

Getting a Social Security Number and Card

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About Social Security Numbers and Cards

A Social Security number (SSN) is used to report your wages to the U.S. government and to determine eligibility for Social Security benefits. Social Security numbers can be assigned to foreign workers who are authorized to work in the United States.

When a Social Security Number is Required

Social Security numbers are required for the following situations:

Employment	<p>You can begin work (and be paid) while you wait for your Social Security number to be issued. However, you must have applied for a Social Security number if you are employed in the U.S. or if you have received and plan to accept an offer of employment in the U.S.</p> <p>Refer to Social Security Administration Policy Regarding Foreign Students [3] (see item #1c) about working while waiting for a Social Security number to be processed. If an employer tells you that you cannot work or cannot be paid until you have received your Social Security number, give them this information sheet [4] that also contains online resources.</p>
Fellowships	<p>If you are going to receive a fellowship or scholarship payment from the University of Michigan, you will need a Social Security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) if you are not eligible for a Social Security number.</p>
U.S. Department of Treasury Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Forms if you have U.S. source income.	<p>All students in F-1 status who are non-resident aliens for tax purposes are required to submit a tax return form to the Internal Revenue Service if they have any U.S. source income (other than bank interest). A Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) is required on Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax return forms. For additional information about these requirements, refer to Non-Residents for Tax Purposes [5].</p>

When a Social Security Number is Not Required

Social Security numbers are not required for the following situations:

Registration for Classes	It is not necessary to have a Social Security number in order to register for classes. Students use an eight-digit number called the U-M I.D. number to register for classes.
Banking	You do not need a Social Security number to open a bank account or for most other financial transactions. If you are an F or J visa holder, the bank may ask you to fill out Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN to prove that you are exempt from the requirement of providing a Social Security number.
Driver's License	Although some states require that you have a Social Security number in order to obtain a driver's license, the State of Michigan does not have such a requirement. Therefore, you do not need a Social Security number to obtain a driver's license in Michigan . However, you may need to sign a form confirming that you do not have a Social Security number. For more information, refer to the State of Michigan Secretary of State [6] web site.
U.S.Department of Treasury Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Forms if you have no U.S.-source income	All students in F-1 status who are non-resident aliens for tax purposes are required to submit Internal Revenue Service Form 8843 to the Internal Revenue Service every year even if they have no U.S. source income. Form 8843 does not require a Social Security number although the government can process the form more easily if it includes a Social Security number. For additional information about these requirements, refer to Tax Laws and Filing Requirements [7].

Source URL: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/tax/getting-ssn-card>

Links

[1] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/tax/determining-eligibility-ssn-card>

[2] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/tax/applying-ssn-card>

[3] <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0110211290>

[4] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/ssninfo.pdf>

[5] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/tax/non-residents>

[6] <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1627---,00.html>

[7] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/tax/laws-and-filing-requirements>