

EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

On-Campus Employment

F-1 students may work in any on-campus job (when the payment is from the university). Such work is limited to 20 hrs/wk during the semester. Full time (anything more than 20 hrs/wk) is permitted during vacation periods. No special work permission is needed to begin working. Once a student graduates, s/he is no longer authorized for on-campus employment. If a student is offered a job on campus after graduation, he or she can only work based on practical training work authorization.

Off-Campus Employment

F-1 students must have been in valid F-1 status for at least nine months before obtaining authorization to work off-campus. Work authorization must be recommended by the International Coordinator and in some cases, approved by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). Students must have approval before working off-campus. The types of off-campus work authorization for F-1 students include:

Practical Training

This type of work authorization allows a student to accept employment in the field of study. The two types of Practical Training that can be considered by an F-1 student include the following:

Curricular Practical Training. This can be used only before the student completes his or her study program and ONLY IF the employment is sponsored by Coppin as an integral part of the student's academic program.

Optional Practical Training. This type of authorization requires an application to the USCIS after approval from the Coordinator for International Student Services. The process can take three months or more to issue the work authorization permit. There is a limit of 12 months of full time Optional Practical Training. Some students can extend their OPT with **STEM Extension OPT**.

Economic necessity

If a student shows compelling evidence of unanticipated financial need, the student may be eligible for this type of work authorization. The USCIS applies these standards in a very strict manner, and insists on documented proof of severe and unexpected economic necessity. If permission is granted, students are allowed part-time work during the academic year (not to exceed 20 hrs/wk) and full-time work during the summer and other vacation periods. See and Coordinator in the International Office if you feel you qualify for this type of work authorization.

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is a type of off-campus work permission for F-1 international students who want to gain experience in their fields of study.

Eligibility Requirements

To obtain CPT, a student must:

- be in valid F-1 immigration status for at least two semesters (except students who must work as a requirement for their degree)
- secure a job offer related to the student's field of study
- obtain CPT authorization BEFORE beginning employment; authorization cannot be post-dated. Remember, it takes three business days to authorize your CPT.
- be registered for classes at Coppin State; CPT cannot be used when a graduate student is in "filing fee status."

The International student coordinator grants permission for CPT after establishing the student's eligibility and reviewing the application materials (see reverse for application procedures). The authorization is granted by issuing a new I-20 for the student with the employer's information notated on page three of the document. After the application for CPT is submitted to Coppin's International Office, the new I-20 is issued within three business days. The I-20 is shown to the employer as evidence of work authorization.

There is no limit to the amount of CPT a student is eligible for. However, if 12 months or more of **full-time** CPT is used, a student forfeits **Optional Practical Training** eligibility. Accrual of part-time CPT does not affect eligibility for OPT.

Authorization can be for full-time or part-time employment, depending on the academic department's requirement.

Course Credit

CPT may be authorized for students who enroll in a course that requires employment to earn a grade, or a course where students design their own research project based on the employment. Enrollment in the course must be concurrent with the employment.

Authorization will be granted on a semester-only basis. However, if a student wishes to work for a period longer than the last day of the semester, s/he must enroll in the next available semester before authorization can be extended beyond the current term.

Fall and Spring CPT

Employment is limited to part-time (20 hrs/week or less) during the Fall and Spring semesters. However, Graduate students who have advanced to candidacy are eligible for full-time employment during the semester as long as the employment is integral to their degree program and is stated as such in a letter of support from the academic department.

Summer CPT

Full-time (20 hours or more per week) employment is allowed for all continuing students in the summer. **If summer is the first or final semester of a student's degree program, CPT is limited to 20 hours per week.** Check with the sponsoring faculty member to determine the number of units required. Authorization can be granted from the day after spring semester officially ends up to the last day of the summer (day before classes begin). Some students may need to obtain a *course code* from their academic Advisor to be able to add Independent Study units into their Summer enrollment.

Application Process

1. Complete the **CPT Application Form**.
2. Enroll in the appropriate course as listed above, if you will receive course credit for CPT.
3. Submit the Academic Department Recommendation form (attached to **CPT Application Form**) to your academic Advisor for completion.
(Undergraduates= Department Advisor / Graduates = Faculty Advisor). Make sure the form is signed and dated.
4. Submit the above items along with proof of course enrollment (only if you will receive course credit) to Coppin International Office.
5. Pick up your new I-20 at the Coppin International Office three business days after submitting your application.

Extensions

To extend CPT beyond the current semester, complete above steps 1-5 again. An extension of CPT authorization cannot be granted until proof of enrollment is available. Students who are working in the fall term and wish to extend through winter break into the spring term should consult with the international coordinator.