

Stop

Caution

Go

CASE SCENARIO	WHAT IS MY STATUS?	CAN I TRAVEL?	WHAT DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED FOR TRAVEL?	WHAT LEVEL OF RISK IS INVOLVED FOR RE-ENTRY TO THE US?
Post-Completion OPT application has been submitted to USCIS. The program end date of my I-20 is in the future.	As an enrolled student you are in an F-1 student status until the program end date of your I-20.	Yes, you are still an F-1 student (who is enrolled) because your I-20 ends in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid I-20 signed for travel • Valid F-1 visa • Valid passport • Proof of enrollment • If received, EAD card <p>NOTE: <i>If your visa is nearing its expiration date, you might want to consider renewing it. Renewing a visa while on OPT is risky.</i></p>	Visa issuance and re-entry to the U.S. is at the discretion of the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) immigration officer. The IC cannot guarantee re-entry. However, you can minimize any kind of problems by planning to re-enter the U.S. a few weeks prior to the end date of your I-20.
EAD card is approved*. I have a job offer and I have a letter stating the offer with specific dates.	You are in F-1 OPT student status.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAD card • Valid I-20 signed for travel • Employment Offer Letter on company letterhead. 	You have all the necessary conditions to travel. Entry to the U.S. will be decided by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) immigration officer.
EAD card is approved.* My I-20 program end dates has passed. I don't have a job offer yet.	You are in an extension of your F-1 student status.	Maybe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAD card • Valid I-20 signed for travel • Valid F-1 visa • Valid Passport • Strongly Recommended: Employment Offer Letter on company letterhead. 	You need to be cautious as you do not have a job to return to. Entry to the U.S. will be decided by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) immigration officer.
EAD card is approved. I am currently working. I will be renewing my F-1 visa while I am abroad.	You are in F-1 OPT student status.	Maybe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAD card • Valid I-20 signed for travel • Valid passport • Employment Offer Letter on company letterhead. • Additional documents required for renewing your F-1 visa. 	You need to be cautious. You technically are no longer a student. You are in an extension of your F-1 student visa status. It is up to the discretion of the U.S. Consulate/Embassy where you apply to grant you a student visa.

EAD is approved and currently working on Post-Completion OPT. OPT STEM extension application is pending and my Post-Completion OPT end date is in the future.	You are in F-1 OPT student status.	Maybe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAD card • Valid I-20 signed for travel • Valid F-1 visa • Valid passport • Employment Offer Letter on company letterhead. 	You need to be cautious because you have a pending application with USCIS and are traveling this may cancel your OPT STEM application.
Mailed OPT Post-Completion application to USCIS. The program end date of my I-20 has passed. EAD card <u>not</u> approved and has not been received in the mail.	You are in F-1 OPT pending student status.	No	Travel is not recommended.	Your departure from the U.S. prior to the approval of your EAD card will cancel your OPT application. Returning to the U.S. in F-1 student visa status is not an option.
EAD is approved and currently working on Post-Completion OPT. OPT STEM Extension application is pending and Post-Completion OPT end date is in the past.	You are in F-1 OPT student status.	No	Travel is not recommended.	You need to be cautious because you have a pending application with USCIS and are traveling this may cancel your OPT STEM application.

*If your EAD card is approved and it's being mailed to you, you must wait to receive it and have it physically in your possession. Traveling with the idea that a friend or relative can mail the card to you outside the U.S. is not recommended. Only travel once you have your EAD card in your possession.