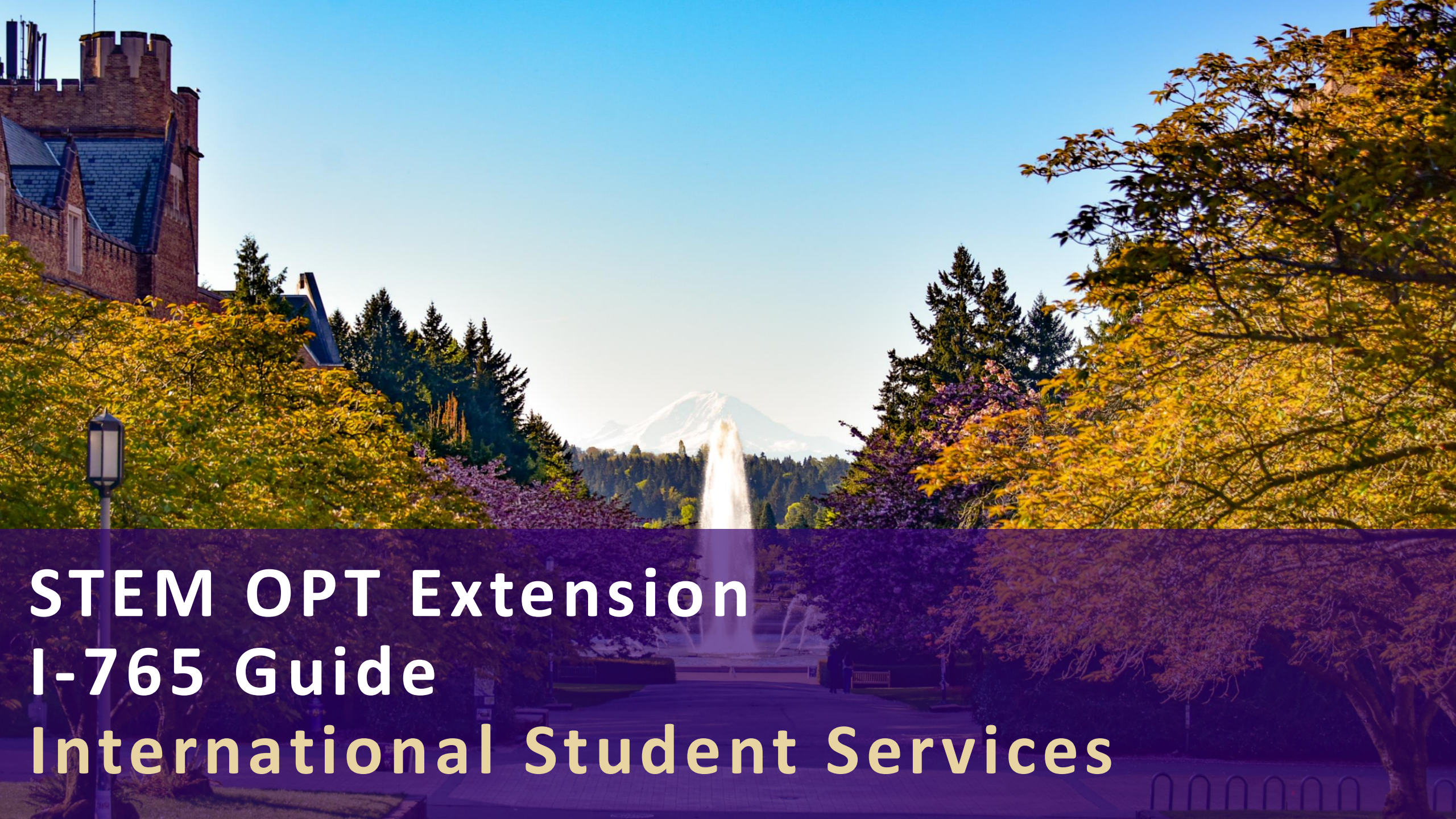


STEM OPT Extension
I-765 Guide
International Student Services

Form I-765: Application for Employment Authorization

The I-765 is an application with USCIS. If approved, you will receive a new Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card for your STEM OPT period.

- Submit the I-765 **after you receive your STEM OPT I-20 from ISS.**
  - You must submit your I-765 **within 60 days** of receiving your STEM OPT I-20.
- The final deadline to submit the I-765 is the last day of your Post-Completion OPT period
- Apply online or by paper.
  - ISS highly recommends you file online.
- Review the ISS STEM OPT Extension webpage for information regarding the OPT application process and timeline.
- If you are applying for Post-Completion OPT, please refer to the Post-Completion OPT I-765 guide.

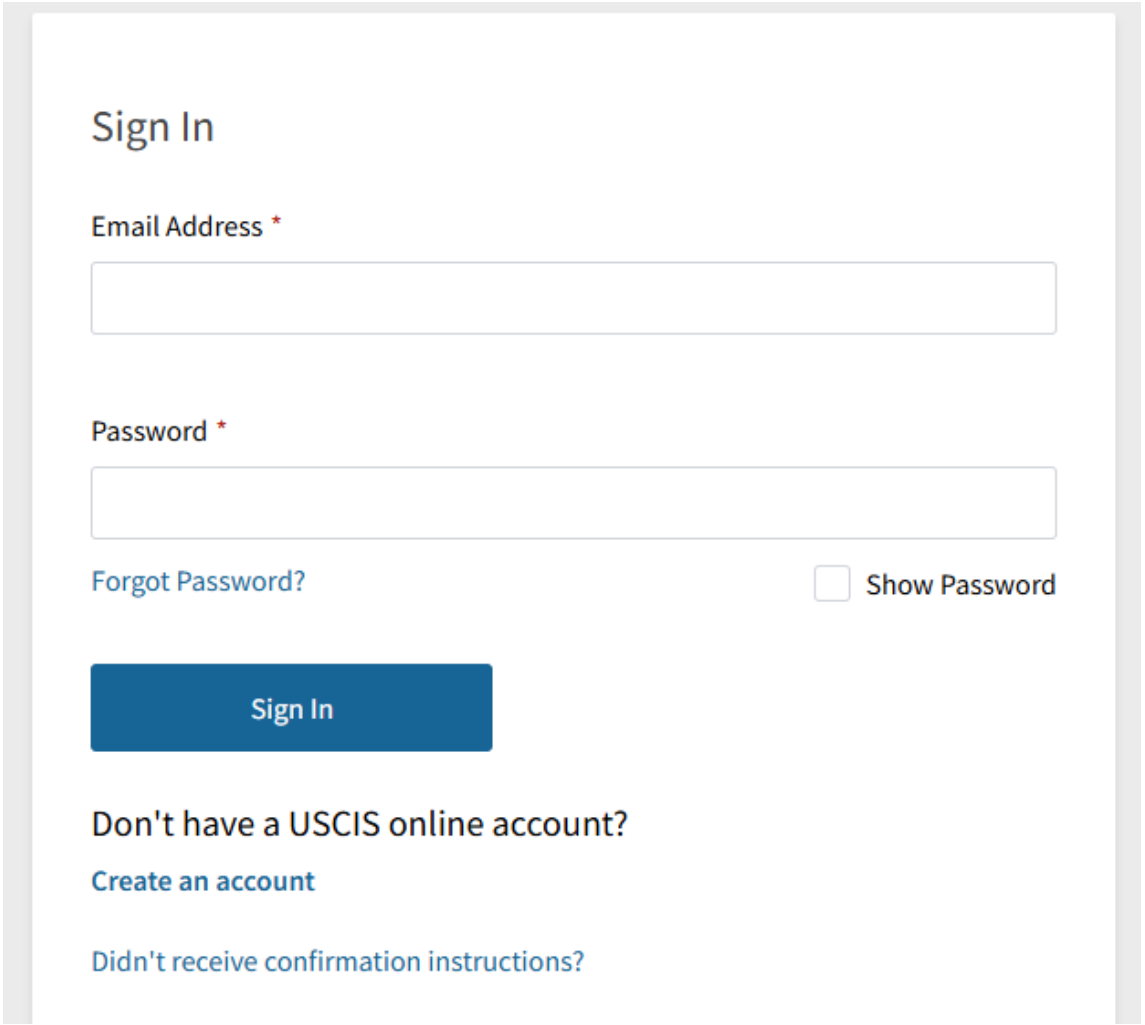
Disclaimer

- This is a general guide for the Form I-765.
- It is your responsibility to ensure your I-765 is completed correctly and accurately.
- It is your responsibility to submit the Form I-765 to USCIS before the deadline.
- **Following this guide does not guarantee approval of your OPT by USCIS and should not be construed as legal advice.**
- Please read the USCIS I-765 instructions HERE.

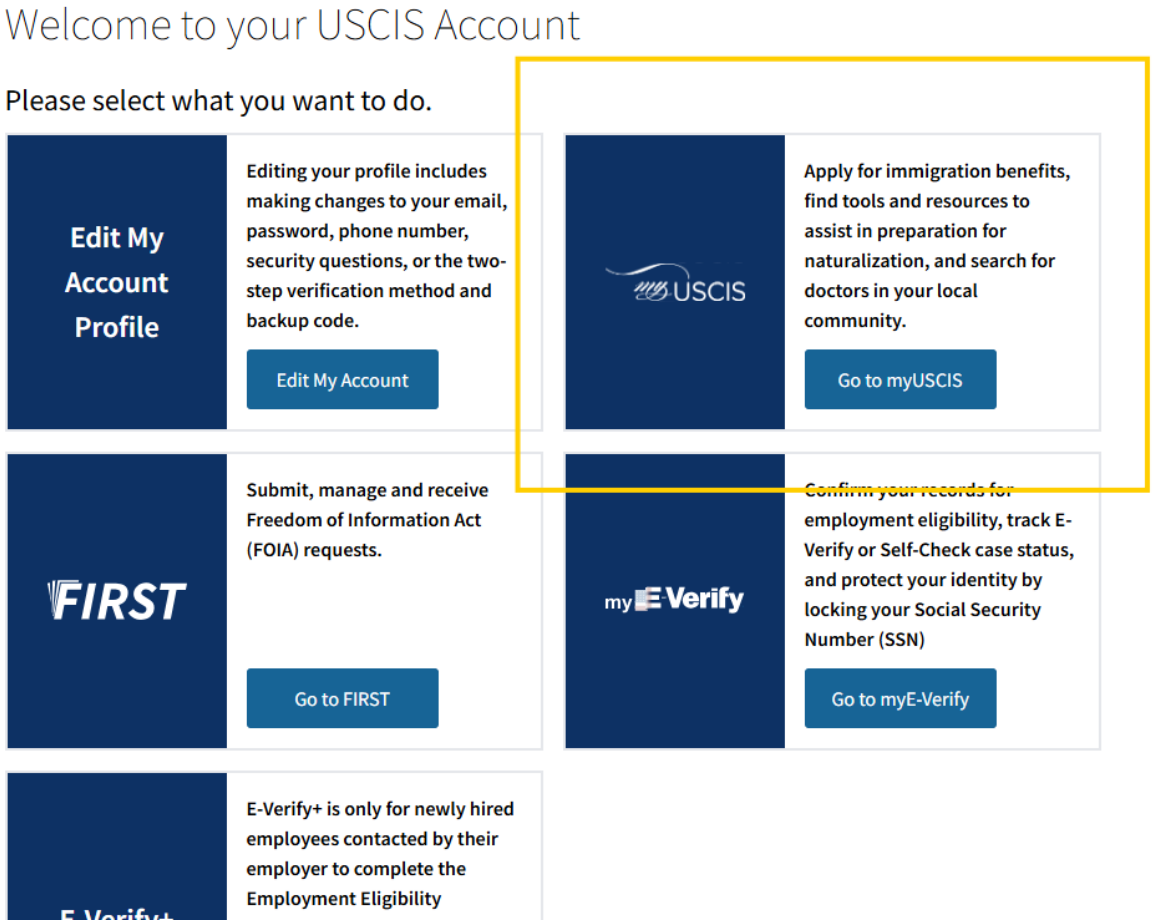
Accessing the I-765

Access your USCIS Account

- Visit https://myaccount.uscis.gov/.
- Log in using your existing USCIS account credentials.
  - If you forgot your password, click “Forgot Password”.
- If you are unable to access your existing USCIS account, you can use these USCIS resources.



