Applying for Optional Practical Training & STEM Extension Online

What the Student Needs To Do

1. Tell the International Students and Scholars office that you want to apply for practical training well before graduation (three months or more).
2. Attend the "Practical Training" workshop that is held each semester. This group meeting will provide you with basic information about practical training, eligibility, the application process, etc.
3. Send an email message to the ISS staff to notify them of your requested Optional Practical Training (OPT) start date and to schedule a time to meet with an ISS advisor to pick up your new OPT Form I-20 and to have the ISS advisor review your draft OPT application materials.

4. Prepare your documents by saving a digital copy (.pdf or .jpeg file format) of the following. **Note: an ISS advisor will prepare a new Form I-20 recommending OPT for you once you have notified the ISS office of your requested OPT authorization start date. You cannot file a complete application for OPT with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office without a new Form I-20 .**

   ☐ Your passport photo/information page
   ☐ F-1 visa
   ☐ All previous Form I-20s
   ☐ Most recent I-94, found here: https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/
   ☐ Previous Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card IF YOU HAVE ONE
   ☐ Scan of U.S. size passport photo saved as a .jpeg file. You can get a digital photo at a passport photo shop, or scan a physical photo, but make sure it's a high quality photo. (Tips: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply/photos.html)

5. Go to https://myaccount.uscis.gov. Create a USCIS Online Account and prepare a draft of your online Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization), including uploading the digital documents you have, using the following instructions and screenshots. **Do not submit your Form I-765 application to USCIS before receiving your OPT Form I-20 from ISS staff.**

6. Meet with an ISS advisor to complete your application. Bring the following with you:
   ☐ Laptop (if meeting in person)
   ☐ Credit/debit card or U.S. bank account information (account number and routing number) for paying the Form I-765 filing fee. See current filing fee information here: https://www.uscis.gov/i-765
   ☐ Your non-Lewis & Clark email address. ISS staff needs to enter this in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).
   ☐ **STEM extension only:** Form I-983 (Training Plan for STEM OPT Students). See the guidelines below. Additional information is available on this website: https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students-and-the-form-i-983
   - Section 1: Complete with your information
     - SEVIS School Code of School Recommending STEM OPT: POO214F00012000
     - Designated School Official (DSO) Name and Contact Information: Lisa Kosiewicz Doran, (503) 768-7304, lkosiewiczdoran@lclark.edu
     - Student SEVIS ID No: Found at the top of Page 1 of your Form I-20
     - STEM OPT Requested Period: From: the date following your current OPT end date to one day prior in two years (Example: June 1, 2024 to May 31, 2026)
     - Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code: found in the Major field in the "PROGRAM OF STUDY" section on Page 1 of your Form I-20

  - Employment Authorization Number: USCIS number found on the front of your EAD card
- Section 2: Sign and Date, Print name
- Section 3: Your Employer will complete
- Section 4: Your Employer will complete and sign
- Section 5: You and your Employer will complete
- Section 6: Your Employer will complete and sign
- Evaluation on Student Progress: You and your Employer complete after 12 months of STEM Extension
- Final Evaluation on Student Progress: You and your Employer will complete at the end of your 24-month STEM Extension or within 10 days of when your STEM OPT employment with the Employer ends (whichever event occurs first)

ISS Staff Will

☐ Add OPT/STEM OPT request to student's SEVIS record: Go to "OPT Request" and fill in information. Under Student Remarks, write: "Full time OPT in the field of _____ is recommended, beginning on _____, or from the date of USCIS adjudication, if later." Under Employment Remarks: "Student will look for work in the field of _____."

☐ Be careful to use the correct "Program End Date", i.e., the last day of final exams in the student's last semester.

☐ Update student's email address in SEVIS to personal, non-LC email.

☐ Sign the newly printed Form I-20 on Page 1 (only sign Page 2 if student will be traveling outside the U.S). Make a photocopy of the OPT Form I-20 for the student's file.

☐ Have the student sign Page 1.

☐ Save a digital copy of the signed OPT Form I-20 to upload to online application.

☐ Check the student's draft online Form I-765 application materials to make sure the form has been completed correctly and all required supporting documents have been uploaded.

☐ Remind the student about travel rules and let them know about the SEVP Portal.

☐ Have student print a copy of the Form I-765 from the USCIS portal.

☐ Update Google sheet with date OPT application was submitted.

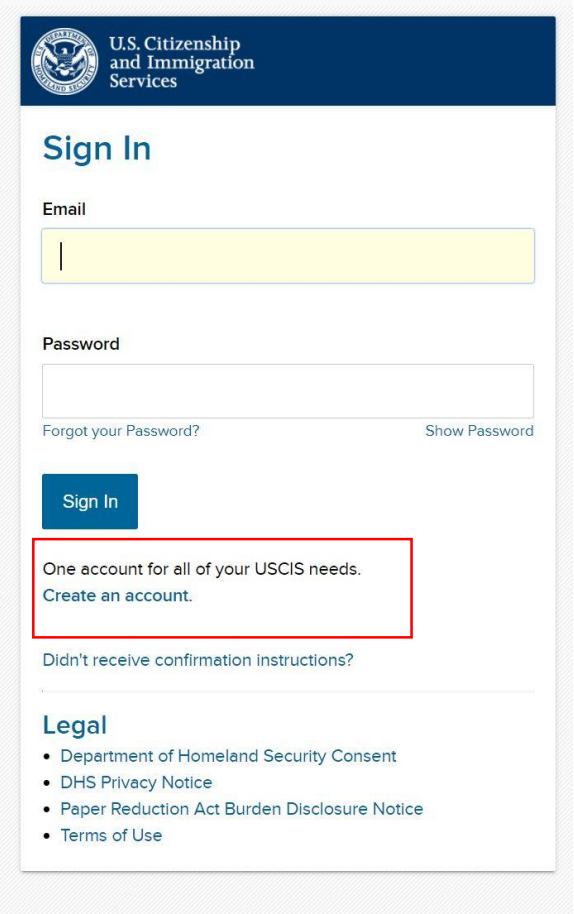
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

OPT Application

I-765 Online Filing Instructions

1. Go to https://myaccount.uscis.gov

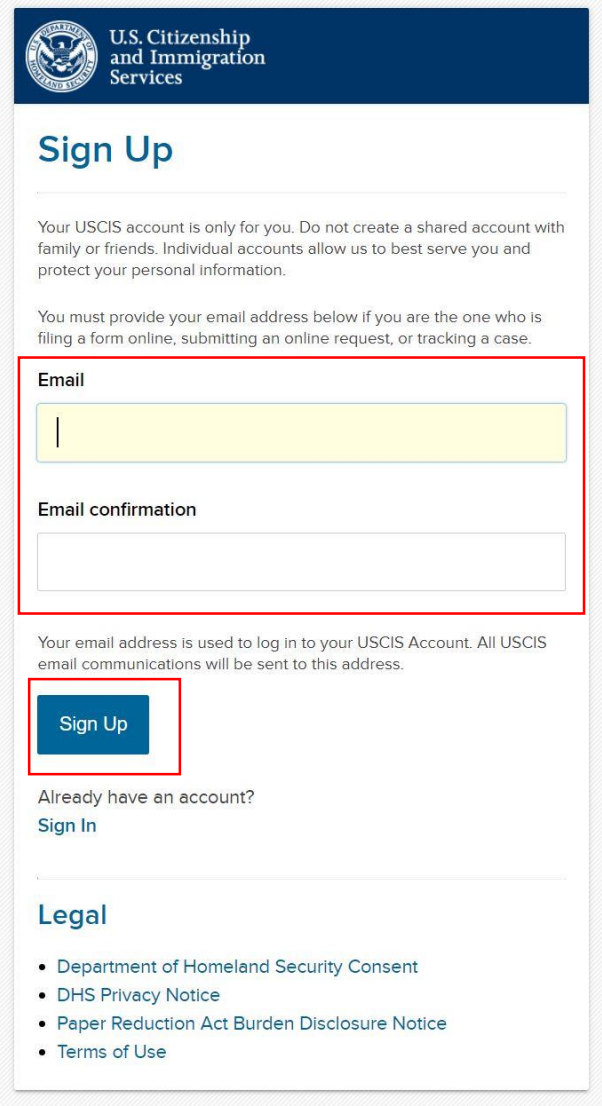
2. Click on “Create an account”



1. Enter your e-mail address

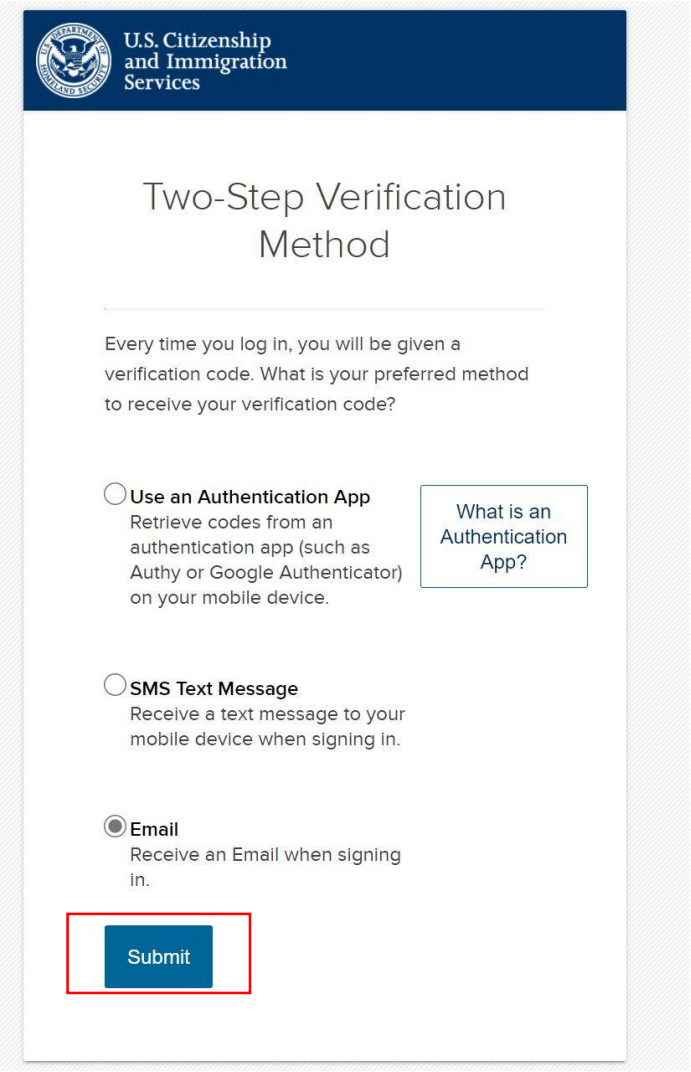
2. Re-enter your e-mail address under “E-mail confirmation”

