OPT ENDING RESOURCES

Your active F-1 status ends and your 60-day grace period begins on your OPT end date. As the end of your OPT work authorization approaches, therefore, it is important to understand your rights and responsibilities to maintain or end your legal status in the US and to make the most of your work experience.

End of F-1 Status Options

At the end of your OPT work authorization period, you are allowed to remain in the US for 60 days, called your grace period. Before your grace period expires, you may take one of the following actions:

- Transfer to another academic program or school. You must be admitted to the new program or school and receive a new I-20 before your grace period ends.
- Apply to USCIS to change your immigration status. Applications are subject to USCIS approval and must be received by USCIS before your grace period ends. Change of status applications can take several months to approve/deny. If denied, you will be required to depart the country immediately.
- Depart the country. If you will be departing the country before your OPT end date, you should notify OISP of your departure date to update your SEVIS record. This is particularly important if you plan to re-enter the US in the future.

Ending Your OPT Employment

Remember that you OPT employment was an opportunity to develop practical experience and skills in your field of study – be sure to make the end of your OPT period an opportunity to continue growing professionally. If you have not already, discuss options to remain employed or maintain a relationship with your employer and colleagues. Give your employer sufficient notice that you will be leaving the organization; usually two or more weeks is expected but can vary from employer to employer. Update your resume, leveraging your US experience as appropriate.

Preparing for Departure

When planning to depart the country, there are multiple items to consider, much like when you moved to the US originally. Verify that your departure will be before the end of your grace period and report your departure to OISP. Consider details such as: driver’s license expiration date (usually the same as your OPT end date), paying any outstanding bills, making arrangements to receive security deposits, updating your mailing address, and closing bank accounts. Keep important documents, such as Social Security and EAD cards, in case you return.

Helpful Resources

- Work authorizations: https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/working-us
- Applying to a new Franklin University program: http://www.franklin.edu/getting-started/apply-now
- Transferring to a new school: http://engage.franklin.edu/oisp/files/2012/12/Transfer-Out-Form-1p571ho.pdf
- Updating address and requesting transcripts: https://my.franklin.edu
- Connecting with Franklin University alumni: http://alumni.franklin.edu