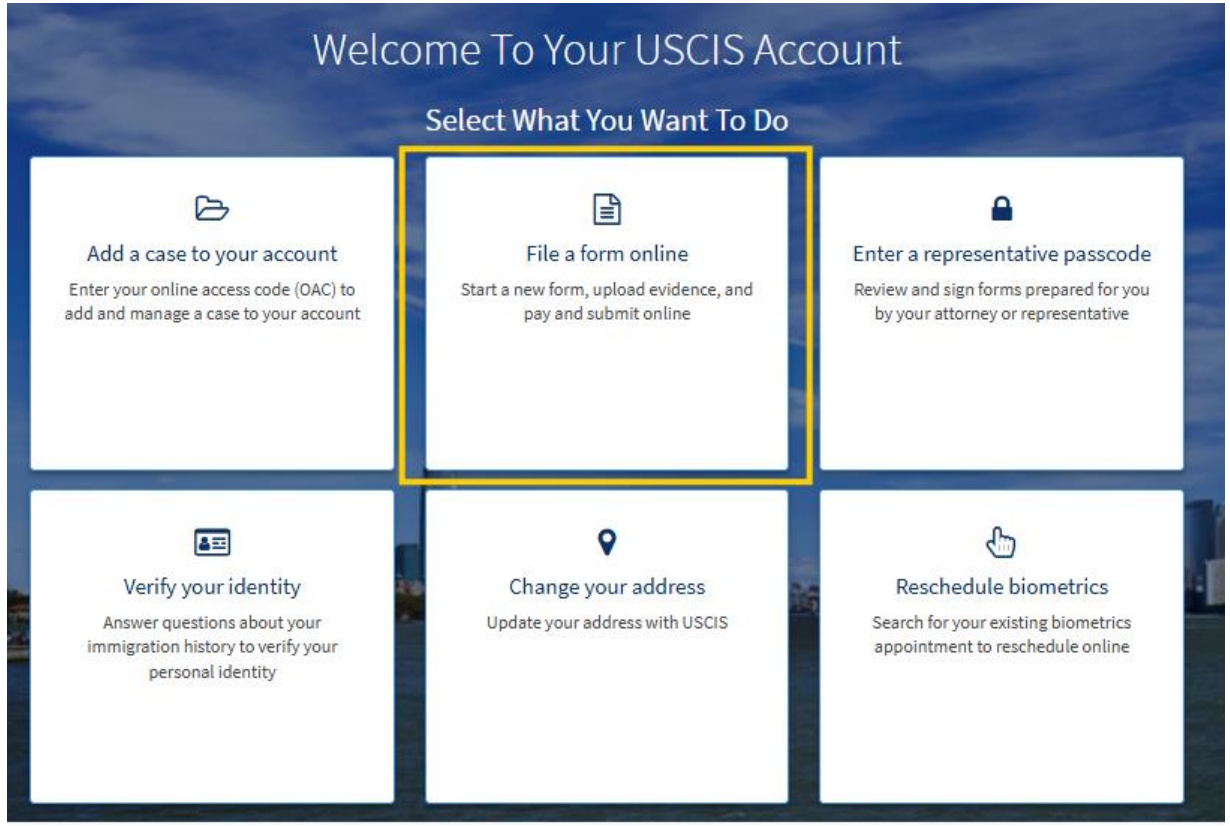
Access myUSCIS



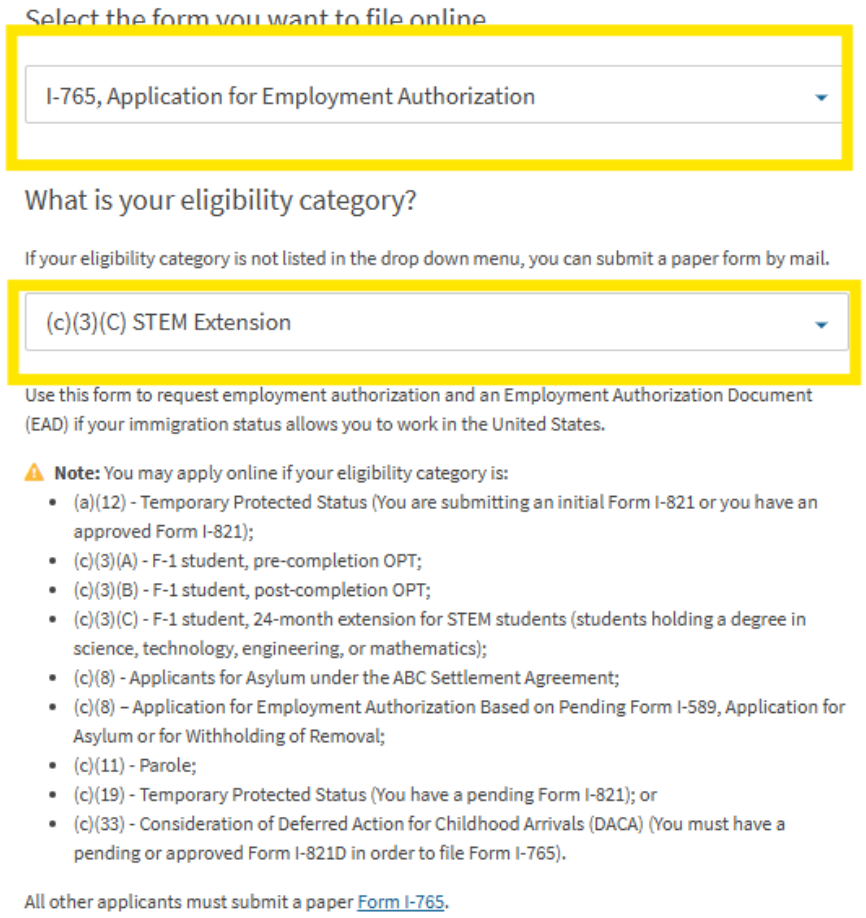
- Click “Go to myUSCIS”.
- “myUSCIS” is where you can file online applications with USCIS.

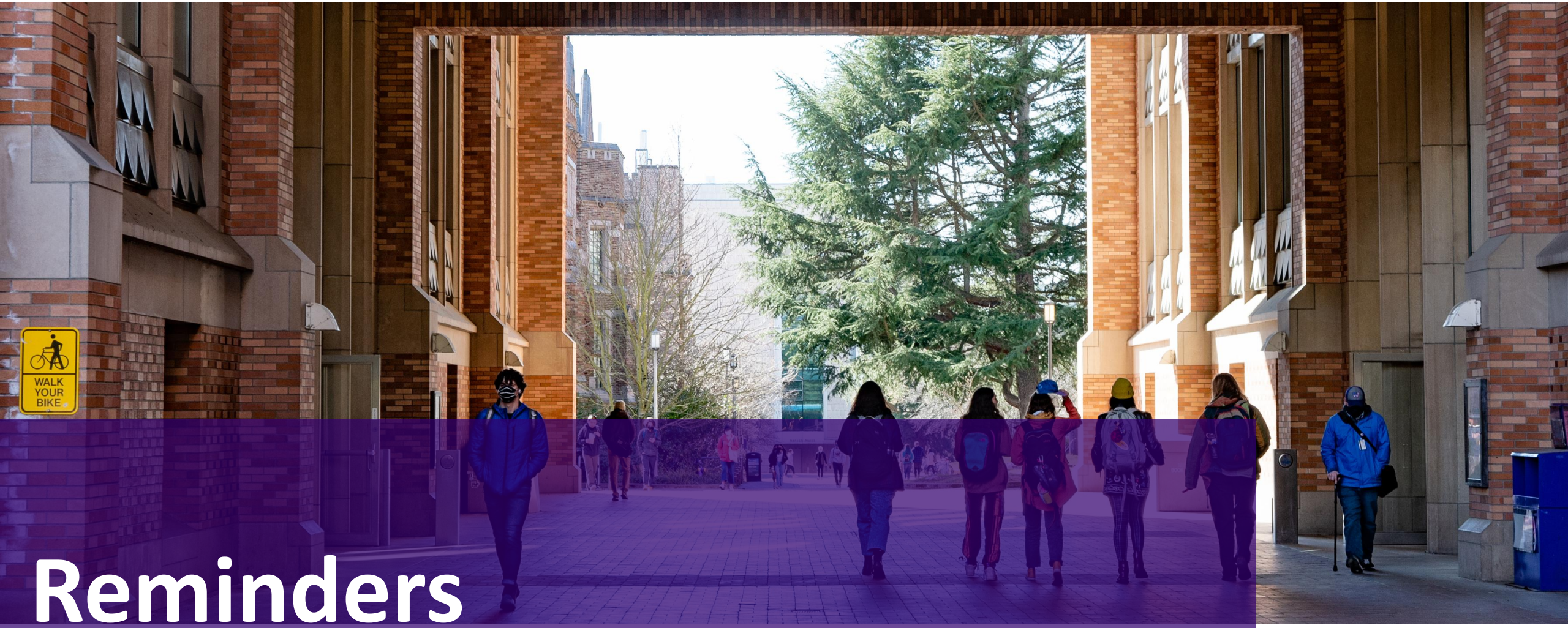
Start your Application

- Click “File a form online”



- Select “I-765, Application for Employment Authorization”.
- Select “(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension”.





Reminders

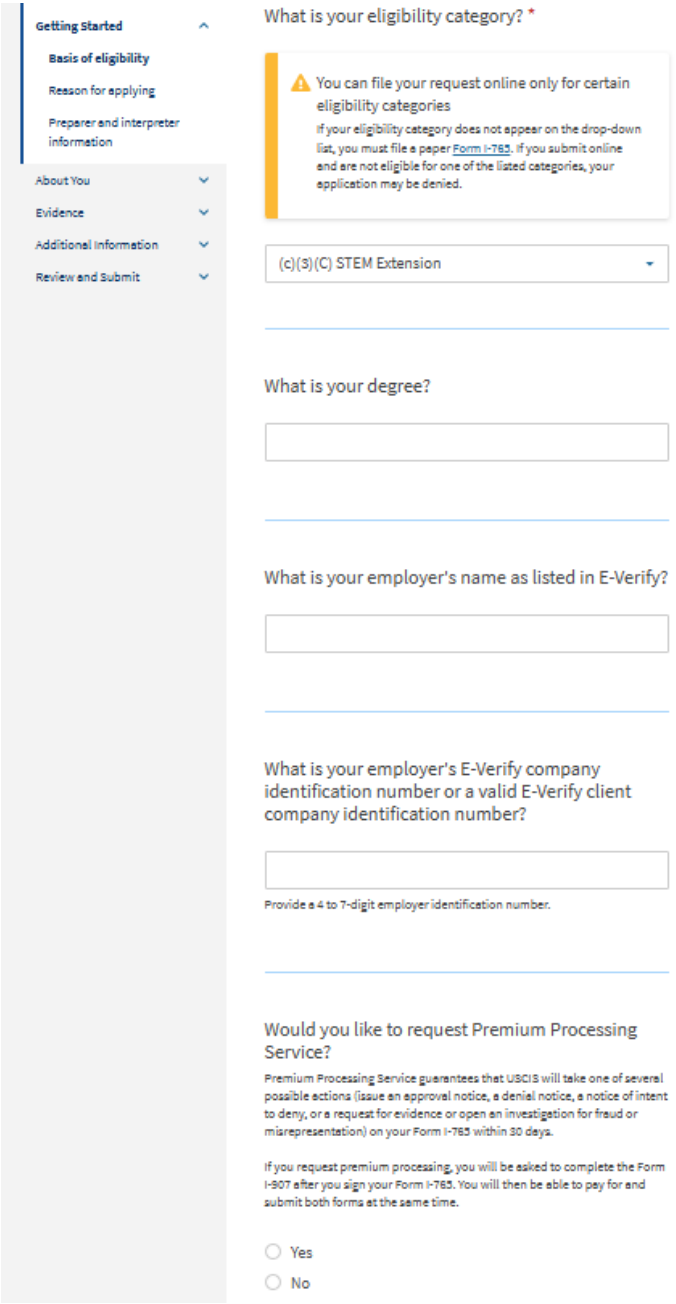
Keep in Mind

- **You must have your STEM OPT I-20 from ISS before submitting the I-765.**
  - You must submit your I-765 **within 60 days** of receiving your STEM OPT I-20.
- You must be **physically inside the U.S.** when submitting the I-765.
- ISS recommends you include all information that is applicable to you.
  - Even if it is not marked with an asterisk (*).
- If you do not work on your I-765 draft for more than 30 days, USCIS will delete it.
- The final step in the I-765 is to pay the application fee. Do not pay the I-765 fee if you are not ready to submit your application to USCIS. You can find the most up-to-date fee information HERE.

