

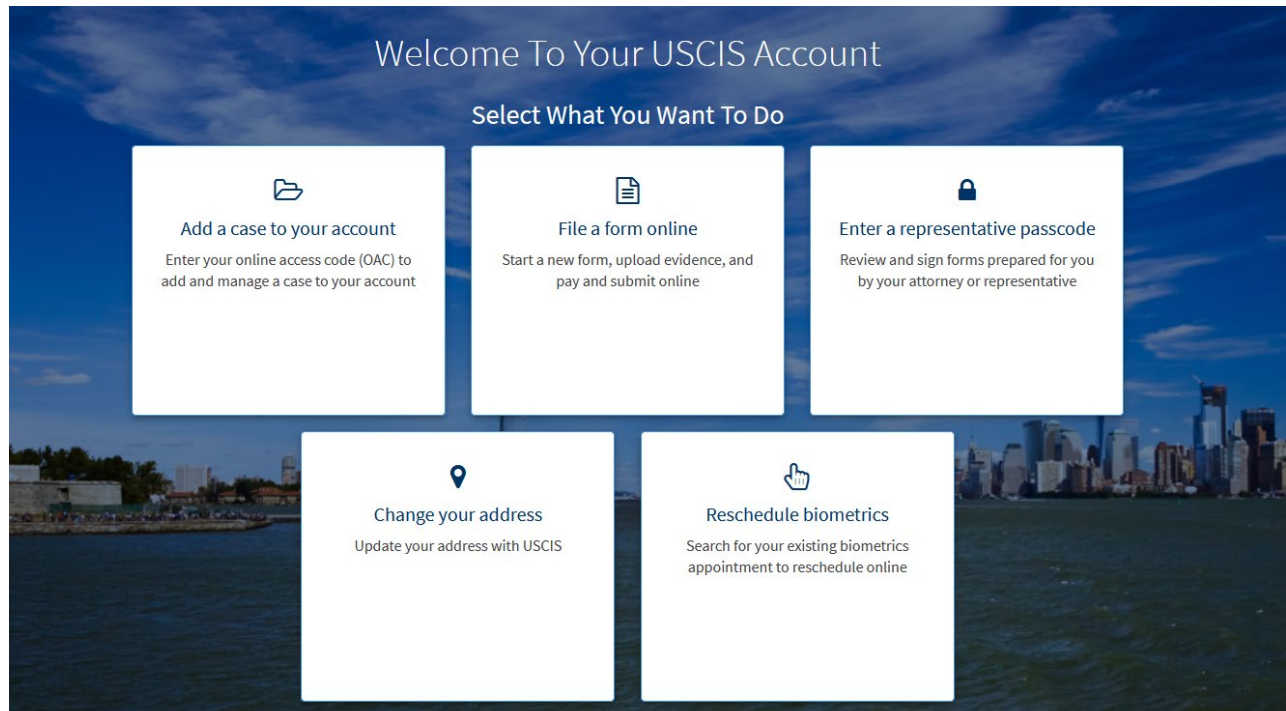
TIPS FOR FILING YOUR STEM OPT APPLICATION ONLINE WITH USCIS

These instructions are designed to help Bentley University F-1 students complete specific sections of the USCIS online STEM OPT application. Please remember that the STEM OPT application is a personal application, and **you are solely responsible** for ensuring the accuracy of your submission, including uploading all required documents and meeting all deadlines. See the disclaimer below.

Once you have received your STEM OPT recommendation Form I-20 from the CISS, you are ready to file your STEM OPT application online with USCIS.

Starting Your Application

Sign in to your USCIS online account, click on “File a Form Online.”



