

Social Security Number (SSN) Guide for IIT International Students

A Social Security Number (SSN) is a unique, 9-digit, identification number issued by the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA). International students, and some dependents of students, may apply for the SSN if they are legally employed in the U.S.

General Requirements for obtaining the SSN

While each immigration category has to meet different evidence requirements, there are some requirements that are universal to all international students.

These are:

- Must be present in the U.S. for at least 10 days before applying
- Valid passport
- Original I-20 or DS-2019
- Original I-94 card (white card in your passport)
- Social Security Application

Additional requirements by visa type

F-1 Students

Employment Type	Requirements
On-Campus Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrolled full-time• Social Security Letter signed by hiring department and the International Center
Curricular Practical Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPT approval on the 3rd page of I-20• Cannot apply more than 30 days prior to the start date of CPT
Optional Practical Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment Authorization Document (EAD)• Cannot apply until after the start date listed on the EAD

J-1 Students

Employment Type	Requirements
On-Campus Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrolled full-time• Social Security Letter signed by hiring department and the International Center
Academic Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DS-2019 printed for Academic Training
Sponsored by IIE/Fulbright or other organization or institution (DS-2019 not issued by IIT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact sponsoring organization or institution for instructions on how to apply for an SSN

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J-2 Dependents

Employment Type	Requirements
Employment Authorization Document (EAD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EAD• Cannot apply until after the start date listed on the EAD

The Social Security Card

You must apply in person at a Social Security Administration (SSA) Office (the IC recommends 77 W. Jackson, Chicago, IL). You will receive a receipt the day you apply. If you have an on-campus job you must bring this receipt, along with your passport, DS-2019 or I-20 and I-94 card, to the Student Employment Office (SEO) in Galvin Library before you begin working. Once your application for an SSN has been approved by the SSA, the SSA will send a Social Security card to the address you provided on your application form. The usual processing time is 2 weeks. If additional security procedures are necessary, processing times may range from 4–8 weeks.

Most likely you will receive a Social Security card that has the notation, **“VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH DHS AUTHORIZATION.”** SSA issues this type of card to students and dependents in F-1, J-1, and J-2 immigration status because the card, alone, does not authorize them to work.

Working without an SSN

You must show proof that you have applied for the SSN before you begin working for any employer. If you will be working on-campus and will be paid by IIT, go to the Student Employment Office for additional information.

For all other off-campus employers, please contact the employer directly for more information.

Security and Identity Theft

Your Social Security card should be kept in a safe place and your SSN should be given out only as needed to guard against identity theft. See <http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/idtheft.htm> for more information on identity theft.

Additionally, since you will keep your SSN throughout your lifetime, it is in your best interest to always know where your original card is. If you lose your card and are not currently employed, you may not obtain a new card. The application evidence requirements to replace a lost card are the same as those listed above.

Reporting Problems to the International Center

If you experience difficulties in obtaining an SSN, please e-mail icenter@iit.edu with as much detail about your situation as possible.