



INTERNSHIP & CPT GUIDE

2025-2026



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WHAT IS CURRICULAR PRACTICAL TRAINING (CPT)?

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is defined as off-campus employment which is an integral part of an established curriculum, including: “alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum which is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school.” *Source: [8 CFR 214.2(f)(10)(i)]*.

CPT authorization must be received from a Designated School Official (DSO) at LIM College, prior to beginning any internship/employment.

Beginning to intern without CPT authorization is a serious violation of F-1 status.

ELIGIBILITY FOR CPT

- **CPT is available only when the internship experience is considered to be an integral part of an established curriculum.**
 - LIM College defines “integral” to mean a curricular component that is required or optional provided it furthers the pedagogy of the discipline, and the experience must be directly related to the student’s program of study.
- **Students must receive academic credit for CPT approval, whether paid or unpaid.**
 - This means that a student seeking CPT approval must be registered for a credited internship course, at LIM College.

Undergraduate Eligibility:

Undergraduate F-1 students may enroll in an internship course, and apply for CPT, once they have completed 2 consecutive, full-time semesters, in F-1 status. Example: Fall/Spring or Spring/Fall.

Graduate Eligibility:

Graduate F-1 students may enroll in an internship course, and apply for CPT, once they have completed 2 consecutive, full-time semesters, in F-1 status. Example: Spring/Summer, Fall/Spring

- **If a graduate student is enrolled in the Career Success Track, they are eligible to apply for CPT earlier than the timeframes noted above.**

Students who have transferred their active SEVIS record to LIM College:

- If a student has transferred their active SEVIS record to LIM, and has completed 2 consecutive, full-time semesters in F-1 status, or is on active OPT/STEM OPT, they may be eligible to apply for CPT earlier than the timeframes noted above.

CPT IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Office of Career and Internship Services

- Discuss Handshake/experience record submission
- Discuss internship course options
- Discuss offer letter
- Course enrollment form, if course is “restricted”; basic course registration information
- Basic CPT conversations
- Changes in internship, while on CPT

Office of International Student Services

- Discuss CPT Application & Eligibility
- Discuss CPT regulations and details regarding CPT requirements
- Social Security Card Information
- Receive CPT approved I-20
- Changes in internship, while on CPT



F-1
Student

Office of Academic Advising

- Discuss internship course planning and graduation planning
- Discuss changes to graduation plan, based on completion or non-completion of planned internship



INTERNSHIP COURSES AT LIM COLLEGE

***MUST BE ENROLLED IN AN INTERNSHIP COURSE TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR CPT APPROVAL**

***INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS VARY BY DECLARED DEGREE/MAJOR**

Undergraduate

Core internships

CARE 1620 (2cr)

CARE 2620 (2cr)

CARE 4820/4821 (6cr)

Elective internship

CARE 1890 (1cr)

CARE 3620 (3cr)

Graduate

Core internships

GRAD 777 (3cr)

Additional internships

*MPSI 692 (1cr)

*MPSI 692

requires Career Success Track declaration

STEPS TO OBTAIN CPT

1. Register for an internship/coop course

- Review the Internship and Senior Co-op Handbook, available [here](#)

2. Secure an Experience (an internship in an area that is directly related to your field of study)

- Make an appointment with the Office of Career and Internship Services to assist with your search ([Handshake](#), in MyLIM)
- Obtain an offer letter and a job description from your potential employer; refer to the sample offer letter available in this guide or from the CIS/ISS teams.

3. Submit & Track Experience Record

- Once you have submitted your experience record in Handshake, the Office of Career and Internship Services will review your proposed internship details and either approve your experience [or](#) request further information from you; submit your Experience Record [here](#).
- **Submit your Experience Record at least 10 business days before the proposed internship start date.**
- If approved, two steps occur:
 - Your internship supervisor will receive an email with a link to Handshake, where they must confirm your internship
 - You will receive the LIM College CPT application, to your LIM College email

4. Get CPT Authorization

- Once your internship is approved by CIS, students are required to submit a CPT application
- CPT applications must be submitted at **least 5 business days before the proposed internship start date**
- Continue reading through this packet, for further details about completing the CPT application
- Once you have received CPT authorization on your I-20, you may begin your internship
 - Students **cannot** begin any internship/work experience without CPT authorization
 - Failure to obtain CPT authorization, prior to beginning an internship, may result in termination of your F-1 status



COMPLETING THE CPT APPLICATION

PART 1: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT:

Last name: * First name: * LIM ID: *
Degree level/Major: *Select... SEVIS ID: *

PROPOSED INTERNSHIP/TRAINING COMPANY INFORMATION
Note: If all information submitted is correct, CPT Authorization may take up to 5 business days to process.

Company Name: *
Your Position Title: *
Start date of the Internship: * End date of the internship: *
(Cannot be before the 1st day of semester) (Cannot be after the last day of the semester)
Number of hours per week: * (Part time CPT no more than 20hrs/wk and Full Time is over 20 hrs/wk)
Company street address: *
City: * State: * Zip Code: *
Will you intern for the company remotely/hybrid (Some hours in person, some remote)? *Select...
If yes, include the full site address where you are working remotely.