3. Click “Sign-up”



1. Choose the two-step verification method

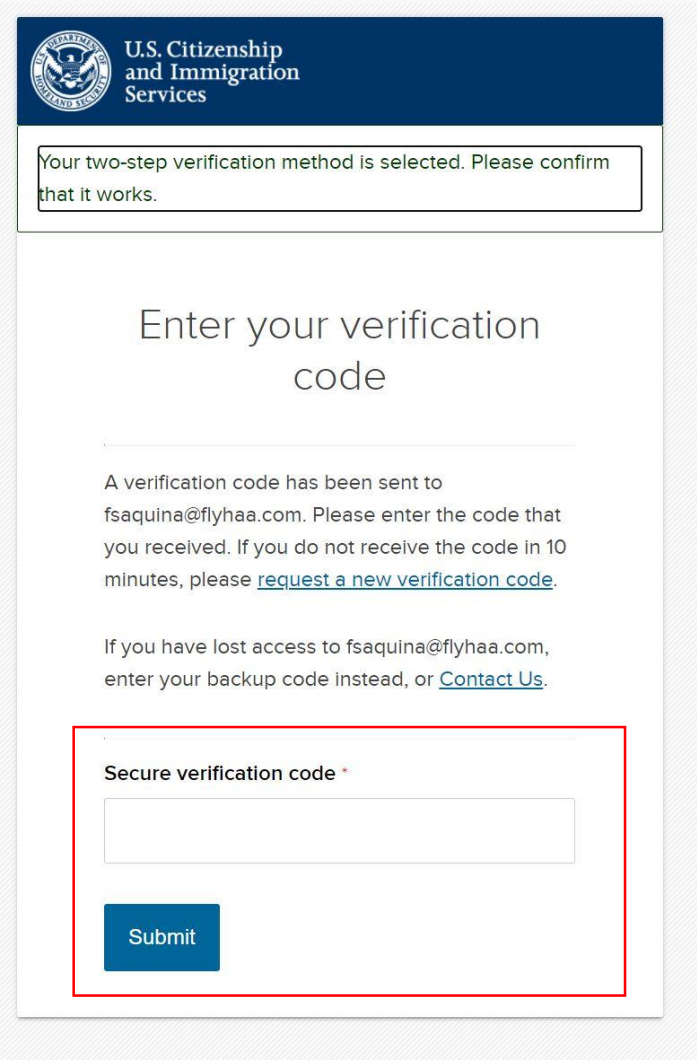
2. Click Submit

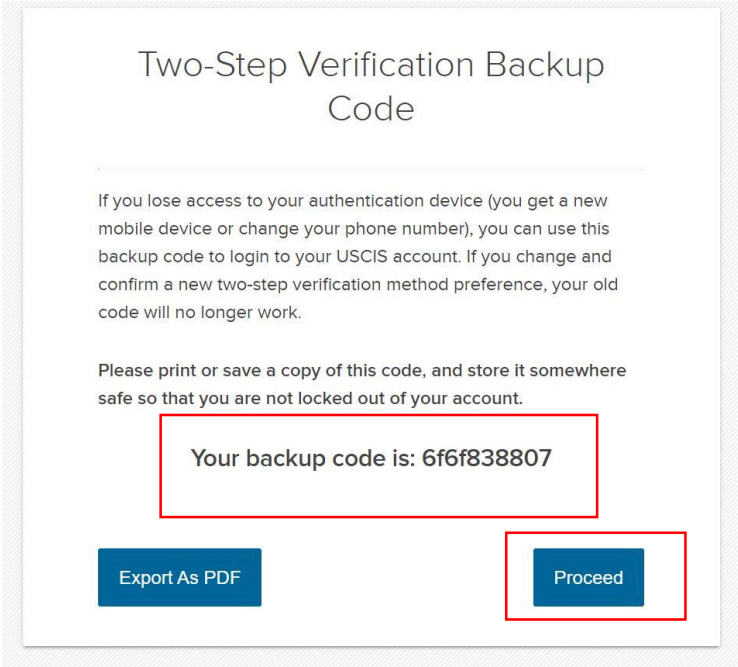


1. Enter your verification code that was sent to the verification method that you chose

2. Click “Submit”

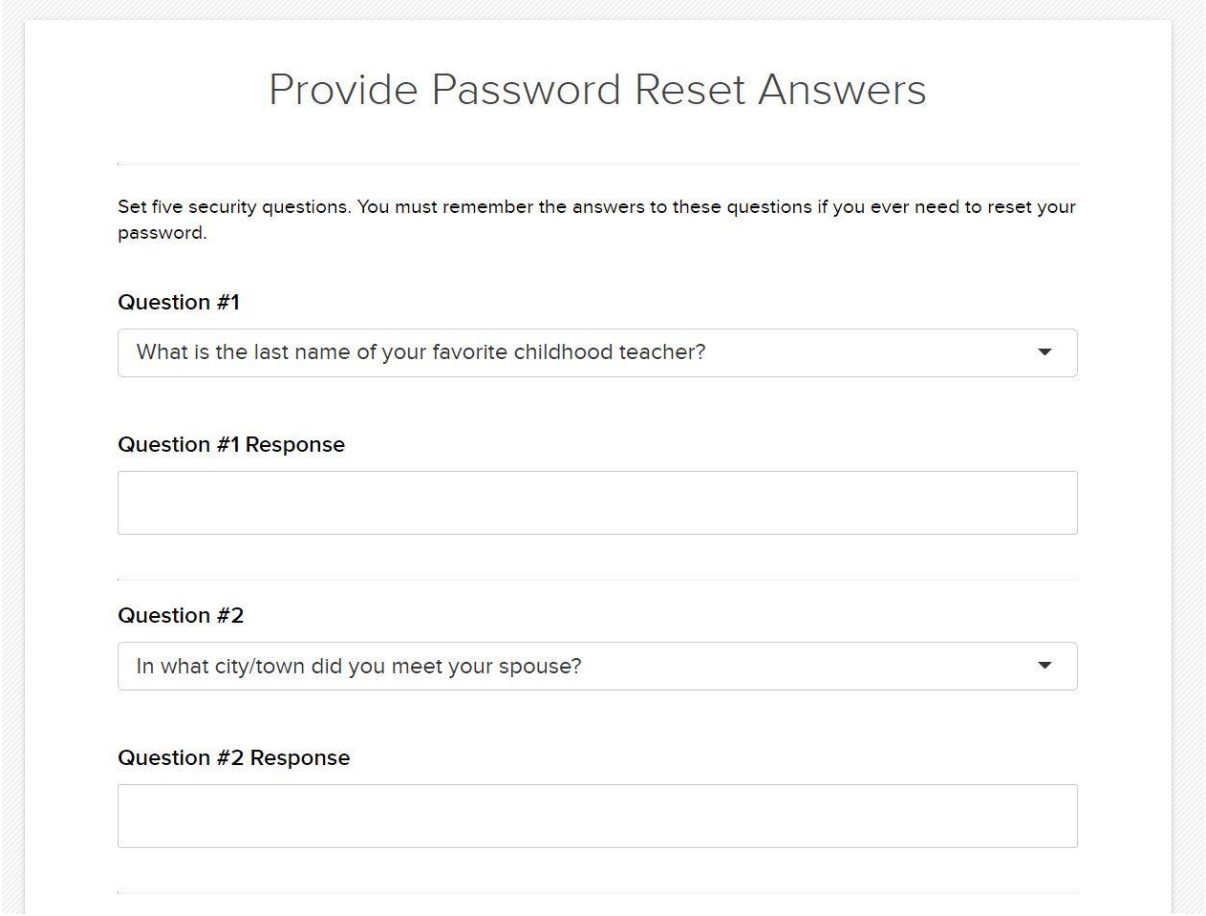
3. On the Two-Step Certification Backup Code, take note on the code and click “proceed”