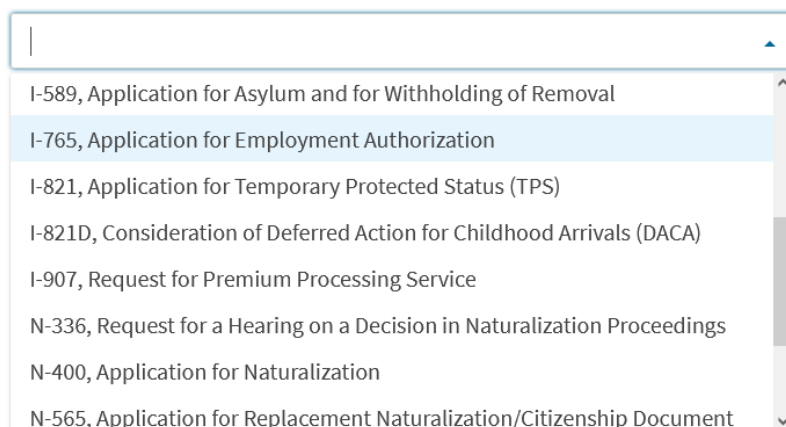
From the drop-down list of available forms, select “I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.”

File a Form

Select the form you want to file online. For some forms you will have the option to either fill out your form online or upload a completed form. Once you start, we will automatically save your information for 30 days, or from the last time you worked on the form.

Fee waiver: Fee waivers can be requested online only when submitting certain benefit requests using the PDF filing option. If your desired benefit request is not eligible for PDF filing, 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.

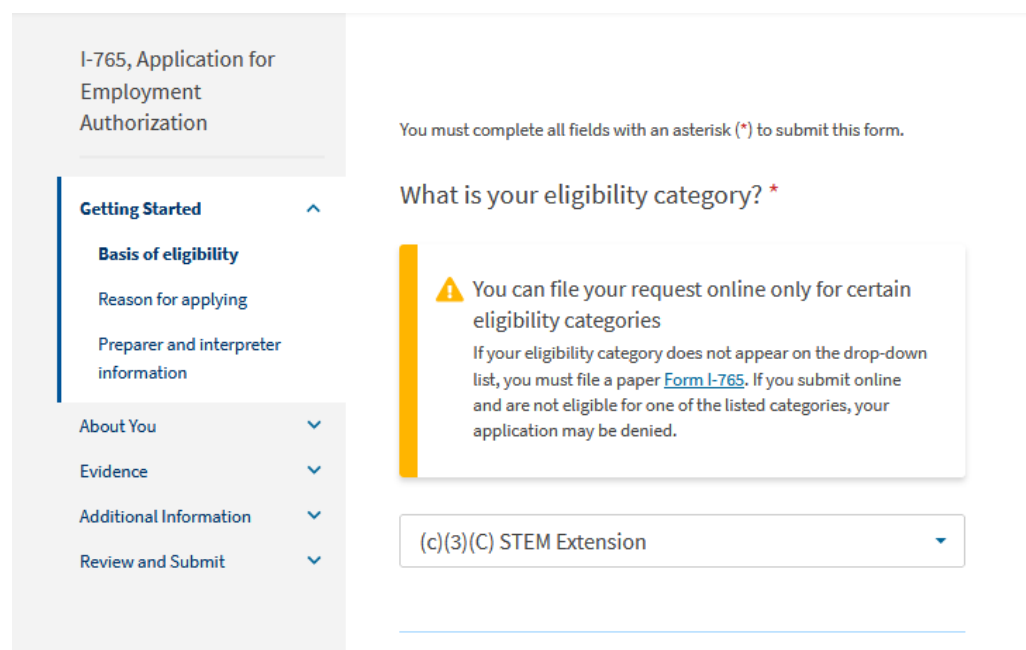
Select the form you want to file online.



A screenshot of a web-based drop-down menu. The menu is open, showing a list of USCIS forms. The form 'I-765, Application for Employment Authorization' is highlighted in blue. Other visible forms include I-589, I-821, I-821D, I-907, N-336, N-400, and N-565.

Eligibility

Select your correct eligibility category: For **STEM OPT: (c)(3)(C)**



A screenshot of the USCIS online filing interface for Form I-765. The left sidebar shows the navigation menu with 'Basis of eligibility' selected. The main content area displays a warning message: 'You can file your request online only for certain eligibility categories. If your eligibility category does not appear on the drop-down list, you must file a paper Form I-765. If you submit online and are not eligible for one of the listed categories, your application may be denied.' Below the warning is a drop-down menu with '(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension' selected. A note at the top right states: 'You must complete all fields with an asterisk (*) to submit this form.'

