.e. your visa or passport)

Image of your passport, most recent F-1 visa

Digital copy or image of your most recent I-94 https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/

Image of your Employment Authorization/EAD Card from previous degrees (if any), front and back

Make sure the images are clear and readable

1. Visit **my.rutgers.edu** and click "Get My Grades" under the Academics tab

2. Use your NetID to log in and receive your unofficial transcript

3. Download your unofficial transcript

4. RBHS students can get their transcripts at **my.rutgers.edu** under the banner "Self-Service" tab

If you received CPT authorization, you should include images of page 1 and 2 of the previous I-20 on which this CPT authorization was shown.

Upload the files of all CPT authorization I-20s to the online application when asked

Create USCIS Online Account

If you have an existing account, sign in. Otherwise create a new account. Please do NOT use any Rutgers email address for this account

2 step authentication is used, and you will choose which way you prefer this to be verified (text vs email)

Each account is unique to 1 person - you cannot have 2 people using 1 account

Resources:
https://www.uscis.gov/file-online/how-to-create-a-uscis-online-account

www.uscis.gov/file-online

STEP 1 - Read official instructions for completing Form I-765: https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

STEP 2 - Once logged in to your USCIS account, click "File a form online" on the home screen

The online application has multiple sessions to complete. These sections are:

1) **Getting Started section**
2) **About You section**
3) **Evidence section**
4) **Additional Information section**
5) **Review and Submit section**
   a) **Form Filing Fee section**

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ⌄

About You ⌄

Evidence ⌄

Additional Information ⌄

Review and Submit ⌄
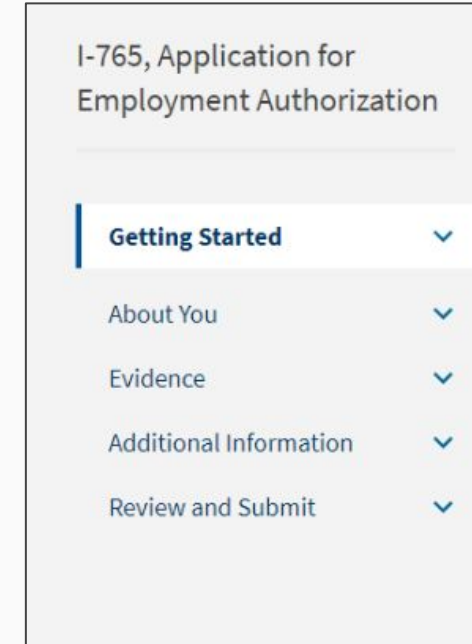
STEP 3 - Select the "Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)" as the form you want to file online

Carefully review all of the information provided on the screen about the Form I-765
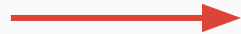
File a Form

Select the form you want to file online. Once you start, we will automatically save your information for 30 days, or from the last time you worked on the form.

Fee waiver: If you are requesting a fee waiver, you cannot file online. You must file a paper version of both the Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver and the form for the specific benefit you are requesting. You can review the fee waiver guidance at www.uscis.gov/feewaiver.

Select the form you want to file online.

I-134A, Online Request to be a Supporter and Declaration of Financial Support

I-539, Application To Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status

I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

I-821D, Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

I-907, Request for Premium Processing Service

STEP 4 - Review the form overview and privacy notices information

STEP 5 - Select the correct employment eligibility category

- **MOST STUDENTS WILL BE APPLYING FOR POST-COMPLETION OPT c(3)(B). IF YOU ARE UNSURE, ASK AN INTERNATIONAL ADVISOR BEFORE MOVING FORWARD. THIS MUST BE CORRECT.**

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started ^

Basis of eligibility

Reason for applying

Preparer and interpreter information

About You ⌄

Evidence ⌄

Additional Information ⌄

Review and Submit ⌄

What is your eligibility category?

c(3)(A) Student Pre-Completion OPT

c(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT

c(3)(C) STEM Extension

online and are not eligible for one of the listed categories, your application may be denied.

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STEP 6 - Select Premium Processing Option

USCIS provides the option for you to have your OPT application adjudicated within 30 calendar days from the date of request. Adjudication could be an approval, request for evidence, rejection, or denial - it does NOT guarantee you an approval.

Premium processing is NOT mandatory. This is a personal decision you need to make based on your situation. You should carefully review all information the USCIS Premium Processing webpage and the normal USCIS Processing Times page before making your decision.