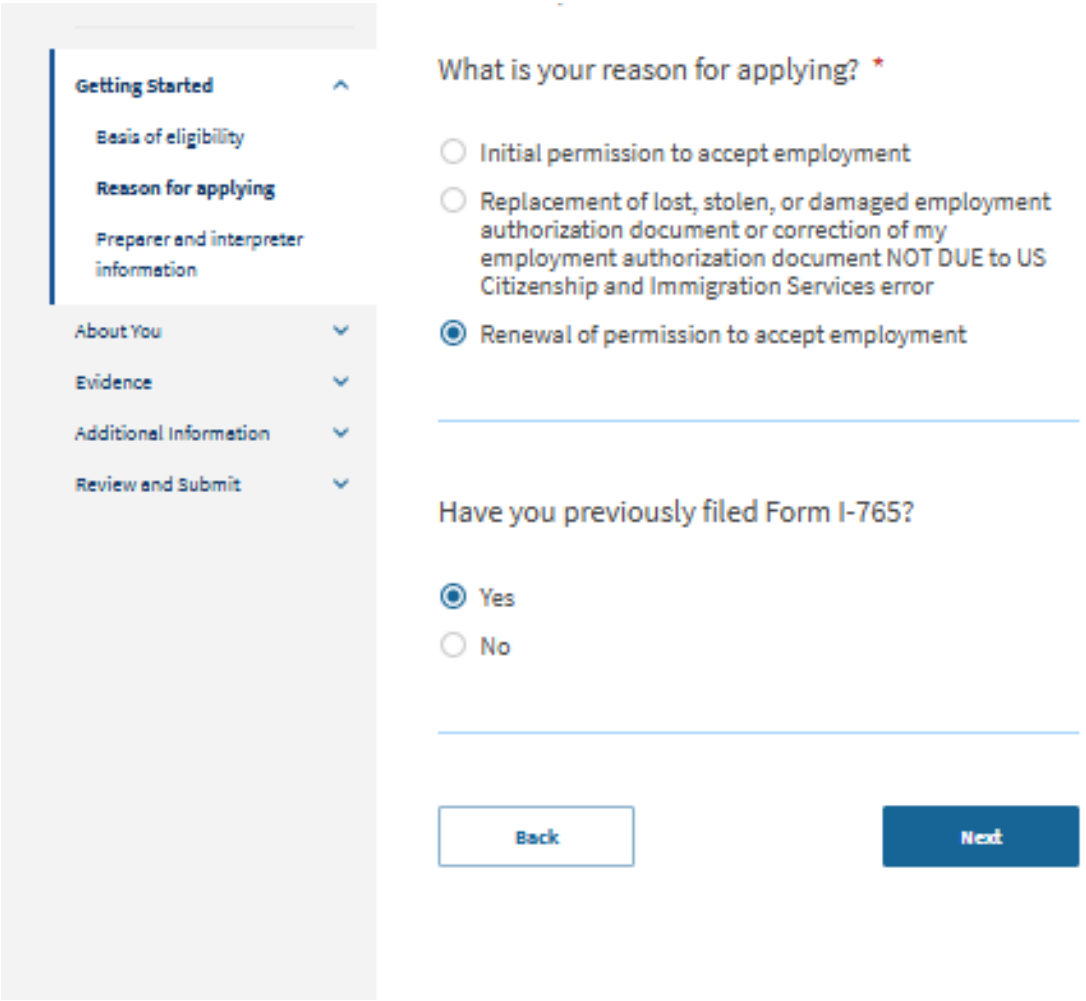
Getting Started

Getting Started:
Basis of eligibility

- Select “(c)(3)(C) STEM Extension”.
- Write your degree as stated on your official transcript.
- Provide your employer details.
- Premium Processing
  - Premium Processing is optional.
  - If you want premium processing, you can choose to apply for it when you submit your I-765 or add it later while your I-765 is pending.
  - If you choose to apply for premium when submitting the I-765, you will pay the I-765 fee and premium processing fee together.
  - View the premium processing fee information HERE.



Getting Started:
Reason for Applying



Reason for Applying:

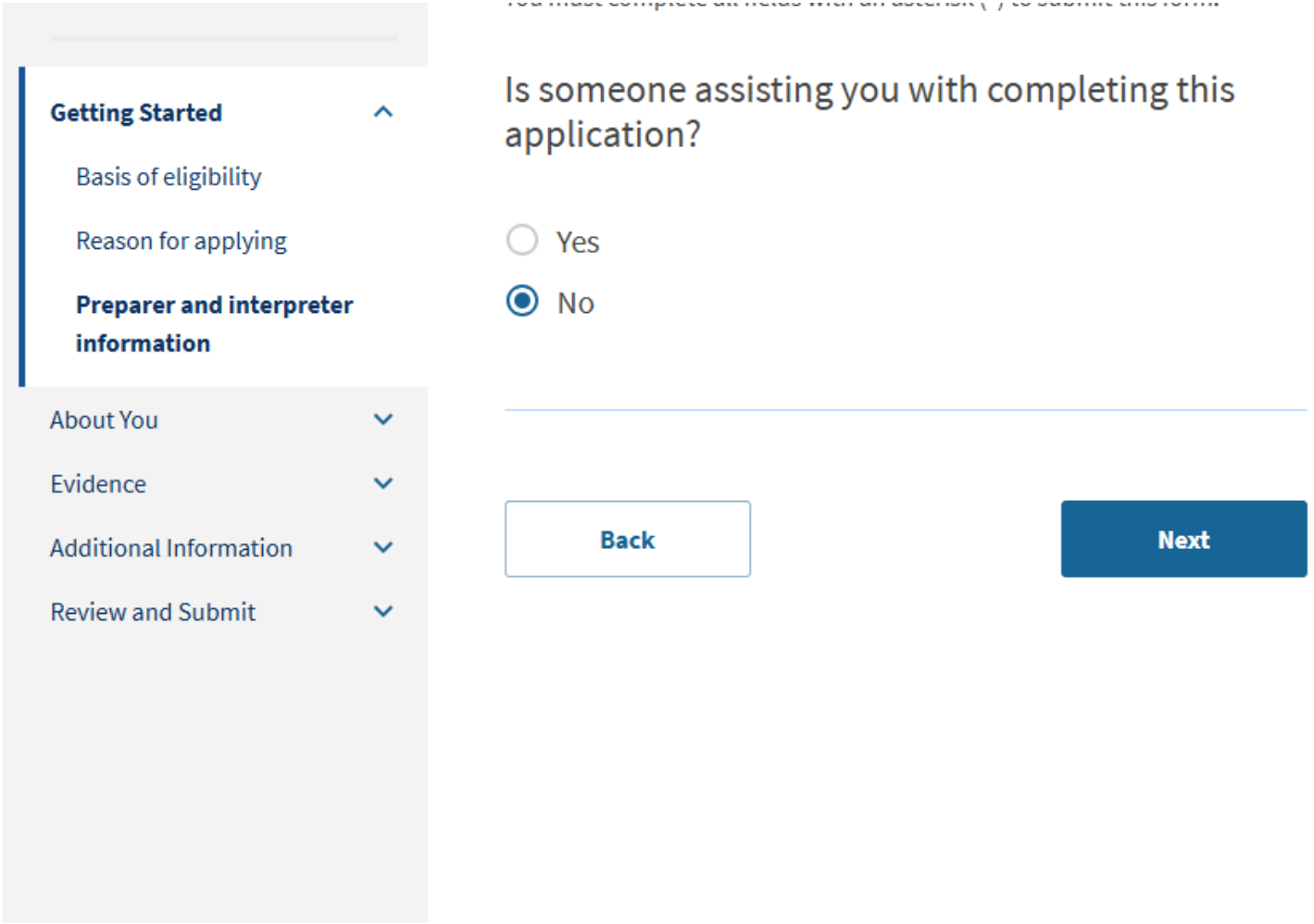
- Select “Renewal”.
- Replacement: If you were authorized for STEM OPT, but your EAD was lost, stolen, damaged, or needs to be corrected.

Previously Filed Form I-765:

- Select “Yes”.

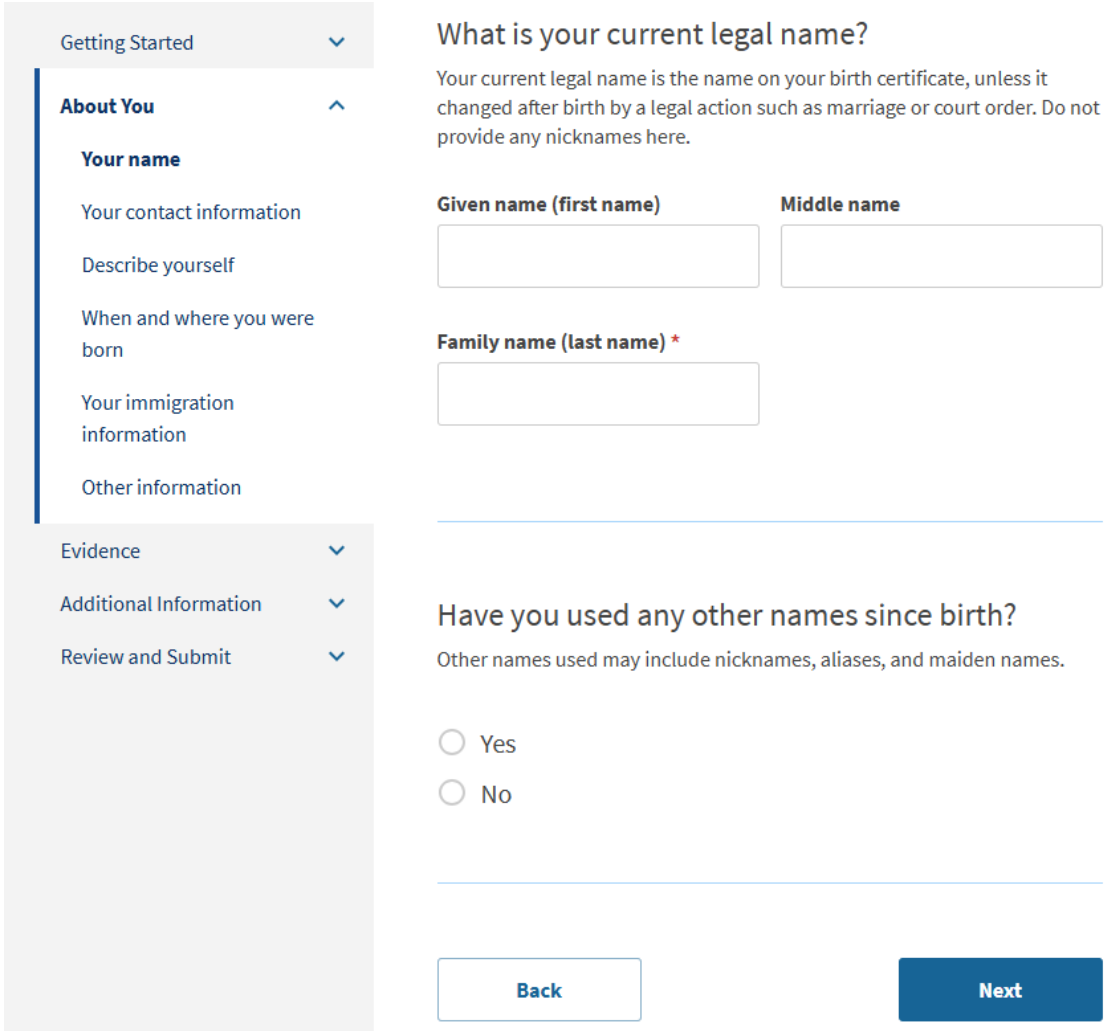
Getting Started: Preparer and Interpreter

- If someone is helping you complete your application, you will need to enter information about them.



