

# Social Security Numbers for F-1 and J-1 Students/Scholars



## WHAT IS A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)?

A social security number is a permanent nine-digit identification number/card issued by the Social Security Administration. It is used primarily to identify participants in the federal government's Social Security Program but because it is unique to each person the number is now used by many other public and private organizations. Anyone employed in the United States must obtain a social security number.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

F-1 and J-1 students/scholars must first be present in the United States for at least 10 working days before they apply for a Social Security Number (SSN). Furthermore, F-1 students can only apply for a SSN if their start date is within 30 days.

You must apply in person to the Social Security Administration and will need to present your **Passport, original I-94 Form, and the following documents:**

### F-1 Students:

- 1. I-20**  
→ Must be your current I-20
- 2. MUST be employed and have Letter of Employment printed on Letterhead (official office paper containing printed heading).**  
→ See page 2 of this document for a list of required content
- 3. Letter of Support from OIE**  
→ OIE will need to see your Letter of Employment before issuing the support letter.  
→ For CPT or OPT, page 3 of your I-20 will serve as the support letter from OIE.

### J-1 Students:

- 1. DS-2019**
- 2. Letter of Authorization from OIE**

### J-1 Scholars:

- 1. DS-2019**
- 2. Letter of Invitation from Department**

Once your application is successful you will usually receive the card by mail in 4 to 8 weeks, unless your application requires further security processing. You will also receive a receipt indicating that you have applied successfully for a card.

Unemployed F-1 students and F-2/J-2 Dependents are NOT eligible for a Social Security Number. If you would like to obtain a driver's license, you will need to be issued Form SSA-L676 from the Social Security Administration.

## ADDRESS:

Address: Social Security Administration  
Peachtree-Summit Federal Building  
401 W. Peachtree St.  
Suite 2860  
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Hours: Monday – Friday  
8:30am – 3:00pm  
Contact: Toll-Free: 1-800-772-1213  
Website: <http://www.ssa.gov>

MARTA: Get off at the Civic Center Station.

Located at the corner of Ralph McGill  
Blvd. and West Peachtree Street.

If you are not permitted to apply for the social security card even though you believe you have the required documents, please take note of the time and date of your visit, as well as the window number of the person who assisted you. Please also ask the agent what specifically is missing and then contact an advisor in OIE for assistance.

# Sample Letter of Employment

**(Prepared on official school or department letterhead and containing the employer's original signature)**

Date:

U.S. Social Security Administration

To whom it may concern:

Please include the following in the letter of employment:

- Student's full name
- Student's position title
- Type and nature of employment
- Name of office or department offering employment
- Employment start date
- Number of hours per week student will work
- Supervisor's name
- Supervisor's contact information

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Original Signature of Department Representative or Supervisor

Department Representative's or Supervisor's Name

Department Representative's or Supervisor's Title