

SUMMARY OF CURRENT SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION POLICY ON SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS



by

*Kristen A. Chang and David J. Long
Long, Chang & Associates, L.L.P.
4915 Piedmont Parkway, Suite 103
Jamestown, NC 27282
Phone: (336) 855-5700
www.longchangonline.com*

QUESTION: How does the Social Security Administration check to see whether a foreigner is allowed to get a Social Security number?

ANSWER: The Social Security Administration (SSA) checks a foreigner's immigration documents and status with the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program before they can process the application for a Social Security Number (SSN) or replacement card. SSA checks with this program online to make sure they have the correct immigration and employment information.

QUESTION: Can someone who has permission to work in the United States work without a Social Security Number?

ANSWER: Yes, someone who has permission to work in the United States can work without a Social Security Number. When a person applies for a Social Security Number, they get a letter that says their application was received. This can be presented to an employer. Sometimes an employer will not let someone start working without a Social Security Number because of problems with an automated payroll system that requires a Social Security Number. However, under IRS, Department of Labor, and Social Security Administration rules, a person does not have to have a Social Security Number to begin working. The Social Security Number is required at the time the employer files payroll taxes.

QUESTION: What is a "mismatch" letter?

ANSWER: The Social Security Administration (SSA) will send a Code V, or "mismatch" letter to employers to request an employee's correct name and SSN information when the information on the employee's W-2 tax forms does not match SSA's records. The SSA expects the employer to check its records, then ask the employee to check their Social Security Number. If the employee says they turned in the correct Social Security Number, the employee should check with the SSA.

QUESTION: Do you need a Social Security Number to get a driver's license?

ANSWER: Only a few states require a Social Security Number to get a driver's license: Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Utah and West Virginia. The Social Security Administration has told its offices to issue Social Security Numbers for driver's licenses in those states.

QUESTION: What is the advantage in having a Social Security Number for tax purposes?

ANSWER: This is a question for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). However, some accountants say that you cannot claim your children as dependents on your tax returns without a Social Security Number. Please ask your accountant for more information.

QUESTION: Can I use the same non-work Social Security Number even after I am able to get an unrestricted Social Security Number?

ANSWER: You keep the same Social Security Number for life, even if its status changes.

QUESTION: Is the Social Security Administration playing a larger role in national security since the events of September 11, 2001?

ANSWER: The Social Security Administration is checking all cases in greater detail and placing greater controls on non-work Social Security Numbers, as well as who gets a Social Security Number.

QUESTION: Where can I find more information about social security law, regulation, policy and practice?

ANSWER: www.ssa.gov/immigration/
www.ssa.gov/pubs/intstudents.htm
www.ssa.gov/employers/ssnv.htm
www.ssa.gov/regulation/rules-in-effect.htm

You can also find more information in the Program Operations Manual System online at www.ssa.gov/regulations/index.htm
And <http://policy.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/aboutpoms>

Kristen A. Chang and David J. Long are attorneys in the immigration law firm of Long, Chang & Associates, L.L.P. Ms. Chang and Mr. Long are members of the North Carolina State Bar and the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). Mr. Long has been certified by the North Carolina State Bar as a Specialist in Immigration Law. They may be reached via telephone at (336) 855-5700 or via e-mail at info@longchangonline.com

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