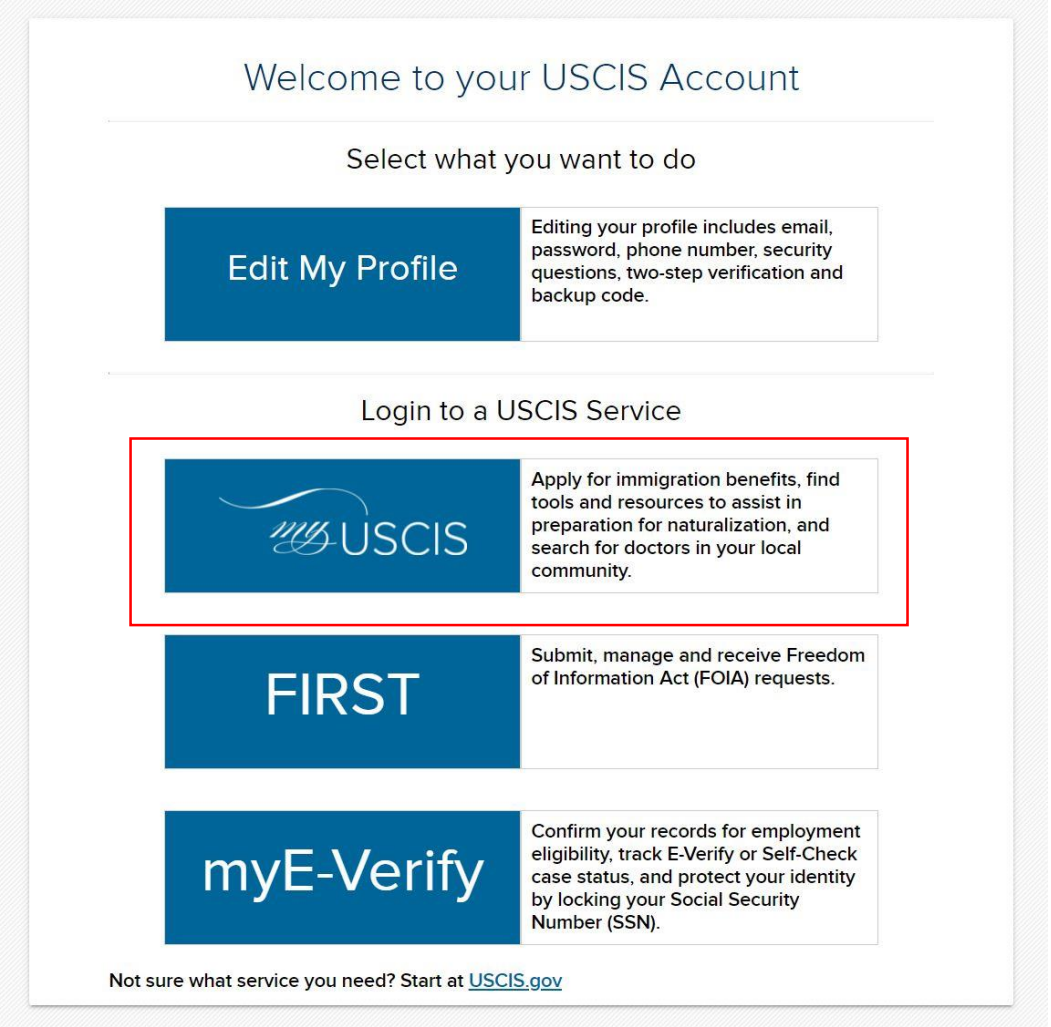


1. Select each question and input the answers on each response column

2. Click “Next” or “Submit” on the bottom

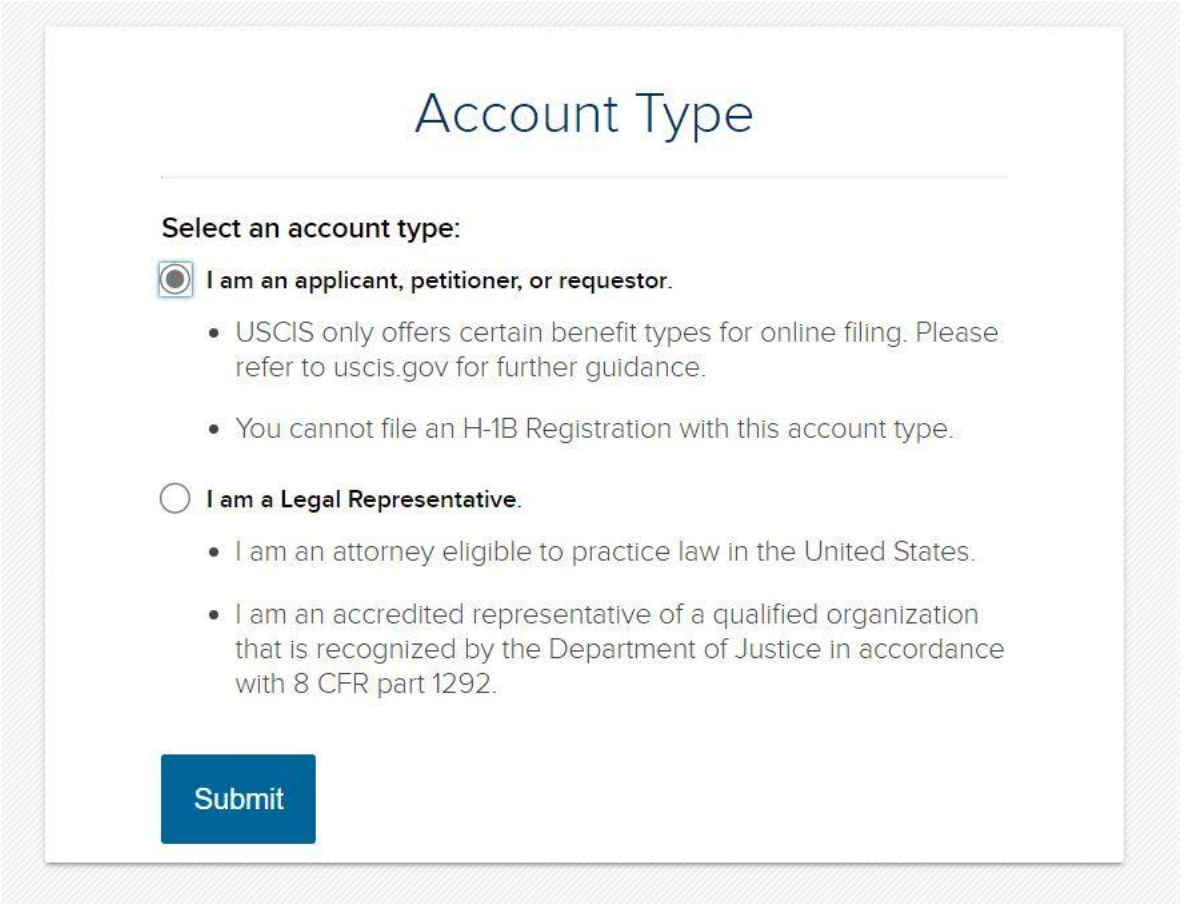


Click on myUSCIS tab to access the application

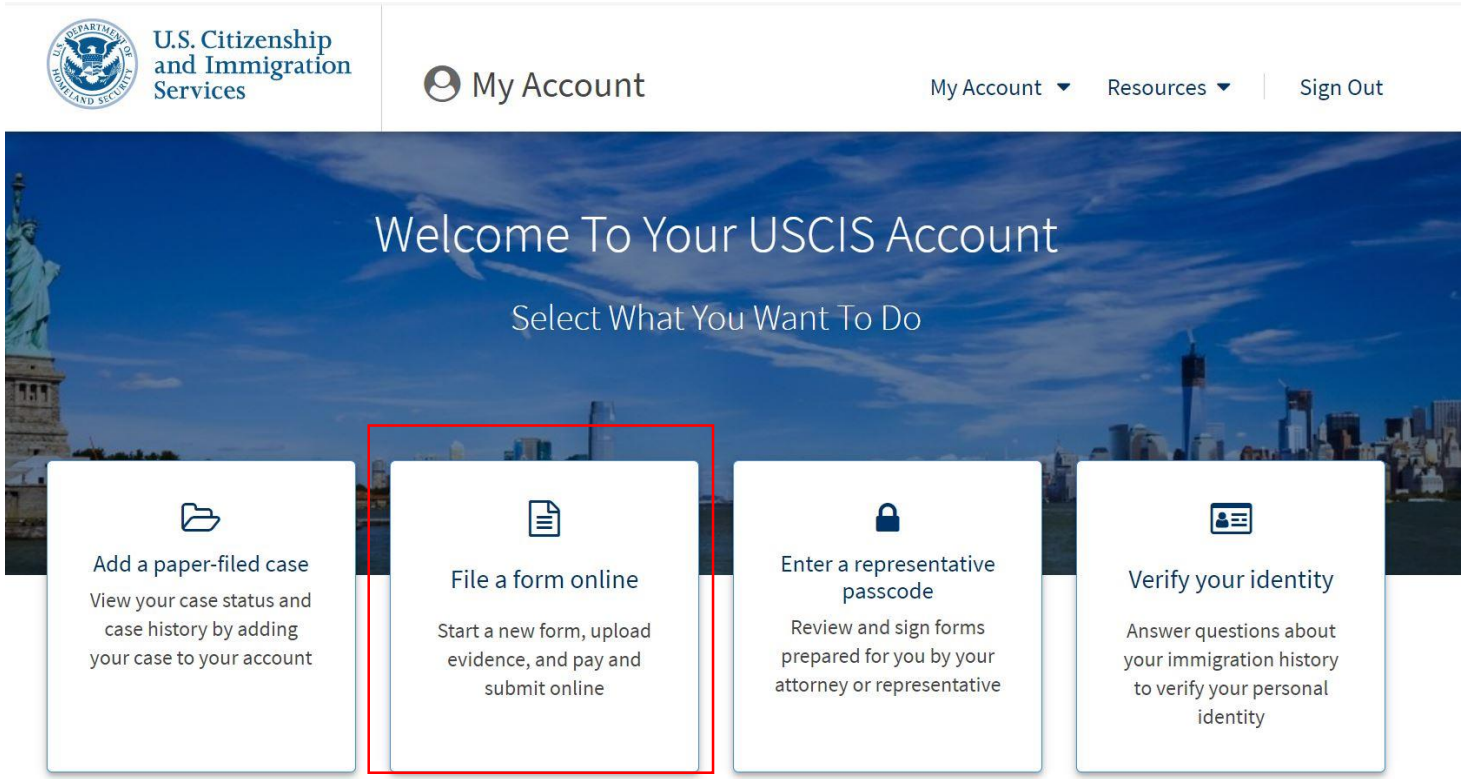


1. Select the first option of “I am an applicant, petitioner, or requestor”

2. Click “Submit”

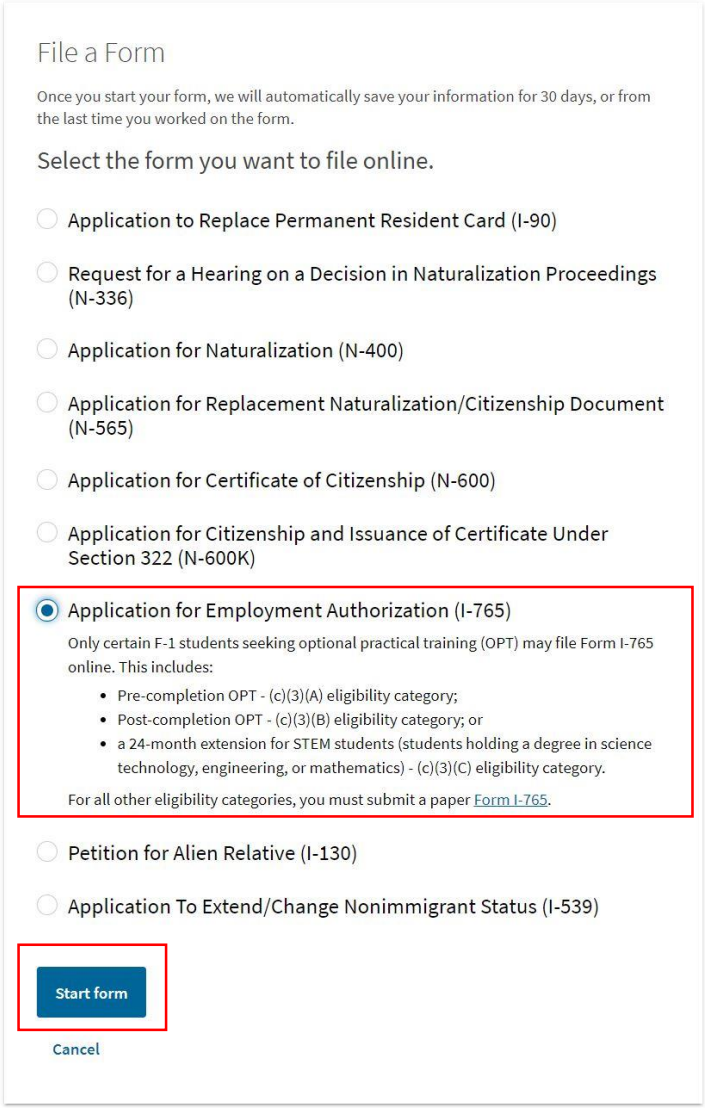


Select “File a form online”



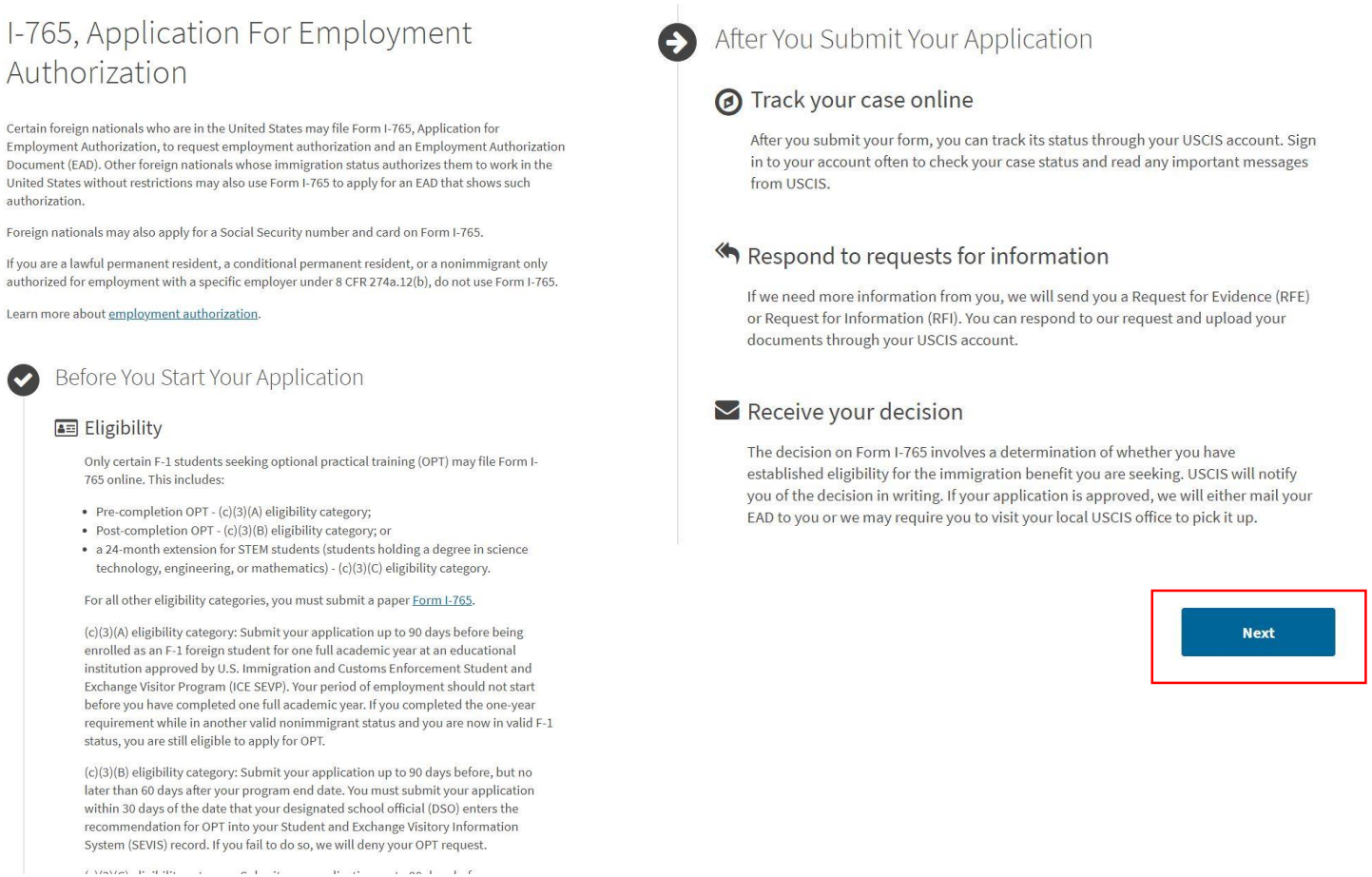
1. Select “Application for Employment Authorization (I-765)

2. Click “Start Form”



1. Read through the information

2. Click “Next” on the bottom of the page



I-765, Application For Employment Authorization

Certain foreign nationals who are in the United States may file Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, to request employment authorization and an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). Other foreign nationals whose immigration status authorizes them to work in the United States without restrictions may also use Form I-765 to apply for an EAD that shows such authorization.

Foreign nationals may also apply for a Social Security number and card on Form I-765.

If you are a lawful permanent resident, a conditional permanent resident, or a nonimmigrant only authorized for employment with a specific employer under 8 CFR 274a.12(b), do not use Form I-765.

Learn more about employment authorization.

Before You Start Your Application

Eligibility

Only certain F-1 students seeking optional practical training (OPT) may file Form I-765 online. This includes:

- Pre-completion OPT - (c)(3)(A) eligibility category;
- Post-completion OPT - (c)(3)(B) eligibility category; or
- a 24-month extension for STEM students (students holding a degree in science technology, engineering, or mathematics) - (c)(3)(C) eligibility category.

For all other eligibility categories, you must submit a paper Form I-765.

(c)(3)(A) eligibility category: Submit your application up to 90 days before being enrolled as an F-1 foreign student for one full academic year at an educational institution approved by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Student and Exchange Visitor Program (ICE SEVP). Your period of employment should not start before you have completed one full academic year. If you completed the one-year requirement while in another valid nonimmigrant status and you are now in valid F-1 status, you are still eligible to apply for OPT.

(c)(3)(B) eligibility category: Submit your application up to 90 days before, but no later than 60 days after your program end date. You must submit your application within 30 days of the date that your designated school official (DSO) enters the recommendation for OPT into your Student and Exchange Visitory Information System (SEVIS) record. If you fail to do so, we will deny your OPT request.

After You Submit Your Application

Track your case online

After you submit your form, you can track its status through your USCIS account. Sign in to your account often to check your case status and read any important messages from USCIS.

Respond to requests for information

If we need more information from you, we will send you a Request for Evidence (RFE) or Request for Information (RFI). You can respond to our request and upload your documents through your USCIS account.

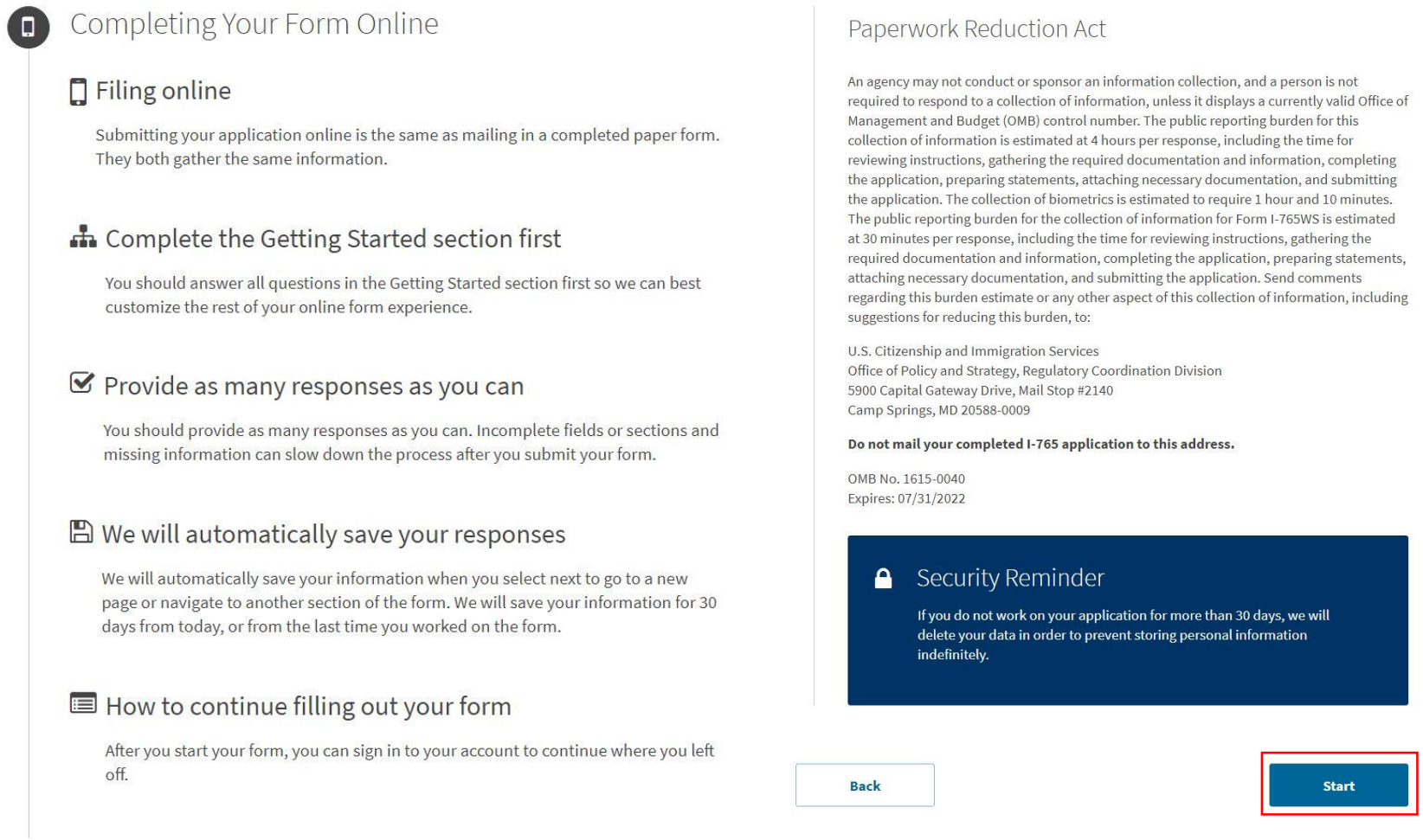
Receive your decision

The decision on Form I-765 involves a determination of whether you have established eligibility for the immigration benefit you are seeking. USCIS will notify you of the decision in writing. If your application is approved, we will either mail your EAD to you or we may require you to visit your local USCIS office to pick it up.

