



CASE SCENARIO	WHAT IS MY STATUS?	CAN I TRAVEL?	WHAT KIND OF DOCUMENTS DO I NEED TO TAKE?	WHAT LEVEL OF RISK IS INVOLVED FOR RE-ENTRY TO THE US?
I mailed out my OPT application to the USCIS office. The end date of my I-20 is in the future. If you received your EAD card prior to your program end date (on the I-20), you will travel with your I-20 as an enrolled student. Keep your EAD card in a safe place.	As an enrolled student you are in an F-1 student status until the end date of your I-20.	Yes, you are still an F-1 student (who is enrolled) because your I-20 ends in the future.	Valid I-20 form properly endorsed for travel, valid F-1 student visa, valid passport and proof of enrollment. NOTE: If your visa is nearing its expiration date, you might want to consider renewing it. Renewing a visa while on OPT is risky.	Visa issuance and re-entry to the U.S. is at the discretion of the USCIBP. The Office of Global Engagement cannot guarantee re-entry. However, you can minimize any kind of problems by entering the U.S. a few weeks prior to the end date of your I-20.
I mailed out my OPT application to the USCIS office. The end date of my I-20 has passed. EAD card not yet approved.	OPT pending status. You are still in F-1 status with OPT pending.	Absolutely NO!	Travel is not recommended.	Your departure from the U.S. prior to the approval of your EAD card will cancel your OPT application. Returning to the U.S. in F-1 student visa status is not an option.
My EAD card is approved.* My I-20 is expired. I don't have a job offer yet.	You are in an extension of your F-1 student status.	Maybe	Your EAD card, valid I-20 form properly endorsed for travel, valid F-1 student visa, and valid passport. Technically you need a job offer in order to return to the U.S.	You need to be cautious. You technically don't have a job to return to. Entrance to the U.S. will be up to the immigration officer's discretion.
My EAD card is approved.* I have a job offer and I have a letter stating the offer with specific dates.	F-1 student visa status.	Yes	Your EAD card, valid I-20 form properly endorsed for travel and your employment offer letter on original employer letter head.	You have all the necessary conditions to travel. Re-entry to the U.S. is determined by the USCIBP.
My EAD card is approved. I am currently working. I will be renewing my F-1 visa while I am overseas.	You are in an extension of your F-1 student status.	Maybe	Your EAD card, valid I-20 form properly endorsed for travel, valid passport and letter confirming employment. Documents required for renewing your F-1 visa.	You need to be cautious. You technically are no longer a student. You are in an extension of your F-1 student visa status. It is up to the discretion of the U.S. Consulate where you apply to grant you a student visa.

*If your EAD card is approved and it's being mailed to you, you must wait to receive it and have it with you. Traveling with the idea that a friend or relative can mail the card to you outside the U.S. is irresponsible. Only travel once you have your EAD card in your possession.

Please consult the U.S. State Department website for further information on visas http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html.