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OPT Travel Guidelines

Current regulations and procedures for re-entry if you are traveling outside the U.S.

It is your responsibility to ensure all your documents are in order.

Documents required for approved and pending OPT applicants

- Currently awaiting decision from USCIS on your OPT application
 - Valid Passport
 - Valid Visa
 - I-797c Receipt of your application
 - Proof you are job searching could be required – e-mail hard copy of job interview, etc.
 - I-20 issued for OPT **with travel endorsement on page 2 within 6 months**
 - **ATTENTION** - If your EAD card is issued while you are outside the U.S. **you may be denied entry.**
- In possession of your EAD (Employment Authorization Document) with a future start date
 - Valid Passport
 - Valid Visa
 - I-20 issued for OPT **signed within the last 6 months**
 - EAD card
 - Job offer letter confirming employment.
- Currently employed on OPT
 - Valid Passport
 - Valid Visa
 - I-20 issued for OPT **signed within the last 6 months**
 - EAD card
 - Letter authorizing vacation from your employer

Tips for re-entry at Customs and Immigration:

Regardless of where you are in the process, initially only give the customs officer your passport and I-20. Hopefully, they will know about OPT and won't ask you for any documents. However, if they notice that you have completed your program, they may ask why you are returning. At that point, give the officer your supporting documentation and indicate you are on 'Optional Practical Training' and are returning to start your new job, continuing your job search, or interviewing, whichever applies to you.

Remember that U.S. Customs and Border Patrol has the final say as to whether you are eligible to re-enter the U.S. while on OPT. Ensure all of your documents (including a valid I-20 signed with in the last 6 months) are in order.