Reporting Employment on Optional Practical Training (OPT)

1. **How do I report employment during OPT?**
    You must report employment by doing the following:
    - **You update your SEVP Portal with your employment information:** https://sevp.ice.gov/opt/#/login
      Students on Pre-Completion and STEM Extension OPT do not have this option to update employment.
    AND you must submit an OPT Employment Verification Form via Docusign
    The OPT employment verification form will require information and signature from your supervisor. Students on Post-Completion and STEM Extension OPT must submit this form. STEM Extension OPT holders also have to submit a new I983 for any new employer and a self and final evaluation form from the previous employer.

2. **What is the deadline to report employment?**
    You are required to report employment by updating your SEVP Portal or submitting the OPT Employment Verification form to ISSS within 10 days of starting a job. You will also need to submit an OPT Employment Verification Form and update the SEVP Portal if you change or add employment within **10 days** of the change or addition of employment. In addition, you are responsible for reporting OPT participation every **six months** for the duration of your OPT by submitting the OPT Employment Verification Form via DocuSign, *even if no changes have occurred*.

3. **I am on STEM Extension, when is the I-983 form and self-evaluations due?**
    The I-983 form is due every time you add or switch employers, within 10 days of the change. The self-evaluation as well as the final evaluation is due every time you leave a job and at the one and two year mark after your STEM Extension start date.

4. **Does my supervisor have to sign my OPT verification form?**
    The Employment Verification section should be completed in its entirety by your supervisor. The "Employer's Physical Street Address" is the address of where you physically go to work. **The address cannot be a PO BOX.**

5. **I am employed by a staffing company. How does my supervisor complete this form?**
    If you are employed by a staffing company, the "Name of Employer/Company" should be the name of the staffing company. The address should be that of the "client-site" where you are performing your employment duties. Your supervisor at the client-site should sign the form and provide his/her contact information. The staffing company may also want to retain a copy for their records as well.

6. **How do I complete the OPT verification form if I am self-employed?**
    If you are self-employed, you (the student) would complete the Biographical Data and Employment Verification sections of the form. You would need to check the "Self-Employed" box and write the name of your company, if applicable. For the employer address, you will use the address of the location where you carry out your employment duties.

7. **May I work as a volunteer or unpaid intern during OPT?**
    Employment **does not have to be paid** during Pre or Post-Completion OPT, but the intern/volunteer position should be directly related to your field of study. However, in order for employment to be reported as full-time, you should be employed for more than 20 hours per week.
    Our office recommends that if you engage in unpaid employment while on OPT, you certify that your voluntary employment does not violate any labor laws. Please refer to the United States Department of Labor webpage for additional information -https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm.
    We also recommend you keep records of all employment, as it may be requested by a government agency, especially if you are applying for future immigration benefits.

8. **How do I request a new I-20 with current employment information?**
    You need to submit a Service Request Form to our office to receive an updated I-20. The Service Request Form is available on our webpage: smu.edu/international