About You

About You: Your Name

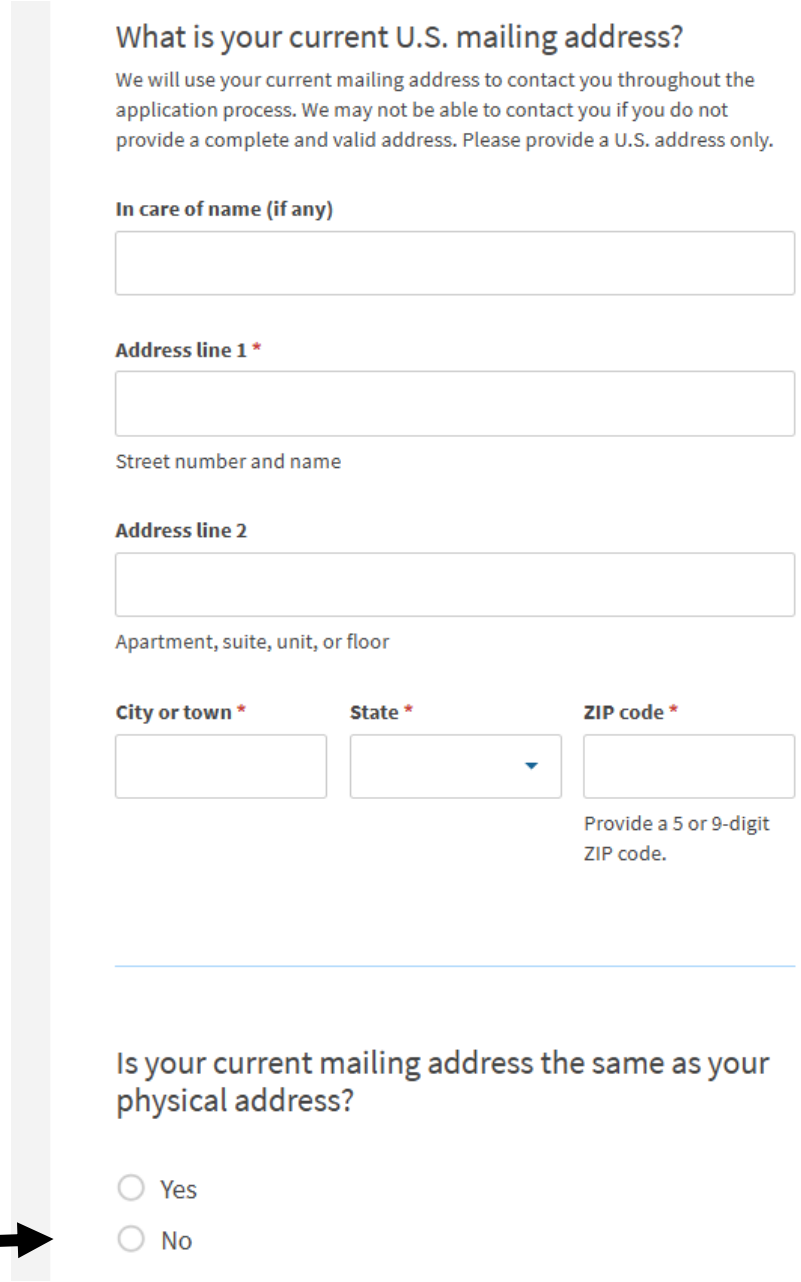


- Type in your name as it appears on your I-20.

- If you have used any other names on official records, please include those (i.e., maiden names, preferred names).

About You:
Contact Information

- Provide your contact information.
- Your EAD card and any notices will be sent to the mailing address on file. Please use a secure address that will be valid throughout your I-765 processing.
- "In Care of Name"
  - If you are not physically residing at the mailing address, indicate the name of the person who is.
- If your mailing address and physical address are different, provide your current physical address here.



What is your current U.S. mailing address?

We will use your current mailing address to contact you throughout the application process. We may not be able to contact you if you do not provide a complete and valid address. Please provide a U.S. address only.

In care of name (if any)

Address line 1 *

Street number and name

Address line 2

Apartment, suite, unit, or floor

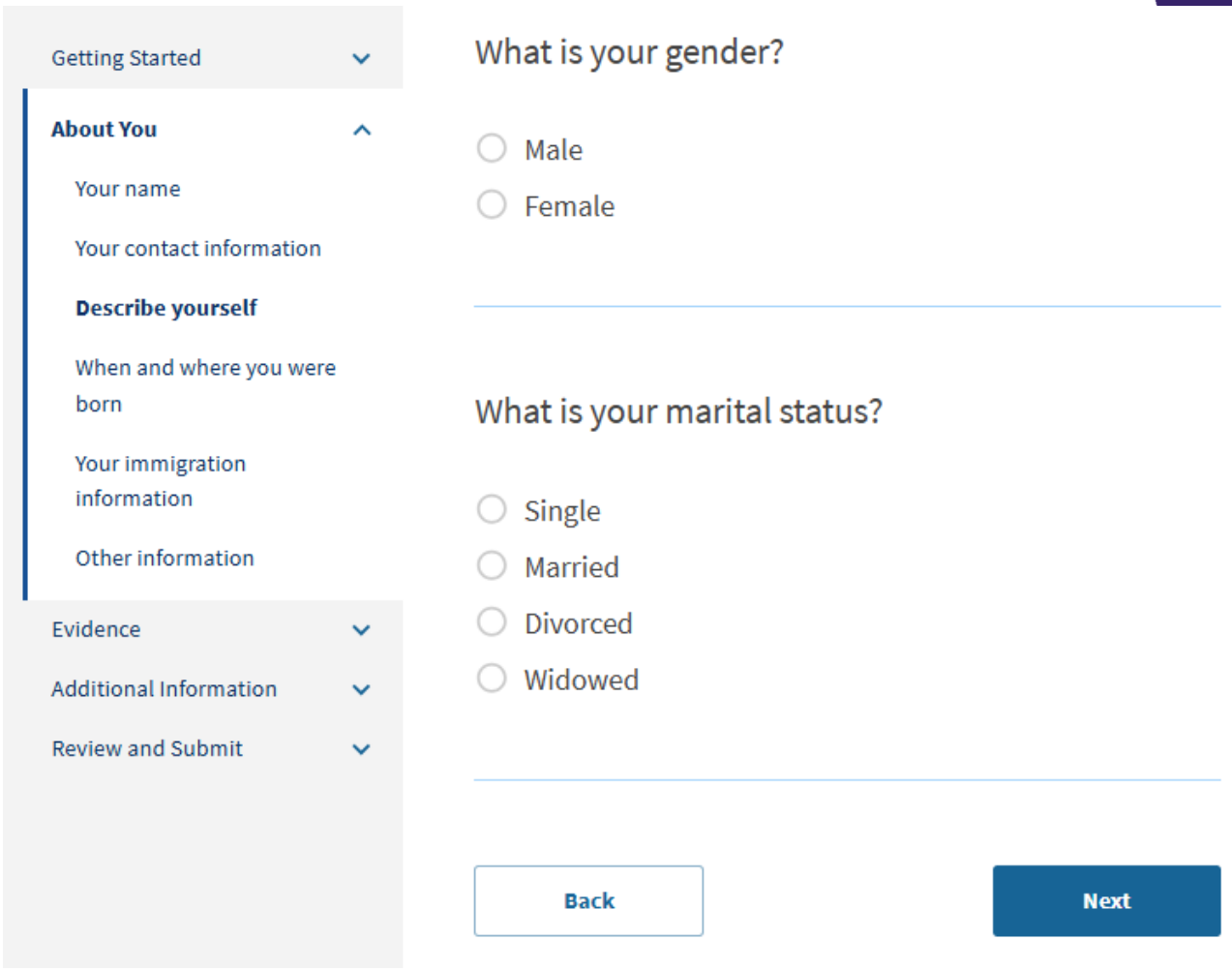
City or town * **State *** **ZIP code ***

Provide a 5 or 9-digit ZIP code.

Is your current mailing address the same as your physical address?

