



## Information on the Social Security Number

### **What is the Social Security Number (SSN)?**

The SSN is a 10-digit number, issued by the Social Security Administration, a U.S. government agency, that is used to track tax payments and issuance of benefits for U.S. citizens, permanent residents ("Green Card" holders), and other resident and non-resident aliens with work authorization.

### **Does a noncitizen in the U.S. need a Social Security Number?**

Only those who have authorization to work in the U.S. and those who hold an on-campus job, are required to have SSN so that they can pay taxes on their income. A SSN is not needed to get a driver's license, register for school, open a bank account, obtain health insurance, sign an apartment lease, turn on utilities, or obtain a cell-phone contract. Your valid and stamped passport, and your school ID is sufficient for all of these needs.

### **Eligibility**

- **F-1** Students are eligible for a social security number **only if they have an on-campus employment offer or specific work authorization granted by USCIS and they are registered for class.**
- **F-2** Dependents are not eligible for social security numbers.
- **J-1** Students are eligible for a social security number **only if they have an on-campus employment offer or have been granted specific work authorization.**
- **J-1 Research Scholars** are eligible for a social security number **only if they have an on-campus employment offer or specific work authorization granted by USCIS.**
- **J-2 dependents** are eligible for a social security number **only if they have received employment authorization from USCIS.**
- **H-1B** visa holders are eligible for a social security number because they have work permit.
- **If your first job in the U.S. is CPT or OPT**, contact your international advisor in the ISSFS (International Student, Scholar, and Faculty Services) office for further guidance.

### **Once your eligibility to obtain a SSN is confirmed...**

**Please note:** *All eligible applicants must wait at least 10 days after their initial entry into the U.S. in their eligible visa category before applying for the Social Security Number.*

## Obtaining a Social Security Number

1. Apply in person at the Social Security Administration Office. The following documents are needed:
  - a. Completed [Form SS-5](#) (Application for a Social Security Card), and
  - b. **F-1 Students** – Form I-20, Form I-94, passport and visa, and a completed SSN Employer Letter signed by both on-campus employer and the international student advisor;
  - c. **J-1 Exchange Visitors and Students**– Form DS -2019, Form I-94, passport and visa, and a **completed SSN Employer Letter signed by both on-campus employer and the international J – Scholar / Student advisor**;
  - d. **H-1B** –Form I-797 (H-1B approval), job offer letter, Form I-94, passport and visa.
2. Be sure to ask for a receipt in case you need proof before you receive your Social Security card. A card will be mailed to you at a valid U.S. address and the average processing time is 4 to 6 weeks.
3. The local Social Security Administration office is located at:

5509 S. Donnybrook Ave., Tyler, TX 75703  
Hours: Mon. Tue. Thu. Fri. 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. Wed. 9:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Phone: 1-877-319-3814

For more information, visit [Tyler Social Security Administration Office](#) website.  
<http://www.ssofficelocation.com/tyler-social-security-office-so1891>