

Social Security Numbers For Noncitizens



If you are a lawfully admitted noncitizen, you may need a Social Security number.

How do you get a number?

To apply for a Social Security number:

- Call or visit one of our local offices;
- Complete an *Application For A Social Security Card* (Form SS-5); and
- Provide original documents showing your age, identity and lawful noncitizen status (including Department of Homeland Security (DHS) permission to work in the U.S.).

You may apply for a Social Security number if you do not have permission to work:

- If a federal law requires that you show your Social Security number to get a particular benefit or service; or
- If a state or local law requires you to show your Social Security number to get general assistance benefits.

To get a number to meet a state or local government requirement, you must provide a letter, on letterhead stationery (no form letters or photocopies), from the government agency requiring you to get a number. The letter must:

- Specifically identify you as the applicant;
- Cite the law requiring you to have a Social Security number;
- Indicate that you meet all the agency's requirements, except having the number; and
- Contain an agency contact name and telephone number.

If you are assigned a number for nonwork purposes, you cannot use it to work. If you use it to work, we may inform DHS.

You will receive your number and card as soon as we verify your immigration status with DHS. Your employer can use your immigration documents as proof of your authorization to work in the U.S.

What can you do if you need a number for tax purposes?

If you need a number for tax purposes and you are not authorized to work in the U.S., you can apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Visit IRS in person or call the IRS toll-free number, **1-800-TAXFORM (1-800-829-3676)**, and request Form W-7, *Application For An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number*.

Do you need a number for other government services?

Lawfully admitted noncitizens can get many benefits and services without having a Social Security number. You do not need a number to purchase savings bonds, conduct business with a bank, register for school or apply for educational tests, obtain private health insurance, apply for school lunch programs or apply for subsidized housing.

Contacting Social Security

For more information, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call toll-free **1-800-772-1213** (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**). We can answer specific questions and provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day.

We treat all calls confidentially. We also want to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some telephone calls.



Social Security Administration
SSA Publication No. 05-10096
ICN 468630
Unit of Issue - HD (one hundred)
January 2004 (Recycle prior editions)

www.socialsecurity.gov

Printed on recycled paper

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