



Are you temporarily in the United States while attending college or language school with a nonimmigrant student F-1 classification? Your school may ask you for your Social Security number. Some colleges and language schools use Social Security numbers as student identification numbers. If you do not have a Social Security number, the school should be able to give you another identification number. A Social Security number is only assigned to people who are authorized to work in the United States. Social Security numbers are used to report your wages to the government. **Social Security will not assign you a number just to enroll in school.**

Do you plan to work?

If you want to get a job on campus, you should contact your designated school official for international students. This official can tell you if you are eligible to work on campus and give you information about available jobs. Also, your school may approve certain limited off-campus employment, as permitted under Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations. **If your school has authorized you to work either on or off campus, and you meet Social Security's eligibility requirements described in the next section, you can get a Social Security number.**

How to apply for a Social Security number

You must provide original documents showing your age, identity, immigration status and proof that your school has authorized you to work either on or off campus.

Age

A birth certificate is generally the best evidence of age, and must be presented if it is in your possession or can easily be obtained. If not, we can consider other

documents, such as your passport or a document issued by DHS, to prove your age.

Identity

We must see a document other than your birth certificate that shows the name you want on your Social Security card. We prefer a recently issued document with a photograph, such as your passport, your immigration document or school identification card.

Immigration status

We need to see the DHS document issued to you when you arrived in the United States (the I-94, Arrival/Departure Record) and your I-20, Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status.

Eligibility to work

To get a Social Security number to work off campus, you must provide us with the Employment Authorization Document you received from DHS.

To get a Social Security number for work on campus, you must provide us with either:

- A letter from your designated school official stating that you are authorized to work and are enrolled in a full course of study; or
- A letter from your designated school official stating that you are authorized to work and a certified college transcript that shows you are currently enrolled in a full course of study; or
- A pay stub or letter from your on-campus employer verifying your employment, along with a certified transcript that shows you are currently enrolled in a full course of study; or
- A letter from your designated school official stating that you will receive a scholarship in exchange for teaching

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services, along with a certified transcript that shows you are currently enrolled in a full course of study.

All documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. We cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents.

How long will it take to get a Social Security number?

Social Security must verify your immigration documents with DHS before we assign a Social Security number to you. Social Security will assign your number and issue your card within two weeks of receiving the verification from DHS. Most of the time, we can verify your documents quickly with DHS online. If your documents cannot be verified online, it may take DHS several weeks or months to respond to Social Security's request. We are working closely with DHS to reduce these delays.

Do I need to have my number before I start working?

We do not require you to have a Social Security number before you start to work, but the **Internal Revenue Service** requires employers to report wages using the Social Security number. While you wait for your Social Security number, your employer can use a letter from us stating that you applied for a number.

Contacting Social Security

For more information, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call toll-free **1-800-772-1213** (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**). We can answer specific questions and provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day.

We treat all calls confidentially. We also want to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some telephone calls.