In one or two sentences, explain how this employment is related to your major?
*

- The information in this section, must match the offer letter from your employer.
*Hours and Week requirements: be sure to review hour/week needed with a Career Coach (Careers@limcollege.edu)
- CPT can only be approved for work/internships completed while a student is physically in the U.S. Students are not permitted to be outside of the U.S., while on CPT.
- Discuss how your work/internship experience relates to your field of study. Refer back to your Experience Record, to assist you with the completion of this section.



CPT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHEN DO I NEED CPT AUTHORIZATION?

You must have CPT authorization from an LIM College DSO **before** you begin a paid or unpaid internship. Your internship cannot begin until you receive a new Form I-20 with the CPT authorization on it.

DO I HAVE TO BE REGISTERED FOR AN INTERNSHIP COURSE?

Yes - Students must enroll in an internship course in order to be approved for CPT.

Interning without enrolling in a course is a violation of F-1 status.

DO I NEED TO HAVE AN INTERNSHIP TO APPLY FOR CPT?

Yes - Students must have an offer of employment, and this offer must be approved in Handshake, to apply for CPT. CPT approval is based on the specific employer. A sample offer letter can be found on in this Guide.

WHEN DOES CPT AUTHORIZATION BEGIN AND END?

CPT authorization is limited to the duration of the CPT start and end dates indicated on your CPT approved I-20. Only intern for the dates on your CPT authorization. CPT is only authorized for a timeframe within the official semester start and end dates.

CAN I EXTEND MY CPT AUTHORIZATION?

No - Students are authorized for a specific duration of time that is printed on page 2 of the Form I-20. Students may not begin before the start date or continue after the end date listed.



CPT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW MANY HOURS A WEEK CAN I INTERN?

CPT can be part-time (20 or less hours per week) or full-time (more than 20 hours per week) Per LIM College policy, students are not permitted to intern for more than 40 hours per week.

WILL MY CPT AUTHORIZATION AFFECT MY ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY FOR OPT?

If you are authorized for a total of 12 months (365 days) or more of full-time CPT, you will lose eligibility for OPT. If you are approved for less than 12 months of full-time CPT in total, or for any amount of part-time CPT, this will not affect your eligibility for OPT.

WHO CAN ANSWER QUESTIONS ON OPT?

For anything OPT-related, connect with The Office of International Student Services: ISS@limcollege.edu

CAN I FIND A FULL-TIME JOB INSTEAD OF AN INTERNSHIP?

No – F-1 students are not allowed to engage in regular full-time or part-time jobs; you can only engage in an internship with appropriate agreements signed by the College and the company where you plan to intern.



CPT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN I COMPLETE A RETAIL INTERNSHIP?

Yes, but only if the retail internship is directly related to your degree.

CAN I CHANGE EMPLOYERS?

CPT authorization is issued for a specific employer. Change of employers must be approved by the Office of Career and Internship Services and by a DSO at LIM College. If approved, students must apply for a new CPT authorization before beginning to intern for the new employer. Refer to the policies outlined in your Experience Record regarding a change of employer.

DO I NEED A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER?

Yes, if your internship is paid or if you receive any type of remuneration, or if your employer requires SSN for background checks, identity verification, etc. Additionally, students are eligible to apply for a Social Security Number with their CPT I-20 if they do not yet have a SSN and wish to obtain one. See Social Security Number information in this Guide.

WILL I BE REQUIRED TO PAY U.S. TAXES?

You may be required to file a federal and state income tax form while you are in the U.S. LIM College is not able to provide guidance on tax filing; however, you can contact any tax professional or accountant within the U.S. for assistance. Additionally, many students have found success using <https://sprintax.com> or <https://glaciertax.com/> to determine their filing needs. LIM College does not endorse any specific person or entity, but there are many resources that students can access, including, but not limited to, the websites above.

SAMPLE OFFER LETTER

[Company/Organization Name]
[Business Address – Street #, Street Name, City, State, zip code]
[Company phone]
[Company website]

[Date]

Dear [Student Passport Name],

We are very pleased to offer you the position of [Title] with [Company/Organization Name]. Please find the following confirmation of the specifics of your internship:

- **Position/Internship Title:** [ex: Social Media Intern]
 - **Start Date:** [Exact start date]
 - **End Date:** [Exact end date]
- *Note: Start and end dates must be within the semester start/end dates
- **Total Hours Per Week (#):** [Exact number of hours per week]
 - **Salary/Stipend (if applicable):**
 - **Location/Modality:** [In-person, Remote, Hybrid]
 - **Internship Location:** [Address where student will be interning, if at all, in-person]
 - **Supervisor:** You will be reporting to [Supervisor Name], [Supervisor Title]
 - **Supervisor Contact information:**
 - Phone [Supervisor phone; xxx-xxx-xxxx]
 - Email [Supervisor email]
 - **Internship Description:** [detailed list of responsibilities and projects]