Next

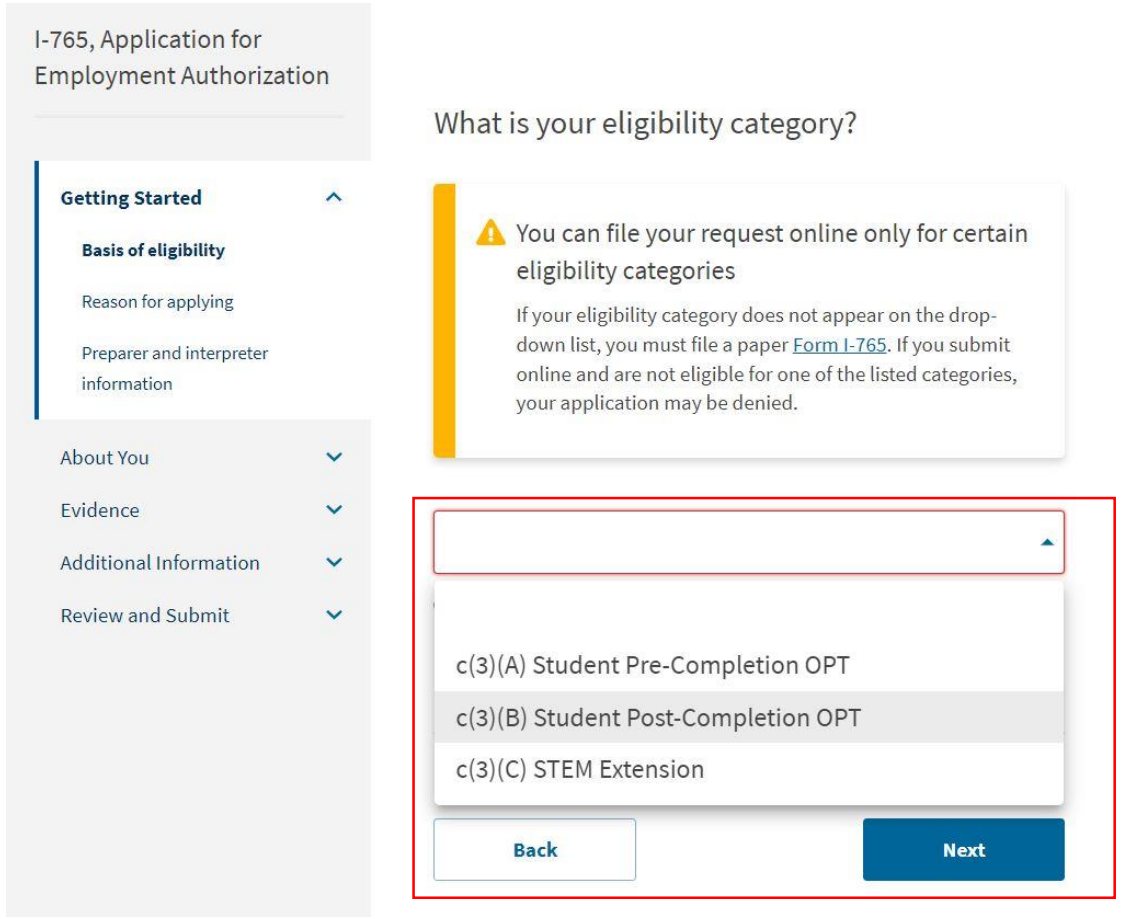
1. Read through the information

2. Click “Next” on the bottom of the page



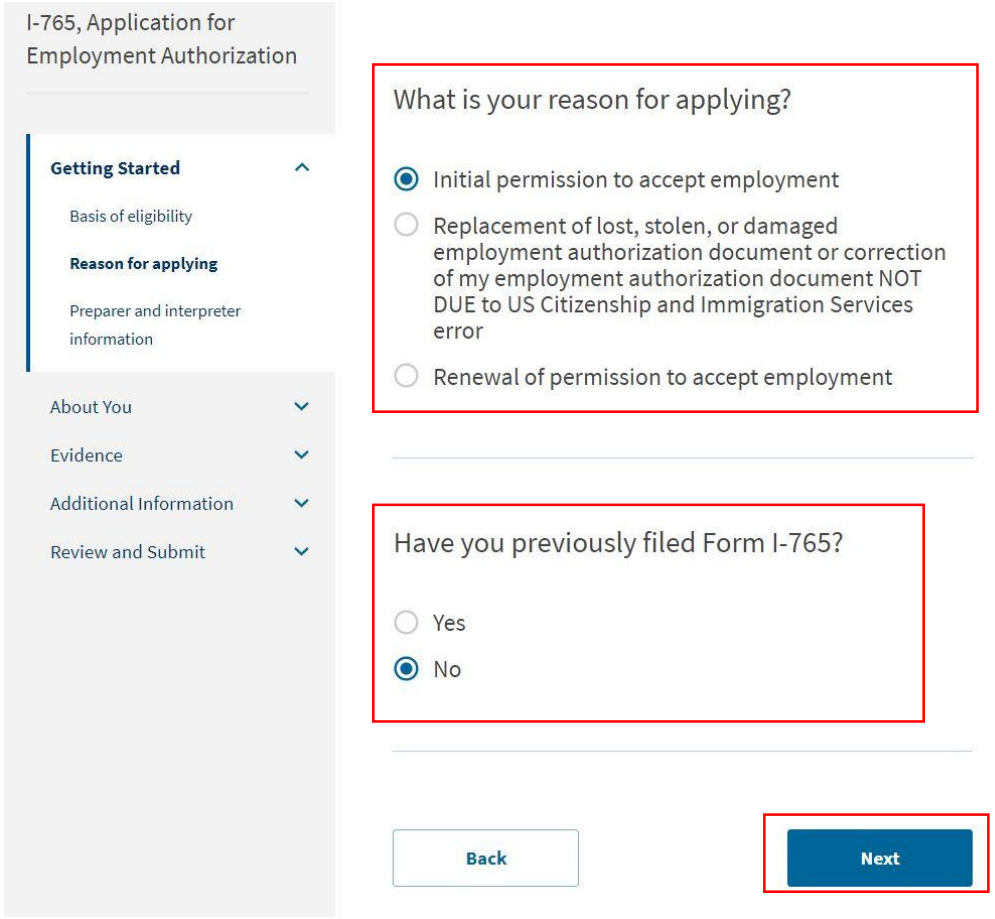
1. Select c(3)(B) Student Post-Completion OPT (second option) unless you're applying for the STEM Extension, then select c(3)(C) Stem Extension.

2. Click “Next”



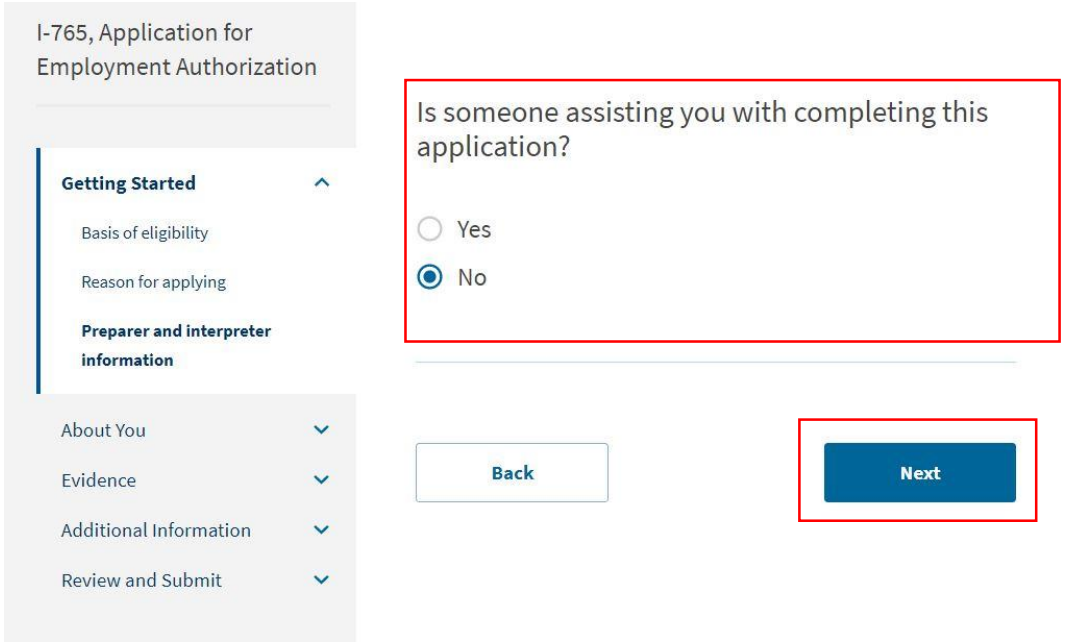
1. Select “Initial permission to accept employment” if this is your first ever OPT application. For the STEM extension, select "Renewal of permission to accept employment."

2. Select “No” if this is your first time filing for an OPT. If it's for the STEM Extension, you've done OPT for a previous degree, or you're re-applying after having an application denied: Select "Yes"



1. Select “No” if you are filing this application yourself. Even if ISS staff are helping you, check "No" here

2. Click “Next”



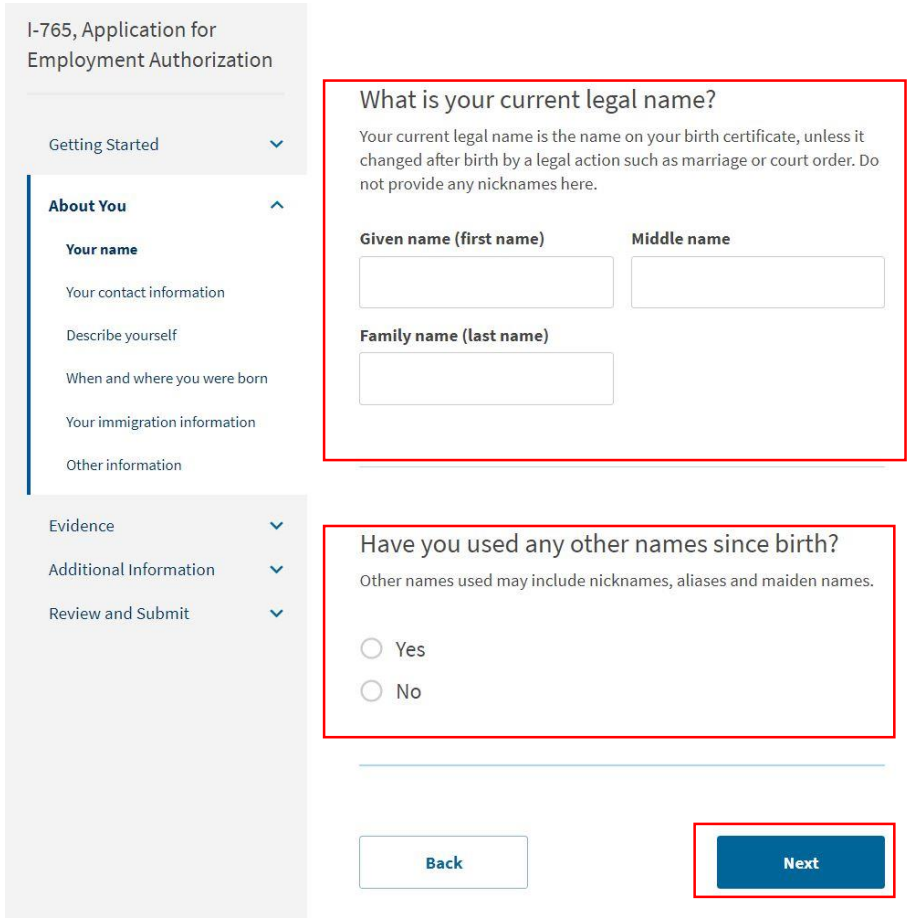
1. Enter your names in the boxes, please double check if you enter them in the correct box

2. Answer “No” on the second question if you've never had another name

Answer “Yes” the second question if you've had other names.

