



OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

University Center for International Studies
University of Pittsburgh

Grace Period for F-1 Students

F-1 students who have maintained their nonimmigrant status earn a 60-day grace period after they complete their program of study. F-1 students can use these 60 days to remain in the United States and consider their next steps following graduation.

The 60-day grace period begins on the earlier of these two dates:

- 1) the day after your I-20 expires, OR
- 2) the day after you complete your degree requirements (if your I-20 lists an end date in the future)

During the 60-day grace period, you can take the following steps:

- Apply for post-completion [Optional Practical Training \(OPT\)](#), if eligible
- [Transfer your SEVIS record](#) to a new school to start a new program of study
- [Change your education level](#) at Pitt by beginning a new academic program at Pitt
- Apply to change visa status (OIS recommends that you work with an [immigration attorney](#) for this)
- Depart the United States

If you have any questions, please contact your [Immigration Specialist](#).

Grace Period FAQs

- **Can I re-enter the United States during my grace period?**

No, you cannot re-enter the US as an F-1 student during the grace period.

- **What is my visa status during my grace period?**

You are still an F-1 visa holder.

- **What can I do during the grace period?**

Travel inside the US, prepare to depart the US, work with your [Immigration Specialist](#) to extend your time in the US (see above options).

NOTE: You cannot work or study during your 60-day grace period, unless you have received OPT authorization, or received an I-20 to study in a new academic program. Contact your [Immigration Specialist](#) with questions.

- **I want to stop my program without finishing it. Do I get a grace period?**

You do not earn a 60-day grace period in that case. Please speak with your [Immigration Specialist](#) about your situation for individual guidance.

- **I received post-completion OPT or STEM OPT authorization. Do I receive a grace period at the end of my OPT / STEM OPT period?**

If you have not exceeded the cumulative limits on unemployment during your [post-completion OPT](#) (90 days), or [STEM OPT](#) (150 days), you receive a 60-day grace period after the OPT / STEM OPT end date.

If you exceed the limits on unemployment, you do not receive a 60-day grace period. You must depart the U.S. as soon as possible after you exceed the unemployment limit.

NOTE: If you wish to apply for the [STEM OPT Extension](#), you MUST submit your STEM OPT application before your post-completion OPT end date.