

# SOCIAL SECURITY CHECKLIST

As an international student you are NOT ALLOWED to work off-campus without work authorization from ISSA or U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS). Working off-campus without authorization is ILLEGAL. Please make an appointment with our office if you would like to know more about your off-campus options.

You cannot start work on campus until you apply for your Social Security Card and complete employment paperwork with the Student Employment office.

Your Social Security card should arrive in 2-4 weeks. Make sure to check your mail often when waiting for your card. This is a very important document that is yours forever. Keep your card and number safe.

As an international student, you can only work up to 20 hours/week when school is in session. You may work more than 20 hours/week during the summer or any time that you have one full week (no partial weeks) off.

If the Social Security number is being requested for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) or Optional Practical Training (OPT), you must submit a copy of the CPT I-20 or OPT I-20 and EAD card along with your job offer letter.

\*\*Social Security Administration (SSA)  
6th Floor, One Empire Plaza, Providence RI  
1-888-402-0808  
Hours: Mon - Fri 9am - 4pm

## STEPS FOR APPLYING FOR A SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

- [Find a job on campus](#) and obtain an employment verification letter from your supervisor (hourly paid jobs). If you are being hired into a graduate assistantship position, the Student Employment Office will provide you with your employment verification letter. The letter must be on a RISD letterhead and state your position start date. *You cannot apply for your Social Security card more than 30 days before you begin working.*
- Complete the ISSA Social Security Letter Request Form via [Terra Dotta Student Portal](#) (F-1 students) or email [issa@risd.edu](mailto:issa@risd.edu) (J-1 students) and upload the letter from your supervisor (on-campus employment only). Receive your Immigration Status Verification Letter from ISSA.
- Take the following documents to the Social Security Administration:
  - Employment Verification Letter on RISD Letterhead
  - Letter from ISSA
  - Social Security Application
    - Complete application [online](#)
  - Valid Passport
  - Visa
  - I-20 (the most recent one)
  - I-94 (you can print one out at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94>)
- When you apply for a Social Security card, **BE SURE TO ASK FOR A RECEIPT!** You will need this receipt to complete employment paperwork with Student Employment.