



CATEGORY: Training | Employment | STEM OPT

# Reporting Volunteer Positions During OPT Employment

July 5, 2018

A volunteer position that is not directly related to an F-1 student's [course of study](#) does not qualify as [optional practical training \(OPT\)](#) and must not be listed as [OPT employment](#) on a student's Student and Exchange Visitor Information System record.

If you report a non-qualifying volunteer position as OPT employment, you are [violating your reporting requirements](#) and are subject to removal from the United States.

Additionally, it is important to remember that:

- You should not report a non-qualifying volunteer position as OPT employment in the [SEVP Portal](#).
- Non-qualifying positions do not stop the accrual of unemployment, which is limited to a total of 90 days during OPT.
- If you have been unemployed for more than 90 days, you must leave the United States or be subject to removal, even if you have volunteered while unemployed.

As a note, volunteer positions do not meet the conditions of a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) OPT extension. If you are completing a [24-month STEM OPT extension](#), you must receive [compensation for your training opportunity](#).

Do you have questions about qualifying OPT employment or accrual of unemployment? Contact your designated school official or the [Student and Exchange Visitor Program Response Center](#).

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