



How to Apply for a Social Security Number (SSN)

1. To apply for an SSN, you must have a job offer.

- If you have been offered employment in the U.S. or are faculty/staff on CU Boulder payroll and you do not have an SSN, you must apply for an SSN.
 - If you already have an SSN, you do not need to apply for a new one
 - For students in F-1 or J-1 status, please work with ISSS to ensure you have work authorization before engaging in off-campus employment
- An SSN is a tax identification number and is required to receive wage income in the U.S.
- You may start working *without* an SSN, but you are required to provide it to Human Resources (HR) as soon as you receive it.
 - Contact your supervisor for instructions on how to submit your SSN securely.
- An SSN is required when you file your taxes if you have ever been employed in the United States or have received a taxable stipend or scholarship.
- You may not apply for an SSN more than 30 days before your employment start date.

2. Once a new or continuing *student* in F-1 or J-1 status has a job offer, they must request an SSN Letter from ISSS to support their application to the Social Security Administration (SSA).

- Complete the *SSN Letter Request e-form* in the [MyISSS portal](#) under Training/Employment-Related Forms.
- For ISSS to issue the SSN support letter, students must be enrolled in a full-time course load (or authorized equivalent).
 - New students must also complete the *Immigration Check-In, Immigration Essentials Quiz Grade Submission*, and *Title IX Certificate Submission* e-forms. [Access via your MyISSS Portal](#).
- You must apply for an SSN with the SSA within 30 days of the issue date indicated on the ISSS SSN support letter.
- New students should wait at least 3 business days from ISSS issuing the SSN support letter to apply for an SSN. In some cases, you may need to wait 10 calendar days from entry into the U.S. in F-1 or J-1 student status to apply for an SSN.
 - Please review [this handout](#) regarding SAVE, an information service for authorized federal, state, and local benefit-granting agencies for further information.
- **Note:** J-1 student interns need an SSN letter from ISSS as well. Please contact your ISSS [J-1 advisor](#) if you are receiving payment from CU Boulder, including a stipend or honorarium, and you did not receive an SSN letter from ISSS after your J-1 SEVIS record has been validated
 - J-1 exchange visitors under the category of short-term scholar, research scholar, professor, or specialist do not need an SSN letter from ISSS

3. Complete the [Online Social Security Number Application](#) on the Social Security Administration website.

- Keep a copy of your confirmation number.



4. **Visit your local Social Security Office within 45 days of submitting your [online application](#) to complete the process.**
 - Bring your confirmation number and required documentation (hard copies):
 - Valid passport
 - [Valid I-94](#)
 - Current I-20 or DS-2019
 - Additional form of photo identification (e.g., CU Boulder temporary visitor ID card, Buff OneCard)
 - For students in F-1 or J-1 status and J-1 student interns *only*, in addition to the above you must also bring:
 - SSN letter from ISSS
 - Offer letter from on-campus employer, assistantship, fellowship, or internship
 - The closest Social Security Administration (SSA) Office to CU Boulder is **480 West Dahlia Street, Louisville, Colorado 80027**.
 - The Louisville SSA office offers walk-in appointments, or you can [book an appointment](#).
 - [Map and directions to SSA in Louisville, CO](#)
 - You may find other office locations on the [SSA website](#).
 - Check the SSA's [hours of operation](#) before going to an SSA office to submit your documentation.
 - It is free to apply for an SSN, and it typically takes 2 to 4 weeks for the SSA to process an SSN application.

Additional Tasks for Students and Scholars Employed by CU Boulder

5. **Complete the [Form I-9](#) no later than 3 days after beginning work.**
 - No appointment is necessary. Documents you must bring to HR to complete your I-9:
 - Valid passport
 - Current visa, if applicable
 - [Valid I-94](#)
 - Current I-20 or DS-2019
 - Photo identification (e.g., CU Boulder temporary visitor ID card, Buff OneCard)

6. Tax Residency Status and Income Tax Filing

Review the [International Tax](#) website, [orientation](#), and the ISSS [Mandatory Income Tax Filing](#) website for more important information.

- All new international CU employees and students that receive a taxable stipend or scholarship must complete a Sprintax Calculus profile to document their U.S. tax residency status with the International Tax Office. You will receive an invitation from CUIntlTax-noreply@Sprintax.com to activate your profile within approximately 14 days of your hire date. Please complete your profile as soon as possible to ensure accurate taxation of your pay including any applicable tax treaty eligibility or FICA tax exemptions.
- If you haven't received your Sprintax Calculus activation email within 21 days from your start date, please check your junk mail folder. If you still cannot locate your activation email, please contact intltax@cu.edu.
- After your initial profile has been completed, please keep your Sprintax profile up to date as your circumstances change.