



Obtaining a U.S. Social Security Number (Information for F and J visa Holders) Guide

F-1 and J-1/J-2 visa holders who will be employed in the U.S. must obtain a U.S. social security number (SSN) to be paid. F-1 and J-1/J-2 visa holders are eligible to obtain the SSN only after receiving proper employment authorization from ISS and/or U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Applicants are advised to wait at least **10 days** after their most recent entry to the U.S. before presenting their application to the Social Security Administration office (SSA). Students/scholars with initial I-20s issued for initial entry, re-entry, or change of level, must confirm with ISS that their SEVIS record is in “**active**” status prior to applying for the SSN. Once obtained, the SSN can be used for any type of authorized employment presently and for future employment opportunities.

Individuals who lost their SSN card may apply for a replacement only if they can prove they are currently authorized for employment in the U.S. F-2 dependents are not eligible to apply for employment and cannot obtain SSNs. Additional SSA guidance for F and J visa holders is available at <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10181.pdf>

Important: If you apply for your social security number and your application is not accepted, please make sure that you clearly understand the rejection reason. Remember to always ask for the name of the person who is assisting you and, if necessary, the name of the supervisor and the best way to contact them for additional information.

Obtaining the SSN for on-campus employment (F-1 students and J-1 Students)

Step 1: Submit ISS [Letter Request E-Form](#) along with the memo/letter of employment from the FAU hiring department and the International Student Employment Eligibility Form from HR/Student Employment

Step 2: ISS confirms that the student is in valid F-1 status. Students new to FAU must have completed immigration check-in with ISS and must be enrolled full-time.

Step 3: ISS issues Social Security Letter.

J-1 students with DS-2019 forms issued by another sponsor (not FAU) must obtain permission in writing from their program sponsor that they have permission to work in the U.S.

Step 4: Apply for the SSN at the SSA Office.

Present the following documents:

- I-20 or DS-2019 from FAU (transfer students must also present I-20/DS-2019 from previous institution(s)).
- [ISS social security letter](#) – also signed by hiring department (top half)
- Valid passport
- I-94 card or Change of Status approval notice (includes the I-94 card)
- Form SS-5 (can be filled out on site at the SSA office or downloaded at <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>)

Obtaining the SSN for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) employment (F-1 Students)

Step 1: Submit ISS [Letter Request E-Form](#) along with memo/letter from the off-campus employer

Step 2: ISS confirms that the student is in valid F-1 status.

Step 3: ISS issues the Social Security Letter to Social to the SSA Office.

Step 4: Apply for the SSN at the SSA Office.

Present the following documents:

- I-20 with Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization on page 2
- ISS social security letter
- Memo/letter from the hiring department
- Valid passport

- I-94 card or Change of Status approval notice (includes the I-94 card)
- Form SS-5 (can be filled out on site at the SSA office or downloaded at <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>)

Obtaining the SSN for USCIS authorized employment

F-1 OPT, F-1 economic hardship, or J-2 employment authorization

Option 1: Request SSN directly on the form I-765 when applying for employment authorization. SSA will mail the SSN card following the approval of the I-765 petition.

Option 2: If SSN was not requested at the time of filing the form I-765, then after receiving the EAD card from USCIS, submit your application to the SSA Office with **the following documents:**

- I-20 with OPT or economic hardship endorsement or DS-2019 form
- Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by USCIS
- Valid passport
- I-94 card or Change of Status approval notice (includes the I-94 card)
- Form SS-5 (can be filled out on site at the SSA office or downloaded at <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>)

Obtaining the SSN for Academic Training (AT) Employment (J-1 Students)

After obtaining the new DS-2019 with Academic Training (AT) approval from ISS, apply for the SSN at the SSA Office with the following documents:

- DS-2019 issued for AT purposes
- Academic Training Letter signed by the Responsible Officer/Alternate Responsible Officer
- Valid passport
- I-94 card or Change of Status approval notice (includes I-94 card)
- Form SS-5 (can be filled out on site at the SSA office or downloaded at <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>)

Obtaining the SSN for J-1 Scholars* (researcher/professor, short-term scholar, student intern, & specialist)

**Applicable only to J-1 scholars who are paid employees of FAU*

Scholar goes to the SSA office and submits the SSN application.

The scholar must present the following documents:

- DS-2019 (including previous DS-2019 forms for transfer J-1 scholars)
- Offer Letter from FAU Department
- Valid passport
- I-94 card or Change of Status approval notice (includes I-94 card)
- Form SS-5 (can be filled out on site at the SSA office or downloaded at <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>)

Please use the [SSA Office Locator](#) to find an office to schedule your SSN application. You will need to call the office first to schedule your appointment with SSA.

Scholars with any questions should reach out to hiring department.