

HOW TO OBTAIN A SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

Who must have a Social Security Card?

International students in F-1/J-1 visa status who have been offered on-campus employment, graduate assistantships, or who are authorized for off-campus employment, as permitted under immigration regulations, must apply for a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN) from the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Social Security Number (SSN)

This is a unique nine-digit number assigned by the SSA to all US citizens, permanent residents, and non-immigrants authorized to work in the US and being paid by the US employer. Its primary function is to track individuals for taxation purposes; it serves as a Federal Taxpayer Identification Number and is used by the Internal Revenue Service to collect federal income taxes and enforce tax reporting and collection law. Each individual may have only one SSN.

New Students

Please note: SEVIS information may not reach the SSA until 10 days after your SEVIS record has been activated. Therefore, the SSA advises students to apply for SSN no earlier than 10 calendar days after the student's record is activated in SEVIS (activation will take place approximately 1 week after the student's check-in with the International Center)

When to apply

You may apply for the SSN when you **have, or have been offered**, employment.

- a. If you are applying for the SSN for on-campus employment, such as graduate assistantship/fellowship, Curricular Practical Training (CPT), or for Academic Training (AT), your employment start date **cannot be more than 30 days in the future**.
- b. If you have an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by USCIS for Optional Practical Training (OPT) or for economic hardship employment, you need to apply for a SSN on, or after, the starting date indicated on the EAD. The SSA will not process your SSN application if the EAD shows a future authorization date. If you are planning to apply for OPT or economic hardship employment, you may also apply for an SSN on Form I-765.

Required documents

You need to bring to the Social Security Agency (SSA) the following documents:

- a. If you have on-campus employment, such as graduate assistantship/fellowship:
 - An official, original letter from the employer on the department's letterhead (see a sample letter below).
 - An official, original letter from the International Center confirming your valid status (see "How to Obtain a DSO/RO's Letter of Valid Status" below).
- b. If you are authorized to start CPT:
 - The I-20 with the CPT authorization.
- c. If you start OPT or economic hardship employment:
 - The EAD issued by USCIS.
- d. If you are a J-1 student in on-campus, AT, or economic hardship employment:
 - The letter of employment authorization from the International Center.

***Note: If J-1 students have the form DS-2019 issued by an organization other than The University of Akron (Fulbright, USAID programs), they must submit a letter from that sponsoring organization permitting on-campus employment.*

In addition to the documents above, all applicants must submit:

- A completed form SS-5, Application for a Social Security Card. The form can be obtained in an SSA office or downloaded at <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>
- Your immigration documents: valid passport with a visa stamp, the Form I-94 and I-20/DS-2019. Note: Canadian citizens are exempt from visa requirements. Form I-94 is typically an electronic Arrival/Departure Record created by the immigration officer at the port of entry. You may download this

form from the website <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>. If you entered by land rather than air or sea, you may have a paper Form I-94.

- Your Zip Card (University of Akron ID).

Working While Awaiting an SSN

You may work while your application for the Social Security Card is being processed. You need to submit the application receipt to the employer, so the employer will comply with its payroll withholding obligations. The employer can find information on how to report wages for an employee who has not yet received the SSN on the SSA's website <https://www.ssa.gov>.

How to Obtain a DSO/RO's Letter of Valid Status

- F-1/J-1 Students – Email the letter from your on-campus employer (example below) to immigration@uakron.edu. Please type "SSA Letter Request" in the subject line.
- J-1 Students/Scholars with DS-2019 issued by sponsoring organization other than The University of Akron – Attach letter from the sponsoring organization that issued your DS-2019.

Once you have obtained all letters...

Until further notice, you will need to schedule an appointment with a local SSA Office to apply for an SSN. Walk-ins are not permitted. Please refer to the instructions on this [page](#) to schedule an appointment.

SAMPLE LETTER FROM THE ON-CAMPUS EMPLOYER

(The letter should be typed on *official department letterhead* and contain the *employer's original signature*)
Social Security Administration

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to verify that _____
Student's Name

has been offered on-campus employment (or is already working as a student assistant or a graduate assistant).

Nature of Student's Job: _____

Department of Employment: _____

Start Date: _____ **Number of Hours/Week:** _____

Employer's Contact Information: 34-6002924
Employer Identification Number (EIN)

Employer's Telephone Number

Student's Immediate Supervisor

Employer Signature (Original): _____

Signatory's Title: _____

Date: _____