

How to Apply for a Social Security Number (SSN)

Why is a Social Security Number Needed?

A Social Security Number (SSN) is used to track an employee's wages for benefits eligibility and tax-reporting requirements. As an F-1 international student, you are required to obtain a SSN if you become employed on or off campus in the U.S. If you are a student who has been awarded an on-campus fellowship, stipend, or assistantship, you should apply for a SSN as soon as possible upon your arrival at the University (see below for more details and suggested timing for your application).

According to U.S. law, a SSN is *required* only for employment and tax-reporting purposes. However, many institutions – including banks, cell phone companies, the Department of Licensing, utility companies, landlords, and other businesses – are in the practice of requesting a SSN as a means of establishing identity or credit history, before they agree to provide their services. It is not mandatory to have a SSN to obtain a driver's license, cell phone, credit card, insurance, admission to an academic institution or other "non-work" reasons.

Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)

Students who are ineligible for a SSN (no current employment, studying in the U.S. for less than 6 months, etc.) may apply for an ITIN. This number can sometimes be used in place of a SSN. Applications must be submitted through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). See the IRS website for more information: <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96287,00.html>

When Should I Apply & How Long Will It Take?

You should **wait 10 days** after your arrival in the U.S. to submit your application. Ask the Social Security Office for a receipt confirming that you submitted your application. You will receive your U.S. Social Security Card by mail, printed with your SSN, within 4 to 8 weeks.

What Type of Employment Am I Eligible For?

Lawful F-1 students are permitted to work only up to 20 hours/week when the quarter is in session, and up to 40 hours/week during a break/vacation quarter. Students must follow all employment regulations governing them.

Undergraduate Students: Employment must be on the UW Bothell campus and Non-Federal Work Study.

Graduate Students: Consult with International Student Services to discuss your employment options.

How Can I Find an On-Campus Job?

Students can visit the Career Center (UW1-161) to learn about available on-campus jobs. Jobs are also posted on the center's website at: <http://www.uwb.edu/careers/jobs-and-internships/oncampus>

How Do I Apply For a Social Security Number?

Not earlier than 10 business days after initially arriving in the U.S., apply *in person* at a local Social Security Administration office in either downtown Seattle or Bellevue. Office location, hours and directions for these two offices can be found at: <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps6z/FOLO/Controller>.

You must bring the following documents with you to apply:

- 1. Social Security Verification Form** (see attached)
You must complete the top part of this form, and then have your employer complete the section part of the form. You must then submit your completed Social Security Verification Form to International Student Services to review and sign the bottom of the form. The form will be ready for pick-up after 24 hours from submission.
- 2. SSN Application Form (SS-5)**
The SS-5 form is available at: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ss-5.html>
Line item #1: Applicant's name must be spelled as listed in the passport.
Line item #5: Check box: "Legal alien allowed to work".
- 3. Immigration Documents: Passport, Visa, I-20, and I-94 card**
- 4. EAD Card** (only required for students with Optional Practical Training authorization).

Can I Work While Waiting for My SSN?

Yes. An F-1 student may work while the Social Security Number application is being processed.

Can My Spouse (on an F-2 visa) Apply for a SSN?

No. Spouses on an F-2 visa are not eligible for a Social Security Number.

Social Security Taxes

F-1 international students are normally exempt from Social Security taxes (FICA) during the first five years of studies in the United States. Check with your employer if these taxes are deducted from your paycheck in error.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER VERIFICATION FORM

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT:

Student: _____ Visa Status: F-1
Last Name First Name

SEVIS ID: _____ Country of Citizenship: _____

UWB Student ID #: _____ UWB Email: _____@uwb.edu

I understand my responsibilities and eligibility to be employed as an F-1 international student and will abide by the rules and regulations provided by the USCIS. I will notify the ISS if any information on this form changes.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYER:

Employing Department/On-campus Contractor: _____

Employer Identification Number (EIN): 91-6001537

Job Location/Address: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Job Description: _____

Beginning Date: _____ Ending Date: _____ Hours/Week: _____

Hiring Official Name: _____ Title: _____

I understand that my signature certifies that the student has been offered on-campus employment, and can work up to 20 hours per week while school is in session, and up to 40 hours per week during breaks.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES:

I certify that _____ (SEVIS ID: _____) is enrolled full-time, registered in SEVIS, maintaining his/her F-1 immigration status at the University of Washington Bothell, and is eligible for on-campus employment.

Designated School Official Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____