IF YOU CHOOSE YES, NOTE THE IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT THE PAYMENT AFTER APPLICATION SUBMISSION!

Would you like to request Premium Processing Service?

Premium Processing Service guarantees that USCIS will take one of several possible actions (issue an approval notice, a denial notice, a notice of intent to deny, or a request for evidence) on your Form I-765 within 30 days.

The fee for Premium Processing Service for Form I-765 is $1,500.

If you request premium processing, you will be asked to complete Form I-907 after you sign your Form I-765. You will then be able to pay for and submit both forms at the same time.

○ Yes
● No

Would you like to request Premium Processing Service?

Premium Processing Service guarantees that USCIS will take one of several possible actions (issue an approval notice, a denial notice, a notice of intent to deny, or a request for evidence) on your Form I-765 within 30 days.

The fee for Premium Processing Service for Form I-765 is $1,500.

If you request premium processing, you will be asked to complete Form I-907 after you sign your Form I-765. You will then be able to pay for and submit both forms at the same time.

● Yes
○ No

ⓘ Form I-765 and Form I-907 will be submitted together. After you sign Form I-765, the form will be locked. You will not be able to make any changes to the form once it is locked. You will immediately be directed to Form I-907 and will be able to pay for and submit both forms after you provide your signatures.

STEP 7 - Select the reason you are applying

- If this is your first OPT application for your current degree, you will select "Initial Permission"

- If your EAD was already approved by USCIS but then LOST or STOLEN, you will select "Replacement". Please contact an advisor before refiling your application for important guidance

STEP 8 - If you were ever approved for OPT in the past, regardless of degree level, select "Yes" for "Have you previously filed Form I-765?". Upload files of the front and back of your previous EAD card(s) and/or Denial notices in the "Additional Information" section

STEP 9 - Answer "No" to "Is someone assisting you with completing this application?" unless an attorney, preparer, or interpreter is helping you file this application. **Rutgers Global - ISSS advisors are not considered an attorney, preparer, or interpreter**

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

Getting Started

Basis of eligibility

Reason for applying

Preparer and interpreter information

About You

Evidence

Additional Information

Review and Submit

Is someone assisting you with completing this application?

○ Yes

● No

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STEP 10 - Enter your name as shown on your most recent passport

If you have a middle name, we suggest writing both your first and middle name in the in the "Given Name" box

If you have used other names, either formally or informally, please say "Yes" and enter them on the application. This includes maiden names or nicknames

STEP 11 - Write a U.S. mailing address where you will be able to receive documents for the next 3 to 4 months. **This should NOT be the ISSS office address or department address. This may also be true for your Rutgers on-campus address, if you are moving after graduating**

This does not necessarily need to be your current address; if it is not your current address, you can write the full name of person whose address you are using in "In care of name" box. Some students purchase a P.O. box instead.

If your mailing address and physical address are different, please answer "No" to the next question and enter your physical address

What is your current U.S. mailing address?

We will use your current mailing address to contact you throughout the application process. We may not be able to contact you if you do not provide a complete and valid address. Please provide a U.S. address only.

In care of name (if any)

Address line 1

123 Practical Training Road

Street number and name

Address line 2

Apartment, suite, unit, or floor

City or town: City   State: New Jersey   ZIP code: 11111

Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

◯ Yes
◉ No

Where in the United States do you live?

Address line 1

Street number and name

Address line 2

Apartment, suite, unit, or floor

City or town   State   ZIP code

Back   Next

STEP 12 - Fill out your biographical information throughout the next section of the application

What is your gender?

○ Male
○ Female

What is your marital status?

○ Single
○ Married
○ Divorced
○ Widowed

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What is your city, town, or village of birth?

What is your state or province of birth?

What is your country of birth?

What is your date of birth?

MM/DD/YYYY

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Last Update March 2023

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STEP 13 - Continue to fill out your immigration information, using your I-94 and passport(s)

To view and print your I-94 go to: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/

If you entered the U.S. on another status other than F-1 and completed a change of status with USCIS, write your last entered status for "Status at last arrival"

Your current immigration status should be "F-1 student"

Enter your current SEVIS ID number. Your SEVIS ID is located at the top left corner of your I-20. Use the "Additional Information" section of the application to provide any previously used SEVIS ID numbers, if applicable

What is your country of citizenship or nationality?
List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national.

+ Add country

What is your Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record Number (if any)?

