

# F-1 Guide to Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

**Disclaimer:** KGI has prepared this guide to provide you with general guidance. However, any advice provided to you by our office, as well as the information in this document, should not be construed as legal advice. KGI staff will provide regulatory and practice information as it stands at the time of the consult. Due to the fluid nature of governmental interpretation, individuals must understand that the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office may change its interpretation of established immigration laws/regulations and eligibility requirements for benefits at any time.

## Definition of Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Curricular Practical Training is a type of work authorization which enables students to engage in off-campus employment that is an integral part of an established curriculum, such as the MBS summer internship. The experience must be undertaken and completed prior to the completion of your degree.

## Eligibility Requirements

You must be in F-1 status for at least one full academic year (9 months) and must be in good academic standing. Students on academic probation are ineligible to participate without express written consent from the dean of their school. Employment must be an integral part of the established curriculum and directly related to your degree. In general, for programs in duration of 2 or more years, KGI limits full-time participation in CPT to the summer after the first year with one additional year of optional part-time extensions (i.e. Fall and Spring of the second year). Exceptions will be made on a case by case basis and for programs that last one year that require an internship. Students may not engage in full-time CPT during school sessions (see below).

## How do I obtain CPT authorization?

To obtain CPT, you must first receive a job offer. Once you receive a job offer, you may complete the Internship Pre-Approval Form found in [Sakai](#) with your academic advisor and register for the appropriate internship course. The completed form must be submitted to Career Services and to your international student advisor at least 3 business days before you will start your position. You will be issued a new I-20 showing CPT authorization to provide to your employer. You may then begin employment. **CPT is specific to the employer** – you must request a new CPT for any new employment opportunity. **CPT is date specific** – you may only engage in CPT for the dates requested. If you need a minor extension of your CPT (i.e. a few days to a few weeks), contact the international student advisor *prior to your current CPT expiring*. A new CPT must be authorized every term, by completion of a new Internship Pre-Approval Form.

**What should I do if I quit or complete my internship before the date listed?**

Immediately notify the international student advisor to amend your authorization dates. Your authorization should always match your days of work.

**How many hours can I work on CPT?**

During the academic term, total employment (including any hours spent employed on campus) may not exceed 20 hours. During academic breaks when school is not in session (i.e. summer) you may work more than 20 hours a week, with authorization.

**Do I need to apply for CPT for an unpaid internship?**

Note that KGI requires a paid internship to complete the required internship component; you may participate in unpaid internships outside of this requirement. It is strongly recommended that you obtain CPT authorization for unpaid internships. If you are considering an unpaid internship that does not meet the criteria of CPT, please make sure that the company is aware of U.S. Department of Labor regulations concerning unpaid internships and that you have assurances (preferably written) to that effect before you accept the position. We also recommend that at the end of your internship you ask your employer to provide you with a letter confirming that there was no remuneration or any other type of compensation provided in any form during your participation. You should keep this letter for your permanent records, as your job history may be questioned in the future by USCIS.

**Do I need to apply for CPT if I am volunteering?**

No, any international student can volunteer their service to the community. However, it should be noted that private companies generally cannot offer [true volunteer positions](#) and there is a difference in classification between unpaid positions and volunteering. Volunteer positions generally provide public service and are generally ineligible to be offered through private companies. It is highly recommended you obtain CPT for unpaid positions (see above).