- Yes
- No

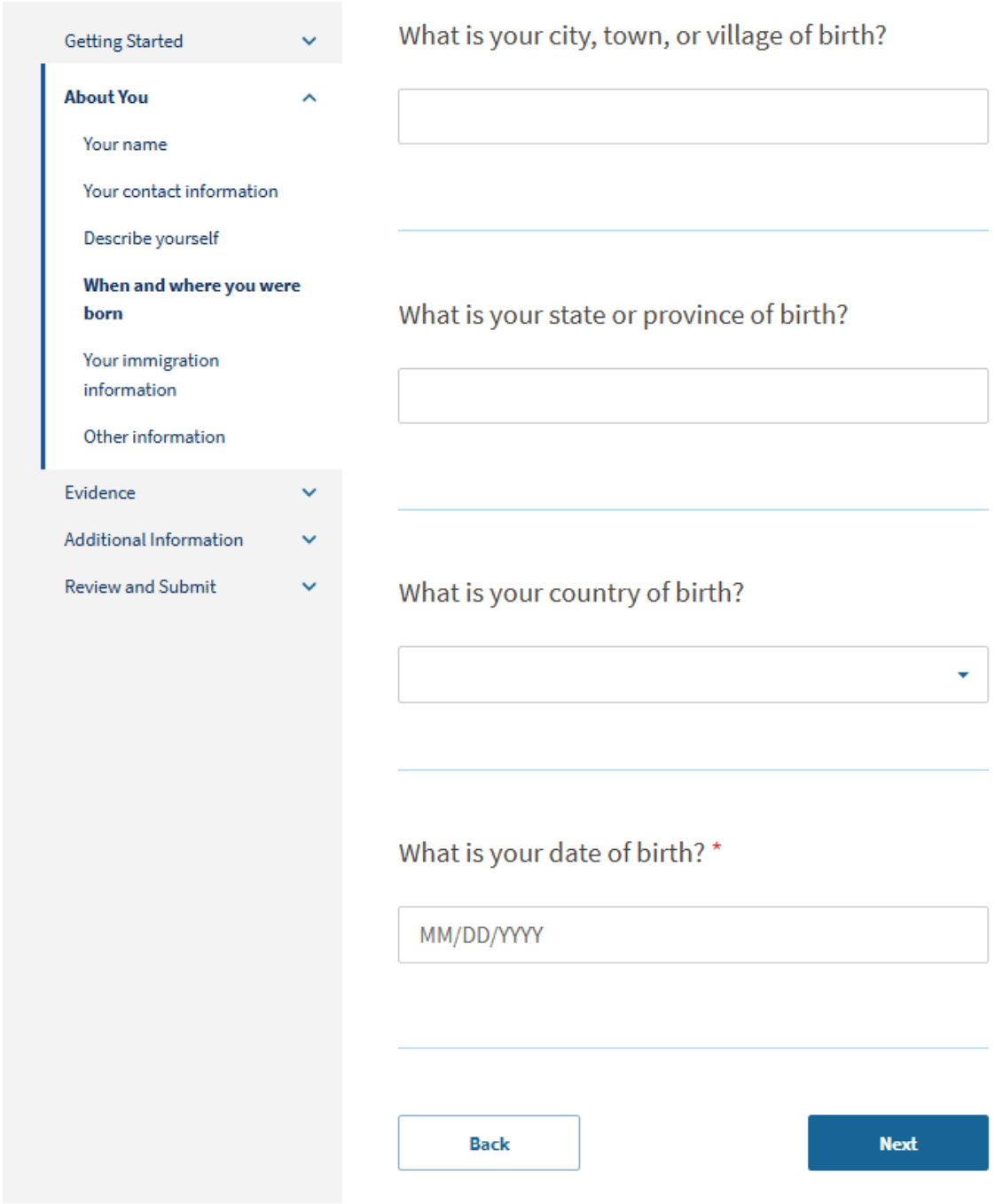
About You: Describe Yourself

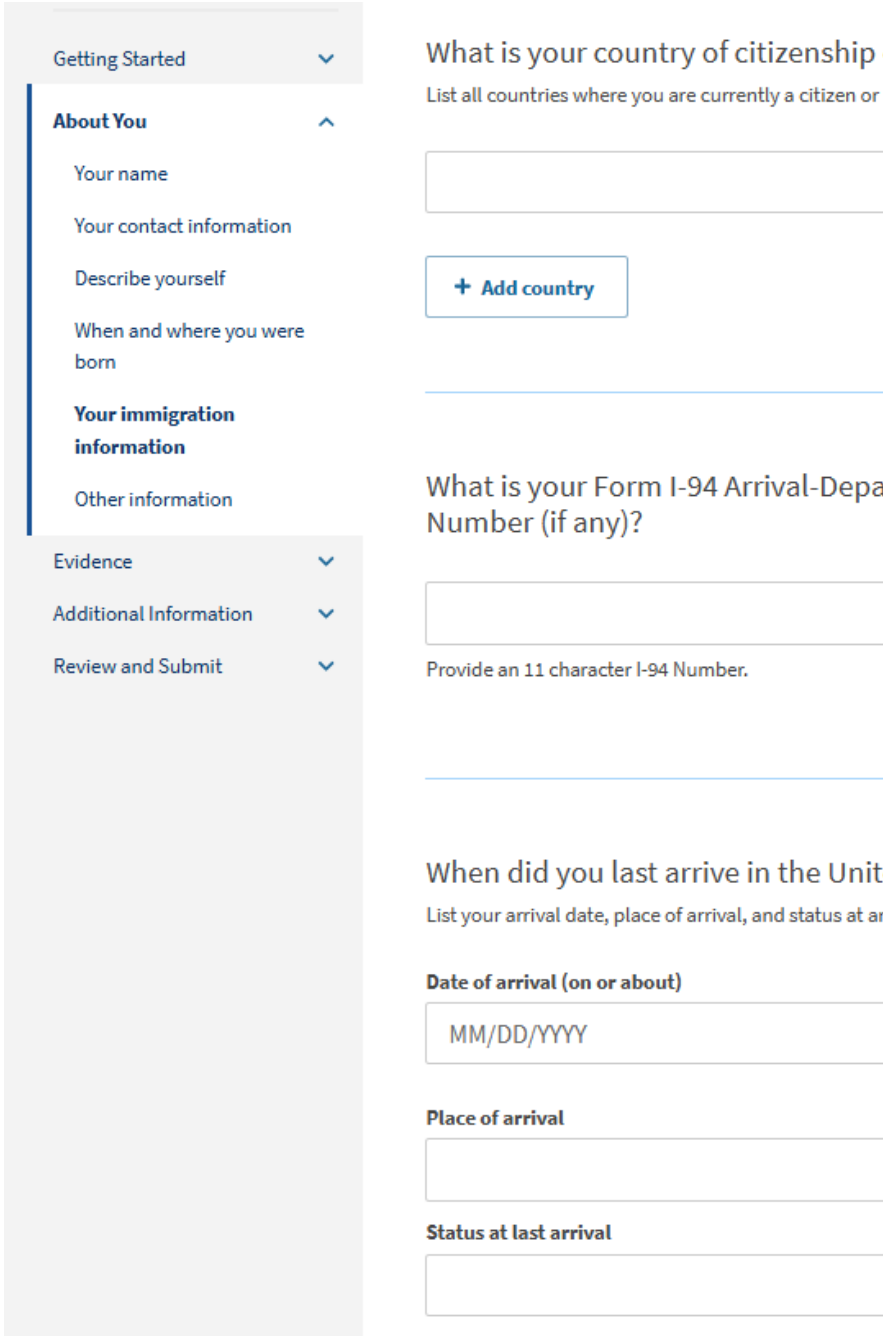


- Provide your gender and marital status.

About You: When and Where you Were Born

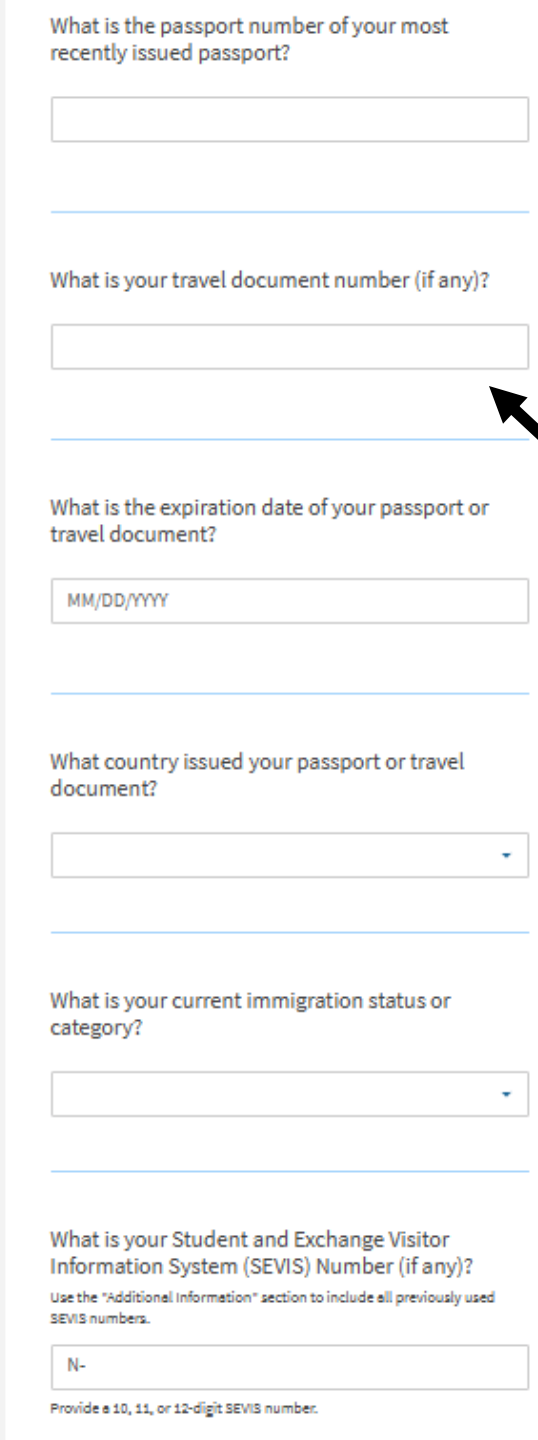
- Provide your location of birth as indicated on your birth certificate.
- If the country's name has changed or no longer exists, select the name of the country as it was named when you were born. If that name is not listed, select the name of the country as it is today.
- Date of Birth: Use the U.S. date formatting (Month/Day/Year)





About You: Your Immigration Information

- List all countries you are a citizen or national of.
- Follow the steps outlined HERE to get your I-94.
  - If you did an in-country change of status and have not left the country since, your most recent I-94 will be on the bottom of your approval notice.
- Use your I-94 record/travel history to fill out your most recent arrival information.

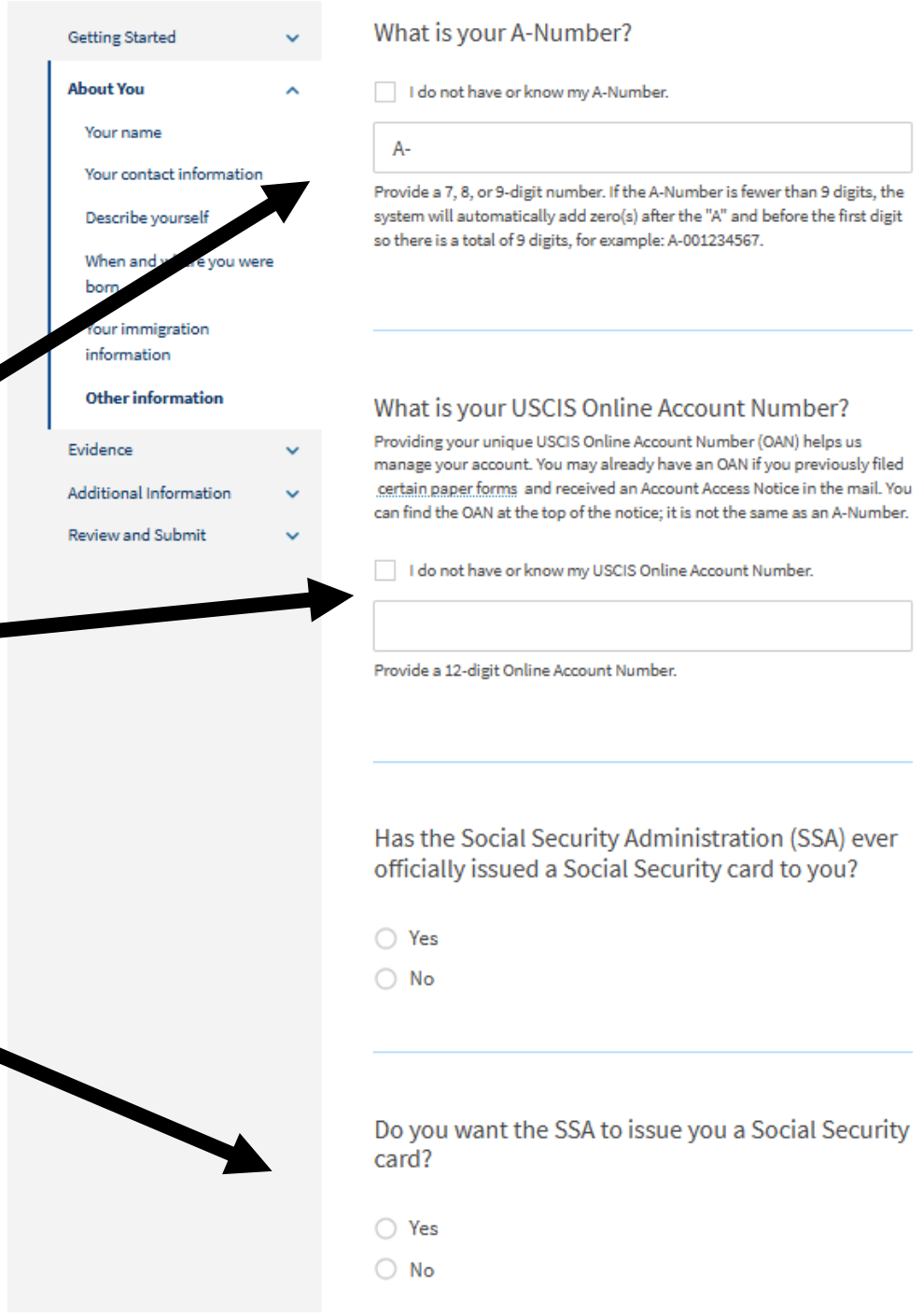


About You: Your Immigration Information

- Provide your most recent passport information.
- Travel Document Number
  - Most students do not have a travel document number. If you do not, skip this question.
- Current Immigration Status or Category
  - Select “F-1”.
- Your SEVIS Number is written at the top of your I-20.