When did you last arrive in the United States?
List your arrival date, place of arrival, and status at arrival.

Date of arrival
MM/DD/YYYY

Place of arrival

Status at last arrival

What is the passport number of your most recently issued passport?

What is your travel document number (if any)?

What is the expiration date of your passport or travel document?
MM/DD/YYYY

What country issued your passport or travel document?

What is your current immigration status or category?

What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?
Use the "Additional Information" section to include all previously used SEVIS numbers.

N-

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STEP 14 - Check "I do not have or know my A-Number"

Check "I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number". You will only have a USCIS Online Account Number if you previously filed an <u>online</u> application with USCIS

What is your A-Number?

☐ I do not have or know my A-Number.

A-

What is your USCIS Online Account Number?

Providing your unique USCIS Online Account Number (OAN) helps us manage your account. You may already have an OAN if you previously filed certain paper forms and received an Account Access Notice in the mail. You can find the OAN at the top of the notice; it is not the same as an A-Number.

☐ I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number.

STEP 15 - If you never had a Social Security number (SSN), you may apply for one now by answering "No" and "Yes" to the following related questions

Read more about getting a SSN through your I-765 application here:
https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/flyers/EBE_Flyer_Apply_for_your_Social_Security_Number_While_Applying_for_Your.pdf

Once your OPT application is approved, the necessary information will be provided to the Social Security Administration. You should receive your Social Security Card by mail approximately two weeks after you receive your OPT approval and Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card

If you have a SSN, select "Yes" and enter the number

If you do not have a SSN...

If you have a SSN...

STEP 16 - Follow the instructions to upload your photo, using the file format requirements. See slide 14 for more details

2 X 2 Photo Of You

Upload a recent color photograph of yourself that measures 2 inches by 2 inches, with your face measuring 1 inch to 1 3/8 inch from your chin to the top of your head. Your eyes should be between 1 1/8 inch and 1 3/8 inch from the bottom of the photo.

Make sure your whole face is visible, you are facing the camera directly, and the background is white or off-white. Your head must be bare, unless contrary to your religious beliefs.

If you need help understanding the photo requirements or want to resize, rotate, or crop your photo, you can use to the Department of State's photo composition tools. Please note that we cannot approve your application without your photos.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, or PNG
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

File upload link button

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STEP 17 - **Obtain your I-94 number**. To view and print your digital I-94 go to: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/

If you have a paper I-94, you must obtain a clear image of it and upload to the application

NOTE - if you changed your status to F-1 while inside the United States (through a USCIS I-539 form), then your I-94 will be located on the bottom of your I-797 F-1 approval notice

STEP 18 - Upload the following:

1) **Image of your most recent passport.** You only need to upload the 1 page showing your biographical information and picture of yourself. The bottom numbers (Machine Readable Zone) must be visible.

2) **Image of your F-1 visa.** If you do not have a F-1 visa, upload your I-797 F-1 approval notice. Canadian and Bermudian students will not have F-1 visas.

3) **ALL previous EAD cards, front and back, if applicable.** If you ever worked on OPT (pre or post), H-4 EAD, and/or J-1 Academic Training at any degree level.

Employment Authorization Document Or Government ID

Upload a copy of your last Employment Authorization document (EAD) (front and back). If you were not previously issued an EAD, you must upload a copy of a government-issued identity document (such as a passport) showing your picture, name, and date of birth; a birth certificate with photo ID; a visa issued by a foreign consulate; or a national ID document with photo and/or fingerprint. The identity document photocopy must clearly show your facial features and contain your biographical information.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

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STEP 19 - Upload the following:

1) **If you previously had CPT: Page 1 & 2 of I-20s that show your previous CPT approvals**, for ALL degree levels.

2) **If you previously had OPT: Page 1 & 2 of I-20s that show your previous OPT recommendations**, for ALL degree levels.

3) **For all students: Unofficial transcript for your current degree.**
   a) See slide 16 for information on how to obtain transcripts

Previously Authorized CPT Or OPT

Upload evidence of any previously authorized CPT or OPT and the academic level at which it was authorized.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Upload no more than five documents at a time
- Accepted file name characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

STOP!

