

## **Broadcast Message: An Overview of STEM OPT Employer Site Visits**

**To:** All Postsecondary SEVIS Users

**Date:** Feb. 14, 2020

**Number:** 2002-02

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### **General Information**

As a reminder,

The March 2016 science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) optional practical training (OPT) rule allows the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to conduct site visits of employers that train STEM OPT students. These are routine visits that the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) initiated shortly after the rule became effective in 2016.

The visits provide a mechanism for DHS to ensure that STEM OPT students are engaged in a structured, work-based learning experience that is consistent with the goals of practical training and with the information supplied on the student's Form I-983, "Training Plan for STEM OPT Students." DHS visits a cross-section of employers to obtain information about the mentoring process and assess how the program is working for students and employers. Per the 2016 STEM OPT rule, employers will receive advanced notification prior to a site visit.

Students and designated school officials (DSOs) can take steps to prepare for upcoming site visits. Students should make sure their employer information and home addresses are up-to-date by updating their information via the [SEVP Portal](#) or reporting updates to their school official. The employer address should be the address the student reports to for work. If working at a client site, which is different from the employer address, the client name and address should be listed along with the STEM OPT employer.

DSOs should be prepared to provide the student's Form I-983 if requested and should ensure the Form I-983 is up-to-date. DSOs are encouraged to use the [upload evidence functionality](#) in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

In an effort to streamline the review process, DHS may request information concerning compliance by email or phone before conducting an inspection. Such a request may seek to confirm the work locations of STEM OPT students and their supervisors or may request documentation on the STEM OPT program to assist in assessing the commensurate wage or other regulatory requirements.

For more information about the rules and regulations regarding employer site visits, please visit the [Employer Site Visits page](#) on the [STEM OPT Hub](#) on Study in the States. For case specific

questions, students should reach out to their DSO or they can contact the [SEVP Response Center](#).

**Comments**

To comment on this broadcast message, please email [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov) with “Broadcast Message 2002-02 Comment” entered in the subject line.

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