- Enter your degree as it appears on your Form I-20 OR diploma *and* the CIP code from your Form I-20. (e.g., MS in Finance (52.0801))

- If you are applying for the STEM extension based on a previously earned STEM degree, be sure you have notified the CISS of your plans, so that we can indicate this information on your STEM recommendation Form I-20.
- Enter your employer's E-Verify information as asked on the form.

What is your employer's name as listed in E-Verify?

What is your employer's E-Verify company identification number or a valid E-Verify client company identification number?

Provide a 4 to 7-digit employer identification number.

Reason for Applying

- For STEM applicants, we recommend the *Initial Permission to Accept Employment* option, since you are applying for the first time under the (c)(3)(C) category.
- Check “Yes” that you have previously filed Form I-765, since you filed this form for your standard Post-Completion OPT.

I-765, Application for
Employment
Authorization

You must complete all fields with an asterisk (*) to submit this form.

What is your reason for applying? *

☒ Initial permission to accept employment
☐ Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged employment authorization document or correction of my employment authorization document NOT DUE to US Citizenship and Immigration Services error
☐ Renewal of permission to accept employment

Have you previously filed Form I-765?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Back
Next

Your Name

- Enter your full legal name exactly as it appears on the biographical page of your passport and your Form I-20.

- If you have used any other names (such as a maiden name, nickname, or previous legal name) since birth, select “Yes.” Additional fields will appear for you to enter those names.
- If you have not used any other names, select “No.”

Your Contact Information

- **EAD cards are official government documents and cannot be forwarded** by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). If the address you provide is incorrect or you move, your EAD may be returned to USCIS.
- The **U.S. mailing address** you enter in your application is where the USCIS will send your:
 - STEM OPT Receipt notice
 - STEM OPT Approval notice
 - Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
- If you plan to **move within the next 5 months**, it’s strongly recommended that you use the **U.S. address of a trusted friend or relative** who can securely receive your mail on your behalf.

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Your Immigration Information

- Your status at last arrival is likely *F-1 Student, Academic, or Language Program*, unless you pursued a change of status (Form I-539) from within the U.S.
- Fill in your (most recently issued) passport information. You can leave the “travel document number” field blank, unless you entered the U.S. on a previous passport, in which case you may list it here.
- You will need to indicate your current immigration status (F-1 Student) and your SEVIS ID. Your SEVIS ID is listed on the top left of your most recent Form I-20 and begins with N.....

What is your country of citizenship or nationality?

List all countries where you are currently a citizen or national.

+ Add country

- Enter the information per your passport and Form I-20.
- Select "Add country" if you have a second country of citizenship.

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

Provide an 11 character I-94 Number.

- Go to <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home> to access & download your I-94 Arrival Record.
- Enter the 11-digit number from your most recent I-94 record.
- Verify the entry reflects your most recent entry to the U.S. If it is NOT correct, STOP and contact your OISS Advisor.
- Enter date of your most recent arrival to U.S. per your I-94 record.
- Select place of arrival from drop-down menu.
- Select status at last arrival: Unless you had a change of status, you should select ***F-1, Academic, or Language Program***

When did you last arrive in the United States?

List your arrival date, place of arrival, and status at arrival.

Date of arrival (on or about)

MM/DD/YYYY

Place of arrival

Status at last arrival

- Enter the SEVIS number located in the upper left corner of your current Form I-20.
- If you have used other SEVIS numbers in the past, list them in the "Additional information" section.
- Provide your passport number.
- Leave the field "What is your travel document number (if any)?" empty.
- Enter the expiration date of your passport and the country that issued it

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.

Provide a 10, 11, or 12-digit SEVIS number.

A-Number

Enter your A-Number, which is the USCIS number printed on your EAD card.

