



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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Fact Sheet

Contact: SEVP
(202) 353-3049

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND EXCHANGE VISITORS (F-1, M-1 & J-1 VISA CATEGORIES) PURSUING EMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State, along with the Social Security Administration, have coordinated several actions in order to ensure that eligible students and exchange visitors can be given Social Security numbers. Some of the actions to facilitate Social Security number issuance involve the cooperation of the student or exchange visitor. If eligible to work in the United States, students/exchange visitors should:

1. Report to their school or to their exchange visitor program as soon as possible after arrival at a U.S. port of entry. This should be done prior to applying for Social Security numbers.
2. Designated School Officials (DSOs) will then follow-up on the arrival of their students by registering them in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

Responsible Officers (ROs) will then follow-up on the arrival of their exchange visitors by validating them in SEVIS.

3. If there are no other conflicts with the requirements of the Social Security Administration and the status of the student or exchange visitor in SEVIS, current students/exchange visitors should receive Social Security numbers.

If the SSA cannot assign an SSN, it will mail a notice of explanation to the applicant. The notice instructs students to contact their DSO and request that their SEVIS information be reviewed to ensure that it is accurate. Exchange visitors will likewise contact their ROs and request that their SEVIS information be reviewed to ensure that it is accurate. Note that corrections made in SEVIS are accessible to the SSA within 48 hours. Once SEVIS is updated, students/exchange visitors may reapply for SSNs after 48 hours elapse.

If a student or exchange visitor is not assigned an SSN and the DSO or RO believes he/she is authorized for employment, DSOs/ROs should first verify that SEVIS reflects the current status of the student or exchange visitor (e.g. active, inactive, etc.) If DSOs/ROs are unable to determine the cause of the difficulty, they can contact the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) at (202) 353-3049.