A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS HIRING UMD ENGINEERING STUDENTS ON F-1 VISAS

If you would like to hire an international student from the University of Maryland's School of Engineering, the process may be much less complex and time consuming than you may think.

If an international student is offered a **co-op or internship position** by your organization, he/she may be eligible for a type of work authorization called Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

Federal Regulations permit certain Designated School Officials (designated by USCIS) to authorize employment for foreign students when the employment is integral to the student's program of study [8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i)]. Before they can start an internship off-campus in the U.S., international students on F-1 visas at the University of Maryland must first receive work authorization from Office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) located on campus in 3109 Susquehanna Hall.   CPT may not be used for full-time permanent positions; rather, it is specifically for internship or co-op positions. *For a student to be eligible for CPT:*

- *The student must have been in lawful F-1 status for nine (9) consecutive months before the internship start date*
- *the co-op or intern position must be directly related to the student's major field of study,*
- *the student must be enrolled in the Engineering Co-op Program or in another academic component.* Eligibility for CPT may also be affected by a student's point of completion in their academic program.

Before the student can begin an internship with your company, there are just a few steps you must take:

1. Provide the student with an <u>offer letter on your company letterhead</u> that states the following:
     - The student's name and that he/she is being hired
     - Job title, including the word co-op or intern, and a 2-3 sentence job description that makes it apparent how the position relates to the student's major and/or curriculum
     - Name of student's supervisor
     - Exact start and end dates of the work assignment (note that dates should fall within the term for which the student will be registered as a co-op student)
     - Number of hours per week the student will work (limited to 20 hours/week during fall and spring semesters)
     - Salary/wage
2. You will also be asked to sign a copy of our **Student Learning Plan for CPT**.

Ideally, the student should have the offer letter and completed Learning Plan at least a week before their start date, so they can complete the work authorization request. The student must bring the offer letter to Engineering Career Services to meet with a staff member to enroll in the Co-op Program. The student will register for a zero credit course called "ENCO099/098" for the term/s he/she will be working. ext, the student will take his/her offer letter and original I-20 to International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) on campus. If everything is in order, ISSS will grant the student permission to work at your organization. This permission will be in writing on the I-20 for the exact dates of employment. ***NOTE: Extensions within the same term are not possible. If you and the student decide to extend the dates of employment to the next term, the student must receive an extension of work permission from ISSS <u>before</u> he/she can continue working. You will need to submit another letter with the new dates of employment for this to occur.***

If you have questions about hiring students for co-ops, internships or full time positions, contact our office.
For more information on CPT, OPT, STEM extension and other employment options for international students on F-1, J-1, or other visas, see International Student & Scholar Services' Employer Resources: https://globalmaryland.umd.edu/ offices/international-students-scholar-services/employer-resources