HARVARD
INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

In order to be eligible for a Social Security Number (SSN) you will need to present evidence of work authorization to an official at a local Social Security Administration (SSA) office and the evidence you submit will depend upon your visa status.

Please note that it is NOT possible to apply for a Social Security Number on line or via an agency. You must have a personal interview with a Social Security Administration representative usually in a local Social Security office.

If you are an F-1 visa holder with on-campus employment, you must first obtain a job offer letter from your on-campus employer. (See the HIO web site for a sample employer letter.) Take the job offer letter to the HIO to get the HIO work authorization letter. Once you have the two letters take your passport and your Form I-20 with the letters to one of the SSA offices listed below. F-1 visa holders are not eligible for an SSN unless they have on-campus employment or off-campus work permission (either OPT or CPT) at the time of the SSN application. You can apply for the SSN within 30 days of the start date.

If you are an F-1 visa holder on OPT or CPT, take your passport, your latest Form I-20, and if on OPT, your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to one of the SSA offices listed below. Students with CPT are allowed to apply up to 30 days prior to the start date of the CPT authorization. Students with OPT cannot apply for an SSN until the start date of the EAD.

If you are a J-1 student under Harvard's J-1 program sponsorship, take your passport, Form DS-2019, and a letter from the HIO indicating that you have work authorization to one of the SSA offices listed below. If your J-1 visa is not sponsored by Harvard, please get the work authorization from your J program sponsor and then follow these same instructions.

If you are a J-1 scholar, an H-1B scholar or an O-1 scholar, take your passport and Form DS-2019 or Form I-797 (for H-1B and O-1 visa holders), to one of the SSA offices listed below.

If you are a **J-2 visa holder**, once you have work permission, take your passport, both your Form DS-2019 and the J-1's Form DS-2019, and your EAD to one of the following Social Security Administration offices.

WHEN TO APPLY?
You can apply for the SSN five days after you have registered with the HIO. This waiting period assures that your record will have been updated in the Government's database. In addition, you cannot apply before the effective date of your visa document (Form I-20, DS-2019 or I-797).

Representatives from the SSA will come to campus every September to process SSN applications. Check the HIO web site for details at the beginning of the fall semester.

Upon completion of an SSN application you will receive notification of your SSN in the mail. The process usually takes four to eight weeks. For more information, check the SSA web site: http://www.ssa.gov or call the SSA at 1-800-772-1213. If you lose your SSN card and need to apply for a replacement, you must prove your eligibility for employment again at the time of application.

Social Security Administration Offices are located at:

10 Fawcett Street, 1st floor, Cambridge, MA 02138   From the Harvard Square T station, take the #78 or #74 bus to Fawcett Street.

10 Causeway Street, Room 148, 1st floor   Take the Green or Orange Line to North Station; the
Boston, MA 02222   office is in the Thomas P. O'Neill Building.

For the most up to date operating hours of Social Security Administration, go to www.ssa.gov.

SAMPLE

On-Campus Employer letter (verifying employment)
Must be typed or written on official school letterhead and containing the employer's original signature.

To Whom It May Concern
Social Security Administration

Date_____

We have offered on-campus employment to _____, an
F-l student attending Harvard University, as a _____ (e.g. wait
staff, library aide, research, etc) not to exceed 20 hours per week. Start Date: _____

Employer's Identification Number (EIN)

_____

Employer's Signature

_____

Employer's Name, typed or printed

_____

Employer's Telephone Number

_____