

Curricular Practical Training FAQ

Q: When can I start working?

A: Students may only begin working *after they have received the Curricular Practical Training endorsement on your I-20*. Any work that takes place before or after the CPT End Date indicated on the form I-20 is considered unauthorized employment and grounds for termination of their F1 status.

Q: Do I need to apply for a U.S. Social Security Number for curricular practical training?

A: Students who do not yet have a Social Security Number will need to apply for one upon their approval of CPT Employment. Once they have received a valid I-20 that indicates the CPT authorization on the 3rd page, they may begin applying for an SSN with their local Social Security Administration Office.

Q: Can I work for different employers?

A: No. Students are not eligible to change employers while on CPT Employment. If a student must change their employer to meet the requirements of their degree plan or program, they must apply for CPT Employment and submit the required paperwork for that employment/internship offer.

Q. Can I “extend” my CPT Employment?

A. Students who require additional periods of CPT Employment must submit a new CPT Application packet to OISSS for review and approval. This includes the completed, signed Form [ISSS-130](#), new/updated **letter from employer** and **proof of course registration**.

Q: Will the time spent working on CPT affect the time that I receive for OPT?

Students who complete 12 months or more of *full-time* CPT are not eligible to apply for OPT.

Periods of part-time CPT do not count towards the 12 month limit of full-time CPT.

Q: Can I apply for CPT Employment if I just want work experience?

A: No. Although students will gain valuable work experience while performing CPT Employment, this is NOT the main purpose of CPT. CPT Employment must be an integral part of a student’s degree program. It must be a **required** for graduation or **earning credit** for the degree program.

Students who are looking for work experience are encouraged to apply for OPT Employment, especially if they are graduating soon, or only left with a Research Project, Thesis or Dissertation to complete.

Q. I’m graduating this semester and this company really wants me to start work right away. Can I work under CPT and work up until I receive my OPT authorization from USCIS.

A. No. CPT can only occur as part of a course. Students must prove that a professor is assigning a grade for this work, and that it is an integral part of their curriculum. CPT Employment must **NOT** exceed the end of the associated course or a student’s defense for Research Project, Thesis or Dissertation.

CPT is NOT for the purpose of facilitating employment.