

# New Rules For Getting A Social Security Number And Card



Recent provisions in law have changed the rules for assigning a Social Security number and issuing a Social Security card. This fact sheet gives the most up-to-date information available on the documents needed to apply for a Social Security number and card.

***All documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. We cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents.***

## Proof of citizenship and identity

To get a Social Security number or a replacement card, you must prove your U.S. citizenship or immigration status, age and identity. For a replacement card, proof of your U.S. citizenship and age are not required if they are already in our records. Under the new law, only certain documents can be accepted as proof of U.S. citizenship. These include your U.S. birth certificate, a U.S. passport, a Certificate of Naturalization or a Certificate of Citizenship. If you are not a U.S. citizen, different rules apply for proving your immigration status, and those rules have not changed.

Also under the new law, only certain documents can be accepted as proof of identity. An acceptable document must show your name, identifying information about you and preferably a recent photograph.

If you are a U.S. citizen, Social Security must see your:

- U.S. driver's license;
- State-issued nondriver identity card; or
- U.S. passport.

If you do not have these specific documents or cannot get a replacement for them within 10 days, we will ask to see other documents, including:

- Employee ID card;

- School ID card;
- Health insurance card (not a Medicare card); or
- U.S. military ID card.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, Social Security must see your current U.S. immigration documents. Acceptable documents from the Department of Homeland Security include your:

- Form I-551 (includes machine-readable immigrant visa with your unexpired foreign passport);
- I-94 with your unexpired foreign passport; or
- Work permit card (I-766 or I-688B).

## Documents for a name change

If you legally change your name because of marriage, divorce, court order or any other reason, you need to tell Social Security so that you can get a corrected card. If you are working, also tell your employer. If you do not tell us when your name changes, it may:

- Delay your tax refund; and
- Prevent your wages from being posted correctly to your Social Security record, which may lower the amount of your future Social Security benefits.

If you need to change your name on your Social Security card, you must show us a recently issued document as proof of your legal name change. Documents Social Security may accept to prove a legal name change include:

- Marriage document;
- Divorce decree;
- Certificate of Naturalization showing a new name; or
- Court order for a name change.

