



# SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER APPLICATION PROCESS FOR F-1 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OFF CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT (CPT/OPT)

## ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

Social Security numbers (SSNs) are issued to U.S. Citizens, permanent residents, and temporary (working) residents. Its primary purpose is to track income for tax purposes. The Social Security Administration (SSA) issues SSNs only to F students who have an employment offer. If you have an off-campus job (through CPT or OPT), you must apply for a SSN. The process is free and described in the steps below.

NOTE: If you have just arrived to the U.S. you should wait at least 10 days before submitting a SSN application. Applying early may result in the SSA rejecting your application.

## STEP 1: REQUEST A SOCIAL SECURITY LETTER WITH YOUR EMPLOYER

- Letters must be completed by your employer
- Template attached
- Contact your local Social Security Office for instructions. You can find your local office here: <https://www.ssa.gov/locator>

## STEP 2: GATHER DOCUMENTS

- Completed Social Security Letter from employer
- I-20
- Passport & F-1 Visa
- I-94 printout (available at [i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94](http://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94))

## STEP 3: APPLY FOR YOUR CARD AT SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA)

- The SSA office nearest SAIC is:
  - 605 W Washington (1-800-772-1213)
  - See [socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber](https://socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber) for other locations
- Complete the Social Security application form ([ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf](https://ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf))
- We strongly recommend you use International Affairs' mailing address, not your personal address.
  - 36 S. Wabash Ave., Suite 1203, Chicago, IL 60603
- Collect your Social Security application receipt.
- Collect your immigration documents (passport, I-94 card, I-20).

## STEP 4: SUBMIT YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY APPLICATION RECEIPT TO YOUR EMPLOYER

- You must submit your social security application receipt and completed I-9 packet to your employer within 3 days of starting your job.
- If you do not submit these documents within 3 days you could be terminated from your job.

## STEP 5: WAIT FOR YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

- Cards take 2-8 weeks to process and mail.
- You may begin working while you wait for your card.

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**STEP 6: COLLECT YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD**

- The card will be mailed to the address you provided on your Social Security application.
- If you used International Affairs' mailing address, you will receive an email from [intaff@saic.edu](mailto:intaff@saic.edu) when your social security card has arrived.

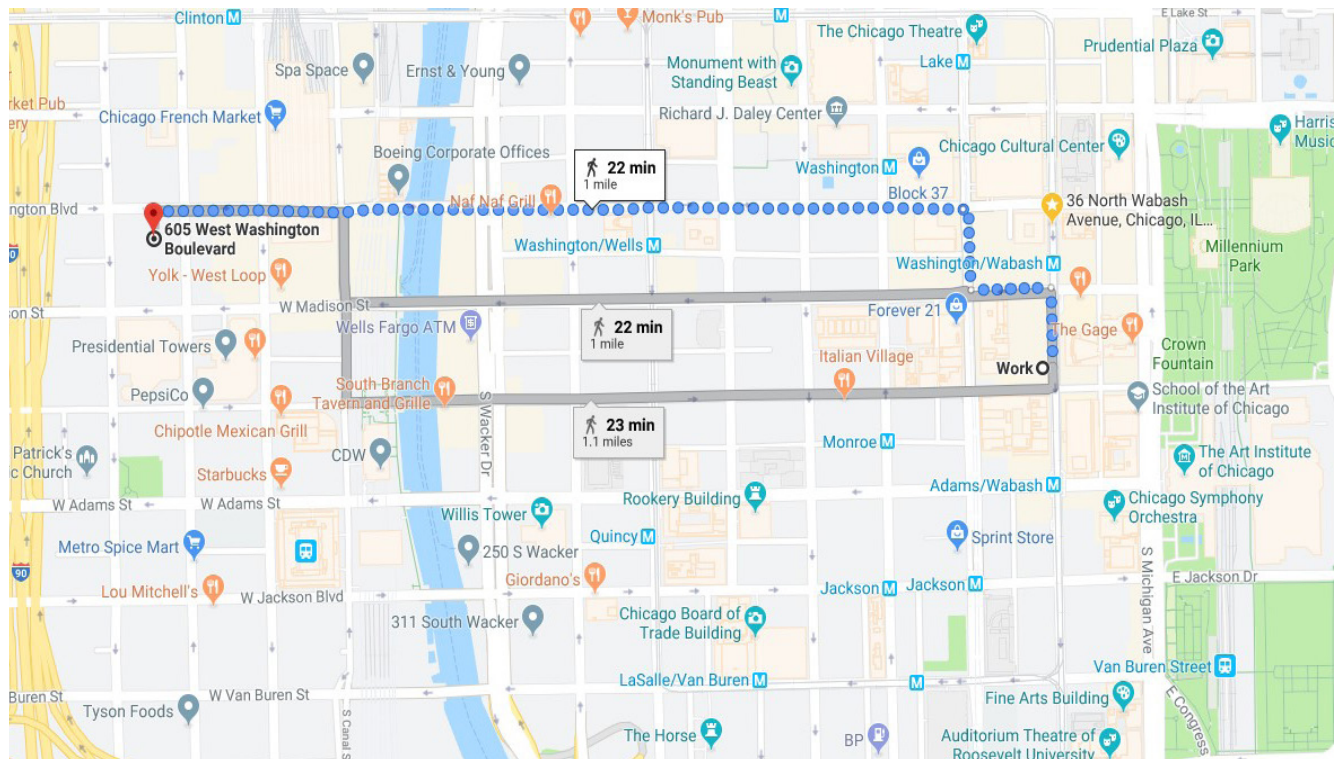
**STEP 7: SUBMIT A COPY OF YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD TO YOUR EMPLOYER**

- Your employer must take a photocopy of your new Social Security card to complete your employment paperwork.

**STEP 8: SECURE YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD IN A SAFE PLACE**

- Your Social Security card is a sensitive identification document.
- Keep your card in a safe place; do not carry it in your purse or wallet.
- Lost or stolen social security cards can be used to commit a crime called identity theft.
- If you lose your social security card you can only replace it if you have a paying job at the time of re-application.

**SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION @ 605 W. Washington Blvd.**



# SAMPLE SOCIAL SECURITY RECOMMENDATION LETTER FOR CPT/OPT EMPLOYMENT

## ABOUT THIS SAMPLE LETTER

Students with off campus Curricular Practical Training or Optional Practical Training must obtain a Social Security recommendation letter directly from their employer. If needed, employers may use this Sample Social Security Letter as reference. Letters should be typed on official letterhead and include the supervisor's original signature.

(Date)

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that (Student's Full Name)

has been offered, or is already engaged in, authorized off-campus employment. (S/he) will be working in the

position of (job/position) at (name of employer/company).

This position begins on (start date) and (student's name) will work (number of hours) weekly.

Employer contact information: (Employer Identification Number, EIN)

(Supervisor's Name)

(Supervisor's Telephone Number)

Sincerely,

(Supervisor's Original Signature)

(Supervisor's Title)