



ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

Social Security numbers (SSNs) are issued to U.S. Citizens, permanent residents, and temporary (working) residents. Its primary purpose is to track income for tax purposes. The Social Security Administration (SSA) issues SSNs only to F-1 students who have an employment offer. If you applied for OPT and do not have an SSN, you can apply for an SSN. The process is free and described in the steps below.

If you would like to contact your local Social Security Office for instructions. You can find your local office here: <https://www.ssa.gov/locator>.

STEP 1: MAKE SURE YOU MEET ALL CONDITIONS BELOW

- You have have your EAD card in your hand.
- Your OPT start date on your EAD card is within 30 days. If you apply earlier than 30 days before your OPT start date on your EAD card, the SSA will not accept your application.
- Your OPT I-20 has “Approved” status on page 2. If it says “Requested,” please contact International Student Affairs to request an updated OPT I-20.

STEP 2: GATHER DOCUMENTS

- EAD card
- OPT I-20 with “Approved” status on page 2
- Passport
- F-1 Visa
- I-94 printout (available at i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94)
- Employment offer letter if available

STEP 3: BEGIN YOUR APPLICATION ONLINE

- Complete the Social Security application form online: <https://www.ssa.gov/number-card/request-number-first-time>
- We recommend you use International Student Affairs’ mailing address, not your personal address if you remain in Chicago.
 - SAIC International Student Affairs 36 S. Wabash Ave., Suite 1203, Chicago, IL 60603

STEP 4: MAKE APPOINTMENT TO VISIT THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

- Upon completion of the online application, you will be prompted to make an appointment with the SSA. The SSA office nearest to SAIC is 605 West Washington (866-563-3899).

STEP 5: SUBMIT YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY APPLICATION RECEIPT TO YOUR EMPLOYER

- You must submit your social security application receipt and completed I-9 packet to your employer within 3 days of starting their job.
- If you do not submit these documents within 3 days, you could be terminated from their job.

STEP 6: WAIT FOR YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

- Cards take 2-8 weeks to process and mail.
- You may begin working while you wait for your card.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER APPLICATION PROCESS FOR F-1 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ON OPT

STEP 7: COLLECT YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

1. The card will be mailed to the address you provided on your Social Security application.
 - If you used International Student Affairs' mailing address, you will receive an email from intaff@saic.edu when your social security card has arrived.

STEP 8: SUBMIT A COPY OF YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD TO YOUR EMPLOYER

- Your employer must take a photocopy of your new Social Security card to complete your employment paperwork (I-9 Paperwork).

STEP 9: SECURE YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD IN A SAFE PLACE

- Your Social Security card is a sensitive identification document.
- Keep your card in a safe place; **do not** carry it in your purse or wallet.
- Lost or stolen social security cards can be used to commit a crime called identity theft.
- If you lose your social security card you may only replace it if you have a paying job at the time of re-application.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION @ 605 W. Washington Blvd.