- **Save the draft application - DO NOT SUBMIT YET**

- **You cannot progress until you have received your NEW OPT recommended I-20 from Rutgers Global**

- **See next slides for information on how to get your new OPT I-20**

STEP 1 - Submit Post-Completion OPT e-form request e-form via the RGlobal Portal

STEP 2 - Submit your complete OPT Application for ISA review via the OPT e-form. Any recommended changes will be sent to you via email
- **You will need to save the "electronic draft" of the Form I-765 from the Online Application, and upload it to the OPT application e-form for Rutgers Global review. This is explained on the next slide.**
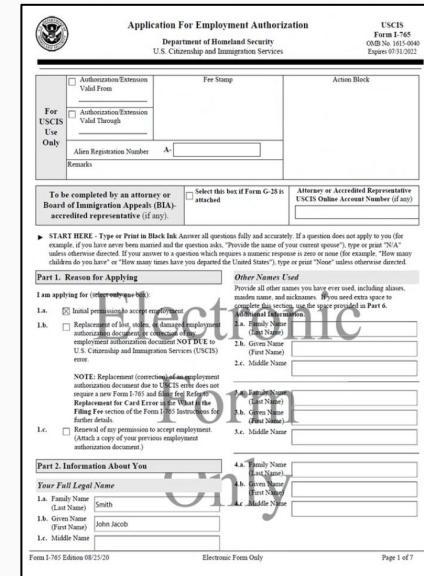
STEP 3 - Schedule an optional appointment to review your application with an International Student Advisor. This is recommended but not required to progress: https://global.rutgers.edu/international-scholars-students/advising-services

STEP 4 – Move forward with the rest of the e-form sections on the RGlobal Portal

Important!

Missing or incomplete documents can delay the creation of your new I-20. Please make sure you've prepared all required documents outlined in STEP 2 of this tutorial before meeting an international student advisor

Review the **draft** I-765 form information for correctness before uploading it to the RGlobal Portal e-form. Click "View draft snapshot" (shown below) to download a copy of the electronic draft form I-765 and save it to your computer

Review the I-765 form information

Here is a summary of all the information you provided in your application.

Make sure you have provided responses for everything that applies to you before you submit your application. You can edit your responses by going to each application section using the site navigation.

We also prepared a draft case snapshot with your responses, which you can download below.

View draft snapshot   Print

THIS IS CORRECT

STEP 1 - Look for an email confirming that your new I-20 with OPT recommendation is ready, signed by an ISA. **The I-20 will be attached to the email**

STEP 2 - Review the OPT I-20 and make sure all information on it is accurate. The OPT recommendation and requested start and end dates are listed on page 2. Please make sure these dates are correct

STEP 3 - Print and sign this I-20 with a blue pen. **YOU MUST SIGN THIS WITH INK.** Your adviser will sign it digitally - you cannot!

STEP 4- Take a picture or scan the I-20 to upload to the online application

STEP 5 - Carefully read the email for important guidelines and reminders

IMPORTANT!

- You should not continue to Step 8 of this tutorial (Submission and Fee Payment) until you have uploaded your new OPT recommended I-20 to the online USCIS OPT application. This new OPT I-20 is given to you by your Rutgers advisor when you complete all the necessary e-form steps on the RGlobal Portal

- The I-20 you upload should also be signed by you, IN INK. This means it must be printed from your email, signed in blue pen, and scanned into an uploadable file that meets the USCIS file format requirements that are found on slide 13 of this tutorial

- Submitting your online application without uploading your OPT I-20 first will **lead to a denial**

I-20, Certificate Of Eligibility For Nonimmigrant Student Status

⚠ Important information regarding your Form I-20

Do **NOT** submit this form until you receive a Form I-20 recommendation from your DSO. We will deny your application if you do not include your Form I-20 recommendation when you submit Form I-765. If you need to provide Form I-765 to your DSO, print or download this draft before you submit.

Upload images of page 1 & 2 of your new, signed OPT recommended I-20

I-20, Certificate Of Eligibility For Nonimmigrant Student Status

Upload a copy of the Form I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status endorsed by the Designated School Official (DSO). For the (c)(3)(B) eligibility category, your DSO must have entered the recommendation for OPT into your SEVIS record within 30 days of you submitting Form I-765. If you fail to do so, we will deny your OPT request. For the (c)(3)(C) eligibility category, the Form I-20 must have been endorsed by the DSO within 60 days of submitting Form I-765.

File requirements

- Clear and readable
- Accepted file formats: JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF
- No encrypted or password-protected files
- If your documents are in a foreign language, upload a full English translation and the translator's certification with each original document.
- Accepted characters: English letters, numbers, spaces, periods, hyphens, underscores, and parentheses
- Maximum size: 6MB per file

Choose or drop files here to upload

Back

Next

If you need to provide any additional information for any of your answers to the questions on the application, enter it into the "Additional Information" section. You should include the questions that you are referencing (Section, Page, Question, etc).