Another set of columns will show up to enter this information if you select “Yes”

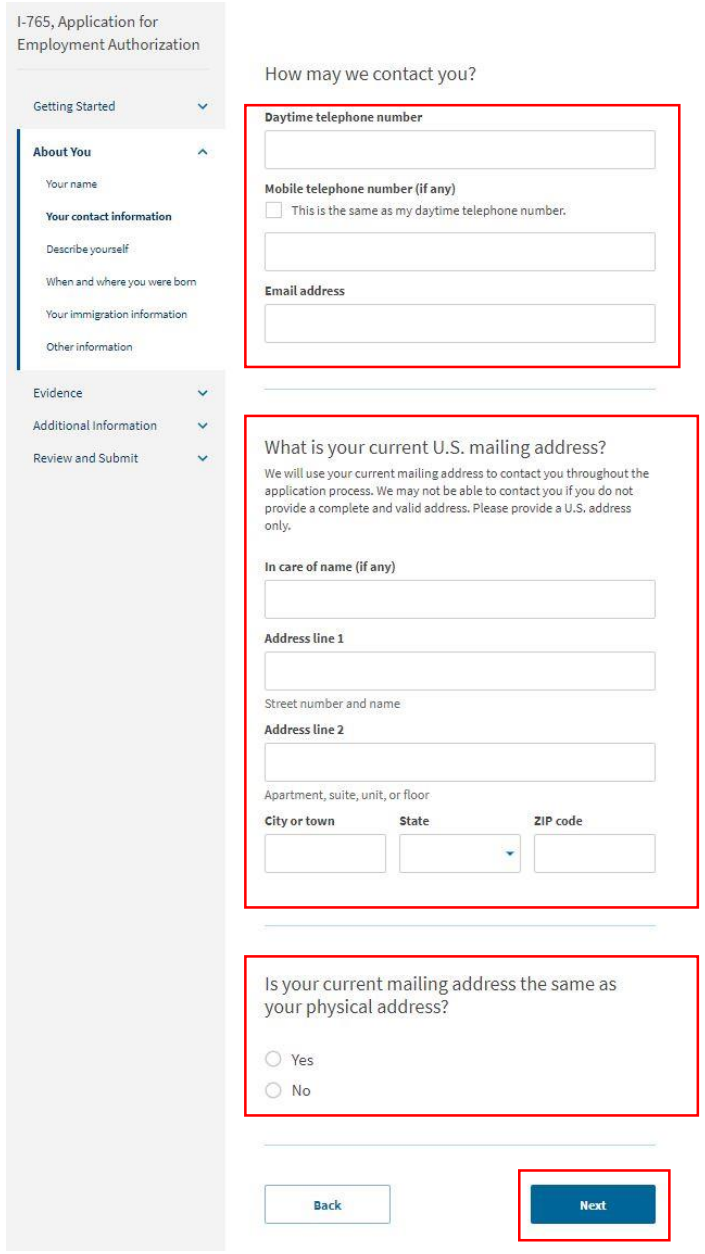
3. Click “Next”



1. Enter your phone number, e-mail address, and mailing address. We recommend using the ISS address as you will likely move after graduation:

In Care of Name: Intl Students & Scholars
615 S Palatine Hill RD
MSC 192
Portland, OR, 97219

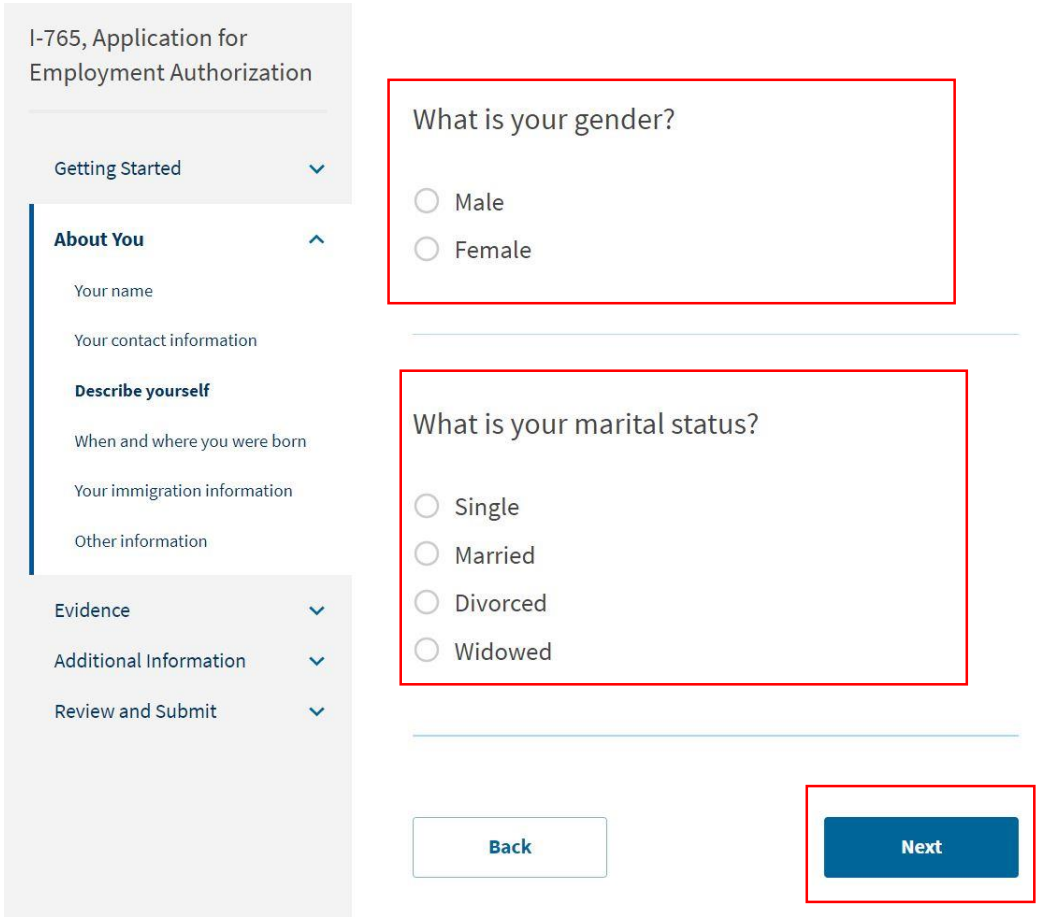
2. Select “No” on the second question and enter your current physical address



1. Select your gender

2. Select your marital status

3. Click “Next”

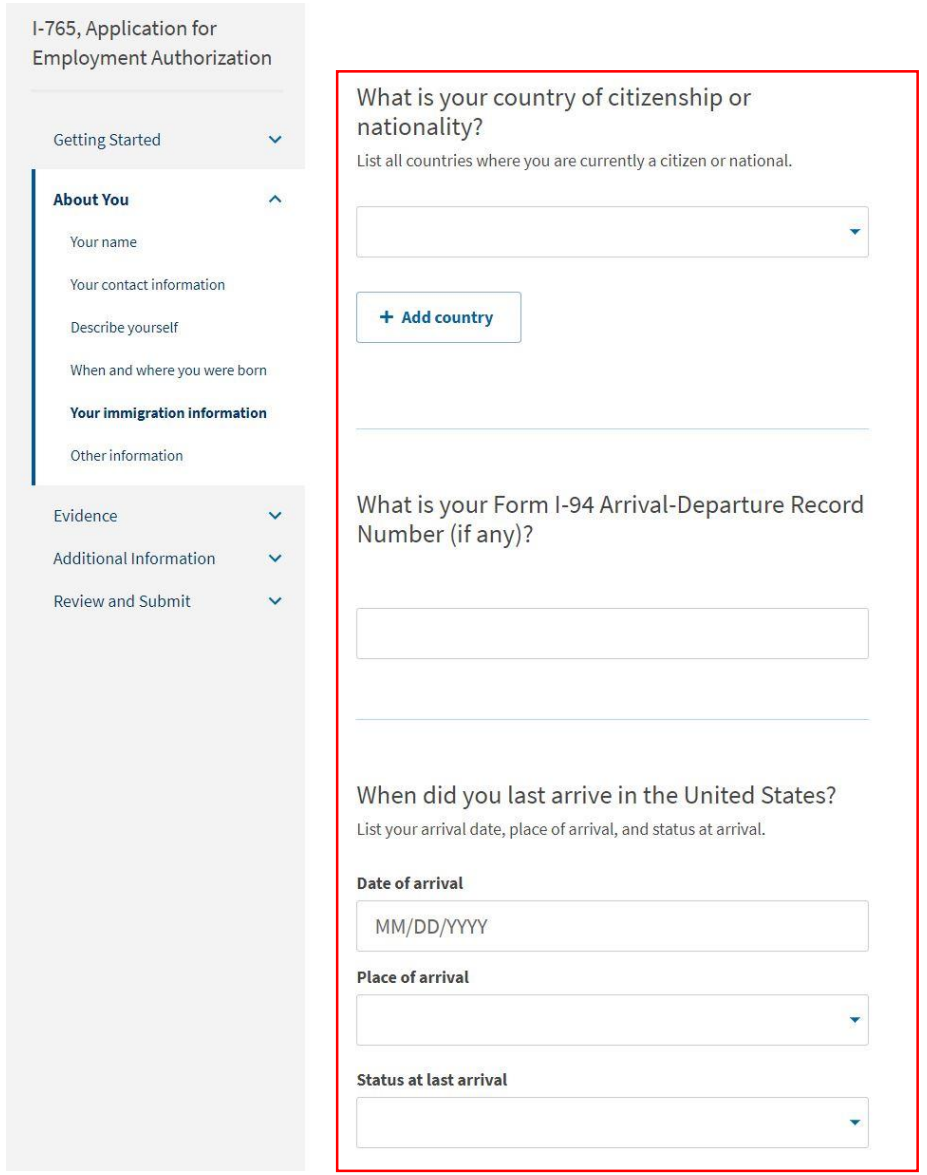


1. Select your Nationality from the drop-down menu.

2. Enter your I-94 Number from the I-94 form

3. Enter your last arrival information.

You can retrieve this information by going to https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home and select “Get Most Recent I-94” and enter your information.



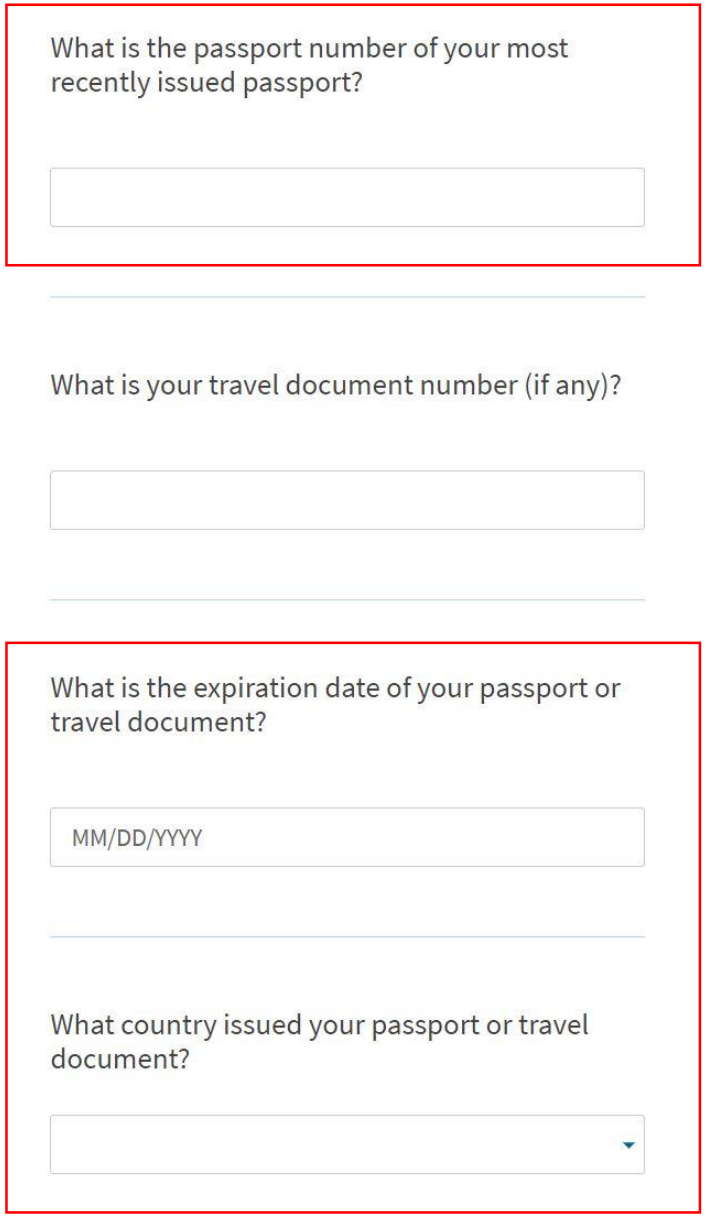
Continued in the next slide →

1. Enter your current passport number

2. Skip “What is your travel document number?”

3. Enter expiration date of your passport

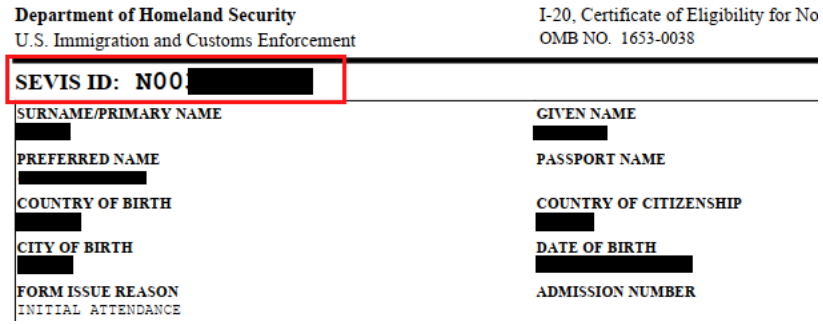
4. Select your country from the drop-down menu



Continued in the next slide →

1. Select “F-1” on the “What is your current immigration status or category”

2. Enter your SEVIS number on your I-20 that starts with “N”



Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for No
OMB NO. 1653-0038

SEVIS ID: N00[redacted]

SURNAME/PRIMARY NAME
[redacted]

GIVEN NAME
[redacted]

PREFERRED NAME
[redacted]

PASSPORT NAME

COUNTRY OF BIRTH
[redacted]

COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP
[redacted]

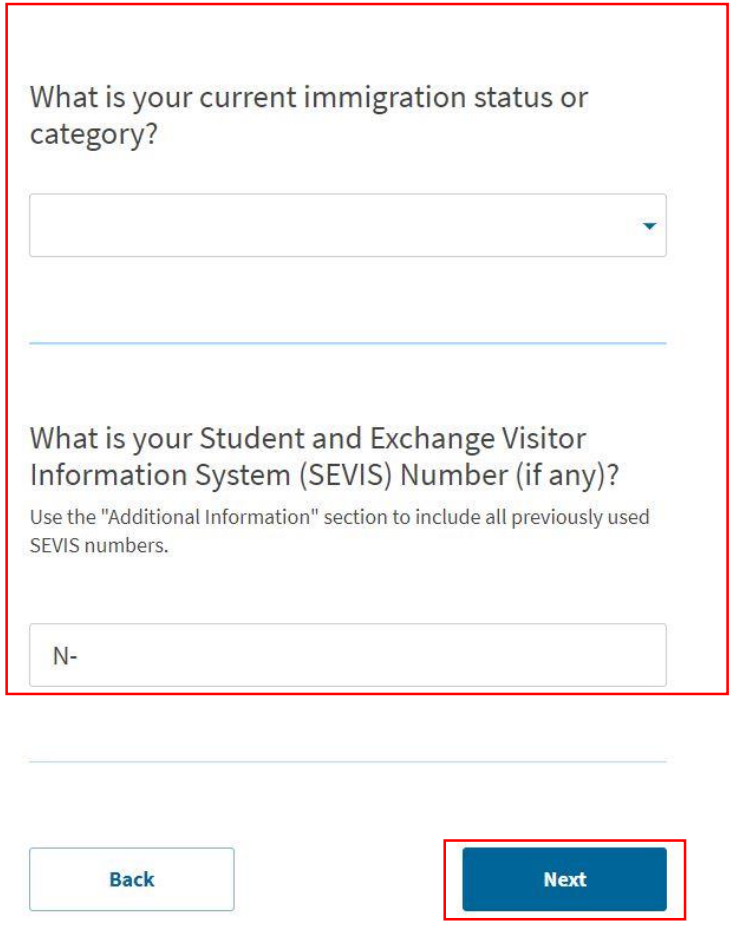
CITY OF BIRTH
[redacted]

DATE OF BIRTH
[redacted]

FORM ISSUE REASON
INITIAL ATTENDANCE

ADMISSION NUMBER

3. Click “Next”



What is your current immigration status or category?

