Social Security Number
eligibility & how to apply: F-1 students

Eligibility
You are eligible to apply for a social security number if you hold F-1 visa status and you meet at least one of the following criteria:

• you are currently working on campus
• you have been offered an on campus job (and are within 30 days of your employment start date)
• you have obtained off-campus work authorization (and are within 30 days of your authorization start date)

Procedure for Applying

FIRST: Obtain a letter from the ISSO stating you are in F-1 status and have the necessary on-campus employment or off-campus work authorization to be eligible for a social security number.

SECOND: Obtain EITHER pay stubs from your current on campus job, OR a letter from your employer (see below), OR proof of off-campus employment authorization. The letter from your employer should be written on your employer’s letterhead stationary and include the following:

☐ The letter should begin by stating, “This is to confirm that [your name] will be [or “is”] working as a [your job], starting on [start date of employment].”
☐ Description of the nature of your job duties (research, filing library books, food service, etc.)
☐ The number of hours per week you are expected to work (Remember students may not work more than 20 hours during the fall and spring semesters.)
☐ The employer identification number (EIN).
☐ The employer’s contact information including name and telephone number of your immediate supervisor.
☐ An original signature, the job title of the signer and the date of the signature

THIRD: After you have been in the U.S. for AT LEAST 10 days, take the documents listed below to the Social Security Administration Office. You will receive your Social Security card in the mail within 4-8 weeks.

Required Documents:
☐ ISSO Certification of F-1 visa status and employment authorization
☐ Paystubs from on campus job OR employer letter
☐ OR proof of off-campus employment authorization
☐ Passport
☐ I-94 (arrival/departure card)
☐ I-20

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
127 W. State St., 2nd floor
(in the Ithaca Journal Building)
Phone: 256-3651 (Ithaca) • 1 (800) 772-1213 (Automated Customer Service)
Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday, 9 am - 4 pm (except for Federal holidays.)

Map of Social Security Administration office location on the back

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