How to Apply for a Social Security Number

First:

Obtain a social security form from the International Advising Office stating you are in status and have the necessary on-campus employment or off-campus work authorization to be eligible for a social security number.

Second:

Take the form to your employer and have them fill out and sign the Identification of Employer section.

Third:

After you have been in the U.S. for AT LEAST 10 days, take the documents below to the Social Security Administration Office. You will receive a Social Security card in the mail within 4-8 weeks.

1. Certification of F-1 or J-1 visa status (visa stamp in your passport)
2. Employment authorization form (attached)
3. Passport
4. I-94 print out (cbp.gov)
5. I-20 or 2019 Form
6. Social Security Application (can be printed out online [http://www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) or picked up in the International Advising Office)
Social Security On-Campus Work Authorization Letter for F-1/J-1 Students

To Whom It May Concern:

The following F-1/J-1 student is in lawful non-immigrant status at Union College. S/he has been offered employment on-campus (see details below) and is authorized for this employment under the regulations governing F-1/J-1 status students found at 8CFR (f)(9)(i) and 22CFR § 62.16(b)

Non-immigrant’s Information – Completed by Student (Please print clearly)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Name</th>
<th>Last:</th>
<th>First:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
<td>Month:</td>
<td>Day:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identification of Employer – Completed by Hiring Department/ Supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and location of On-Campus Hiring Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment Identification Number (EIN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Union College: 141338580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Other Company: _______________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer Telephone Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s Position Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates of Employment (Actual or Anticipated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours per Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Description</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sincerely,

___________________________________     ________________________________
Hiring Dept./Supervisor (Signature)    Date               PDSO/DSO RO/ARO (Signature)   Date

__________________________________      _________________________________
Hiring Dept./Supervisor (Print)  Date                       PDSO/DSO RO/ARO (Print Name)  Date
Tel. (518) 388-8003

Working While Awaiting an SSN
An F-1/J-1 student may work while the Social Security number application is being processed. Employers may wish to reference SSA’s fact sheet, Employer Responsibilities When Hiring Foreign Workers. This fact sheet contains information on how to report wages for an employee who has not yet received an SSN and is available online at http://www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/hiring.htm.
Please note: This handout provides general information on the Social Security Number. When you check in at the International Advising Office, an advisor will provide you with more specific information on the Social Security Number application process and location.

What is a Social Security Number?
The Social Security Administration issues Social Security Numbers to all who are work-eligible as a way to identify participants, including taxpayers, in the federal government’s social security program, which provides retirement and disability benefits to workers and their families. Although the Social Security Administration states that the SSN is intended only for employment purposes, some public and many private institutions, such as banks, phone companies, and utilities (gas and electric) have adopted the SSN as a unique identifier for their customers. There is no charge for a Social Security number and card.

Do I need an SSN?
If you are going to work in the United States, either on-campus or with off-campus work authorization, you must obtain a Social Security Number. Your employer will withhold Social Security taxes from your paycheck and submit them to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which credits each payment to your Social Security account. You may start working on-campus at Union College without an SSN, but you must provide your SSN to your department and the Human Resource Office upon receiving your card.

Am I eligible for an SSN?
If you hold J-1 visa status, you may apply for an SSN.

If you hold F-1 visa status, you are eligible to apply for an SSN if you meet at least one of the following criteria. You must also provide proof of employment (see your Int’l advisor for details).
- You are currently working on campus
- You have been offered an on-campus job
- You have obtained off-campus work authorization

If you hold any other visa status, please consult with the Int’l Advisor or the Social Security Administration about your eligibility to apply for an SSN.

How do I apply?
To apply for a Social Security number, please:
1. Come to the International Advising Office to talk with an advisor about your eligibility for an SSN. If you are eligible, the Int’l Advisor will provide you with a letter certifying that you have the necessary immigration status and work authorization to be eligible for an SSN.
2. After you have been in the U.S. for AT LEAST 10 DAYS, take the documents listed below to the Social Security Administration Office at 1 Broadway Center (when you come to the Int’l Office, the Int’l Advisor will provide you with directions to this office).
   - Int’l Certification of your immigration status and work authorization (F-1 or J-1)
   - Proof of Employment (F-1 Students Only)
   - Passport
   - I-94 (small, white arrival/ departure card)
   - I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1) Certificate of Eligibility for Visa
3. You will receive your number and card in 4-8 weeks. **Once you receive your card, please take it to the Human Resources Dept.** at 17 South Lane, to update your SSN in the college information system and inform the administrator in the department that is employing you.

**Not eligible for an SSN?**

**What if I am not eligible for an SSN?**
As mentioned above, some other government agencies (e.g., the state departments of motor vehicles) and private institutions (e.g., banks, phone companies, utilities) now use the SSN for administrative and identification purposes. Below is some information on how to access these services without an SSN.

**New York State Driver’s License**
The New York State Department of Motor Vehicles requires all applications for driver’s licenses to provide a Social Security card, or a letter from the U.S. Social Security Administration stating that you are not eligible for a Social Security Number. The SSA Letter must have been issued within the last 30 days. You can obtain a letter from the local SSA office.

**Banking**
You do not need a Social Security Number (SSN) to open up a bank account. You will need to show your passport and a copy of either your bill from Union College or your student identification card. You will also be asked to complete a W-8BEN form (for tax withholding).

When opening up a checking account, you can apply for a check card. This VISA, MASTERCARD, or check card can be used to make purchases. The amount of your purchase is debited directly from the checking account.

A credit card is available by applying for a Secure Credit Card (minimum is between $300 and $10,000). The funds have to be in an account at the bank. This is necessary because there is no credit history or SSN to do a credit history report. The advantage to the Secure Credit Card is that it helps to establish credit.

Bank of America, a local and national bank has the secure credit card.

**Utilities**
Students applying for gas and electric utilities through National Grid are not required to have an SSN. You will be asked to provide a Union College ID, passport, biographical information, address etc., as well as a lease. If lease is for less than a year, then you are required to pay a deposit.

**Cell Phones**
Cellular telephone companies require a deposit from customers who do not have an SSN or credit history. Prices vary between companies. For example, Sprint requires a deposit from customers between $125-$250 and Verizon’s deposit is $400. This deposit would be refunded after one year if you maintain a good payment history. To avoid paying a deposit, many choose to purchase pre-paid calling cards.

**A Note on Taxes**
Because all international students must submit tax forms to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) each Spring, international students and family members who are not eligible for an SSN can apply for an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) from the IRS when submitting their tax forms. The Int’l Office will provide more information on tax forms and the ITIN toward the middle of the Winter Term. For more information, visit the IRS website ([http://www.irs.gov/individulas/article/0,,id=96287,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/individulas/article/0,,id=96287,00.html))

**Contacting the Social Security Administration**
For more information, visit the Internal Revenue website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call toll-free 1-800-772-1213 (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call the TTY number, 1-800-325-0778). They can answer specific questions and provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day. To contact our local SSA office, please see below.