

Updated SEVP Guidance on Curricular Practical Training (CPT)

Last Updated: September 2026

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) recently issued additional guidance regarding **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)** eligibility for F-1 international students. The guidance emphasizes a more restrictive interpretation of how practical training may be considered an **integral part of an established curriculum**.

SEVP communicated this guidance to Designated School Officials (DSOs) through two recent Broadcast Messages:

- **August 12, 2026 – SEVP Broadcast Message: Reminder of Liability for DSOs Regarding CPT Authorization**
<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcm260801.pdf>
- **August 24, 2026 – SEVP Broadcast Message: Guidance for Designated School Officials Regarding Curricular Practical Training**
https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcm_260802.pdf

In response to this guidance, Suffolk University is reviewing its CPT policies, procedures, and academic program requirements to ensure continued compliance with federal regulations and SEVP expectations.

What Does the New Guidance Mean?

Previously, SEVP has emphasized that CPT must be an **integral part of the student's established curriculum** and must be **directly related to the student's major field of study**.

The August 2026 SEVP guidance emphasizes that practical training experiences—including internships, practicums, clinical experiences, rotations, cooperative education, and other training opportunities—must have a clear curricular connection and meet applicable federal requirements for CPT authorization.

SEVP has further emphasized that CPT should not be authorized solely to provide an F-1 student with employment or professional experience when that employment or experience is not an integral component of the student's established curriculum.

Important: Temporary Pause on Certain CPT Applications

While Suffolk University reviews the new SEVP guidance and its impact on our academic programs and CPT authorization practices, the International Student Services Office is **temporarily pausing CPT applications for experiences that are not clearly required as part of the student's degree program for AY2026-2027**.

At this time, we will continue reviewing CPT requests when the internship, practicum, clinical placement, rotation, cooperative education experience, or other practical training

is **clearly required for completion of the student's degree program** and otherwise meets CPT eligibility requirements.

CPT requests based on **optional internships, elective internship courses, or practical experiences that are not required for degree completion** may be placed on hold while the University completes its review.

The temporary pause does not mean that Suffolk University is eliminating CPT. Rather, the University is reviewing its policies and academic programs to determine how CPT may continue to be authorized in accordance with the updated federal guidance.

What Should Students Do?

Students considering CPT should first consult with their **academic department or program** to determine whether the proposed practical training experience is a required component of their established curriculum.

Students should **not begin any off-campus employment or practical training until CPT has been authorized by Suffolk's International Student Services Office (ISSO) and the student has received an updated Form I-20 showing the CPT authorization.**

Students should also avoid making employment, travel, housing, or other financial commitments based on an expectation that CPT will be approved.

Receiving an internship or employment offer **does not guarantee CPT eligibility or authorization.**

What Is Suffolk University Reviewing?

The International Student Services Office (ISSO) is working with university partners and academic departments to evaluate how the updated SEVP guidance affects existing internship and experiential-learning opportunities.

This review includes examining:

- Whether practical training is required for completion of specific degree programs,
- Whether the practical training requirement is formally established within the curriculum,
- How internship, practicum, clinical, cooperative education, and other experiential-learning requirements are documented,
- Whether the practical training is directly related to the student's major field of study,
- Academic registration and transcript requirements associated with practical training, and
- University CPT policies and procedures necessary to maintain compliance with federal regulations and SEVP guidance.

Students With Current CPT Authorization

Students who have already received CPT authorization should continue to follow the employer, location, dates, and other conditions listed on their CPT-authorized Form I-20.

Students should contact Suffolk's International Student Services Office (ISSO) before making any changes to their authorized CPT employment.

Students Planning CPT for a Future Semester

Students planning CPT for an upcoming semester should understand that eligibility requirements and University procedures may change as Suffolk completes its review of the new SEVP guidance.

Students should **not assume that previous CPT practices or eligibility standards will apply to future CPT requests.**

Students interested in future CPT opportunities are encouraged to speak with their academic department regarding their program's curricular requirements and to monitor this webpage for additional updates.

Additional Information

Suffolk University recognizes that internships, practicums, clinical placements, and other experiential-learning opportunities are important components of many students' academic and professional development.

The University is committed to supporting international students while ensuring that CPT authorizations comply with federal immigration regulations and current SEVP guidance.

Additional information will be posted as the University completes its review.

Students with questions about their individual circumstances should contact

International Student Services Office (ISSO@suffolk.edu) before accepting or beginning any off-campus practical training.

U.S. Federal Guidance

SEVP Broadcast Message – August 12, 2026

Reminder of Liability for DSOs Regarding CPT Authorization

<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcm260801.pdf>

SEVP Broadcast Message – August 24, 2026

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