

Can I travel outside the US while on OPT or STEM OPT?

If you leave the US in F-1 OPT or STEM OPT status, you should be aware of the following requirements for reentry to the US. You should be prepared to present ALL 6 of the following documents at the US Port of Entry upon returning to the US:

- 1. Your valid passport.** Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months into the future.
- 2. A valid F-1 entry visa in your passport.** If your F-1 visa has expired or will expire soon, you should be prepared to apply for a new F-1 visa *outside of the US*. *There are no guarantees that a new F-1 travel visa will be reissued.*
- 3. A valid DSO signature for reentry on page 3 of your OPT or STEM I-20.** The DSO travel signature on page 3 of the OPT or STEM OPT I-20 is valid for up to 1 year. If the signature has expired or will expire soon, you must apply for a new one by completing a “Green Sheet” request form and submitting it to ISO. Please allow 5-10 business days for processing.
- 4. Your valid OPT or STEM OPT EAD card.** Note: Your EAD card will state “NOT VALID FOR REENTRY TO THE US.” This means that the EAD card alone will not suffice for reentry to the US. You should be prepared to present all 6 documents as listed on this sheet for reentry to the US.
- 5. An official job offer for future employment or a current employment letter for OPT or STEM OPT.** The job duties listed should be *directly related to your major/level field of study*.
- 6. Recent bank statements or payroll stubs which show that you have funding to support yourself in the US while on OPT or STEM OPT.** There is no set amount of funding to have in your account; however, you should be prepared to show enough funding to support yourself for at least 1 – 2 months into the future, especially if your OPT employment does not begin right away.

Caution: *If you are unable to present ALL 6 of these documents at the US Port of Entry, you risk being denied readmission to the US in F-1 OPT or STEM OPT status.*

We recommend checking various immigration updates and news before and during your travel to ensure that nothing has changed with your re-entry plans or the documents required. You can also consult with an Immigration Attorney if you have concerns about your travel. Some websites to check include:

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services: <https://www.uscis.gov/>

United States Customs and Border Protection: <https://www.cbp.gov/>

Department of Homeland Security: <https://www.dhs.gov/>

American Immigration Lawyers Association: www.aila.org

If you have been arrested and/or charged with ANY crime here in the U.S., including both felonies and misdemeanors (such as a DUI), we recommend that you seek **legal** advice before attempting any overseas travel as you may likely be denied re-entry. We highly discourage travel even for students whose criminal record has been expunged unless they have received legal review, advice and clearance.