



Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

What is Curricular Practical Training (CPT)?

CPT is type of work permission given for employment which is an integral part of a student's established curriculum. This includes alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school. To be considered CPT, the position must be related to your major field of study and must also be an essential part of your curriculum. Even if your curriculum does not require an internship course, you must receive academic credit for the employment experience. The employment must result in the award of at least one course credit for an independent study. *You must be registered for the course during the period that you request the CPT authorization.*

When can I apply for Curricular Practical Training?

You must be a full-time student for at least one academic year (2 semesters) before you can apply for CPT.

Do I need to have a job offer to apply for Curricular Practical Training?

Yes, you do. You cannot apply for CPT unless you have a job offer.

How many hours a week can I work?

CPT may be authorized on a part-time or full-time basis. Part-time employment is 20 hours per week or less. Anything over 20 hours per week is considered full-time. Please note that:

- Only part-time CPT will be authorized during the academic year.
- During the summer, you can apply for full-time CPT.
- If you work 12 months or more of full-time CPT, you will not be eligible for OPT.
- Part-time CPT does not affect your OPT.
- If you are working part-time during the academic year, you must still be enrolled as a full-time student to maintain your F-1 status.

What if my department doesn't offer an internship, practicum, or independent study credit?

If you cannot receive credit for employment, then you are not eligible for CPT. Not every F-1 student will be able to have this work permission opportunity because it is directly related to your curriculum.

How do I apply for Curricular Practical Training?

Bring the following documents to the Office of International Student Services (ISS):

- A letter from your prospective employer.
 - It must be on company letterhead with the company's address and phone number.
 - It should include your job title, the start and end dates of your employment, the number of hours you will work each week, and a brief description of your responsibilities.
- A letter or email confirmation from your department giving you CPT permission
- Proof of your course registration

What happens next?

An advisor at ISS will confirm your eligibility for CPT, update your SEVIS record, and print a new I-20 with CPT authorization for the specified company. You may begin work on the start date noted by ISS. This work permission does not require approval from USCIS. You may not continue employment beyond the authorized end date listed on your I-20 *unless* you apply for and are granted an extension of your work permission.

Can I change employers while working on Curricular Practical Training?

No. CPT is authorized for a specific employer. You may only work for the company indicated on your I-20. If you want to change jobs, you must apply for CPT again and get a new approval at ISS.

What else do I need to know?

Taxes

In general, F-1 students who have been in the U.S. less than six calendar years are exempt from social security (FICA) and Medicare taxes. Please bring this to the attention of your employer because many employers are not familiar with this provision of the tax laws. F-1 students are subject to all other taxes that may apply: federal, state and local. Please read the *IRS Publication 519: U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens*: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p519.pdf>

Social Security

You need a Social Security Number to work in the United States. You should apply for one at a local Social Security Administration office. Please visit ISS for more information.

Caution

It is your responsibility to comply with all immigration regulations that apply to F-1 students. Working without the proper authorization is a serious violation of your status. Prior to accepting any employment in the U.S., we urge you to consult with the Office of International Students and Scholars.