- If you have applied for OPT previously, your A-Number is listed on your EAD cards as *USCIS #* and listed on your receipt notice.
- If you have not applied for OPT previously, check the “I do not have or know my A-number” box.

Social Security Number

- If you have a Social Security Number (SSN), answer “No” to this question.
- If you do not have a Social Security Number (SSN), answer “Yes” to request that the SSA issue you a Social Security card.
- We have been informed that USCIS has stopped automatically issuing SSN cards upon approving OPT. Instead, you can apply directly to the Social Security Administration for an SSN on or after your OPT start date.

Evidence

In this section, you will need to upload various documents.

- Files must be **clear and easy to read**
- Accepted file types: **JPG, JPEG, PDF, TIF, or TIFF**
- **Do not upload** encrypted or password-protected files
- File names may include **English letters, spaces, periods (.), hyphens (-), underscores (_), and parentheses ()**
- Maximum file size: **6 MB per document**

1. Copy of Degree

Upload a copy of your Bentley University diploma indicating your STEM-eligible degree program.

NOTE: If your Bentley diploma does not list your STEM-eligible degree or if you are a Financial Analytics/Quantitative Finance track graduate, include your full Bentley transcripts instead of your diploma.

If you are applying for the STEM extension based on a previously earned STEM degree, please make sure you have notified the CISS of your plans to do so, so that we can indicate so on your STEM recommendation I-20.

2. Passport-Style Photo

Upload a recent (taken within the last 30 days) passport-style photo (2 x 2 inches).

Do not use photos from a recent passport renewal, U.S. visa application, or previous OPT/EAD applications. Use the U.S. Department of State Photo Tool to ensure your photo meets the required standards.

3. Form I-94

Upload a copy of your most recent I-94 Entry Record (not the travel history). Your Form I-94 should look like this. Do *not* upload the I-94 Travel History. You can download it [here](#).

Make sure your Class of Admission is listed as “F1,” unless you changed your status (I-539) since last entering the U.S.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Securing America's Borders

Get I-94 Information | I-94 FAQ

OMB No. 1651-0111
Expiration Date: 05/31/2015

Most Recent I-94

Admission (I-94) Record Number: [REDACTED] [Print](#)

Most Recent Date of Entry: [REDACTED]

Class of Admission: F1

Admit Until Date:

Details provided on the I-94 information form:

Last/Surname: [REDACTED]
First (Given) Name: [REDACTED]
Birth Date: [REDACTED]
Passport Number: [REDACTED]
Country of Issuance: [REDACTED]

[Get Travel History](#)

► Effective April 26, 2013, DHS began automating the admission process. An alien lawfully admitted or paroled into the U.S. is no longer required to be in possession of a preprinted Form I-94. A record of admission printed from the CBP website constitutes a lawful record of admission. See 8 CFR § 1.4(c).

► If an employer, local, state or federal agency requests admission information, present your admission (I-94) number along with any additional required documents requested by that employer or agency.

► Note: For security reasons, we recommend that you close your browser after you have finished retrieving your I-94 number.

[For inquiries or questions regarding your I-94, please click here.](#)
[Accessibility](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

4. Employment Authorization Document (EAD) or Government ID

STEM OPT Extension applicants: Upload your current, valid Post-Completion EAD card.

5. Form I-20

Upload a signed copy of your most recent Form I-20 with the STEM OPT recommendation.

6. Previous CPT or OPT Authorizations (if applicable)

Upload documentation of any previously approved CPT or OPT, including:

CPT Form I-20(s) showing approved CPT

OPT Form I-20(s) showing approved OPT

Front and back of EAD card(s) for prior OPT

7. Institutional Accreditation (if applicable)

- Required only if you are applying for STEM OPT Extension based on a previous degree.

Additional Information Section

This section must be completed if:

- There is information that did not fit in the spaces provided in the form
- You need to explain a complex situation that may affect application approval

Note: You do not need to submit a copy of your Form I-983 Training Plan. While USCIS can request this document at any time, you, your employer, and CISS will keep the completed version.