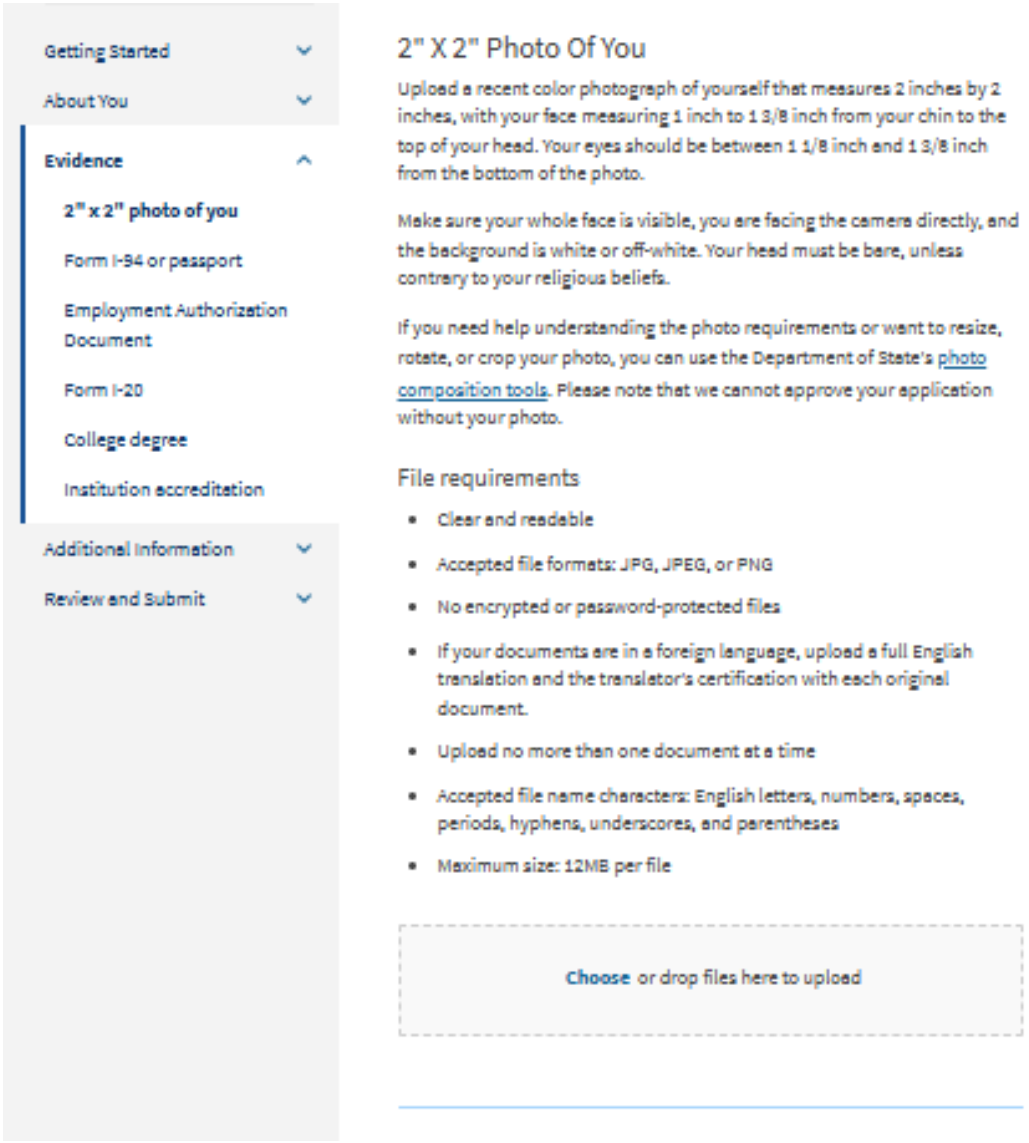
About You:
Other Information

- Provide the USCIS# written on your Post-Completion OPT EAD card.
- If you do not know your USCIS Online Account Number, please indicate that.
- If you do not have an SSN, ISS recommends you select “Yes”.
  - If you select “Yes”, you will be prompted to provide your parent’s names.



Evidence

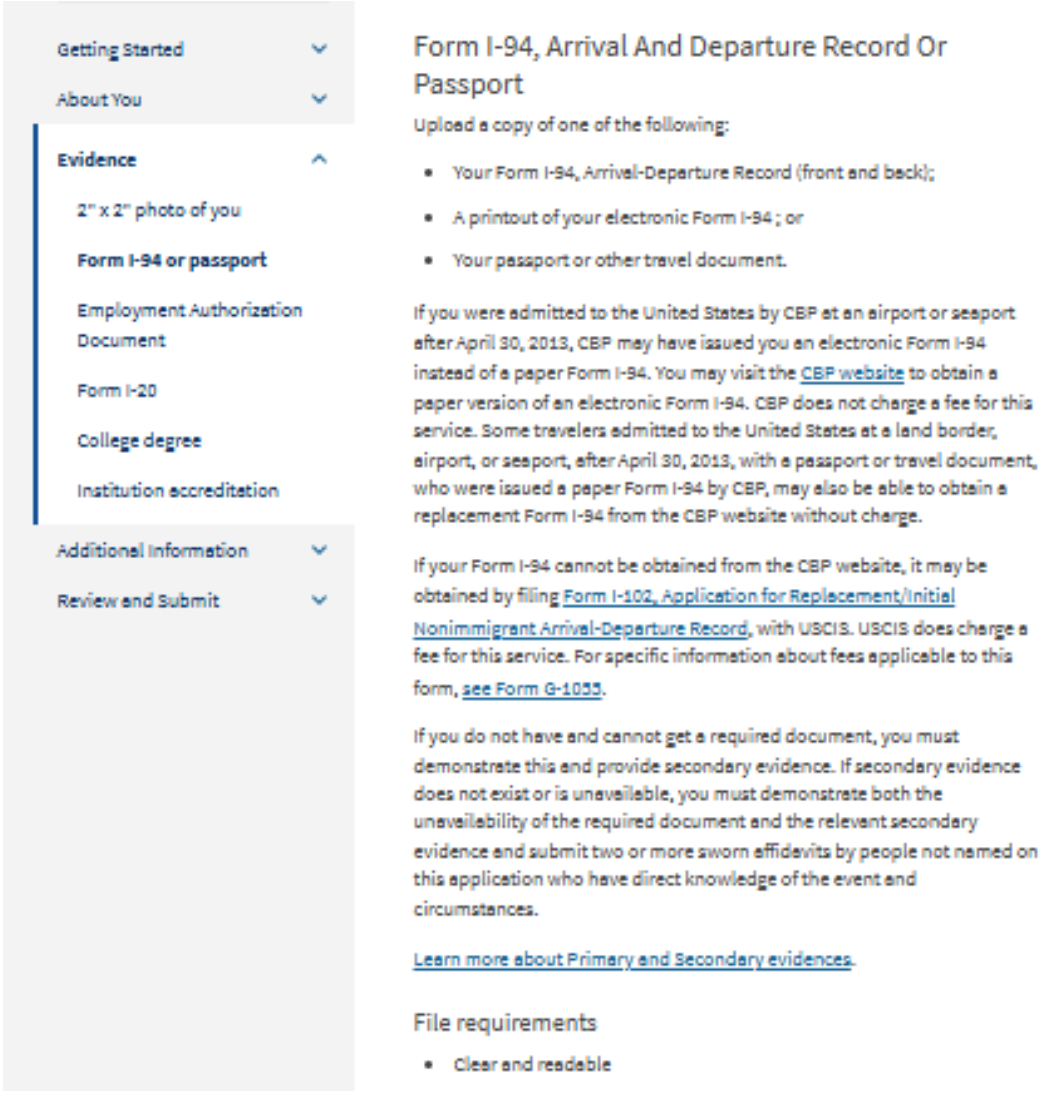
Evidence: 2 x 2 Photo



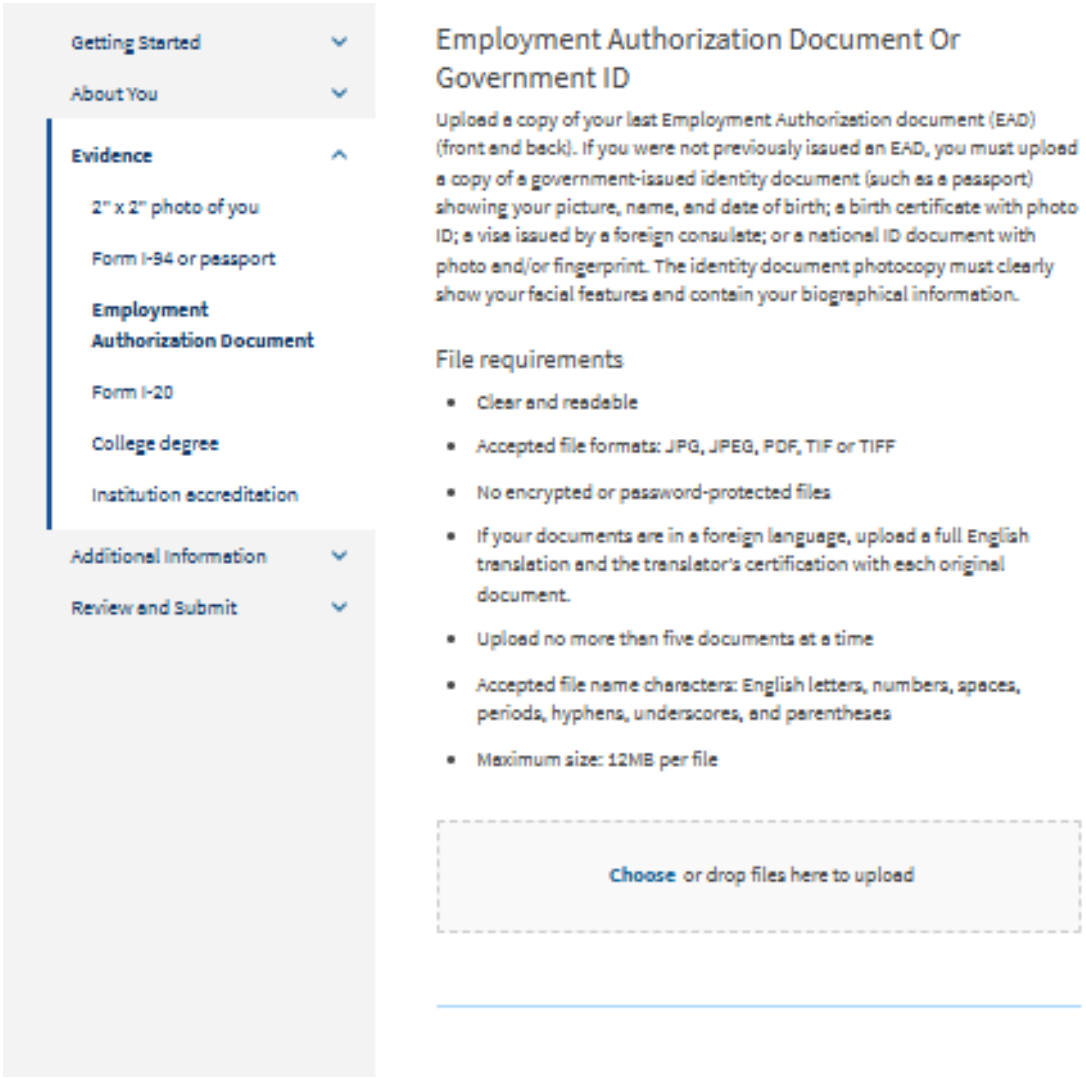
- Your photo should be recent (taken within the last 30 days).
- The photo must meet USCIS standards.
  - As of December 12, 2025, USCIS accepts only photographs taken at an Application Support Center (ASC) during a Biometrics Services Appointment (BSA), or by other USCIS-authorized entities.
  - If your submitted photo does not meet their requirements, you may receive a request to attend a Biometrics Services Appointment at an ASC.

Evidence: Form I-94 or Passport

- Provide your I-94 and/or a photo of your passport (the biographical page).



Evidence: Employment Authorizati Document



- Provide your Post-Completion OPT EAD card.
- If you have had multiple EADs in the past, provide photos of all of them.

Evidence: Form I-20

- Upload your **STEM OPT I-20** from ISS.
- Reminders!
  - You need to sign page 1 by hand.
  - You must apply to USCIS within 60 days of receiving your STEM OPT I-20.
  - Make sure page 2 includes the STEM OPT recommendation from ISS (see example below).

