



College of the Atlantic

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) FAQ's

What is Curricular Practical training (CPT)?

CPT authorization is an immigration benefit granted to F-1 students to allow off-campus employment when that work can be characterized as an “integral part of the established curriculum”. At College of the Atlantic, we only authorize CPT when the employment fulfills a student’s internship requirement for credit or non-credit. In exceptional circumstances we will consider granting CPT authorization to students’ whose proposed work qualifies as Cooperative Education.

When am I eligible to apply for CPT?

To be eligible for CPT authorization you must have been enrolled and maintain F-1 status for at least one-academic year (3 COA terms). F-1 students are only eligible for CPT before the completion of their academic program. You must have a job offer from an employer to be eligible for CPT (see below).

Do I need a job offer to be eligible for CPT?

Yes. CPT is granted for work with a specific employer, at a specific place for a specific period of time.

Is there a limit to how long I can work with CPT?

There is no cumulative maximum period of CPT authorization. However, CPT can only be granted for the duration of the proposed employment period or in periods of one year, whichever is shorter. You can do more than one CPT.

Will the use of CPT impact my eligibility for OPT?

No, unless you use a full cumulative year of full-time CPT. Using a full year of full-time CPT makes you ineligible for OPT at the same educational level.

What sort of work qualifies for CPT employment? How many hours can I work?

CPT employment must be in the student’s field of study and an integral part of the student’s academic program. It may be full-time or part time, depending on the requirement of the academic program and nature of the work. For example, if your CPT work is for a COA internship, it must be full-time work, as that is a characteristic of the COA internship requirement.

Does it cost anything to apply for CPT? No

Application Procedure

- Fill out a CPT/OPT Request Form, available from the Coordinator of International Student Services and from the COA website. This form documents your CPT request and is kept in your immigration file.
- Bring the completed CPT/OPT Request Form, your approved internship proposal, and a letter from a faculty member/advisor, along with your letter of offered employment to the Coordinator of International Student Services. Your employment offer letter should detail your Employer's name and address, your dates of employment and whether the proposed employment is full-or part-time.

***Please ask for the recommendation template to be sent to your affiliated faculty or advisor**

- The Coordinator of International Student Services will review your eligibility and notify USCIS through SEVIS of your CPT authorization.
- You will receive a new I-20, with the CPT authorization noted on page 3. You may not begin your CPT employment until you have received this authorization, and your employment may not extend beyond the end date without extending your CPT employment period.