Procedure:
Applying for a Social Security Number

Introduction

All persons employed in the United States are required to have a Social Security number (SSN). Non-U.S. citizens on non-immigrant visas[1] with job offers from Clemson University should follow the procedures outlined below to obtain a Social Security number from the Social Security Administration.

SSN Eligibility (Non-U.S. Citizens)

- Non-U.S. citizens must be authorized to work in the United States by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in order to obtain an SSN.
- Non-U.S. citizens should wait 10 days after arrival in the United States before applying for an SSN to ensure the Social Security Administration can verify the applicant's immigration status with DHS.
- Students and participants in the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program must report to the sponsoring organization before applying for an SSN.
- Students on F-1 and J-1 visas and exchange visitors (e.g., research scholars, teachers, professors, etc.) on J-1 visas:
    - Applicants must have a job offer and an employment verification letter from the hiring department.
    - The SEVIS check-in process must be completed before applying for an SSN.

Required Documentation

Non-U.S. citizens must provide documentation as outlined below by visa type when applying for a Social Security number:

(A) Faculty, researchers, or staff with an employment-based visa category (i.e., H1B, TN, or O visas):

- Official job-offer letter from the University.
- Original unexpired passport.
- U.S. entry visa or Form I-797A Notice of Action.
- Arrival/Departure Record (Form I-94) printed from the Customs and Border Patrol Website (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/).
- Completed Application for a Social Security Card.

(B) F-1 or J-1 Students:

- SEVIS record activation—Students must complete the International Services check-in process and have their SEVIS records activated prior to applying for a SSN. The Social Security Administration will not accept SSN applications if the SEVIS record is not activated.
- Employment verification letter approved by the hiring department and International Services.
- Original unexpired passport.

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[1] U.S. permanent residents please visit the Social Security Administration's webpage Social Security Numbers For U.S. Permanent Residents for instructions on applying for an SSN.

- Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status (Form I-20) for F-1 students or Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status (Form DS-2019) for J-1 students.
- Arrival/Departure Record (Form I-94) printed from the Customs and Border Patrol Website (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/).
- Completed Application for a Social Security Card.

(C) J-1 Faculty, Staff, Researcher Scholars (non-student or international visitor J-1 categories)

- SEVIS record activation—J-1 Scholars must complete the International Services check-in process and have their SEVIS records activated prior to applying for an SSN. The Social Security Administration will not accept SSN applications if the SEVIS record is not activated.
- Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status (Form DS-2019) with a designation of financial support from the sponsor.
- Original unexpired passport containing your entry visa.
- Form DS-2019 (with financial support from sponsor noted).
- Arrival/Departure Record (Form I-94) printed from the Customs and Border Patrol Website (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/)
- Completed Application for a Social Security Card.

(D) J-2 visa holders:

- An unexpired Employment Authorization Document (Form I-766).
- Original unexpired passport.
- Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status (Form DS-2019).
- Arrival/Departure Record I-94 printed from the Customs and Border Patrol Website (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/).
- Completed Application for a Social Security Card.

Applying for a Social Security Number:

1. Complete the Application for a Social Security Card. It is important that you do the following:
   a. Complete all the highlighted fields on the form, sign and date in the designated spaces.
   b. Print clearly, so that your information is entered into the system accurately.
   c. In field # 5, mark the box "Legal Alien Allowed to Work."
   d. In field # 16:
      i. If you are located on Clemson's main campus, enter the address of the International Services Office (OGE's Office of International Services, 108 Long Hall, Clemson, SC, 29634-5714).
      ii. If you are on one of Clemson's other campuses, enter your home address. If this address is unreliable, ask your hiring department for a secure, local address to use.
2. Take your completed application and all required documents to a Social Security Administration office.

   a. If you are on Clemson's main campus, OHR recommends that you go to the Social Security Administration office in Anderson, S.C.
   b. If you are on one of Clemson's other campuses, we recommend that you visit the Social Security Administration website https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp or call 1-800-772-1213 to locate an office near you. Your department can also direct you to the nearest Social Security Administration office.
3. When submitting the Application for a Social Security Card, you will need to request a "receipt letter" from the Social Security Administration office. The receipt letter will indicate whether the Social Security Administration has approved your application or is requiring further verification before an SSN will be issued. Receipt letters indicating SSN approval can be used to satisfy the Internal Revenue Service's requirement that employers obtain a Social Security Number or proof that the SSN applicant has been approved. (Note that, for tax purposes, the receipt letter is not accepted from November 1 to December 31 of each year. During this period, the SSN must be presented prior to hiring.)
4. Present the "receipt letter" indicating that your application has been approved to the Office of Human Resources. (OHR, Attn: International Employment, Administrative Services Building, 108 Perimeter Road, 29634). OHR recommends that you bring the letter with you when you present your employment eligibility documents. Note that applicants will not be approved for hire without either an SSN or a receipt letter.
5. A Social Security card with your Social Security number on it will be issued upon approval. Normally, it takes two weeks to receive the card. The Social Security card will be mailed to the address you enter into field # 16 of the application. If you enter the Office of International Services as your mailing address, International Services Office will notify you via your Clemson email address when your card arrives. Upon notification, you can go to the Office of International Services and pick up your card
6. Take your Social Security card to OHR International Employment to update your employment file. If you are not located on Clemson's main campus, please contact OHR International Employment for instructions.

Related Resources

Anderson, S.C., Social Security Administration Office
Ask-HR
Employment Verification Letter for F-1 Visa
Employment Verification Letter for J-1 Visa
Employment Verification Policy
Clemson University International Employees at Work website
OHR Glossary of Terms
Social Security Administration website
Social Security Card Application