



STEM OPT Reporting Resource Guide

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Reporting Requirements

Students participating in the STEM Extension of OPT have several reporting requirements. Listed below are the most common types of reporting situations and how students can report while participating in STEM OPT:

ACTION	WHEN	HOW
Change of Address or Phone Number	Update within 10 days of change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update Immigration Reporting Address and/or preferred phone number in ConnectCarolina 2. Update the SEVP Portal
Change of Email Address	Update within 10 days of change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update preferred email address in ConnectCarolina <p>Note: Changing your email address will update the email address used to access the SEVP Portal</p>
Change in Legal Name	Update within 10 days of change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit a scanned copy of your passport ID page listing your updated legal name to your International Student Advisor
Beginning New Employment with an Employer	Update within 10 days of beginning employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and submit OPT Employment Reporting Form 2. Complete and submit a new Form I-983 for your new employer
Ending Employment with an Employer	Update within 10 days of ending employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and submit OPT Employment Reporting Form 2. Submit a signed self-evaluation (Page 5 of Form I-983) for your former employer.
Changes to Worksite Location	Update within 10 days of moving worksites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and submit OPT Employment Reporting Form 2. Complete and submit an updated Form I-983.
Six-Month Validation Report	Due every 6 months during STEM OPT period	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and submit STEM OPT Validation Report Form
Annual Self-Evaluation	Due at the 12-month and 24-month mark of STEM OPT period	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and submit a signed self-evaluation (Page 5 of Form I-983) along with STEM OPT Validation Report Form.
Materials Changes to the Form I-983	As soon as possible , unless one of the employment changes listed above	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and submit an updated Form I-983.
Change of Status	Notify ISSS within 10 days of the change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit Form I-797 approval notice or a copy of your latest Form I-94, showing your new status and its effective date
Formal Departure from U.S. before end of STEM OPT	Notify ISSS within 10 days of departure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and submit the International Student Departure Notice 2. Complete and submit the OPT Employment Reporting Form, along with a completed self-evaluation (Page 5 of Form I-983), if you were working.

SEVP Portal

The SEVP Portal is a tool created and managed by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) that allows F-1 students participating in the STEM extension of OPT to view and report certain information in their F-1 SEVIS record. Any information updated in the SEVP Portal is immediately sent to the student's SEVIS record and becomes a permanent part of the student's immigration record with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Information Reported Through the SEVP Portal

The SEVP Portal allows students to view and report the following information:

- Physical Home Address
- Mailing Address
- Telephone Number

The following items are fields within the SEVP Portal that require either a new Form I-983 or a completed self-evaluation, therefore, although these fields may be edited for existing employers in the SEVP Portal, students should submit an [OPT Employment Reporting Form](#) to have these fields updated by their [International Student Advisor](#):

- Employer Name
- Employer Address
- Job Title
- Supervisor Name and Contact Information
- Full/Part-Time work indicators
- Employment End Date
- Relation to Field of Study

Changes to Email Address

Students are permitted to change the email address used to access their SEVP Portal account. In order to update the email address used to access the SEVP Portal, students must log into ConnectCarolina and update their preferred email address. Once updated, ISSS will report the new email address to SEVIS. Several days after the information is updated in SEVIS, the student will receive two emails (one to their previous email address and one to the new email address). The emails will provide instructions on how to activate or reset a portal account using the new email address.

SEVP Portal Resources

The following resources are provided by SEVP to assist students with navigating the SEVP portal:

1. [SEVP Portal Help Hub](#)
2. [SEVP Portal User Guide](#)

Form I-983

Students participating in STEM OPT are required to complete a Form I-983 Training Plan for each STEM employer. The training plan is a living document and should be updated whenever there are material changes to the document.

Follow the Form I-983 Instructions

When completing the Form I-983, students should take special note of the [Form I-983 instructions](#). Students and their employers should follow these instructions carefully, to ensure that their Form I-983 meets all requirements.

Common Errors on the Form I-983

Below are a list of fields that are often incorrectly completed on the Form I-983 and the appropriate item that should be indicated in that respective field:

Section 1

- **Name of School Recommending STEM OPT:** Please list the school name as it appears on the Form I-20 under the section “School Information.”
- **SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT:** This code is found on the Form I-20 under “School Information.”
- **Based on Prior Degree?:** Check “Yes” if your STEM OPT participation is based on a previously-obtained STEM degree, and is not the same degree upon which your current Post-Completion OPT was granted. Check “No” if your STEM OPT participation is based on our most recently obtained degree, and that is the degree upon which your current Post-Completion OPT is based.
- **Employment Authorization Number:** This is the USCIS #, as listed on your post-completion OPT EAD.

Section 3

- **Start Date of Employment:** If you will continue working for the same employer as your employer on Post-Completion OPT, then indicate the start of the STEM OPT period as the Start Date of Employment. If this is a new employer during the STEM OPT period, then indicate your actual start date with the employer.