What is your Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Number (if any)?

Use the "Additional Information" section to include all previously used SEVIS numbers.

N-

Back

Next

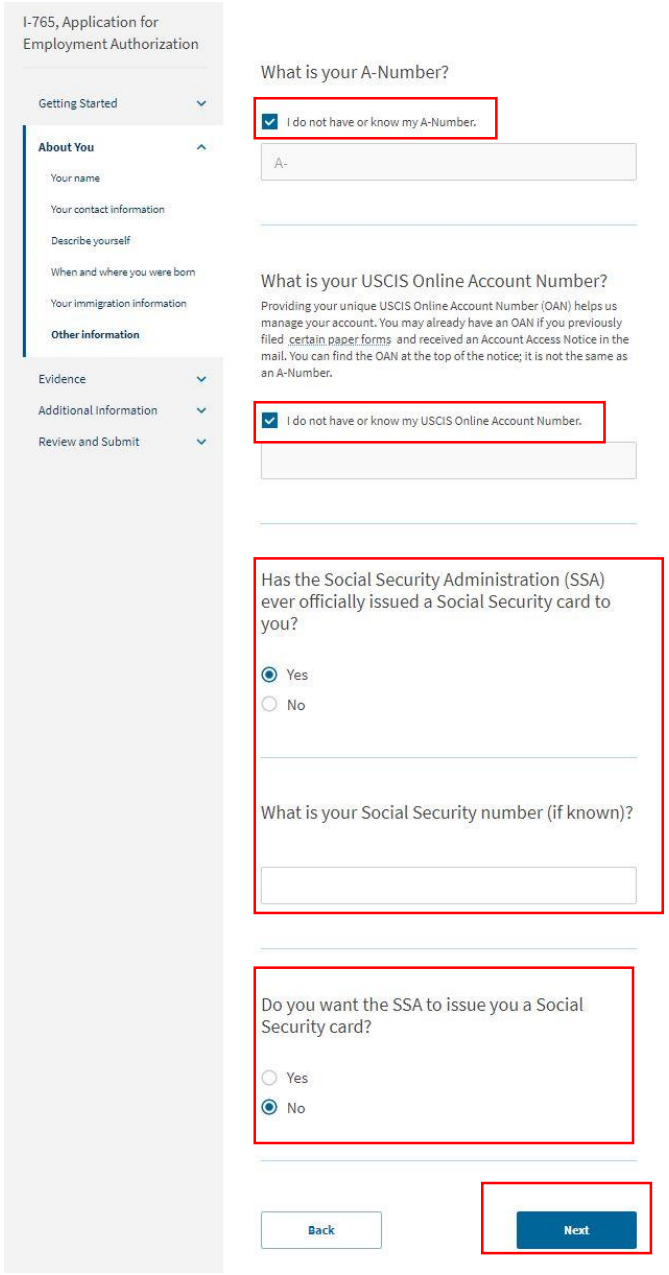
1. Select “I do not have or know my A-number”

2. Select “I do not have or know my USCIS Online Account Number

3. Select “Yes” if you currently have Social Security Number and enter the SSN number in the field below

4. Select “No” if you already have an SSN.
Select “Yes” if you don't have an SSN

5. Click “Next”



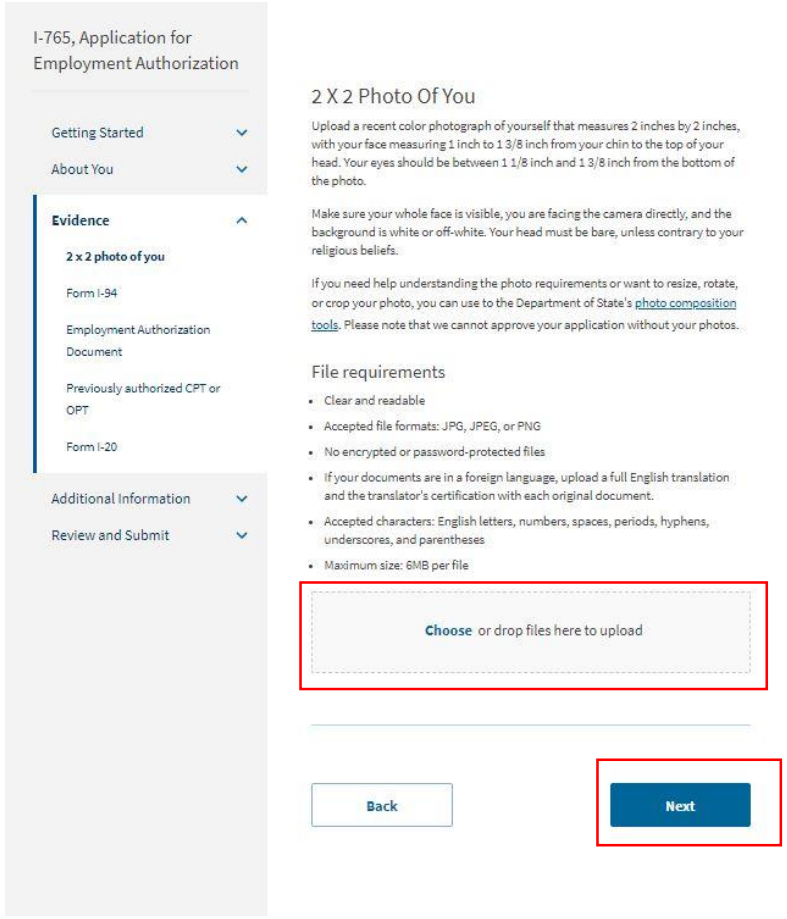
1. Scan your 2x2 passport photo to your computer and save it into JPG, JPEG, or PNG file.

Recommended: high quality scan via a scanner

Not recommended: taking a photo of your passport photo with your phone

2. Upload the JPG file to the column by clicking “choose” or drag the file on to the box

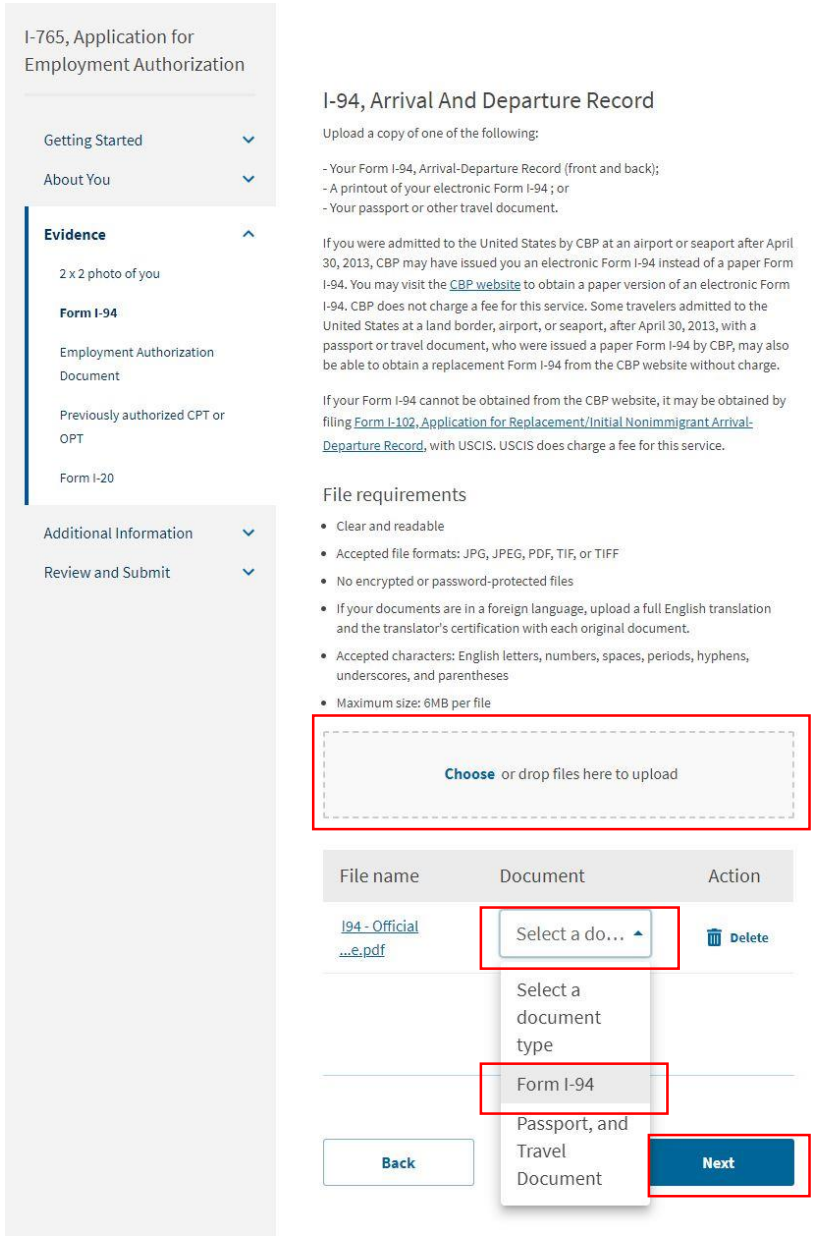
3. Click “Next”



1. Upload your I-94 form by clicking “Choose” or drag your I-94 file into the box

2. Click on the Document type and select “Form I-94” on the drop-down menu

3. Click “Next”



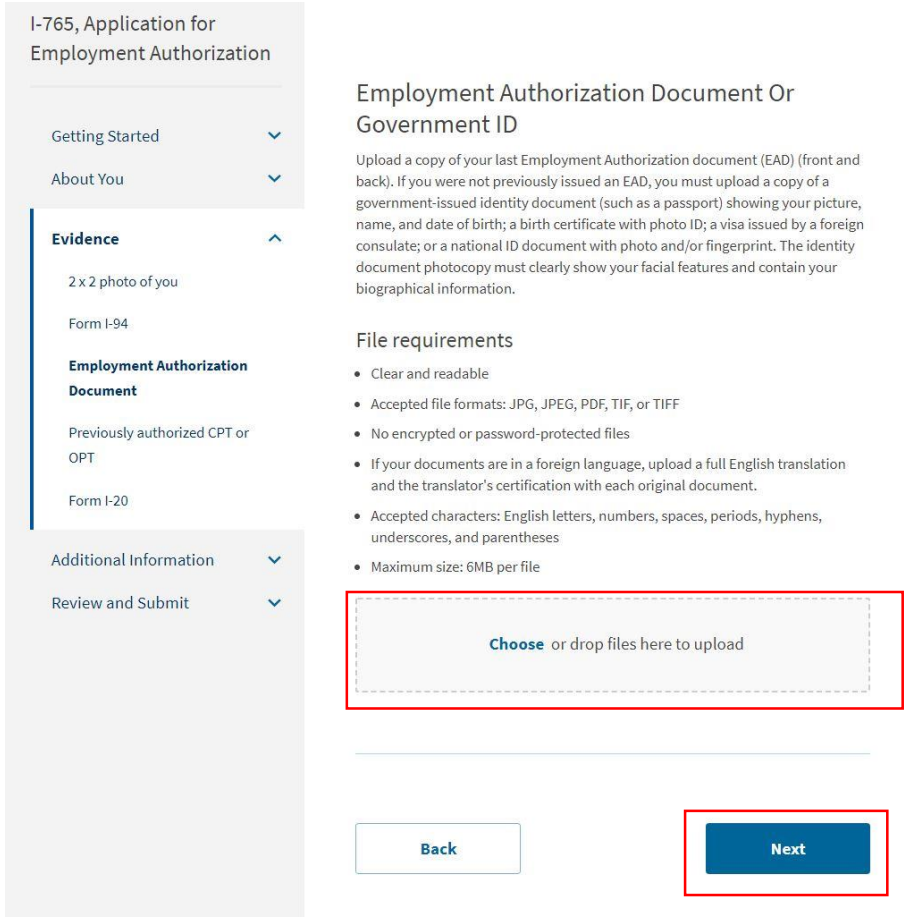
1. Upload copies of your:

- Passport (photo and information page)
- U.S. F-1 Visa

by clicking “Choose” or drag the documents to the box.

If you're applying for the STEM extension or have an EAD from a previous degree's OPT period, upload a copy of your EAD card (front and back).

