

Here are some quick facts about Curricular Practical Training (CPT):

- For students to receive CPT, the training (and employment associated with the training) must be "an integral part of an established curriculum" and "directly related to the student's major area of study."
- Regulations require one full academic year of study before a student may engage in CPT *except* when enrolled in a graduate level studies where immediate CPT is required of all students engaging in the program. In these instances, CPT is allowed in the first year of study.
- CPT is authorized directly by the designated school official (DSO) who updates the student's SEVIS record with the CPT authorization, including: the employment start and end date; employer name and address; whether the authorization is for part-time or full-time CPT; and an explanation of how the employment is curricular. Unlike optional practical training (OPT), which is approved by USCIS, CPT is authorized directly by the DSO through this SEVIS notification.
- CPT can be paid or unpaid. SEVP guidance states that "compensation is not a consideration when determining whether an opportunity qualifies as CPT," but federal and state labor and wage/hour laws do still apply.
- There is no set limit to the amount of time a student may engage in CPT. However, if a student engages in full time CPT for 12 months or more, the student is becomes ineligible for post-completion OPT Engaging in part-time CPT (20 hours or less) does not affect eligibility for post-completion OPT.

Quick-reference table: Characteristics of CPT

<p>Preconditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student must have been lawfully enrolled on a full-time basis at a DHS-approved school for one full academic year before being eligible for CPT. Exception exists for graduate students whose programs require immediate curricular training. Available only while student is in F-1 status, before completion of the educational objective. Students in English language training programs are ineligible for CPT.
<p>Location</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students may engage in CPT only for the specific employer, location and period approved and recorded by the DSO in SEVIS.
<p>Duration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depends on the specific period granted by the DSO. May be granted by DSO in increments of no more than one year, or until expected date of employment completion, whichever is shorter. No cumulative maximum, except that it can only be approved before completion of the academic objective.

Hours per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can be approved for part-time (20 hours or less) or full-time (over 20 hours).
Field/level of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be an integral part of an established curriculum, and be related to the student's major field of study.
Offer of employment/training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must have an offer of employment or training from an employer offering work or training that qualifies as curricular practical training.
Effect on other work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of full-time CPT for one year or more eliminates eligibility for Optional Practical Training. Use of part-time CPT does not affect eligibility for Optional Practical Training (see 3.37 Effect of use of CPT on eligibility for OPT).
Approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DSO must update SEVIS with CPT authorization. Student cannot begin CPT until CPT Employment Start Date recorded in SEVIS. DSO will also print out updated Form I-20 reflecting the CPT authorization. The student will need this when completing Form I-9 for the employer. USCIS approval is not required, and no EAD is issued.
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must continue to maintain a full course of study in F-1 status during the period of employment.