

****This information was current at the time of posting, but SSA policy is subject to change****

1) Why am I being presented with the option to link my Social Security Online account to a Login.gov credential?

We have started a multi-phase effort to transition all of our customers to a federated credential service provider (Login.gov or ID.me) to meet current standards for security and credentialing. Effective July 22, 2023, if you choose to create a new credential with Login.gov from the sign-in page and have an existing Social Security Online account (username and password) we will ask if you want to link your existing account to your newly created Login.gov account.

Once you successfully create a credential with Login.gov you will use this credential to access Social Security online services and no longer login with your Social Security Online account (username and password).

2) How do I file electronically?

To get started, visit www.ssa.gov/bso, scroll down to the Employer Box, then select either “Log in” or “Create account.”

There are three ways to file W-2s online:

1. [Upload a Wage Report](#) – Upload your files using your own software if it meets the specifications for electronically filing Forms W-2. You also can use our AccuWage test tool to check the accuracy of your wage reports before submitting them.
2. [W-2 Online](#) – Great for the smaller employer or submitter. Complete and print up to 50 Forms W-2 suitable for distribution to your employees. No software is required. [W-2c Online](#) – Complete and print up to 25 Forms W-2c’s suitable for distribution to your employees. No software is required.
3. 3. You also have the option to hire a 3rd party to submit W-2s electronically on your behalf.

3) How do I request the Business Services Online (BSO) activation code?

After you receive your BSO User ID, you are redirected to the BSO application, where you Request New Services. Next, you request wage reporting services and add your employer information, your employer will receive an activation code by USPS. Then, you activate your account, and the following services will be available immediately:

W-2/W-2c Online

Wage File Upload

AccuWage Online

View Name and SSN Errors

Social Security Number Verification Service (SSNVS)

For more information, please visit [BSO Registration and Access to Services Handbook](#).

4) Do I need a personal Login.gov and ID.me account to access BSO employer services?

You must use an ID.me, Social Security online account or Login.gov credential to gain access to the BSO application. You have a choice of using any of those 3 options. If you encounter issues with Login.gov and have not yet tried to use ID.me. We recommend you try [creating an account with ID.me](#).

5) I have a Login.gov account for other services, can I use that for BSO?

If you already have a Social Security online account, Login.gov, or ID.me credential, visit our [BSO Welcome](#) page select “Log in” in the “Employers” box. Use your credential to sign in and add the additional levels of security.

Once the credentialing and authentication process has been completed, current BSO User ID(s) will be associated with your credential.

6) How do you complete ID verification if you don't have a cell phone?

You can request verification via phone call. Please visit [How to Navigate BSO Access And Registration](#) and review the information under the heading ‘Ways to Get Registered to Access BSO Employer Services’ for more information.

7) I have an existing BSO User ID, how can I access BSO to submit a wage report?

Start at the [BSO Welcome page](#). You can either log in or create an account from the “Employers” box.

Note: Your BSO User ID and password is no longer used to access BSO employer services. You must use an ID.me, Login.gov or Social Security online credential to gain access to the BSO application.

8) If an employer has a Social Security account, do they need to complete the registration process?

Yes, if you are an existing user, you may be asked to add extra security. If you are, be prepared to take clear photos of your driver's license or state-issued ID with a smartphone. You can also input your ID and financial information. If you encounter issues, we recommend signing in or creating an account with ID.me before reaching out for assistance.

9) Will my employer automatically be sent an activation code?

No, you must Request New Services in the employer suite of services within BSO for your employer to receive an activation code. Please visit [Registration and Access to Services Handbook](#)

10) What is the difference between a BSO account and a Social Security account?

A BSO account is a requirement users must create to use Social Security wage reporting services. BSO Internet services for businesses and employers who exchange information with Social Security. For more information, see the [Registration and Access to Services Handbook](#)

A Social Security account provides personalized tools for personal and business.

11) Is the e-file mandate for W-2's 2023 or 2024?

The mandate will become effective for Tax Year 2023. Beginning January 1, 2024, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has issued final regulations that reduce the electronic filing threshold from 250 W-2s to 10 informational returns.

12) How do you file paper W-2s?

For more information on paper filing, visit [Paper Forms W-2 & Instructions \(ssa.gov\)](#).

