

HOW TO: Get a Social Security Card

MISSOURI STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER



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If you have a Driver's License or State Photo ID, getting a replacement Social Security Card is quite simple. You can use the user-friendly online application. However, it's a bit more complex for those without a Driver's License or State Photo ID who need a new or replacement Social Security Card. This "How To" guide is designed specifically for U.S. Citizenship in this situation.

How to Apply:

Getting a Social Security Card through the application process doesn't cost anything. However, there are some rules about how many replacement cards you can request. You can ask for a maximum of three replacement cards in one year and up to ten in your entire lifetime, unless you're changing your name or there's strong evidence that having a card is absolutely necessary to avoid significant hardship.

Individuals have three options to choose from when applying for a Social Security Card:

- They can apply online at ssa.gov/ssnumber. It's important to note that applicants still need to visit a local Social Security office within 45 days to provide the necessary documents in person.
- They can visit a local Social Security office in person and complete a paper application. To avoid long lines, schedule an appointment. Information on locating a Social Security office and its contact details can be found at <https://www.ssa.gov/locator/>.
- Individuals can apply by mail, sending their application to any Social Security office. It's essential to include the required documentation, as the Social Security Administration states they will return it. However, this method is not recommended, as some forms of identity verification require visual confirmation that the person in the photo is the applicant. Furthermore, it's easier to reject an application when there's no face-to-face interaction.
- Click [here](#) for a paper application

Documents Needed to Obtain a Social Security Card:

Three things need to be verified in order for a new or replacement Social Security card to be issued.

1. That applicants are U.S. Citizens
2. When applicants were born/How old the applicants are
3. The applicants are who they say they are



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Navigating Evidentiary Documents

The documents should be the actual originals, not copies or scans.

Applicant will need to provide one document from each category listed.

Even if a single document can confirm all three requirements, like a passport, you still need to submit two other documents, for a total of three documents.

If applicant is not able to provide Priority Evidence in a category they can go to <https://www.ssa.gov/online/services/> to learn about other acceptable documents that can be used.

Category 3- Proof of Citizenship:

Priority Evidence:

- U.S. Birth Certificate
- U.S. Passport
- Less common: Certification of Report of Birth, Consular Report of Birth Abroad, Certification of Birth Abroad, U.S. Citizen Identification Card, American Indian Card showing a class code of "KIC," Northern Mariana Card, Certificate of Naturalization, Certificate of Citizenship, Machine Readable Immigrant Visa, Certificate Statement from a U.S. consular official

Source: <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/O110210505>

If applicant is not a United States Citizen they must provide current:

If Applicant is not a U.S. Citizen, they must provide their current U.S. immigration document(s) and their foreign passport with biographical information or photograph

Evidence of Immigration Status

Applicant must provide unexpired documents issued by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) showing their immigration status, such as Form I-551, I-94, or I-766.

Category 1- Proof of Age:

Priority Evidence:

- U.S. birth certificate- preferred

In some situations hospital birth records or passport may be accepted.

Category 2- Proof of Identity:

Priority Evidence:

- U.S. driver's license
- State-issued non-driver identification card
- U.S. passport



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If applicant is an international student or exchange visitor, they may need to provide additional documents, such as Form I-20, DS-2019, or a letter authorizing employment from school and employer (F-1) or sponsor (J-1). If applicant is not authorized to work in the U.S. the applicant can get issued a Social Security card only if the the number is needed for a valid non-word reason. The card will be marked to show the applicant cannot work and if the applicant does work, DHS will be notified.

Special Considerations:

Applicants who do not yet have a social security number will be interviewed by the social security administration to see why and verify that they have no number assigned to them.

Source: <https://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5doc.htm>

Applicants in jail or prison Individuals can request newer replacement Social Security cards, but they will need to apply by mail. Since their circumstances don't allow the Social Security Administration to check their physical identity, it's a good idea for the applicant to try to obtain a certified letter from jail or prison staff to confirm their identity.

Applicants that have guardians are able to have their guardians apply on their behalf if they are physically and mentally unable to do so themselves. The guardians will need to include with the application proof of their identity and status as guardians – in addition to the regular documentation.

Source: <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0110205025>



Print List

1. "How to: Get A Social Security Card" Guide
2. [Paper Application](#)

Full Links/Reference (in order of appearance)

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Social Security Administration (SSA) Online services:

<https://www.ssa.gov/onlineservices/>

Paper Application for Social Security Card SS-5:

<https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>

SSA Field Office Locator:

<https://www.ssa.gov/onlineservices/>

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Social Security Program Operations Manual System (POMS):

<https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0110210505>

Online Services:

<https://www.ssa.gov/onlineservices/>

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Documents you will need to get a social security card:

<https://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5doc.htm>

Proper Applicant for a Social Security Card:

<https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0110205025>

Form I-551, I-94, I-766, I-20, DS-2019:

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/form-i-9-resources/handbook-for-employers-m-274/130-acceptable-documents-for-verifying-employment-authorization-and-identity/131-list-a-documents-that-establish-identity-and-employment-authorization>

Other Resources:

POMS Secondary Evidence:

<https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0110210515>

POMS Fourth Level Evidence:

<https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0110210525>

POMS 4th level US Citizenship

<https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0110210525>

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