Off-Campus Employment Overview for F-1 Students

Employment is considered any type of compensation (monetary, products, goods, services, etc.) for your work.
Off-campus employment (including virtual employment) **is NOT permitted without authorization**.
Working off-campus **WITHOUT** employment authorization is grounds for termination of your F-1 status.

Off-campus or virtual employment can be authorized with Practical Training; Curricular (CPT) and Optional (OPT).
Employment must be related to your academic program at JMU and must be authorized before employment begins.

Curriculum Practical Training (CPT)	Optional Practical Training (OPT)	
CPT Overview	Pre Completion OPT (packet)	Post Completion OPT (packet)
What you should know:		
- You must **receive credit from a course** (internship course or independent study) **OR** - the work MUST be a **requirement** for your field of study	- A job offer is **not** required to apply, but you must obtain authorization by USCIS prior to employment. - OPT is granted for specific dates and cannot be adjusted after it is approved.	
Application Overview:		
CPT Application	Pre OPT Application	Post OPT Application
- Upload **employment letter** (via application form)	Phase 1 - Employment Details	
- Obtain **recommendation from your academic** advisor (via application form)	- Submit the anticipated **start and end date**	- Obtain *Anticipated Degree Verification Letter*
		- Submit your anticipated **start date**
	Phase 2 - Gathering Documents	
	- Scan of passport info. page	- Scan of passport info. page
- If CPT is credit based, class registration is required	- pdf of your **I-94 Arrival Record**	- pdf of your **I-94 Arrival Record**
	- passport-sized **photo**	- passport-sized **photo**
- ISSS issues **CPT endorsed I-20 form**	- Scans of previous EAD card(s) & CPT/OPT docs.	- Scans of previous EAD card(s) & CPT/OPT docs.
	- **OPT endorsed I-20 form**	- **OPT endorsed I-20 form**
	- Begin working on **I-765 form** & upload documents	- Begin working on **I-765 form** & upload documents
	Phase 3 - Submitting the Application Form	
	- Have ISSS **check your I-765 form**	- Have ISSS **check your I-765 form**
	- Finalize the application by paying the **$410 fee**	- Finalize the application by paying the **$410 fee**
	Phase 4 - Waiting for USCIS	
	- Look for your **Receipt Notice**	- Look for your **Receipt Notice**
	- Look for your **Approval Notice**	- Look for your **Approval Notice**
	- Look for your **EAD card**	- Look for your **EAD card**
Application Deadline:		
- 1 week prior to start date	- 90 days prior to EAD start date	- Apply as early as 90 days prior and as late as **60 days post** graduation date
Estimated Application Processing Time:		
- 1 week	- 1 month to 3 months	- 1 month to 3 months
Duration of Employment:		
- 12 months or in shorter increments with part time or full time options depending on time of year	- 12 months or in shorter increments with part time or full time options depending on time of year	- 12 months or in shorter increments with part time or full time options. An extension of 24 months is applicable to STEM majors - hwww.jmu.edu/global/isss/stem-opt-majors.shtml

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