

# F-1 Curricular Practical Training

## Definition of Curricular Practical Training

Practical training is temporary employment to gain practical experience in the field of study. Curricular practical training is available to F-1 students before completion of the educational objective and is off-campus employment authorized by International Student Services to students meeting the eligibility requirements. According to F-1 regulations, curricular practical training (CPT) must be “an integral part of an established curriculum.” At NMSU, an F-1 student can qualify for CPT if the off-campus employment is: (1) a requirement of the degree program; (2) a position approved by the NMSU Cooperative Education Program; or (3) a requirement for academic credits approved by the academic advisor as integral to the degree program.

## Eligibility

Student must have been enrolled on a full-time basis for one full academic year (two semesters) before eligible for CPT. An exception is graduate students whose programs require immediate curricular training. Curricular practical training is available to F-1 students before completion of the educational objective (graduation).

CPT can be full-time (over 20 hours per week) or part-time (20 hours or less per week). For part-time CPT, the F-1 must also enroll full-time at NMSU. Full-time CPT approved by the NMSU Cooperative Education Program is considered full-time enrollment and course registration is optional.

## Procedures

The following items must be submitted to International Student Services to receive authorization for CPT:

1. F-1 CPT Request Form
2. Academic Advisor’s Curricular Practical Training Recommendation Form
3. For coop positions, NMSU Cooperative Education Program approval (signed copy required). If this is not a coop position, proof of course registration and letter from employer indicating dates of employment, hours per week, location of employment and job duties.
4. Proof of valid health insurance for the CPT period.

## Reminders

If CPT is approved, you will be issued a new I-20 with CPT employment authorization on page 3. Written authorization from the DSO on the I-20 is mandatory. Failure to receive CPT authorization prior to the start of your employment is a violation of your F-1 status.

Employment cannot begin prior to the starting date on the I-20 or extend past the CPT ending date without authorization.

An F-1 student using full-time CPT for one year or more is not eligible for optional practical training (OPT). Part-time CPT does not affect OPT eligibility.