TIP: The government is looking for a summary of your past CPT/OPT authorizations. Use the sample format below and customize it with your information:

Under SEVIS Number N#####, I was previously authorized for full-time/part-time OPT/CPT at the Bachelor's/Master's/Doctoral level from MM/DD/YYYY to MM/DD/YYYY.

Click "Save Response" once you've entered your information.

Review Your Application

Before submitting, carefully review your application for accuracy and completeness:

- Check for any issues in the “**Alerts and Warnings**” section, which will flag missing or inconsistent information.
- Keep in mind: while you can upload additional documents later, **you cannot edit the application itself after submission.**
- It’s highly recommended to **save a copy of your Form I-765:**
 - Click “**View draft snapshot**” to download, review, and save a PDF version for your records.

Premium Processing

The OPT application includes an option to request Premium Processing.

- If you select “Yes”, you will be prompted to complete Form I-907. This allows you to pay for and submit both your STEM OPT application and your premium processing application together.
- If you select “Yes” and sign the application, you cannot change your response. You will be required to pay the additional Premium Processing fee.
- If you select “No”, you still have the option to request Premium Processing later, after submitting your application. [Learn more about USCIS Premium Processing.](#)

Submit Payment

When you're ready to submit, the system will redirect you to **Pay.gov**, the official U.S. government payment portal. There, you can pay the **Form I-765 filing fee** using one of the following methods:

- A U.S. **credit or debit card**, or
- An **ACH transfer** (direct withdrawal) from your U.S. checking account.

⚠ Important: Once your payment is submitted, your Form I-765 will be **locked**, and you will no longer be able to make any changes.

Saving Your Draft

If you begin working on your Form I-765 but are not yet ready to submit it, **USCIS will save your draft for up to 30 days.** This allows you to return and complete it at your convenience before final submission.

The screenshot displays the USCIS I-765 application submission interface. On the left, a sidebar menu lists the application steps: 'Getting Started', 'About You', 'Evidence', 'Additional Information', 'Review and Submit' (highlighted), and 'Pay and submit'. The 'Review and Submit' section is expanded, showing 'Review your application', 'Your application summary', 'Your statement', 'Your signature', and 'Pay and submit'. The main content area is titled 'Pay for and submit your application' and includes the following text: 'The final step to submit your Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, is to pay the required fee. Your application fee is: \$470. 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.' Below this text is a blue box with the USCIS seal and the text: 'We will send you to Pay.gov — our safe, secure payment website — to pay your fees and submit your form online.' This is followed by a list of steps: '1. Provide your billing information on Pay.gov', '2. Provide your credit card or U.S. bank account information', and '3. Submit your payment'. A note states: 'When you have paid your fee, your application will be submitted.' Another note says: '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.' At the bottom of the blue box is a 'Pay and submit' button.

Important Reminder

Do not submit your payment or application until you have received your new STEM OPT Form I-20 from CISS **and upload it** in the **Evidence** section under **Form I-20**.

Electronic Receipt Notice

Within a few minutes to 24 hours after submitting your online Form I-765 application, an electronic receipt notice will be available under the “**Documents**” tab in the “**Your Cases**” section. If it’s not immediately accessible, please allow up to 24 hours for it to appear.

In addition, USCIS will mail you a physical copy of the receipt notice, which typically arrives within a few weeks.

Disclaimer

The **Center for International Students and Scholars (CISS)** at **Bentley University** provides guidance on the STEM OPT application processes as a courtesy to Bentley students and alumni. While we strive to offer the most accurate and up-to-date information, the support we provide does **not constitute legal advice**.

Students are responsible for reviewing all deadlines and ensuring the accuracy of their OPT/STEM OPT application materials before submitting them to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The STEM OPT application is a personal process, and each applicant is accountable for their submission. Outcomes may vary depending on individual circumstances.

Please be aware that USCIS policies, procedures, and eligibility criteria may change at any time. CISS is not liable for any errors, omissions, or decisions made by USCIS regarding your application. For legal advice, students are encouraged to consult a licensed immigration attorney at their own expense.