

OBTAINING A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER INFORMATION

Social Security Numbers (SSN) are used to track an individual's earnings over a lifetime and eligibility for financial benefits after retirement as well as reporting income to the US government for income tax tracking. If they do not already have one, F-1 and J-1 international students employed on-or off campus in the US are required to apply for a Social Security Number as part of the hiring process. F-2 dependents are not eligible to work or to get a SSN. Students who receive taxable scholarships but who are not employed may apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) for tax reporting purposes. Every individual present in F-1 or J-1 status during the calendar year must file US income taxes. . Once you get a SSN, it will be in your legal name and will remain on your record for the duration of your lifetime, whenever you are in the United States. Social Security Numbers do not expire and cannot be transferred to another individual.

Only students with work authorization and a verifiable job or job offer may obtain a Social Security Number (SSN) in the US. To be eligible to receive a Social Security Number issued by the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA), you must provide the following evidence:

- Eligibility to work in the US
- Proof of a full time student status, including Curricular- and pre-completion Optional- Practical Training (or on post-completion OPT)
- Written offer of employment
- Proof of valid F-1 or J-1 status and required and appropriate authorization for employment from your immigration advisor (Designated School Official/DSO or Alternate Responsible Officer/ARO)

To apply, take your SSN application and supporting documents to apply in person at:

SOCIAL SECURITY
SUITE 100
714 N IRONBRIDGE WAY
SPOKANE, WA 99202

Bring with you:

- Completed and signed federal form SS-5 available at <http://www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf>
- Form I-20 or DS-2019 (updated or endorsed for Practical Training if you have been authorized)
- Passport
- Current I-94
- EAD card (students with authorized OPT or Economic Hardship)
- Employment offer letter on company letterhead, with original signature from your supervisor, and including contact information, dates of employment, position, and nature of employment
- Letter from OGI confirming your immigration status and eligibility (include a copy of your letter of employment when requesting your SSA letter and allow one week for processing)

If all your paperwork is complete and SSA can verify your status in the US immigration database, you may be able to request a type of “receipt” immediately which may include an assigned Social Security Number. Receiving the card itself can take 2-4 weeks, sometimes more. Original Social Security cards are mailed to the current physical address you indicate on the SS-5 form.

Replacement cards can be obtained if you meet all of the eligibility requirements , but you are limited to 10 replacement cards during your lifetime (not including legal name changes or other specific exceptions to the limit).