

Cornell University

International Services, Office of Global Learning

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Dear prospective employer,

Thank you for considering an international student at Cornell University for a position with your organization. Because most international students hold F-1 student status, they must obtain authorization for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) before engaging in off-campus employment required as part of their academic program. This letter explains what that means for you as an employer, and what we will need from you before the student can begin work.

What is CPT, and why does it require your participation?

Under federal immigration regulations (8 C.F.R. § 214.2(f)(10)(i)), CPT can be authorized only when practical training — an internship, co-op, or practicum — is an integral part of an established curriculum. The Student Exchange and Visitor Program (SEVP) also requires that the training be conducted by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school. In practice, that means Cornell, as the school, must be a signing party to the arrangement, not just the student and the employer. This is what makes CPT different from a standard internship offer.

Recent federal guidance affecting CPT

In August 2026, the SEVP issued new guidance to schools adopting a more restrictive interpretation of when CPT may be authorized and emphasizing that CPT should be used only for bona fide training opportunities that form a part of a student's academic program. As a result, Cornell is asking every CPT employer to sign a short agreement describing the training experience, supervision, and learning objectives, to enable the University to confirm that the position satisfies the student's degree requirements and document both parties' responsibilities.

What we need from you

- Complete and sign the enclosed one-page CPT Placement Agreement, which may serve as the formal job offer (position, dates, hours, compensation, and supervisor).
- Notify Cornell International Services promptly of any material change to the position (e.g., the dates, hours, supervisor, or duties of the position) since CPT authorization is tied to those specific terms.
- Wait for confirmation that CPT has been authorized before the student's start date. A student may not legally begin work before CPT is endorsed on their Form I-20.

What happens next

Once you and the student complete the enclosed agreement, the student's academic advisor and Designated School Official (DSO) will review it to confirm that it satisfies the relevant curricular requirements and to countersign it. If all student eligibility criteria are met, Cornell will then authorize CPT and issue an updated Form I-20 showing the approved dates and employer. The student will share a copy of the I-20 showing CPT work authorization with you before their start date.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to Cornell International Services with any questions about this process.

Sincerely,

International Services, Office of Global Learning, Cornell University

<https://international.globallearning.cornell.edu/get-advice>