



Information for Off-Campus Employers of F-1 International Students

F-1 international students with the below employment authorizations do not require visa sponsorship from an employer to engage in work off-campus. Work authorization is granted by either their university or the U.S. government (USCIS). ***Employing international students on CPT (internships while still in school) or OPT (the period immediately after degree completion) does not require any financial obligation or legal sponsorship on the part of the employer.*** It is the students' responsibility to ensure that the position they are applying for meets the parameters of their work authorization.

OFF-CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT FOR F-1 STUDENTS

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) - During academic studies

Eligibility:

- Work is integral to academic program
- Position can be paid or unpaid
- School may have hours restriction or other requirements during the semester
- Valid for the time period and location listed on I-20

Process:

- Student must have internship/job offer to apply for this work authorization
- Typically credit class is required
- School may have form for employer to complete
- Authorization issued per semester by university in form of new I-20

Optional Practical Training (OPT) - First year after graduation

Eligibility:

- Work must be related to field of study
- Job offer not required to apply
- Position can be paid or unpaid
- Student may work during dates on EAD work permit, up to 12 months

Process:

- Student applies for authorization from USCIS
- USCIS issues EAD work permit within ~3 months
- **OPT Extension:** STEM Extension of 24 months for qualifying degrees after initial OPT period, which does require training plan on part of employer, paid position, and separate application on part of student

In Sum:

- YES, international students in F-1 status are legally authorized to work in the U.S. (on the Form I-9 F-1 students are considered "noncitizen authorized to work").
- NO, F-1 students do not require visa sponsorship from their employer.
- NO, the employer is not required to pay anything to hire an international student.
- NO, international students do not need a Social Security number to apply for or begin employment.

Disclaimer: This handout has been prepared for general informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice or serve as a substitute for legal counsel. Other types of work authorization for F status exist that have not been covered here. Any questions on F-1 employment eligibility should be directed to the student's university international office.