

New England Conservatory

Application Packet for CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR F-1 STUDENTS

In this packet, you will find:

- ❖ An NEC Practical Training Faculty Recommendation
- ❖ Frequently Asked Questions about CPT for Students
- ❖ Frequently Asked Questions about CPT for Employers
- ❖ Sample Cover Letter for Employers

Please read the forms and instructions carefully before filling them out. Applying for Curricular Practical Training will be easier if you have all of your forms prepared before you bring them to the International Student Office. You must get approval and I-20 endorsement from a DSO before you begin working. Applying early is encouraged!

Please keep in mind that your application must be complete before it can be processed. Make sure that you have the following:

- A completed CPT Faculty Recommendation form from your Studio Instructor
- An offer letter from your employer

Questions about your application may be addressed to the International Student Office
Monday – Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Director of International Student Services: Suzanne Hegland
Ph: 617.585.1313 email: shegland@newenglandconservatory.edu

Coordinator for Office of Student Services: Leah Krznarich
Ph: 617.585.1310 email: leah.krznarich@newenglandconservatory.edu

Working before you have received CPT authorization from NEC is a violation of your F-1 visa status and will jeopardize your immigration status in the US.

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING FACULTY RECOMMENDATION

Please note that according to Department of Homeland Security Regulations pertaining to F-1 visa holders; sponsoring schools may only endorse a program of Curricular Practical Training if the off-campus work is a required part of the curriculum. At NEC, Curricular Practical Training is offered as part of studio instruction only if the instructor approves the job(s) as an enhancement of the studio instruction.

***** This does not apply to one-time gigs.*****

APPROVAL:

I have met with _____ and I have reviewed the job
(student's name)
description and/or letter of employment from _____.
(name of employer)

I recommend that full-time/part-time (circle one) curricular practical training be authorized from _____ to _____ based on one of the following:
(date) (date)

Please check one:

_____ The employment is designed and structured to enhance the student's educational program endorsed by this department, and is directly related to the student's major field of study. Employment will be monitored to ensure academic relevance.

_____ The employment is through an institutionally sponsored cooperative education, internship, or work-study program.

DENIAL:

I do not recommend authorization of employment under CPT based on one of the following:

_____ The proposed training experience is not directly related to the student's major field of study.

_____ I have reasons to believe that employment at this moment might jeopardize the student's academic standing.

Faculty Signature

Faculty Name (please print)

Date

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING FAQs FOR F-1 STUDENTS

What is Curricular Practical Training (CPT)?

- Curricular Practical Training is a work authorization you receive as a benefit of your F-1 Student Visa. It is processed through the NEC International Students Office, where you will receive a new I-20 validating your employment authorization.
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How do I qualify for Curricular Practical Training?

- Graduate students qualify for CPT immediately. Undergraduate students must have been in F-1 status and in good academic standing at NEC for 9 consecutive months (2 semesters). CPT at NEC is part of your studio instruction, therefore you must be enrolled for studio instruction and your studio teacher must approve of the job.

What kinds of jobs can I use CPT for?

- You can use CPT for any sustained, part-time (up to 20 hours a week and full-time during school breaks) music-related job opportunity that is offered to you that is integral to the enrichment of your program. ***One-time casual gigs do not qualify.***

How much can I work using CPT?

- There is no limit on how many jobs you may take using Curricular Practical Training! However, you may not work more than 20 hours a week total while classes are in session. CPT work authorization is granted by the semester. If your job runs longer than one semester, you must apply **again** next semester.

When can I start working when after I apply for CPT? When should I apply?

- Since NEC is able to give you work authorization without going through the USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Service) you will be able to work as soon as the NEC International Student Office gives you your new I-20. Usually this is within a week, often the same day you bring in your application.
- You are encouraged to pick up and complete an application as soon as you are aware you have been offered a job opportunity. **The International Student Office will NOT process incomplete applications for any reason.** Generally, a week before you are going to begin your job is when you are encouraged to bring your completed CPT application to the International Student Office.

I got this great gig with a local symphony and they said they wanted me to start that day! I've been working there for a week now, but I haven't applied for CPT. Can I still apply?

- Working without authorization from NEC is a very **SERIOUS** violation of your F-1 visa status. You will have worked illegally if you work without CPT and are no longer in F-1 student status. F-1 visa holders who have worked illegally are **not** eligible for reinstatement. If you have made NEC aware of illegal employment, it is NEC's responsibility to report it to the USCIS. It is important that you apply for CPT for every work opportunity you receive in a timely matter.

I got CPT for a concert series I sang last spring. I got a soloist position in a church choir yesterday. I already applied for CPT when I applied for the concert series. Do I have to apply again, right?

- **YES!** You must present a separate application for every job opportunity you receive.

CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING FAQs FOR EMPLOYERS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Are foreign students allowed to work? What is Practical Training?

- ✓ A student who has an F-1 visa **is** allowed to work under certain conditions and with approval from the sponsoring school and U.S. Immigration Services using work permission called Practical Training. Practical Training can be Curricular (used while in school) or Optional (often used after graduation).

Can I hire a student full-time while they are in school?

- ✓ Students may only work a maximum of 20 hours per week while they are in school. They may work full-time during school break when classes are not in session. CPT is given one-semester at a time only.

What is an I-20 form?

- ✓ The I-20 form is a form issued by New England Conservatory. It is created using a government web-based tracking system called SEVIS (Student Exchange Visitor Information Service) that is used by schools that admit foreign students. This form is very important as it makes them eligible for their F-1 visa and it also allows student to travel outside of the U.S., and work legally while in school.

What do I have to do before the student is legal to work?

- ✓ It is easy to hire an international student! However, as the employer you should address an employment offer letter to the student on company letterhead, which states the position and nature of the job offered to the student, the beginning and ending dates of the position and how many hours a week the student will be working. A form with suggested language for this letter is included in the form. An employment letter may be accepted via fax as long as it has a valid signature. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to make certain that he or she is not working illegally.

Please see reverse side for a Sample Employer Letter

SAMPLE LETTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OFFER UNDER CPT

Date

International Student Advisor
New England Conservatory
290 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115

Dear International Student Advisor,

_____ has been offered employment as _____
(Name of student) (job title)
at _____ for _____ hours per week.
(Name of Company) (number)

Provide Brief job description here:

His/her period of employment will be from _____ to _____.
(date) (date)

This student will be employed at the following address:

Company name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Sincerely,

Name and title of employer/supervisor