Section 4

- **Signature of Employer Official with Signatory Authority (Sign in Ink):** The signature must be an ink signature and may not be an electronic or typed signature.

Section 5

- **Site Address:** Enter the exact and complete address for where the STEM practical training will take place. This address should contain any relevant suite or building names/numbers and match the address reporting on the [OPT Employment Reporting Form](#).
- **Goals and Objectives:** Students and employers must provide **all** 3 items in this field:
 1. Describe the specific skills, knowledge, and techniques the student will learn or apply
 2. How the student will achieve the goals set out for his or her training
 3. The training curriculum including the timeline.

Section 6

- **Signature of Employer Official with Signatory Authority (Sign in Ink):** The signature must be an ink signature and may not be an electronic or typed signature.

Evaluation on Student Progress

Students are required to complete an annual self-evaluation during the STEM OPT period and provide a completed self-evaluation whenever they end employment with an employer. **Students submitting an initial request for STEM OPT, must leave the evaluation page blank.**

- **Range of Evaluation Dates:** These fields are completed differently based on the student’s circumstance.
 - Submission of Self-Evaluation for 12-month STEM report:
 - **From:** STEM OPT period start date, or your employment start date, whichever is later.
 - **To:** 12-months after your STEM OPT start date minus one day.
 - Submission of Self-Evaluation for 24-month STEM report:
 - **From:** 12 months after the STEM OPT start date, or your employment start date, whichever is later.
 - **To:** Last date of STEM OPT Period.
 - Submission of Final Self-Evaluation when ending employment prior to the end of the STEM OPT period:
 - **From:** STEM OPT period start date or your employment start date, whichever is later. This date may vary if you’ve previously submitted a 12-month self-evaluation.
 - **To:** Last day of employment

- **Signature of Employer Official with Signatory Authority (Sign in Ink):** The individual signing the evaluation must be the same individual who signed Section 6 of your latest Form I-983. The signature must be an ink signature and may not be an electronic or typed signature.

Material Changes to the Form I-983

Employers and students participating in STEM OPT are required to submit a new Form I-983 whenever there are material changes to the information outlined in the training plan. Material changes include, but are not limited to:

- Change in worksite location
- Any change of the employer's Employer Identification Number, (i.e., the company's Federal Tax ID number) resulting from a change in the employer's ownership or structure.
- Any reduction in student compensation that is not tied to a reduction in hours worked.
- Any significant decrease in hours per week that a student engages in a STEM training opportunity.
- Changes to the employer's commitments or student's learning objectives as documented on the Form I-983.

Students should submit an updated Form I-983 to reflect materials changes as soon as possible, once the change occurs. Changes to worksite locations must be reported to ISSS through a new Form I-983 and completed [OPT Employment Reporting Form](#) **within 10 days** of relocating.

Tips on Reporting OPT Employment

Reporting Employment Location

Students are required to report their employment address. When reporting this information on the [OPT Employment Reporting Form](#), students must indicate their **physical location of work** and the reported address must match the worksite listed in section 5 of the Form I-983.

Changing Worksites for the Same Employer

Students should update their worksite location only after they've begun working at the new site. Student must report their new worksite location by submitting a new Form I-983 and completed [OPT Employment Reporting Form](#) to ISSS **within 10 days** of beginning work at the new location.

Establishing a Direct Relationship between Employment and Major Area of Study

Students on OPT are required to explain how their job is directly related to their degree/field of study which should be articulated on the [OPT Employment Reporting Form](#). Below are a few examples provided by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) to describe the relationship in detail:

1. **Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering:** I work full time as an Electrical Engineer at ABC Corp., a government contractor. In my job, I analyze client requirements for electrical systems and provide them with cost estimates of such systems. My work requires understanding of electrical circuit theory, which I studied in-depth at the University of ABC.
2. **Bachelor's degree in Business:** I work full time as a Loan Officer at a mortgage company, Happy Homes, where I meet with clients and evaluate, authorize and recommend approval of loan applications. On a daily basis, I use the knowledge I gained in my credit analysis, sales and marketing classes that I took as part of my major program of study.
3. **Master's degree in Music:** I am working at a hospital playing the harp in patient rooms. I also conduct hands-on harp beginner workshops for long-term patients. On average, I work at the hospital 35 hours a week. My duties directly utilize the skills and knowledge I acquired from my coursework and degree in music therapy.

4. **PhD in Computer Science:** I am employed as a Computer and Information Research Scientist at ABC Research Institute. I work as part of a team of scientists and engineers that designs experiments to test the operation of various software systems. My work builds on research in complex algorithms and machine learning, which I studied as part of my dissertation.

5. **Master's degree in Kinesiology:** I am working 25 hours a week in a health food store as a consultant for Self-Made Inc., designing and teaching exercise classes that are incorporated into a customer's overall nutrition and exercise plan. My designs and customer instruction draw upon my studies and classwork in exercise therapy and physical reconditioning.