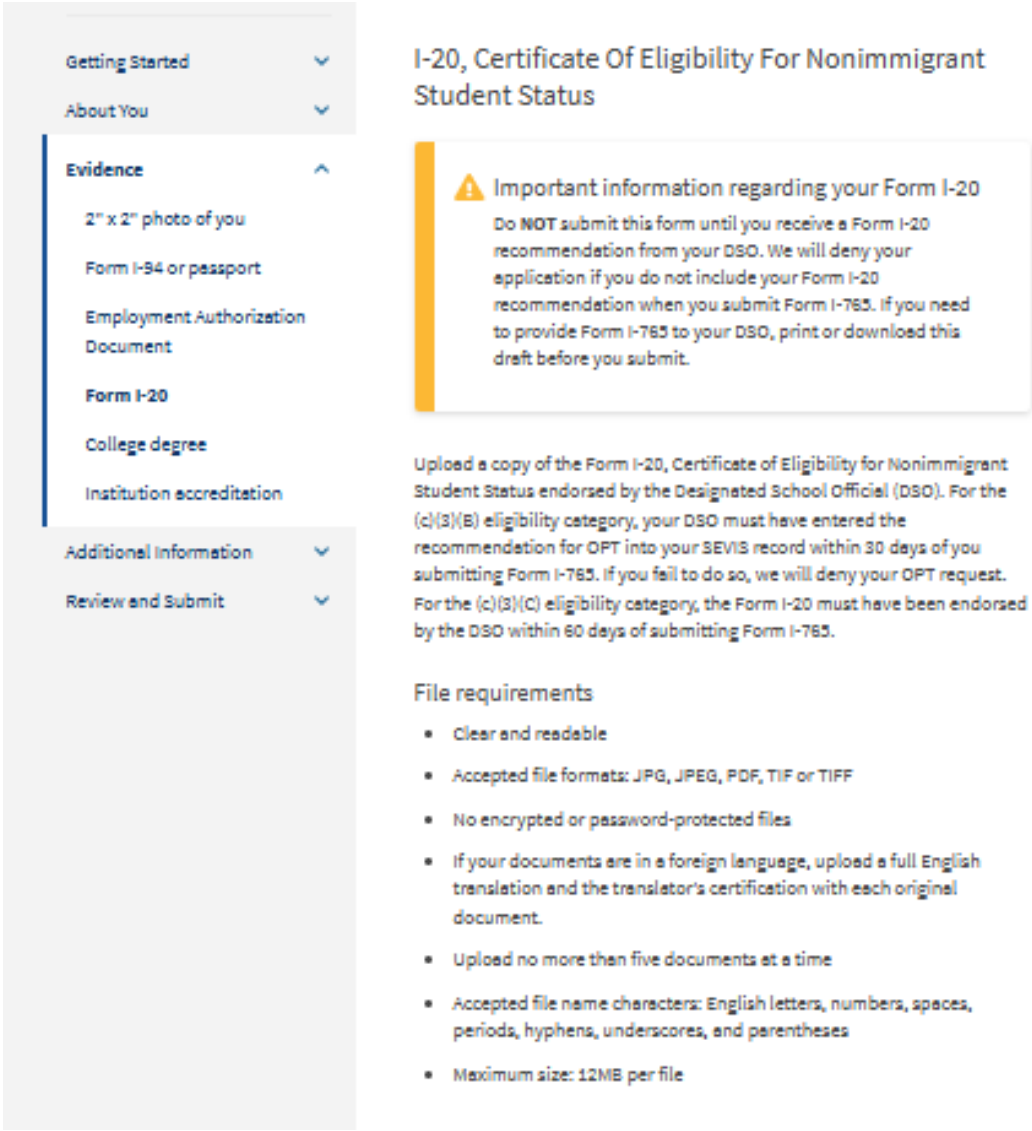
Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status
OMB NO. 1653-0038

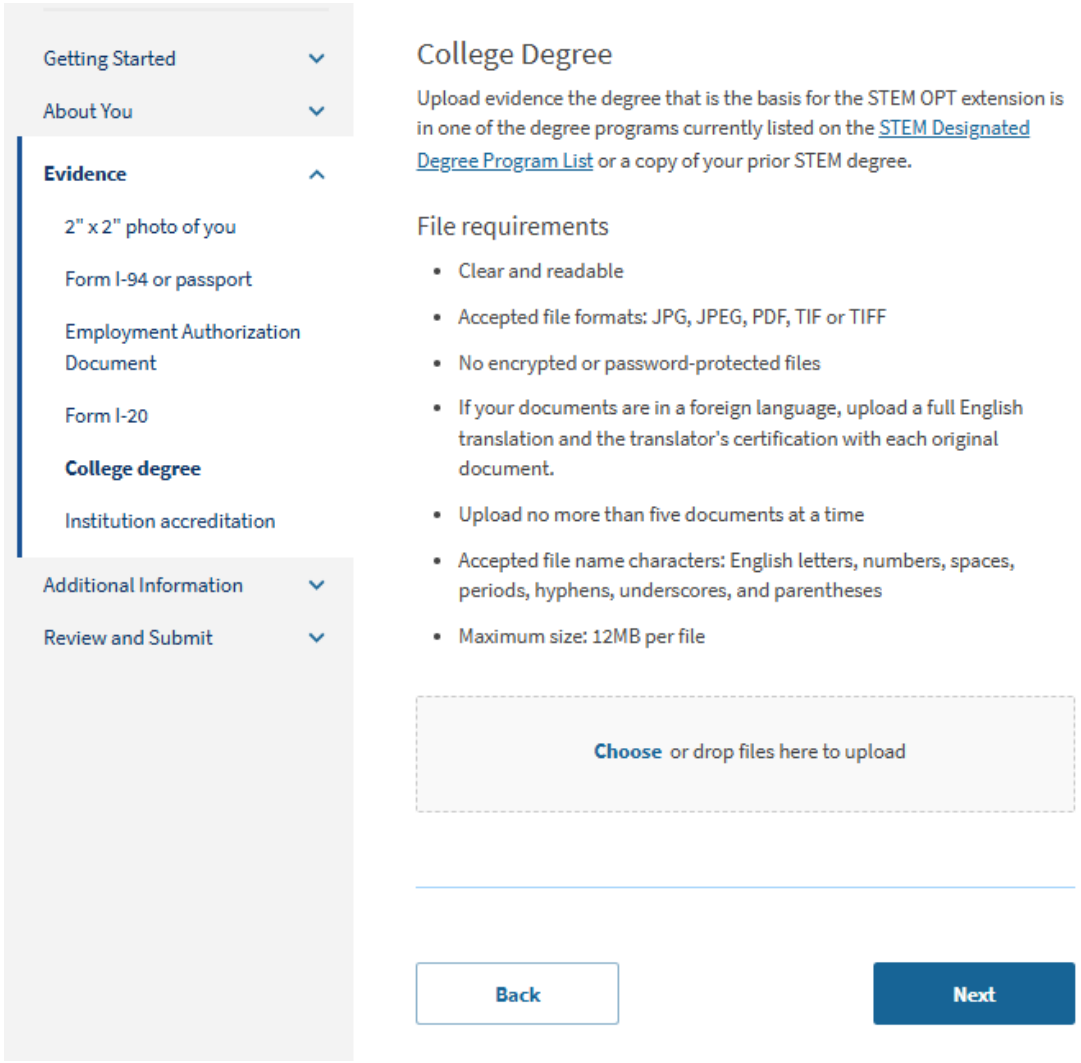
SEVIS ID: [redacted] **(F-1)** **NAME:** [redacted]

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

TYPE	FULL/PART-TIME	STATUS	START DATE	END DATE
POST-COMPLETION OPT	FULL TIME	APPROVED	16 MARCH 2020	15 MARCH 2021
STEM OPT	FULL TIME	REQUESTED	16 MARCH 2021	15 MARCH 2023



Evidence: College Degree

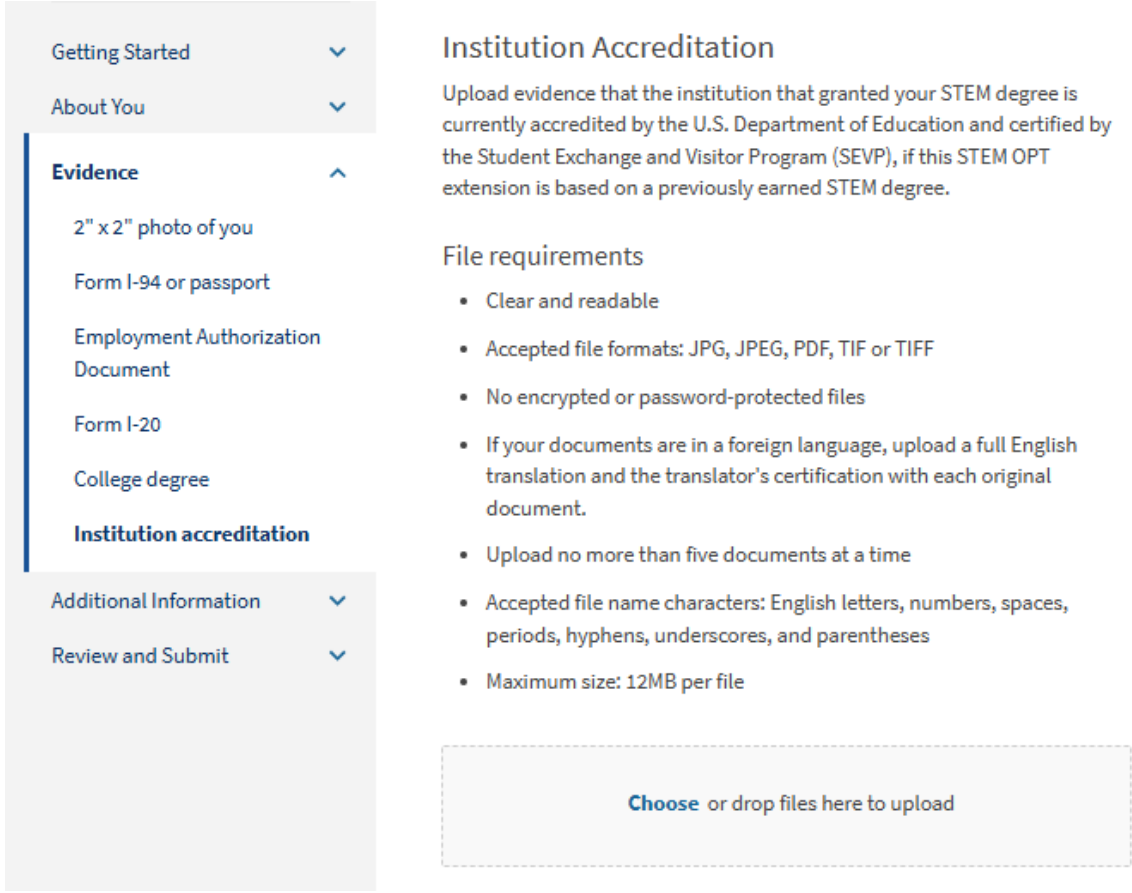


- Upload your diploma and/or transcript showing your STEM degree.
  - An unofficial transcript is okay.

Evidence: Institution Accreditation

- If you are applying for STEM OPT based on your most recent degree earned from UW, leave this section blank.

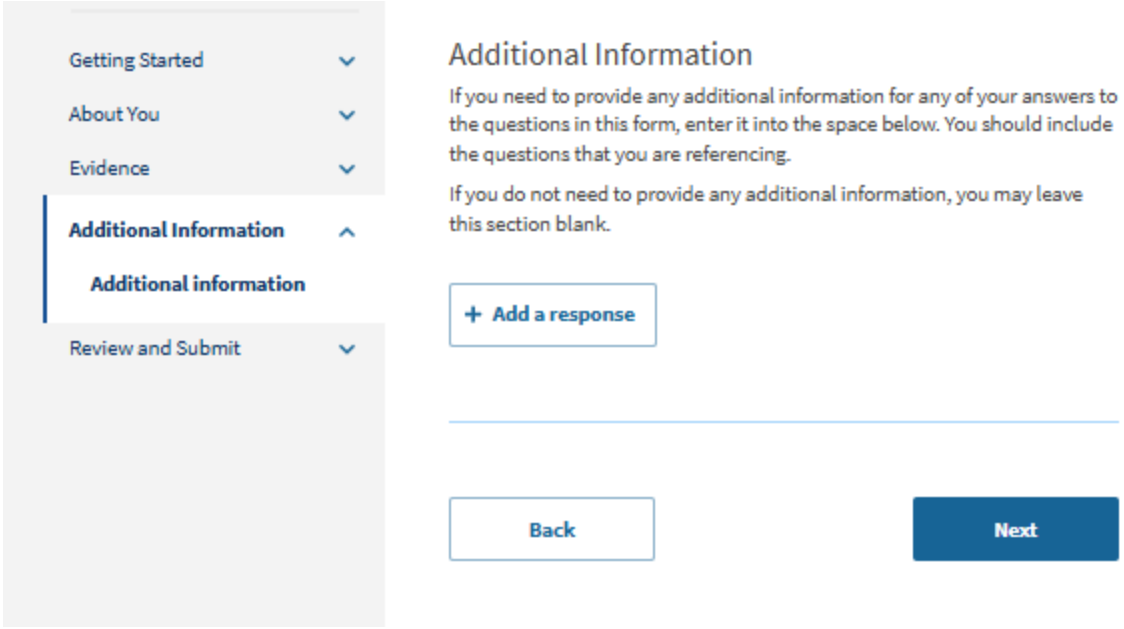
- If you are applying for STEM OPT with a previously earned STEM degree, you must upload an accreditation letter from the school where you earned that degree.