13) What are the ways to get registered to access BSO employer services?

Below are common paths that users may take to get registered. If you already have an existing ID.me, Login.gov, or Social Security Online account you do not have to create a new account specifically for Social Security. Please visit our [How to Navigate BSO Access and Registration](#) website for more on wage reporting services.

[First Time User with Login.gov](#)

[Standard to Advanced Account with Login.gov](#)

[Sign in to Your ID.me Account with Extra Security](#)

Disclaimer: The information above is current, but subject to change.

14) Is special software required to file W-2's online?

No special software is needed. You can use our W-2 Online application that allows you to key your W-2 information directly to our website in the W-2 format and print copies for distribution to your employees.

15) I still have not received the activation code and it has been more than 10 business days.

Your activation code is mailed to the Employer address we have on record with the IRS. Before re-requesting an activation code, check with your employer to determine whether the activation code(s) has been received. To confirm that address please call our Employer Reporting Service Center at 1-800-772-6270 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

Please reference [Registration and Access to Services Handbook](#) and review the “Re-request Activation Codes” section, for instruction.

16) Which is preferred, ID.me or Login.gov?

You can use either ID.me or Login.gov. However, if you encounter issues with Login.gov, try signing in or creating an account with ID.me prior to reaching out for assistance.

17) Can I reset my SSA account?

Yes, for issues relating to the Social Security (SSA) online accounts, please contact and state that you would like to reset your SSA account, 1-800-772-1213.

18) Can a Registered Agent or 3rd party be used to submit W-2s electronically on your behalf if you don't have an SSN?

Yes, you have the option to hire a 3rd party to submit W-2s electronically on your behalf.

19) Do I still need to purchase W-2 forms to print for employees or can I print them from the website?

Yes, you can print them from the website, you do not need to purchase W-2 forms. You can use our [W-2 Online](#) that allows you to key your W-2 information directly to our website in the W-2 format and print copies for distribution to your employees. No additional software needed.

Please reference the [Electronic W-2 filing User Handbook](#) and review the section forms W-2/W-3 Online.

20) How can I test my formatted wage file?

Please review [AccuWage Online Information \(ssa.gov\)](#) for more information.

21) Is there a limit of how many W-2s you can create? Can you save and go back to it later?

Yes, you can create 50 W-2 forms per submission. You have the option to save your report and resume working on unsubmitted Forms W2/W3 reports.

Please reference the [Electronic W-2/W-2C Filing - User Handbook for Tax Year 2023](#) and review the section forms W-2/W-3 Online.

22) I use QuickBooks and print my W-2's. Can I upload those W-2 forms online in BSO. What format is required for the upload?

You can use payroll software to submit W-2s. You would need to inquire with the developer of the software that you use to confirm that they offer that feature.

23) Can I file a 1095 on BSO?

No, you would file a 1095 with the IRS. Please visit www.irs.gov for more information.

24) Do I have to file W-2s with the IRS or only Social Security?

No, you must file W-2s with the Social Security Administration. For more information please visit: [2023 General Instructions for Forms W-2 and W-3 \(irs.gov\)](#).

25) When I try to sign in, it keeps telling me to use my existing social security online account.

It appears you have an account that was created before September 18, 2021. If you are unable to remember your username and password, then please select the “Forgot username” or “Forgot password” feature to recover your credentials.

26) How do I access BSO from the SSA.gov home page?

Starting from www.ssa.gov, scroll down to the bottom of the page to the “Services for” heading. Select Employers & businesses.

From the [Employer W-2 Filing Instructions & Information page](#), select the [Business Services Online link](#) on the right side of the page. Scroll down the next page to the Employer box and choose either Log in or Create account.

27) If you are a CPA, 3rd party submitter filing for clients or an employer, do you register with BSO for each company or organization that you process payroll for?

No, you do not need to register each company. You will need to [sign into](#) your Social Security, Login.gov, or ID.me account. Once the credentialing and authentication process has been completed, current BSO User ID(s) with activated services will be associated with your credential. At that time, you may add new EINs as needed.

28) Why do I have to use my personal information?

We are committed to protecting your information and benefits and take this responsibility seriously. That’s why we ask you to verify your identity to create a business and personal account. We work with external partners to securely verify your identity. We do this to protect your data while making our online services easy for you to use. To use any of the employer suite of services, all new and existing BSO users will need a Social Security online account with Extra Security. You can use your personal my Social Security account, an existing Login.gov or ID.me credential.