If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave this section blank.

Examples shown on the next slides

Additional Information

If you need to provide any additional information for any of your answers to the questions in this form, enter it into the space below. You should include the questions that you are referencing.

If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave this section blank.

Section

Page

Question

Additional information

0/500

Save response   **Cancel**

Example #1: You have a different, previous SEVIS ID #

If you attended school for a while, left the US to take a break from school, and returned with a new I-20, you would have a SEVIS ID # from your first period of attendance that is different than your current SEVIS ID #

In the "Additional Information" box, enter your specific information:

SEVIS ID: N00########

Program start date - Program end date

Degree Level (Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD)

Additional Information

If you need to provide any additional information for any of your answers to the questions in this form, enter it into the space below. You should include the questions that you are referencing.

If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave this section blank.

Section

About You ▾

Page

Your immigration information ▾

Question

What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Inform... ▾

Additional information

Previous SEVIS ID# - N0123456789, Bachelors, 9/1/2015 - 5/31/2017

65/500

Save response   Cancel

Example #2: You have used CPT and/or OPT in the past, at any school or any degree level. You should upload 1 evidence section for all CPTs and 1 evidence section for all OPTs. List out the information separately for each individual authorization period, using the example information below.

In the "Additional Information" box, type your specific information:

- Employer's name (for CPT only, not OPT)
- Start & end date
- Part-time or Full-time
- Degree Level (Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD)

CPT example

OPT example

- Check your application for accuracy and completeness before submitting
- Check for any alerts that may be showing, and correct them as needed
- **WARNING** - alerts are not always shown! It is your responsibility to ensure your application is correct

Check your application before you submit

We will review your application to check for accuracy and completeness before you submit it.

We encourage you to provide as many responses as you can throughout the application, to the best of your knowledge. Missing information can slow down the review process after you submit your application.

You can return to this page to review your application as many times as you want before you submit it.

Your fee

ⓘ Your form filing fee is: $410

Alerts and warnings

You have one or more alerts and warnings based on the information you provided in your application.

A red alert means you have incomplete responses or inconsistent data. You cannot submit your application with any alerts.

🛑 There are errors in About You: Your immigration information

Edit my responses

Your fee

ⓘ Your form filing fee is: $410

Alerts and warnings

You have one or more alerts and warnings based on the information you provided in your application.

A red alert means you have incomplete responses or inconsistent data. You cannot submit your application with any alerts.

Alerts and warnings

✅ We found no alerts or warnings in your application

After receiving ISA feedback from Rutgers Global, consider making changes to your application where needed. Then, review the I-765 form information once again on your own for correctness and save it to your computer for future reference

THIS ONE

To submit your application, confirm that you can read and understand English on the "Applicant's statement" box

Carefully read the confirmation language on the "Applicant's Declaration and Certification" page. You must understand this information, as this is **your** application to USCIS

If confirmed, type your full legal name in the "Applicant's signature" box
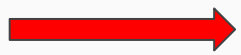
Applicant's statement

You must read and agree to the statement below.

☑ I can read and understand English, and have read and understand every question and instruction on this application, as well as my answer to every question.

[Back]   [Next]

Applicant's Declaration and Certification

You must read and agree to the certification below. If you knowingly and willfully falsify or conceal a material fact or submit a false document with your application, we can deny your application and may deny any other immigration benefit. You may also face criminal prosecution and penalties provided by the law.

Copies of any documents I have submitted are exact photocopies of unaltered, original documents, and I understand that USCIS may require that I submit original documents to USCIS at a later date. Furthermore, I authorize the release of any information from any and all of my records that USCIS may need to determine my eligibility for the immigration benefit that I seek.

I furthermore authorize release of information contained in this application, in supporting documents, and in my USCIS records, to other entities and persons where necessary for the administration and enforcement of U.S. immigration law.

I understand that USCIS may require me to appear for an appointment to take my biometrics (fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature) and, at that time, if I am required to provide biometrics, I will be required to sign an oath reaffirming that:

1) I reviewed and understood all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application; and

2) All of this information was complete, true, and correct at the time of filing.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that all of the information in my application and any document submitted with it were provided or authorized by me, that I reviewed and understood all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application, and that all of this information is complete, true, and correct.