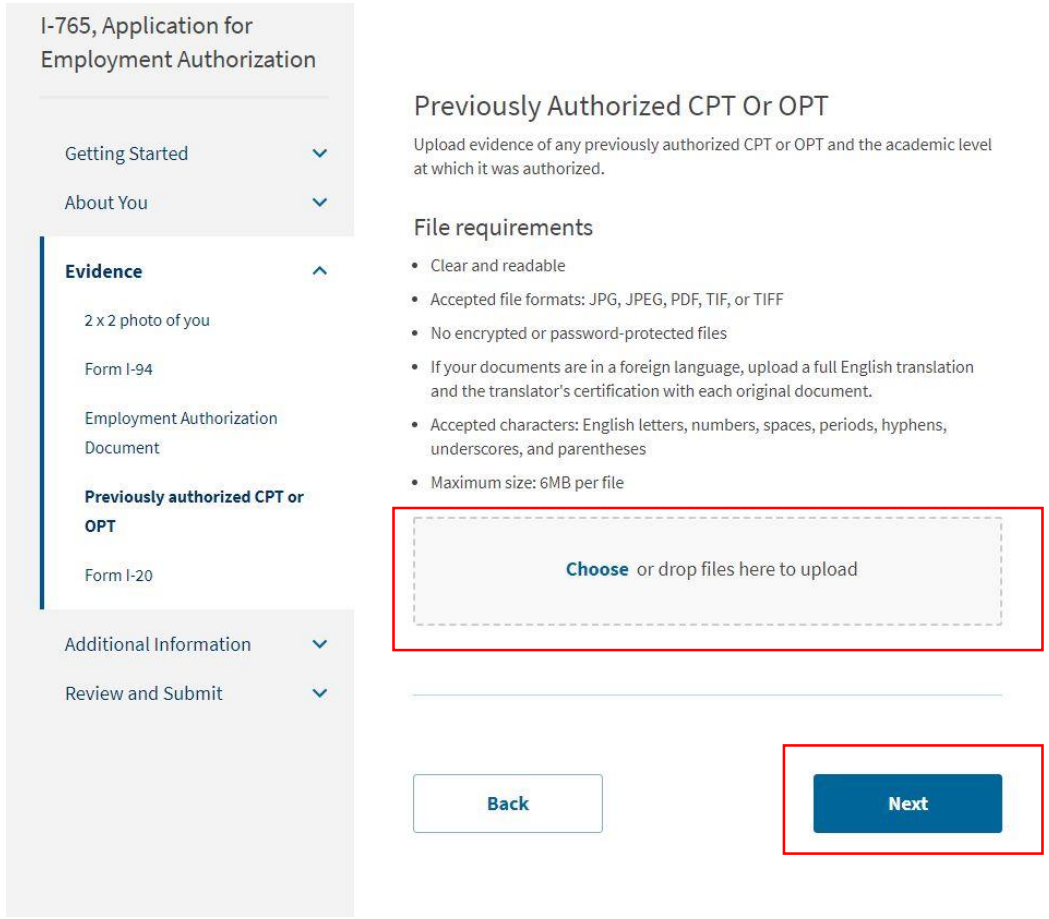
2. Click Next



1. Upload all previous I-20s with CPT or OPT employment on them.

2. If you've had OPT before, upload any previous EAD cards, too.

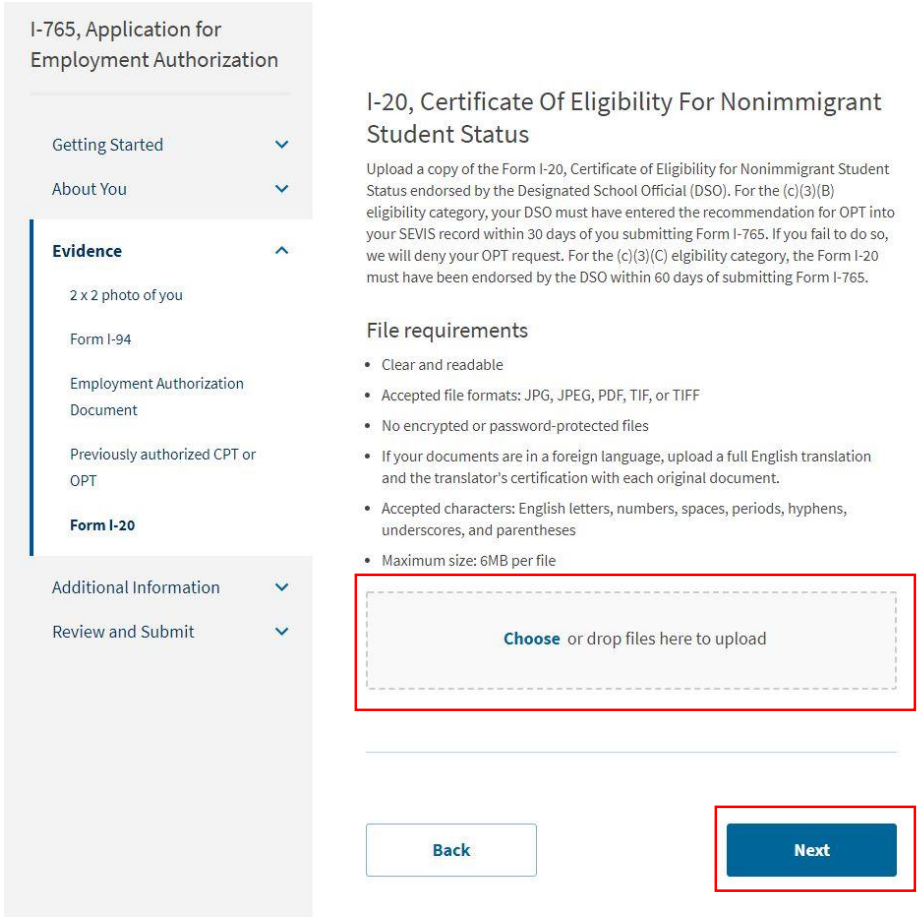
3. Click “Next”



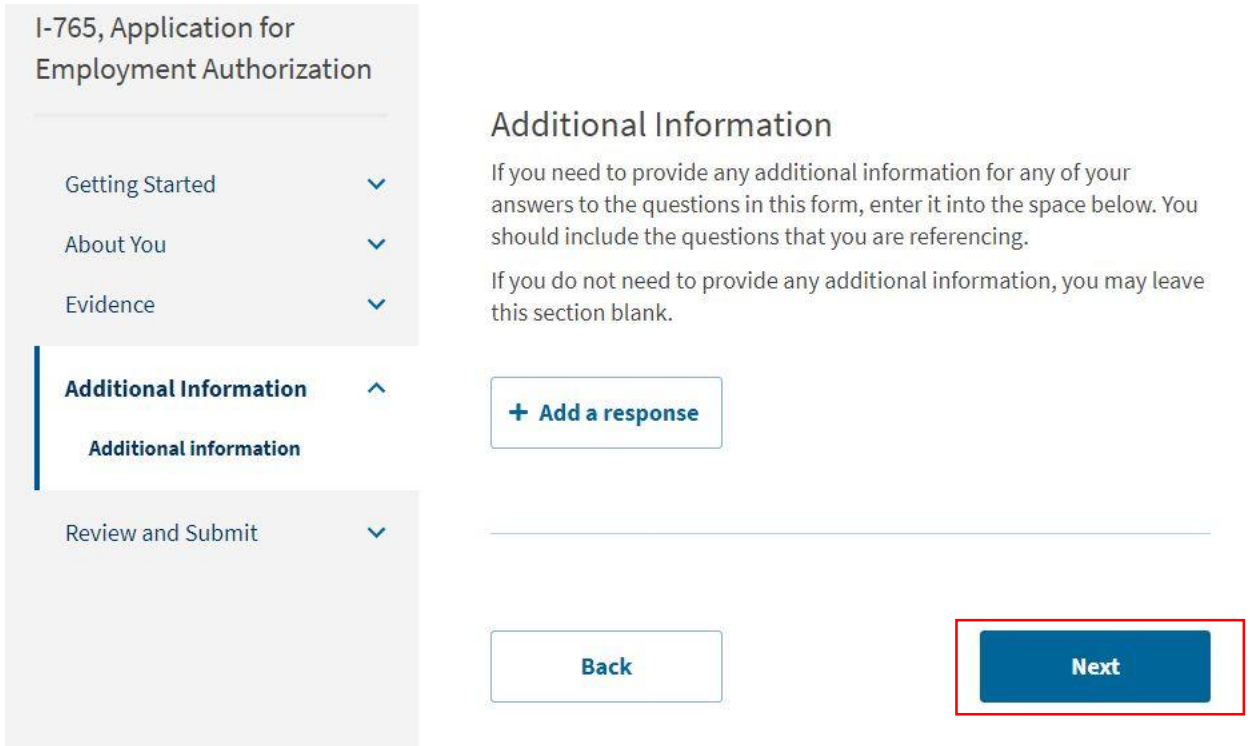
1. Upload **the latest I-20 that the ISS office sent you for the OPT recommendation.**

Please check if the second page has “Post-completion OPT” in “Requested” status before you upload it.