29) If you are a CPA, 3rd party submitter filing for clients or an employer, from the BSO welcome page, do you sign in using the options from the “Employers” or “Representative Payee” box?

As a 3rd party submitter who submits on behalf of other companies, CPA or an employer, you would register or log in by navigating to the “Employers” box on the [BSO welcome page](#) and selecting either the Log in or the Create account link.

30) How do I register to file W-2s for US employees from Canada or any other foreign country?

As an ID.me partner, we now accept the [Individual Taxpayer Identification Number \(ITIN\)](#) or a [passport](#) as an alternative to an SSN. You can register with ID.me to use BSO with an ITIN or passport regardless of your foreign or domestic address. You may access BSO by creating or using an existing ID.me account.

ID.me is a Single Sign-On provider that meets the U.S. government's most rigorous requirements for online identity proofing and authentication. Access to the BSO application requires multifactor authentication.

You must start at the [BSO Welcome page](#). From the Employers box, select the 'Log in' link or 'Create account' link to verify your identity with ID.me.

31) I created a Login.gov account with my business email. Am I able to change that email to my personal email?

Yes, please contact the [Login.gov Help Center](#) 1-844-875-6446.

32) Do you need a physical address to receive your BSO activation code?

No, you do not need a physical address to receive your BSO activation code. The activation code letter is sent to the address we have on file for your employer from the IRS. For more information, please visit [The Registration and Access to Services Handbook](#) and to verify the address we have on file, call 1-800-772-6270.

33) Can multiple people use one BSO account?

No, every BSO user must register personally. You may not register on behalf of another person or share one BSO User ID for an entire office.

For information on how to register, please view our guide <https://www.ssa.gov/employer/documents/howtoregister.pdf> and visit our website [How To Navigate BSO Access And Registration](#).

34) After you have submitted W-2s, will I be able to print the forms to distribute to my employees?

Yes, with W-2 Online you can complete and print up to 50 Forms W-2 suitable for distribution to your employees and with W-2c Online you can complete and print up to 25 Forms W-2c's suitable for distribution to your employees. No software is required.

For more information, visit [What You can Do Online \(ssa.gov\)](https://ssa.gov)

35) Does SSA forward Local and State information to the IRS on my behalf?

No, we do not forward any information to the State or local government.

The IRS maintains a website that may assist you about how to file for your State requirements. Please visit: [State Government Websites - irs.gov](https://irs.gov).

36) Can I use my Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) to access BSO?

No, you will not be able to access BSO with an ITIN to file your W-2/W-3 reports electronically. Instead, you will need to mail paper Forms W-2/W-3 and W-2c/W-3c to the Wilkes-Barre Direct Operation Center (WBDOC). Please visit, <https://www.ssa.gov/employer/paperFormInstr.htm> for address information.

37) What are my options if I'm unable to file electronically by the January 31 deadline?

You have the option to secure a waiver or exemption from the IRS. Request the waiver by submitting [Form 8508, Request for Waiver from Filing Information Returns Electronically](https://www.irs.gov/efile/form8508) and for more information on 'Electronic Filing Waivers and Exemptions and Filing Extensions' please visit, <https://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc803>.

38) We are a township. Would I use Government Services Online, or file as an Employer?

No, you should not use Government Services Online. BSO is used for submitting W-2/W-3 and W-2c/W-3c.

Note: All electronic W-2 filers must use BSO in order to wage report with SSA.

39) Are you able to enter information for the W-2 (GU)'s and W-2CM's?

Yes, you can enter information W-2 GU and W-2 CM through our Wage File Upload and W-2 Online application.

The BSO application accepts W2/W2c information for the US and all territories. For a complete list, visit [Specifications For Filing Forms W-2 Electronically \(EFW2\)](https://www.irs.gov/efile/form8508).

40) Is a specific browser required to use the registration system.

No, there is not a specific browser that is required to use SSA applications. As of 2023, the minimum browser versions SSA supports are the following:

Google Chrome	103.0.0.0 and above
Apple Safari	14.12 and above
Microsoft Edge	108.0.1462.54 and above
Mozilla Firefox	108 and above

41) Will we have a separate login to SSNVS?