I understand that USCIS may require me to appear for an appointment to take my biometrics (fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature) and, at that time, if I am required to provide biometrics, I will be required to sign an oath reaffirming that:

1) I reviewed and understood all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application; and

2) All of this information was complete, true, and correct at the time of filing.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that all of the information in my application and any document submitted with it were provided or authorized by me, that I reviewed and understand all of the information contained in, and submitted with, my application, and that all of this information is complete, true, and correct.

☑ I have read and agree to the applicant's statement

Applicant's signature

You must provide your digital signature below by typing your full legal name. We may deny your application if you do not completely fill out this application or fail to submit required documents. We will record the date of your signature with your application.

John

[Back]   [Next]

WARNING: **Do not submit an OPT application online from outside of the US and/or without a SIGNED OPT recommendation I-20**

Once you pay the online application fee, the I-765 is considered filed immediately and can result in a denial if you applied from outside the US and without the OPT I-20

USCIS uses UTC time zone. Your application has to be submitted before 11:59pm UTC of the due date. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO SUBMIT.

After typing your name, you will be prompted to pay for your application submission. Read the instructions carefully and follow the link to pay.gov (click "Pay and submit")

Pay for and submit your application

The final step to submit your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, is to pay the required fee.

Your application fee is: **$410.**

Refund Policy: By continuing this transaction, you agree that you are paying for a government service and that the filing fee, biometric services fee and all related financial transactions are final and not refundable, regardless of any action USCIS takes on an application, petition or request, or how long USCIS takes to reach a decision. You must submit all fees in the exact amounts.

We will send you to Pay.gov — our safe and secure payment website — to pay your fees and submit your form online.

Here are the steps in the payment and submission process:

1. Provide your billing information on Pay.gov
2. Provide your credit card of U.S. bank account information
3. Submit your payment

When you have paid your fee, your form will be submitted.

Pay.gov will redirect you to a uscis.gov confirmation screen, which will include your receipt number. Please keep a copy of your receipt number for your records. You can track the status of your application through your USCIS online account.

Pay and submit

Paying the I-765 Fee WITHOUT Premium Processing:

After you agree to the applicant statement, you will be directed to pay.gov, a secure government portal

Check the fee amount: https://www.uscis.gov/i-765

Pay by ACH withdrawal, or debit/credit card
- ACH withdrawals require bank and routing information, and must be from a US financial institution
- Call your credit card company to alert them of this upcoming charge, to prevent blocked payment processing

Enter payment information

When you hit continue, the payment for your application will be submitted and the "I-765 Application for Employment Authorization" is considered filed immediately

Premium Processing is addressed on the next slide

Last Update Feb 2024

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Paying the I-765 WITH Premium Processing (I-907):

IF YOU SELECTED "YES" TO PREMIUM PROCESSING, REVIEW THE MESSAGE ABOUT YOUR APPLICATION AND ADDITIONAL I-907 FEE.

YOU CANNOT MAKE EDITS AFTER SUBMITTING THIS SO PLEASE BE CAREFUL.

Finish the I-765 and continue to the I-907

By finishing this form, your Form I-765 will be locked and no further changes can be made. Please make sure that the information on your Form I-765 is complete and accurate before continuing. If you need to make any edits after finishing, you will need to create a new Form I-765.

Next, you will continue to Form I-907. Once you complete Form I-907, you can pay for and submit both forms at the same time.

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Finish and continue

A PDF receipt notice will become available for download in the **"Documents" tab** of your account. It will also be mailed to your mailing address from your application

Your application gets <u>receipted up to 48 hours</u> after payment

Your receipt notice shows the date you submitted the application, and your case #

You can use this case number to track your status/progress (see next slide)
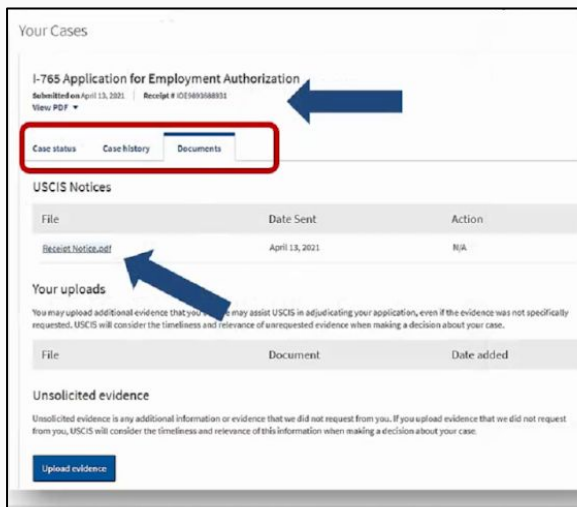
All notices are posted to your account