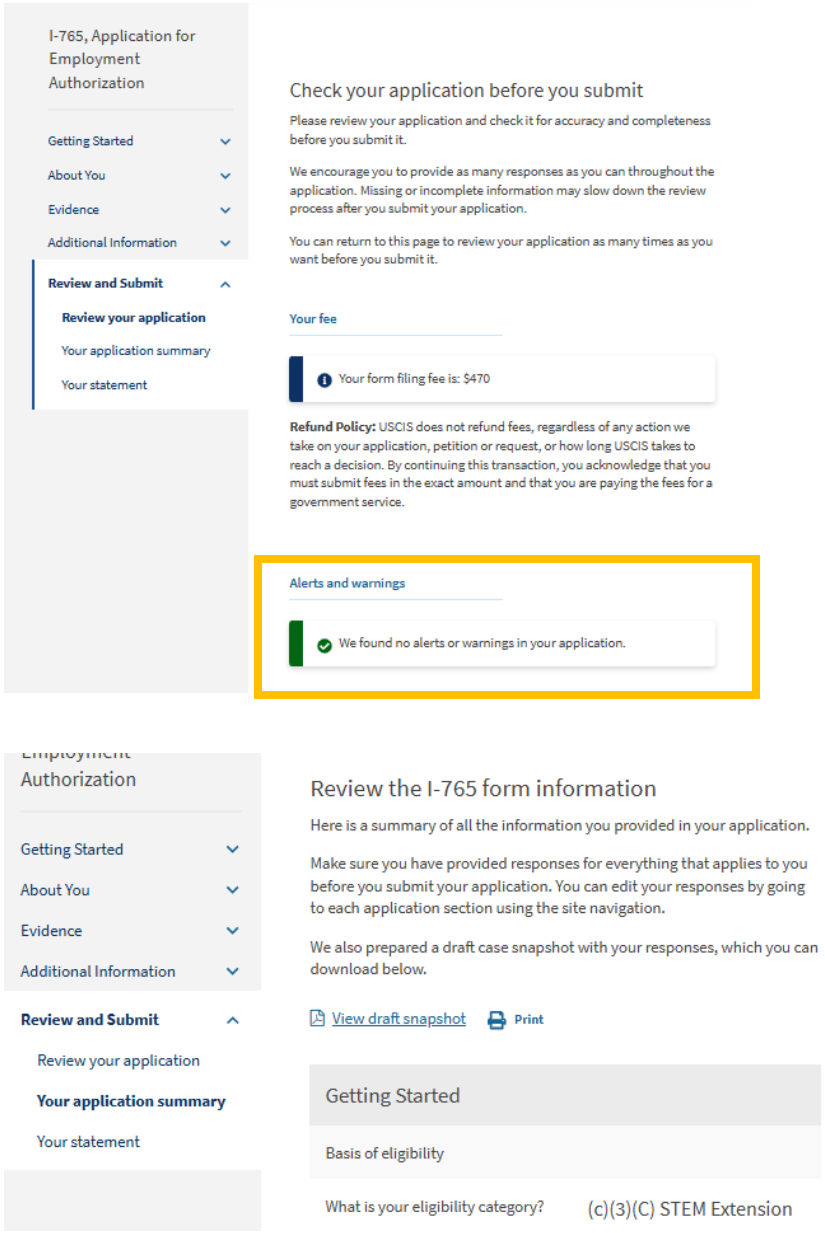


Final Steps

Additional Information

- If you need to provide any additional details regarding a previous answer in the I-765, you may provide that information here.



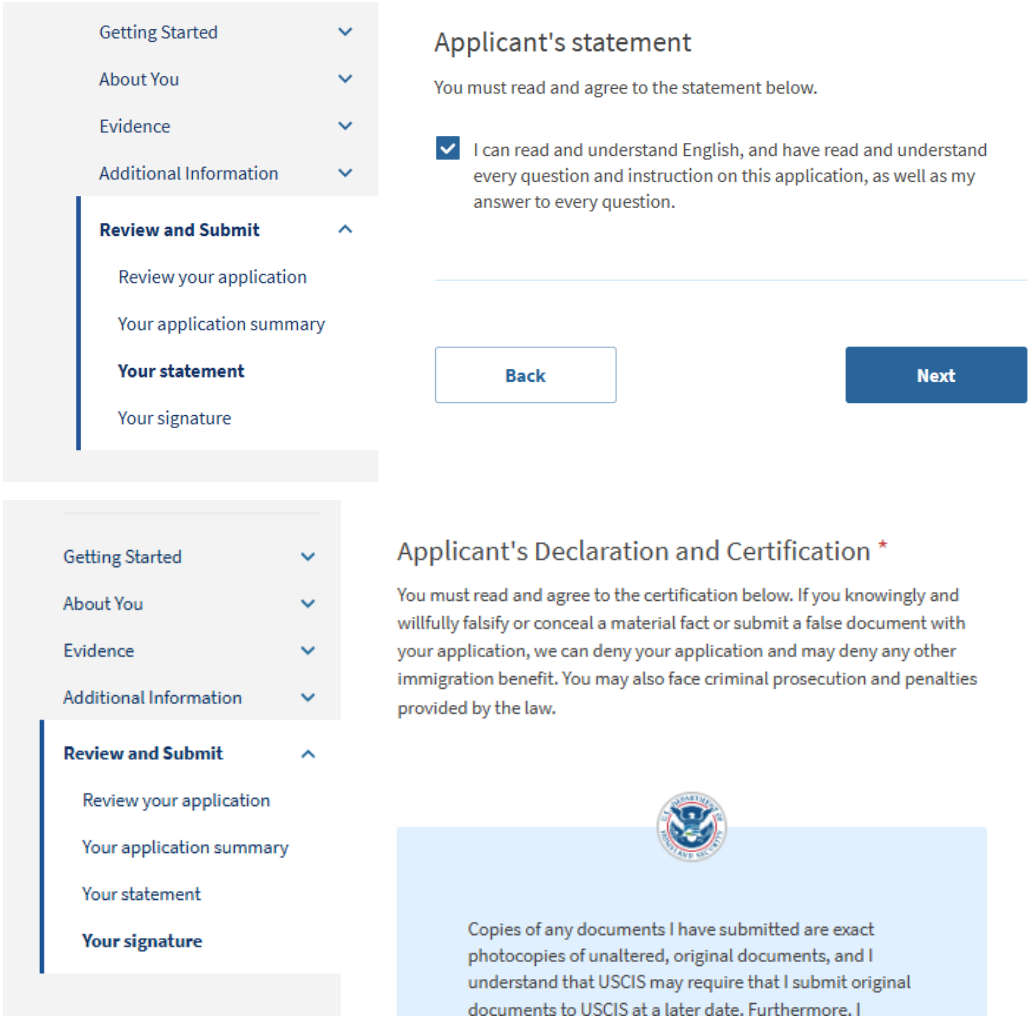


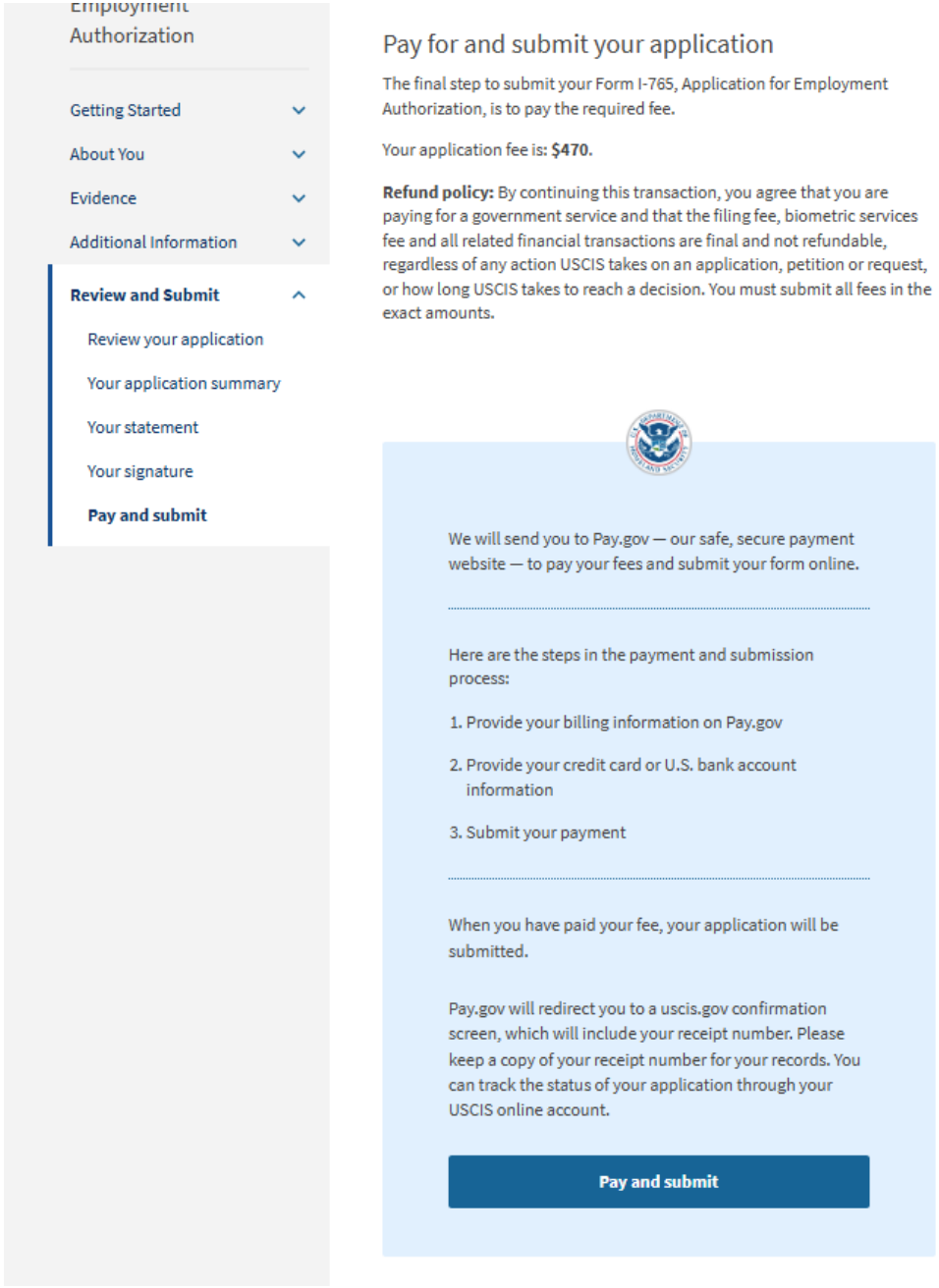
Review Your Application

- Review your application.
  - Ensure you answered all questions applicable to you.
  - Ensure you accurately reported all of your information.
  - Ensure you have no alerts or warnings.
- Note: When reviewing the application summary or draft snapshot, there will be questions included that are blank. That is normal – those questions do not apply to F-1 applicants.
- **If you would like an ISS advisor to review your application, <u>do not proceed from this step.</u>**

Statement and Signature

- Complete the required statement and signature.





Pay the USCIS Fee

- <u>This is the final step in the application</u>
- If you are not ready to submit your application, do not pay the application fee.
- If you opted for premium processing, you will be asked to pay the premium processing (I-907) and I-765 fee together.

After Submission

After Submission

- You should receive a digital receipt notice from USCIS within 24 hours of submitting your application. A paper receipt notice will be mailed to you.
- You are allowed to continue working for 180 days after your Post-Completion OPT EAD expires as long as your STEM OPT I-765 is pending. Please review this HERE.
- If you need to change your mailing address after submitting your application, you must submit an official change of address to USCIS.
- If you need to attach additional evidence to your I-765, you can do so as unsolicited evidence.
- If you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE) or Request for Information (RFI), please notify ISS immediately.
- If approved, USCIS will provide you a digital and paper approval notice. Your EAD card will arrive in the mail.
- Review the ISS page HERE for additional information.