



Employment Authorization Card (EAD)

The EAD is proof that Immigration has approved your work permission under OPT. Keep the card with your passport, I-20 and other important documents. You will need the EAD only when entering the U.S. after

Travel

YES - You may travel while on OPT! But, after graduation, you must be prepared to show an official employment letter or letter of request for an interview to an Immigration officer upon reentry, if asked to do so. Beware of travel restrictions and US visa processing issues!

Documents for Travel While on OPT:

I-20 *

valid passport

valid F-1 visa (Canadian citizens are exempt from this requirement)

EAD **

employment letter ***

* You must travel with the I-20 that shows the requested OPT dates. Students on OPT must have a new signature on the I-20 _____

** The EAD includes a notation that says, "Not valid for reentry." This means that the EAD alone is not enough documentation for your reentry to the U.S. If you travel, you must have the following documentation with you: I-20, valid passport, valid F-1 visa stamp, EAD, employment letter.

*** Letter of Employment / Letter of Request for Interview:

There are no guidelines for this letter other than it should be on business letterhead paper (recommended). And, although Immigration officials have been instructed to request a letter of employment from F-1 visa holders entering the U.S. while on OPT, there is no guarantee that you will be asked to present a letter. As your International Advisor, I recommend that you have a letter ready, just in case. Keep the letter simple; include your name, the client (if freelance/contract work) or employer name, the start date of the employment (be sure the start date is AFTER the start date of your authorized OPT period), and a one- or two-sentence description of the work to be done.

Beware of any travel restrictions into the US. Additionally, visa processing at US consulates may be suspended.

