

Planning for Summer Internships

F-1 Immigration Updates + Opportunities

Immigration News

End of D/S

- On September 14, 2026, the U.S. District Court in Massachusetts issued a [preliminary injunction](#) that applies throughout the United States so that the “rule to end D/S” did not go into effect on September 15, 2026. For now, the current D/S framework remains in place, and no action is required related to the new rule. Litigation is ongoing, and we will continue to monitor developments closely.

Immigration News

CPT

- In August 2026, SEVP issued two Broadcast Messages regarding the standards for CPT (Curricular Practical Training) that appear to differ from current CPT regulation. Based on this guidance, Caltech paused new CPT authorization until further notice.
- On October 5, a lawsuit was filed challenging the content of the broadcast messages and asking the court to stop implementation of changes while the legal case is considered. The lawsuit itself does not change Caltech's current pause of new CPT authorization.
- Caltech continues to review its CPT policies and practices to determine whether and under what circumstances CPT authorization may be available to Caltech students in the future. ISP will share updates as they become available.

Immigration News

OPT

- On October 9, DHS published a **proposed** rule that would require schools to pay a \$70,000 fee before making an initial OPT recommendation (pre-completion or post-completion) and \$30,000 for subsequent OPT recommendations, including STEM OPT. We recognize that these proposed amounts are alarming; however, **this is a proposed rule, not a final rule**, and there is no change to OPT or its current fees at this time.
- Publication in the Federal Register begins a 30-day public comment period. After the comment period, DHS must review comments and complete additional steps before any final rule could be issued.
- ISP will continue to monitor the proposal and keep you informed of significant developments.

On-Campus Employment

During Enrolled Academic Term

Undergraduate Students

- 16 hours a week maximum, per Caltech Dean's Policy, inclusive of all work

Graduate Students

- 20 hours a week maximum
- Research Assistantships (RAs) and Teaching Assistantships (TAs) already fulfill this maximum

During School Breaks / Annual Vacation Terms

BS

- 9-month academic term allows for full-time summer employment at Caltech
- Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF) program
- Self-arranged research experiences in campus labs; OTTCP* on-campus summer internships

MS

- 9-month academic term allows for full-time summer employment at Caltech

PhD

- Academic term and enrollment is 12 months a year
- Approved leave would be required to engage in full-time employment at Caltech

* Caltech Office of Technology Transfer and Corporate Partnerships (OTTCP)

- Offers on-campus summer internships for Caltech undergraduate and graduate students

On-Campus Employment at Off-Campus Location

On-Campus employment may be approved for an Off-Campus location that is educationally affiliated with Caltech and is an integral part of the student's educational program.

Eligible SURFs

- Off-campus SURF at another university or research institution
- All payments must be through Caltech
- [Applications](#) open Nov 1 for summer 2027 with awards announced April 1

International Internships

Working outside the United States while on an approved Caltech leave or during an annual Institute break (vacation term) is permitted. F-1 regulations do not apply to work performed while you are physically outside the United States.

If you are physically located in the United States, you cannot work for a company located outside the United States. Any work performed from within the U.S. requires prior work authorization. ISP cannot authorize employment with employers located outside the United States.

Pre-Completion OPT

Off-Campus work authorization for F-1 students prior to degree completion.

- **Part-Time**
occurs during an enrolled academic term
 - Undergraduates: limited to 16 hours/week inclusive of all employment
 - Graduate Students: limited to 8 hours/week
- **Full-Time**
possible during official Institute breaks, annual vacation terms, or approved leaves

Application Process

- USCIS application and fee required
- Earliest submission is 90-days prior to requested start date of employment
- Processing times vary, premium processing (additional fee) may be needed to meet start date

Cautions

- Pre-Completion OPT is deducted from the 12 months of OPT available at each higher degree level.
 - **Part-Time** Pre-Completion OPT has historically been deducted at a 50% rate.
 - **Full-Time** Pre-Completion OPT is deducted at a full-time rate.
- Any unused days of Pre-completion OPT cannot be recovered.
- Applying for Pre-Completion OPT during the final term of enrollment may result in complications with OPT.

Resources

- Coordinate closely with ISP – early and often.
- Monitor ISP emails for updates and clarifications.
- Refer to International Offices [website](#)
- STUDY in the STATES [quick facts](#) and [FAQs](#)
- International Student Resource Center ([ISRC](#))
- [NAFSA](#): Association of International Educators
- International Students Association at Caltech (ISAC) [Slack](#) for community!

ISP guidance does not constitute and should not be construed as legal advice. Individuals with questions about how laws, regulations, and policies apply to specific situations should contact an experienced immigration lawyer.