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Reminder - Extension of Post Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) and F-1 Status for Eligible Students under the H-1B Cap-Gap Regulations

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Submitted by Chief Editor on Jun 20th 2018

ALERT: Although F-1 nonimmigrant students with degrees in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) may apply for a [24-month extension](#) ^[2] of their post-completion OPT employment authorization, our policies regarding the cap-gap extension remain the same. An F-1 student who is the beneficiary of an H-1B petition and request for change of status that is filed on time may have his or her F-1 status and any current employment authorization extended until the first day of the new fiscal year.

The "cap-gap" period starts when an F-1 student's status and work authorization expires and, unless terminated, ends on October 1, the required start date of their approved H-1B employment

Cap-gap occurs because an employer may not file, and USCIS may not accept, an H-1B petition submitted more than six months in advance of the date of actual need for the beneficiary's services or training. As a result, the earliest date that an employer can file an H-1B cap-subject petition is April 1 for the following fiscal year, which starts October 1. If USCIS approves the H-1B petition and the accompanying change of status request, the earliest date that the student may start the approved H-1B employment is October 1.

For more information visit [click here](#) ^[3] .

Team Notes:

Nonimmigrant Visas:

[F-1 Visa](#) ^[4]

[STEM](#) ^[5]

[H-1 Visa](#) ^[6]

[General Nonimmigrant Visa](#) ^[7]

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Links:

[1] <https://immigration.com/news/reminder-extension-post-completion-optional-practical-training-opt-and-f-1-status-eligible>

1-status-eligible

[2] <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/stem-opt>

[3] <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-workers/h-1b-specialty-occupations-and-fashion-models/extension-post-completion-optional-practical-training-opt-and-f-1-status-eligible-students-under-h-1b-cap-gap-regulations>

[4] <https://immigration.com/visa/nonimmigrant-visas/f-visa/f-1-visa>

[5] <https://immigration.com/visa/nonimmigrant-visas/f-visa/stem>

[6] <https://immigration.com/visa/nonimmigrant-visas/h-visa/h-1-visa>

[7] <https://immigration.com/visa/nonimmigrant-visas/general-nonimmigrant-visa>