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE – CANNOT BE TYPED]
[Name]
[Title – HR representative or direct supervisor]
[Contact Information]

Offer letter must:

- be on company letterhead
- be signed by the hiring official
- contain all items in red
- be dated at least 10 business days before start date to allow time for processing

Note:

- If anything is incorrect or missing, it may cause a delay to the start date.
- Please doublecheck all fields before submitting with your CPT application
- You may obtain an editable version of this letter from the Office of Career and Internship Services (Careers@limcollegee.du) or from the Office of International Student Services (ISS@limcollege.eud)



IMPORTANT OFFER LETTER INFORMATION

As you navigate the internship and CPT approval process, you will use your offer letter in 2 places:

- Your Handshake Experience Record submission
- Your CPT Application

The information on your offer letter, must match the information that you include in your CPT application. You will upload the same offer letter into Handshake, that you upload with your CPT application (Handshake is first, and then CPT application second).

You must submit your offer letter to Handshake at least 10 business days **before** the proposed internship start date. Example:

- Allow for 5 business days Handshake processing, and 5 business days CPT processing

Please work with the Office of Career and Internship Services and the Office of International Student Services for specific Handshake and CPT application deadlines, as these vary by internship course. Refer to the Internship and Senior Co-op Handbook for details, click [here](#) for the Handbook.



SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)

What is a Social Security Number?

A Social Security card is required for everyone who works in the U.S., even non-immigrant students. **A social security card is not a work permit.**

A Social Security Number (SSN) is a unique, 9-digit number used for taxpayer identification, income reporting, and record-keeping purposes. Once issued, the number is valid for a lifetime. You do not need to apply for another one, if you already have a SSN from a previous stay in the United States. A SSN is **not** required to open a bank account, rent an apartment, start a mobile phone contract, or get a credit card.

When to apply for a SSN?

For on-campus work or CPT, you may not apply more than 30 days prior to the start date of your employment.

Once you have submitted your SSN application to the Social Security Administration (SSA), you should receive your SSN in the postal mail within 2-4 weeks. New students must wait at least 10 days after being registered full-time in SEVIS, and only after the first day of classes. You can present your SSN card to your employer after receiving it in the postal mail. There is no charge for a Social Security Number and card.

Lost SSN Card?

If you lose your SSN card, you will need to reapply for a new one. The Social Security Administration will replace your card (and give you the same #) only if you are currently eligible to get one. Please contact the ISS Office to help you in the replacement process; ISS@limcollege.edu

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)

Important Reminders regarding SSN and employment/internships

As an F-1 student, you must be authorized by a Designated School Official (DSO) at LIM College to work either on campus or off campus. If your internship company asks you to provide a Social Security Number (SSN), you will need to apply for an SSN with the Social Security Administration (SSA) once you have received your new I-20 with CPT authorization. Make sure to check the appropriate checkbox on the CPT Application to indicate that you will need an SSN; additional details will be shared along with your new I-20.

Steps to obtain a SSN

****If you wish to Apply in-person without an Appointment to the Social Security Card Center then skip to #3.**

- 1.)** Go to ssa.gov/ssnumber and answer the questions. You will need your Passport to help answer certain questions
- 2.)** After you electronically sign the SSN application, print and save the control number shown on the screen.
- 3.)** Go to the Social Security Center with your original documents. If you applied online, bring the printed page with the control number from your application.

Below are the documents required to show at the Social Security Card Center (originals and print-outs):

For Students with an Approved CPT I-20:

- Unexpired passport (valid at least 6 months into the future)
- Offer letter on official company letterhead
- Valid Form I-20, with CPT authorization on page 2 (*as early as 30 days in advance of your CPT start date, and no later than your CPT end date-printed on page 2 of the I20*)
- Most Recent I-94 record; may be obtained [here](#)
- LIM College ID Card
- ****If you did not fill out the electronic/online application, bring the completed SSN application (Form SS-5, found [here](#))**

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)

Social Security Card Center Locations

The ISS Office *recommends* the Manhattan Social Security Card Center:

MANHATTAN SOCIAL SECURITY CARD CENTER:

123 WILLIAM STREET | 3RD FLOOR | NEW YORK, NY 10038

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM.

Phone number: 1-800-772-1213

The office is located on William Street between Fulton and John Street.

SSA is near the 2, 3, 4, 5, A, C, R and Z subway lines as well as the Path Trains.

If you live in NJ or other NYC boroughs then you can use the Social Security Center Locator:

<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>

Helpful Web Resources

- International Students & Social Security Numbers: <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10181.pdf>
- SSA online services to check your status: <https://www.ssa.gov/agency/contact/>

QUESTIONS?

Contact: ISS@limcollege.edu or Careers@limcollege.edu

Schedule an appointment in **Handshake** by choosing "CPT Questions" as the appointment type

Refer to the International Student Handbook

