



Rensselaer

OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS ON AN F-1 VISA

Practical training is defined as employment directly related to your major areas of study. Students in F-1 status must have been enrolled full-time for one academic year before becoming eligible for practical training.

A student in F-1 status may apply for optional practical training:

- During annual vacation and at other times when school is not in session and if the student is currently enrolled and eligible, and intends to register for the next semester. The practical training may be full or part-time.
- When school is in session, provided that practical training does not exceed 20 hours per week.
- After completion of all requirements for the degree (excluding thesis or dissertation). The practical training must be full-time.
- After completion of the course of study.

Optional practical training is limited to a total of 12 months. Part-time optional practical training, 20 hours per week or less, shall be deducted from the available optional practical training at one-half the full-time rate (but you have to be registered full-time).

A student may be authorized for an additional 12 months of practical training when he/she changes to and completes a higher level of education. (Example: M.S. and then Ph.D.)

Any optional practical training granted prior to completion of studies shall be deducted from the amount of practical training available after graduation. Therefore, you must carefully consider your goals before applying for optional practical training.

Optional practical training is recommended by the ISSS Office and authorized by the DHS. This means that you must send in your application to DHS and pay a \$340.00 fee to obtain your employment authorization document (EAD).

If the optional practical training is to begin following completion of a degree, application can be made 90 days before completion of a degree or 60 days after graduation. During this period, you must obtain both the recommendations from the ISSS Office and the employment authorization documents (EAD) from the DHS.

If you are traveling outside the US while on practical training you will need your EAD Card and a valid letter of employment **PRIOR** to reentering the US

Employment may not commence until you have obtained your EAD.

The following documents are to be submitted to the ISSS Office to process an application for optional practical training:

1. Optional Practical Training recommendation form (attached).
2. All pages of every I-20 you have been issued (originals, not photocopies)
3. Completed I-765
4. Photocopy of I-94 (both sides) – 2 copies of each
5. Photocopy of identifying pages in passport – 2 copies of each
 - Visa stamp page
 - Picture page with personal information.
6. Photocopy of previous EAD if you have one (both sides) – 2 copies of each
7. Two photos (see instructions).

The ISSS Office will instruct the student when he/she should return to the office to pick up the documents to send to Immigration.

All outstanding bills must be paid before your application will be processed.

Immigration will send your EAD card to the address that you put on the form I-765.

Requirements for the **photo** for the EAD card:

1. Full frontal face position, no distracting shadows on the face or background.
2. Have a “natural expression” – this means “neutral (non-smiling) with mouth closed. A smile with closed jaw if allowed but is not preferred”.
3. Do not wear any headpiece unless “worn daily for religious purposes;” but “no item or attire should cover or obscure any part of the face”.
4. It is recommended that you do not wear large earrings, eyeglasses unless “normally used by the subject;” dark or tinted lenses are not acceptable unless (needed) for medical reasons” and a medical certificate may be required.
5. Photograph should be 2 inches by 2 inches (see attached).
6. White or off-white background. Printed on thin photo paper or stock
7. Photographs may not be more than 30 days old at the time of filing this application. All photos must be identical.
8. In color, clear, focused & not retouched, enhanced or softened.
9. Printed with continuous-tone quality; if digitally printed must be produced without visible pixels or dots (“a digital camera with a resolution of 1 mega pixel will be more than adequate”).
10. Head should be centered within the frame, with the captured image from slightly above the top of hair to the middle of the chest; height of head should measure one inch to 1 3/8 inches; with eye height 1 1/8 inches to 1 3/8 inches from the bottom of the photo (see attached).



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Optional Practical Training Request Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Date of Birth: _____

RPI E-mail: _____

RIN (Rensselaer ID Number): _____

Degree Pursuing (circle one): Master's / PHD

Graduate Program: _____

Dates you are requesting for your Optional Practical Training:

Start Date: _____ **End Date:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

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GRADUATE SCHOOL'S RECOMMENDATION FORM FOR F-1 OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

This form provides the information required by the Department of Homeland Security for the granting of employment for practical training to an international student. The Graduate School and the student's Graduate Program Director must complete this entire form and sign it. Questions can be directed to Jane Havis, Assistant Dean of Students x6561. Thank you for your assistance.

STUDENT'S NAME: _____ RIN Number: _____

GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR & PROGRAM: _____

1. When do you anticipate this student completing his or her studies at Rensselaer?
Please fill in date and check one of the following:

_____/_____/_____

- Graduation Date
 Completion of degree requirements but still writing thesis or dissertation

2. Based on the offer letter (attached), is the type of employment experience the student is seeking related to the student's field of study and appropriate to the student's educational level? _____ YES _____ NO

Graduate Program Director's signature

Date

Graduate Program Director's name printed

Phone Number

Dean of Graduate School's Signature

Date

Dean of Graduate School's name printed

Phone Number

PLACES THAT TAKE IMMIGRATION *PHOTOGRAPHS*



Picture People

Crossgates Mall, 2nd Floor
Albany, NY 12203

Phone: (518) 464-0702

Studio 59

59 113th Street
Troy, NY 12182

(by appointment)

Phone: (518) 237-4446

Hot Shots Photo

893 New Loudon Road
Latham, NY 12110

Phone: (518) 783-1215

AAA Hudson Valley

514 Congress Street
Troy, NY 12180

Phone: (518) 426-1000