

Social Security Number Issuance Guide

To receive wages legally in the United States, international students who want to work must apply for [a social security number \(SSN\)](#). As of October 13, 2004, the [Social Security Administration](#) will issue SSNs to international students only after they secure legal employment. The Social Security Administration (SSA) requires international students to provide proof of F-1 status, proof of employment, and work authorization to obtain an SSN.

The following steps must be completed in the order listed to apply for an SSN for CPT authorization with a paid internship.

Step 1: Secure a qualifying internship position.

- “Qualifying” means that the internship is in your major field (minor field is not acceptable) AND directly relates to your academic program and future career goals.

Step 2: Obtain an Internship Offer Letter from your employer.

- This letter explains that you are a paid intern of the organization and needs to contain the following information:
 - Hiring organization’s name,
 - Supervisor’s name and contact information,
 - Internship start and end dates,
 - Job title and duties, and
 - Number of hours/week that you will work (must be 20 hours or fewer per week if you will be doing part-time CPT).

Additionally, you will need to show the following documents to your Supervisor so that you can satisfy your [Form I-9 requirements](#):

- Unexpired foreign passport,
- I-20 with CPT authorization, and
- Most recent [Form I-94](#) indicating F-1 nonimmigrant status.

Step 3: Apply for CPT authorization through and obtain an updated I-20 from Undergraduate Admissions – Immigration.

- Complete the [CPT Application - Department Head Approval](#) and submit it to immigration@tarleton.edu with a copy of your internship offer letter.
- Please allow up to 5 business days for processing your application and offer letter. **You must receive a new I-20 with CPT authorization before you can begin working.**
- Your updated I-20 will be emailed to your Tarleton email account once it is ready.
- **Please note:** Although Undergraduate Admissions – Immigration will issue you an updated I-20 using a scanned copy of your internship offer letter, the SSA Office will not accept electronic signatures. Additionally, you may have difficulty securing your social security card if you have a “tentative” start date listed on your internship offer letter. Follow up with your Supervisor, if necessary, to correct one or both of these issues.

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Step 4: Make an appointment with a local Social Security Administration Office and apply for your SSN.

- After receiving your updated I-20, gather all the required documents and make an appointment with a local SSA Office to complete the social security application process. To find the SSA Office closest to you, please click [here](#).
- Suggested documentation:
 - Internship offer letter from your employer
 - Valid passport
 - Most recent I-94
 - I-20 with CPT authorization
 - [Social security card application \(Form SS-5\)](#) – This form must be completed in blue or black ink. It may also be typed and then signed in blue or black ink.
- **Please note: Request a receipt indicating that you have applied for an SSN. Once the SSA processes your request, they will mail your social security card to you.** If you are a newly admitted student to Tarleton, please wait until at least 14 days after Undergraduate Admissions – Immigration has registered your SEVIS record before applying for your SSN. This delay helps ensure that the SSA Office's database shows your active SEVIS status. If you apply too early, the SSA may be unable to verify your legal alien status and, therefore, will not issue you an SSN.

Step 5: Report your SSN to your Supervisor.

- Once you either receive confirmation from the SSA informing you of your new SSN or you receive your social security card in the mail, inform your Supervisor ASAP.
- Your SSN is yours for the rest of your life. It never expires. Even after you stop working, you can still use your SSN to file your tax return, change your visa status, apply for post-completion OPT, apply for permanent residency, or for any other legal purpose that requires providing an SSN.

Please refer to the following resources for additional information regarding social security numbers, cards, and records:

- Pages 1-4 of your Form SS-5
- IRS publication "[International Students and Social Security Numbers](#)"
- IRS publication "[Guard Your Card](#)"
- IRS's fraud protection [website](#)
- Social Security Administration's [website](#)