2. Click “Next”

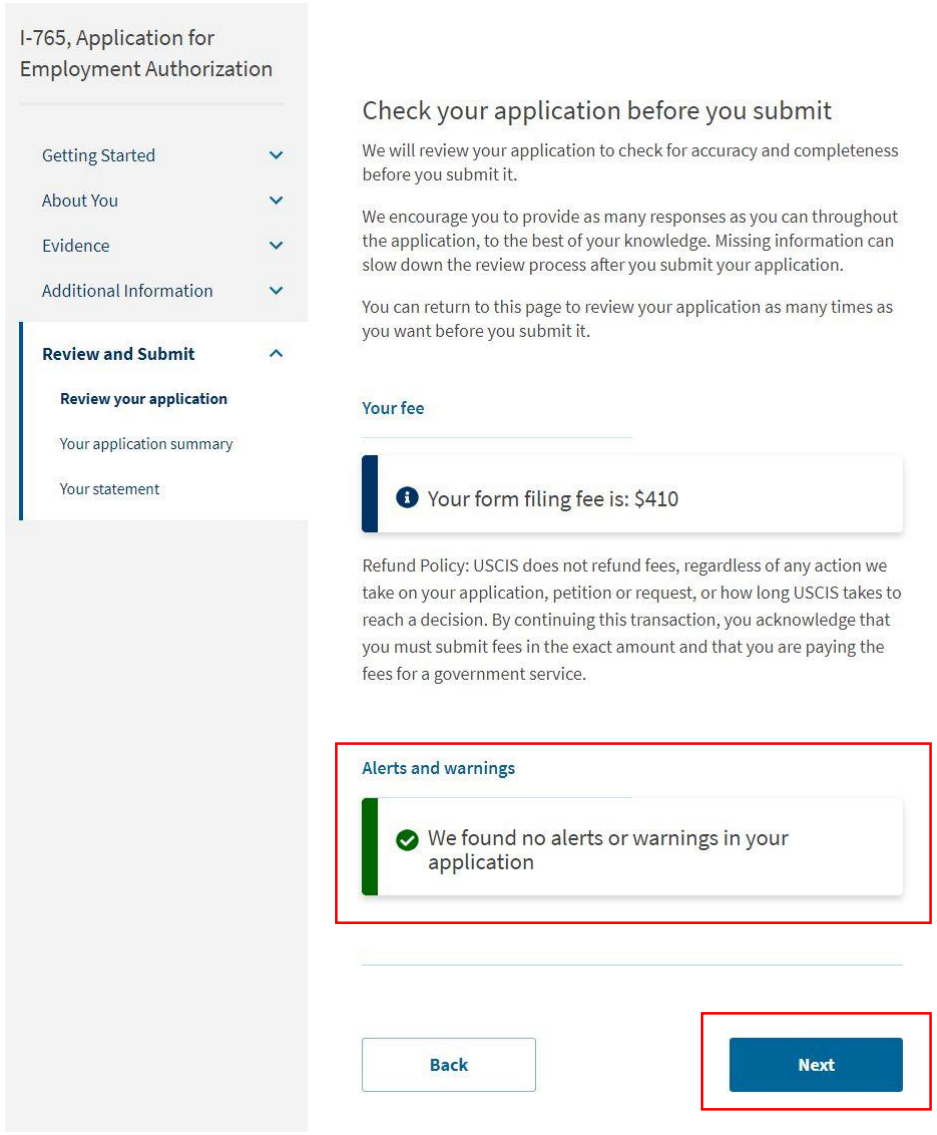


1. Click “Next”

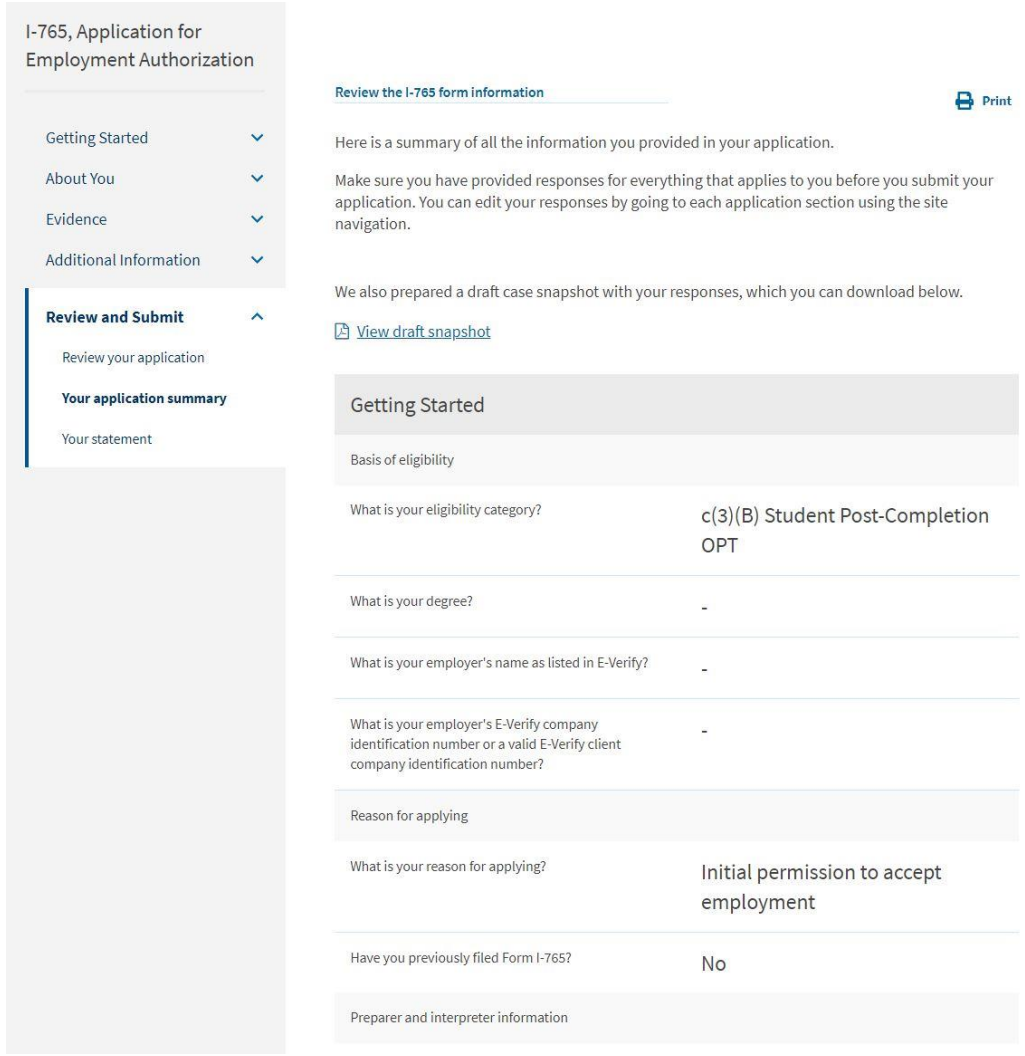

I-765, Application for Employment Authorization
Getting Started
About You
Evidence
Additional Information
Additional information
Review and Submit
Additional Information
If you need to provide any additional information for any of your answers to the questions in this form, enter it into the space below. You should include the questions that you are referencing.
If you do not need to provide any additional information, you may leave this section blank.
+ Add a response
Back
Next

1. See if you have any unfilled/incomplete columns by looking at “Alerts and warnings”

2. Click “Next”

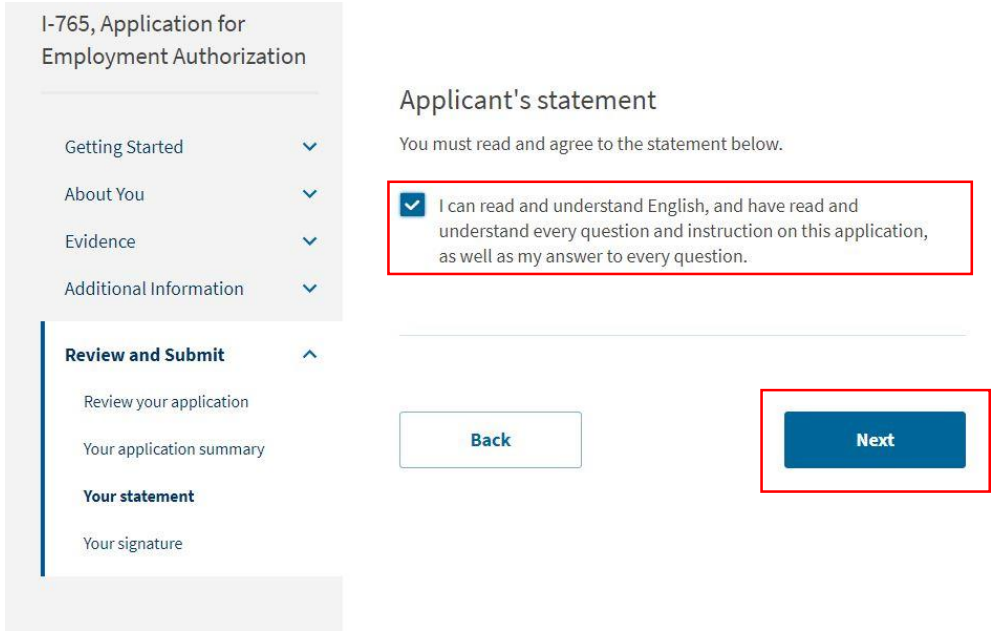


1. Review all of your information that you entered and make sure everything is accurate



1. Once you ensure everything is correct and accurate, check the box that says “I can read and understand English,….”

2. Click “Next”

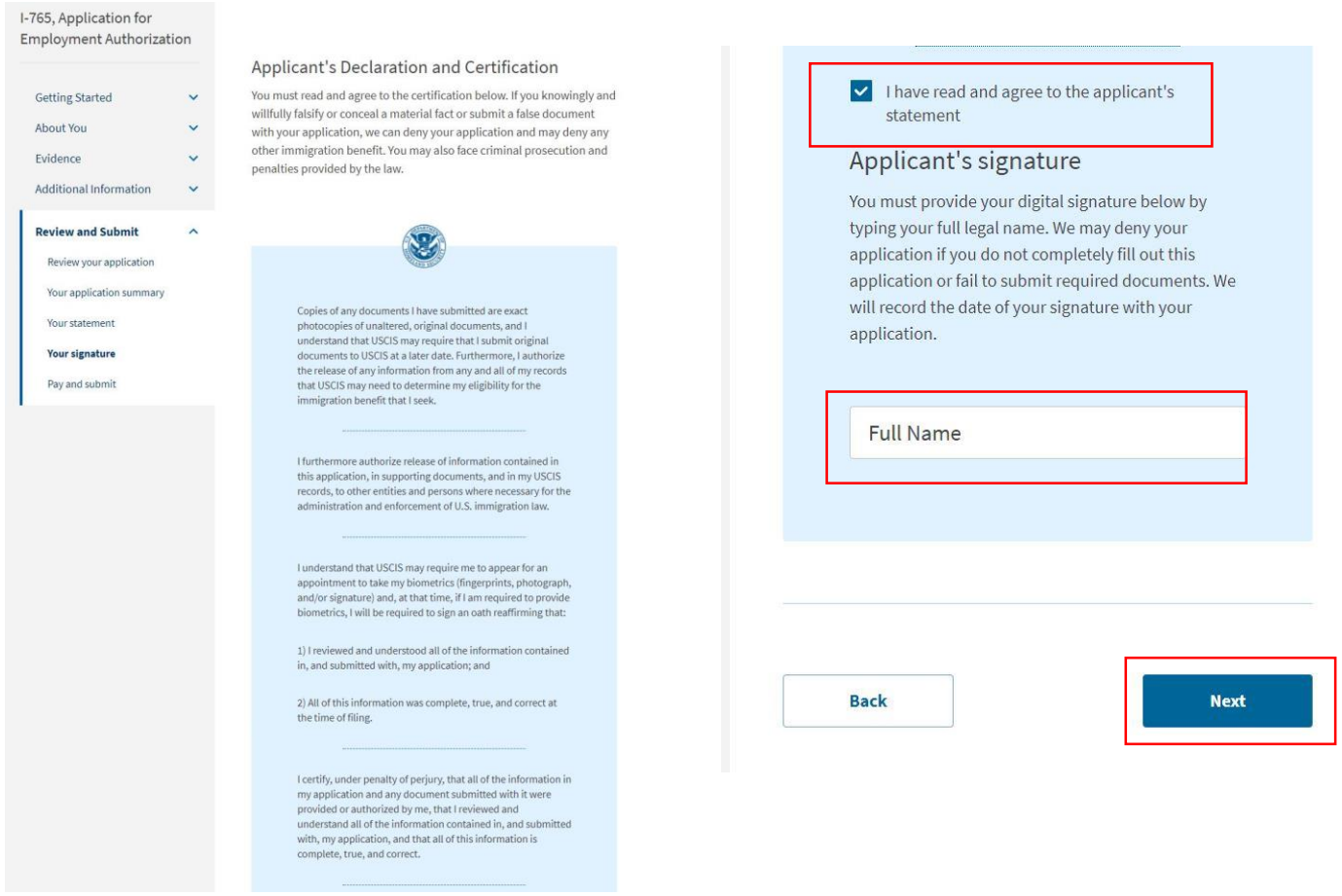


1. Read and scroll through “Applicant’s Declaration and Certification”

2. Click on “I have read and agree to the applicant’s statement”

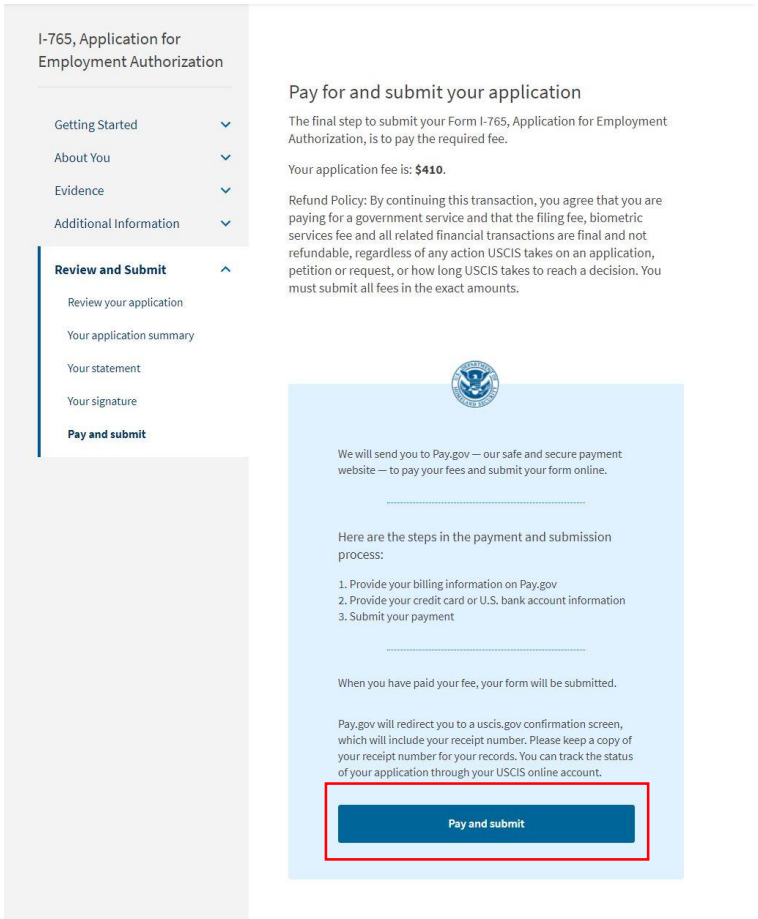
3. Enter your full name on the column below that

4. Click “Next”



1. Click on Pay and Submit

2. Have your credit card ready for payment

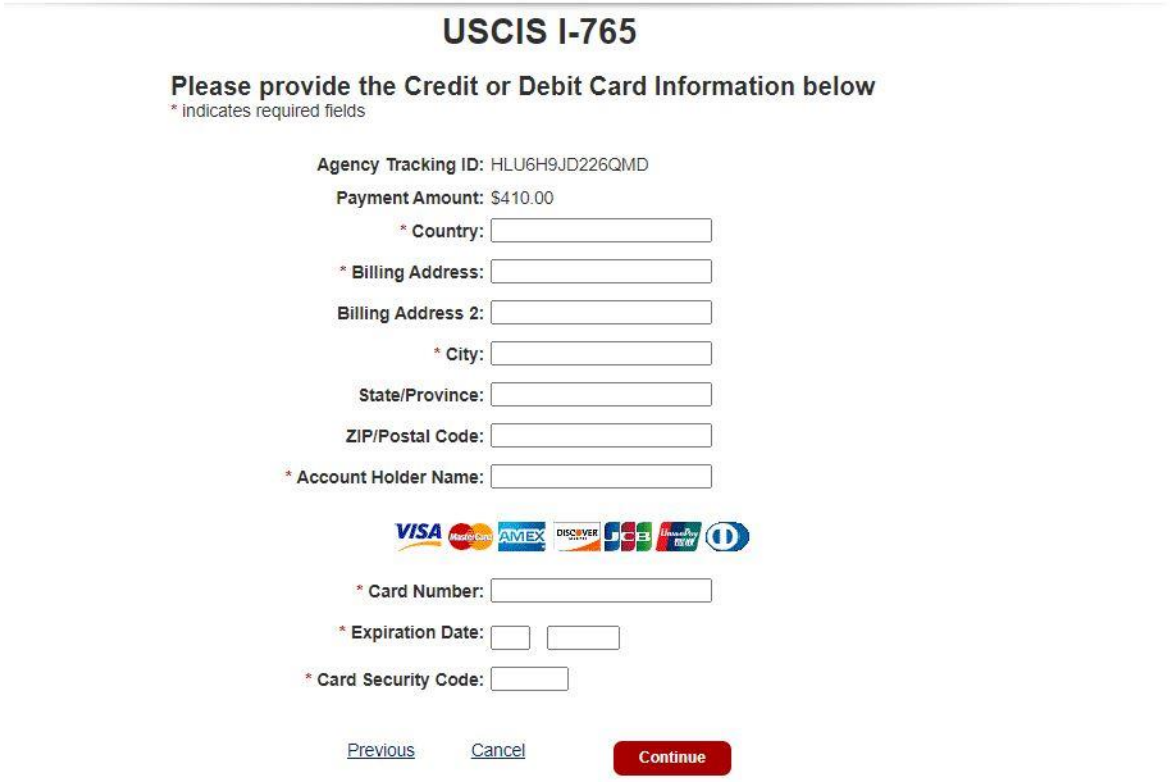


1. Select “I want to pay with debit or credit card”

2. Click “Continue”

1. Fill out the required fields

2. Click “Continue”



Case status

- You can login to your myUSCIS account and check your case status.

- If applicable, please provide ISS with your case tracking number.