

Work in the U.S.

Things To Know

- Off-campus work is strictly regulated through CPT and OPT
- Very rare exceptions are made for students experiencing severe economic hardship
- Before you can begin work, you must apply for and receive a Social Security Number
- Paying taxes on income is a requirement for all those living in the U.S.

Work On-Campus

- Limit of 20 hours per week during the semester. Check with your supervisor about your schedule.
- Any position must involve direct student services or interaction with other students.
- All opportunities should be posted to Handshake. Ask Career Development for help!
- You are not eligible for federal work-study, but you may qualify for the Krebs program.
- Your DSO should be informed of any on-campus work before you begin.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

CPT is paid or unpaid work you complete as a required part of a class in your major field of study. This could be clinicals, an internship, or another kind of experiential learning. Before you begin work, it must be authorized as CPT by your DSO so that it appears on your I-20. You must complete one academic year of your degree before you can be authorized for CPT (with special exception for some graduate students required to begin training immediately).

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Most F-1 students are eligible to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) and choose to apply at the end of their degree. Post-completion OPT allows you to work for one year after graduation while still on your student visa. OPT requires an application to the Department of Homeland Security, which you can submit up to 90 days before graduation or as late as 60 days after. Once you are approved, you will still have reporting requirements to your DSO. Some STEM degrees allow students to apply for a two-year extension on your OPT; ask your DSO if you are eligible and how to apply.

Social Security Numbers

Bring the following to the Social Security Office at 601 W Broadway, Room 101, Louisville, KY 40202:

- I-20, passport, and I-94
- Letter from your DSO
- Letter from your employer (must include the employer's EIN, your start date, the number of hours you will work weekly, your supervisor's name and phone number)