No, the same credential is used to access the [Social Security Number Verification Service](#) (SSNVS) as well as other wage reporting services.

42) What is the difference between a credential, authentication, and activation code(s)?

A credential is the account you use to sign in to BSO. We accept credentials from two Credential Service Providers (CSPs) - ID.me and Login.gov.

Authentication is the process of signing in with your credential.

An activation code is a one-time code that we issue to help verify your identity and provide access to secure services. You can receive this code by text, email, or USPS.

The BSO activation code for access to wage reporting services is only delivered by USPS and sent to your employer address we have on file with the IRS. For more information on the BSO activation code review the [BSO Registration and Access to Services Handbook](#).

Please review the information in [Decoding the Activation Code](#).

43) Do I need to verify my identity every time I log in?

No, you only need to verify your identity once.

44) Can one business have two BSO accounts?

Yes. BSO accounts are assigned to the individual, not to the company. **All BSO users must register for their own account.**

For more information, review the [BSO Registration and Access to Services Handbook](#).

45) My personal information has changed. How do I update this information after I've logged in and accessed BSO?

You can update your personal information after you have successfully authenticated and accessed BSO.

From the BSO Main Menu, select “View/Edit Account Info” and then “Edit Personal Information”.

Please refer to the [BSO Registration and Access to Services Handbook](#).

46) I have never electronically filed W-2s. Do I still need to upload PDFs of the paper W2/W3 forms or upload an Excel spreadsheet with extracted data?

No, you will not need to upload documents when filing W-2s electronically.

You can use our W-2 Online application that allows you to key your W-2 information directly to our website in the W-2 format and print copies for distribution to your employees. No additional software is needed. After you file electronically, you do not need to send paper forms to us.

For more information, please visit, [Before You File – First Time Filers](#).

47) If we have a BSO account, will it allow us to verify an employer address before submitting?

No, to verify an employer address before submitting an electronic wage report, you can contact the [IRS](#) or our [Employer Reporting Services Center](#).

Email employerinfo@ssa.gov or call 1-800-772-6270 (TTY 1-800-325-0778), Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Eastern Time.

48) How do I change an activation code address?

We mail the activation code(s) to the employer's address registered with the IRS. For more information, please visit www.irs.gov.

If you need to change your employer's address we have on file, please visit [About Form 8822-B, Change of Address or Responsible Party - Business | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](#).

49) Is the Transmitter Control Code specific to a business or individual?

The Transmitter Control Code (TCC) is not used by the Social Security Administration. For information about the TCC, visit [Filing Information Returns Electronically \(FIRE\) | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](#).

50) Does the new registration process apply to Household employers?

Yes, it applies if you plan to file forms W2/W3 electronically with SSA for your household employees.

For general information refer to the Household Employer's Tax Guide

51) Where can I find information about other IRS forms?

For information about IRS employment forms, including 1099 and 94X, please visit:

[E-file Employment Tax Forms | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](#)

52) Can W-2's for prior tax years be filed on BSO?

Yes, W-2's for the three prior tax years can be filed on BSO. We have a variety of electronic filing options, for more information visit <https://www.ssa.gov/employer/firstFilers.htm>.

53) How can I change my email address on my Login.gov account?

To change your email address for your Login.gov account, please visit: [Change the email address associated with your account | Login.gov](#).

54) I have questions about SSA's Privacy and Security policies, where can I go to find more information?

For more information, please visit, [Privacy and Security policies](#).

Customer Support Issues

For issues related to registration, credentialling, identity verification and activation codes, please contact:

- [Login.gov Help Center](#)
 - 1-844-875-6446
- [ID.me Help Center](#)
 - Virtual help ONLY
- For registration issues relating to BSO accounts
 - 1-800-772-6270 (TTY 1-800-325-0778)
- [National 1-800 #:](#)
 - For registration information about Social Security online programs and benefits, please use our automated services by calling:
 - 1-800-772-1213

If you have question about access and registration, W-2/W-3 submission or any other wage reporting service, please contact:

Social Security's toll-free line to help employers with wage reporting questions or problems.

Phone: 1-800-772-6270 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5:30p.m., Eastern Time

E-mail: employerinfo@ssa.gov