- Receipt notice
- Biometrics notice
- Request for Evidence (RFE)
- PDF of completed form
- Decision letter

* Notices are also mailed to the mailing address on file

You can **<u>EITHER</u>** mail your application to USCIS **<u>OR</u>** apply online

Do NOT submit an application both ways! You can only submit your OPT application through 1 method

Please decide if you will mail your application, **<u>OR</u>** if you will submit it online

You can track the status of your application through the **Case Status Tracker**: https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/mycasestatus.do

Closely review the "How to Track Delivery of Employment Authorization Document (EAD)" page from USCIS for important delivery information:
https://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-guidance/how-to-track-delivery-of-your-green-card-employment-authorization-document-ead-and-travel-document

The United States Postal Service (USPS) offers a free service to help you digitally track your daily mail called **Informed Delivery**. This may be helpful in tracking your receipt notices and EAD card.

You can sign up for this service on their website here: https://tem-informeddelivery.usps.com/box/pages/intro/start.action

REJECTED, DENIED, or RFE APPLICATIONS

If your application is rejected or denied by USCIS for any reason, or if you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE), please contact our office BEFORE responding to the RFE, if time allows. You may need an updated I-20 from our staff.

USCIS will communicate with you via your online account as well as mail. Please see the image below for your communication options in your USCIS account.
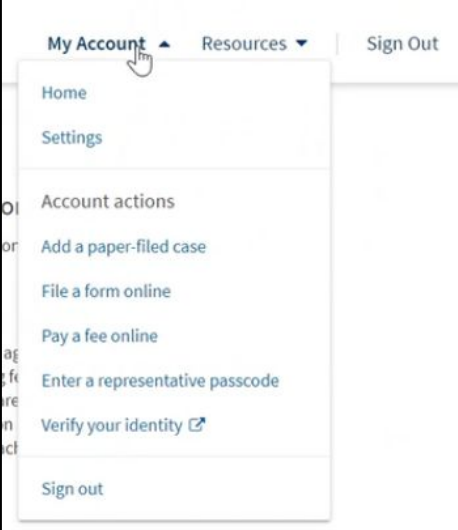
Please let us know if you wish to have a second review of your new application materials.

IF YOU DO NOT GRADUATE AS EXPECTED:

This will impact your OPT application! Please contact our office right away if you have already applied for OPT but then find out you did not meet the degree completion deadline as originally planned. You may be directed to withdraw your application. Our advisers will help you review your options.
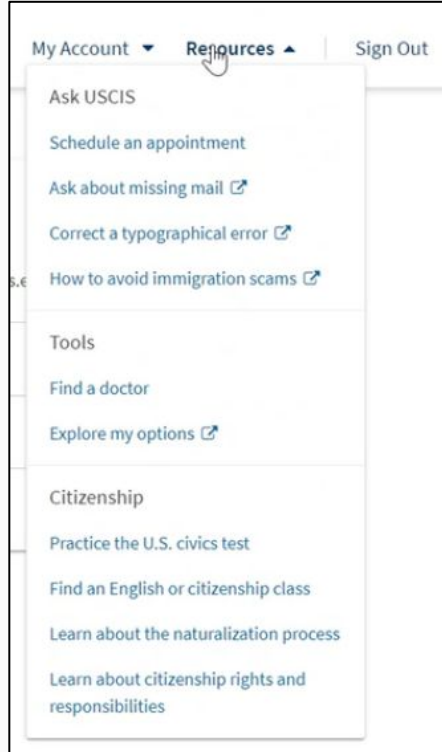
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Your USCIS account offers **resources** to help you manage your application on the online application portal. Please become familiar with these tools.

Email us:

- New Brunswick -
  isss-students@global.rutgers.edu

- RBHS -
  isss-rbhs@global.rutgers.edu

Call us:

- New Brunswick – 848-932-7015
- RBHS - 973-972-6138

Join our QQA or make an appointment:

- https://global.rutgers.edu/advising

Join us for an OPT Chat Session:

- https://global.rutgers.edu/opt

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