



## OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

University Center for International Studies  
University of Pittsburgh

### 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.

#### Pennsylvania Driver's License or Photo Identification Card

To apply for a [Driver's License or Photo ID](#), individuals who do not have an 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 an SSN in the future, when you are eligible to do so.

Here are the steps to apply for a "Denial Letter":

#### Step 1: Prepare Materials

- Complete and submit Social Security Administration's [online application](#)
  - Select the "Apply for SSN for the first time" option
  - Proceed with the application, as if you were applying for a SSN
- Write the "Online Control Number" that appears after you submit your application
- As part of the application process, you will schedule an in-person appointment at the Social Security office

#### Step 2: Go to SSN Office

- Attend your schedule appointment at the Social Security office
- Prepare and bring the following documents to your appointment:
  - Passport
  - F-1 or J-1 visa stamp page
  - Form I-20 or DS-2019
  - [I-94 record](#)
  - Brief cover letter, including your name, address, and telephone number, stating that this request is 'for a denial letter for a driver's license.'
- The SSN Office will provide you with the SSN Denial Letter at the end of your visit

#### Step 3: Apply for DL or Photo ID

- After you receive your Social Security Number Denial Letter, you can apply for a Pennsylvania Driver's License / Photo ID:
  - Review OIS' [Driver's License or Photo ID](#) Fact Sheet for instructions
  - Go to a PennDOT office to apply for a Driver's License / Photo ID