Social Security Number Denial Letter

In the United States, a Social Security number (SSN) is a nine-digit number issued to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and temporary (working) residents. The number is issued to an individual by the Social Security Administration. Its primary purpose is to track individuals for taxation purposes. Social Security numbers are available only to those international students and scholars who have secured employment in the U.S. If you have previously applied for and been granted an SSN, this number is yours for life. You should not apply for a second number.

To apply for a Driver's License or Photo ID, individuals who do not have a SSN, and do not have an on-campus job, must obtain a Social Security Number “Denial Letter” before they apply for a Driver’s License or Photo ID.

Obtaining a Social Security Number “Denial Letter” does not prevent you from obtaining a SSN in the future, when you are eligible to do so.

During COVID-19, each Social Security Administration has their own procedures for individuals to obtain a Social Security Number “Denial Letter”. Verify which Social Security Office will process your application by entering your personal mailing address here: https://www.ssa.gov/locator/.

- The following instructions are for the East Liberty (6117 Station St., Pittsburgh, PA 15206) office.
- If your personal address corresponds to a different Social Security Office, you must contact that office directly about its application process.

**Step 1:** Prepare Materials
- Write a brief cover letter, including your name, address, and telephone number, stating that this request is ‘for a denial letter for a driver’s license.’
- Complete Form SS-5.
- Gather the following documents:
  - Passport
  - F-1 or J-1 visa stamp page
  - Form I-20 or DS-2019
  - I-94 record

**Step 2:** Go to SSN Office
- Go to the East Liberty SSN Office (6117 Station St., Pittsburgh, PA 15206).
  - 9AM to 1PM, Monday through Friday (no appointment needed)
- Bring the cover letter, SS-5, passport, visa stamp, Form I-20 or DS-2019, and I-94 record, with you.
- The SSN Office will provide you with the SSN Denial Letter at the end of your appointment.

**Step 3:** Next Steps
- After you receive your Social Security Number Denial Letter, you can apply for a Pennsylvania Driver’s License / Photo ID:
  - Review OIS’ Fact Sheet about how to apply for a Driver’s License or Photo ID.
  - Go to a PennDOT office to apply for a Driver’s License / Photo ID.