

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 graduate assistantship employment.

Step 1: Secure a graduate assistantship position.

- Most students apply for graduate assistantships through their academic department.
- However, if an assistantship is not currently available through your academic department, try searching for one in the [Handshake Employment System](#). As with other on-campus jobs, your position must be located on one of Tarleton's campuses.

Step 2: Obtain an Employment Offer Letter from your hiring department.

- This letter explains that you are a paid employee of the department and needs to contain the following information:
 - Hiring department's name,
 - Supervisor's name and contact information,
 - Start date,
 - Job title and duties, and
 - Number of hours/week that you will work (must be 20 hours or fewer per week except during authorized school breaks)

Additionally, Employee Services will ask you to complete the following steps **before you can begin working**:

- Your hiring department should send you the link to Employee Services' Student and GA Employment Application. You can also access the application [here](#). You need to complete the application, print it out, and return it to Employee Services (Gough Hall, 1st Floor). Please also bring the following documents with you when you submit your application so that you can satisfy your [Form I-9 requirements](#) at this time:
 - Unexpired foreign passport,
 - Most recent continued attendance I-20, and
 - Most recent [Form I-94](#) indicating F-1 nonimmigrant status.
- Pass a criminal back ground check (link will be emailed to you)
- Complete on-boarding tasks through Workday (link will be emailed to you)

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- If your position is benefits eligible, one of your tasks will be to either opt-in to or opt-out of the Graduate Student Employee Health Insurance Plan.
 - Opting-in allows you to receive a waiver of the student health insurance fee on your Texan Bill Pay.
 - **However, to receive this waiver, your employee insurance must be effective either January 31 for spring enrollees or September 1 for fall enrollees.**
 - To ensure that your insurance takes effect in time for you to receive the fee waiver, you must complete your insurance on-boarding task in Workday within the time frame given to you by Employee Services during your Benefits Orientation.
 - Not completing your insurance on-boarding task in Workday in a timely manner could result in your being “double covered” and having to pay the student health insurance fee for the first semester of your assistantship.
 - If you want to opt-out of the Graduate Student Employee Health Insurance Plan, you must decline the insurance in Workday. If you do not decline the insurance, you will be enrolled by default.
- Attend in-person Benefits Orientation if your position is benefits eligible (date, time, and location will be emailed to you)

Step 3: Obtain a Social Security Letter from Undergraduate Admissions – Immigration.

- Email your employment offer letter to immigration@tarleton.edu.
- Please allow 1-2 business days for processing your employment offer letter.
- You will be emailed at your Tarleton email account once your letter is ready for pick up.
- **Please note:** Although Undergraduate Admissions – Immigration will issue you a social security letter using a scanned copy of your employment 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 employment offer letter. Please follow-up with your supervisor, if necessary, to correct one or both of these issues.

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

- After receiving your social security letter, 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](#).

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- Suggested documentation:
 - Employment offer letter (from your hiring department)
 - Social security letter (from Undergraduate Admissions – Immigration)
 - Valid passport
 - Most recent I-94
 - Most recent continued attendance I-20
 - [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 Employee Services.

- Once you either receive confirmation from the SSA informing you of your SSN or you receive your social security card in the mail, please bring your SSN to Employee Services.
- 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](#)