

**TEACHERS COLLEGE**  
**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

**MEMORANDUM**

To: TC Departments and Offices Hiring F-1 International Students

From: Marion R. Boulton, Director

Re: SSNs and Employment Confirmation Letters for F-1 Students

Date: October 13, 2004

The Social Security Administration has announced new procedural requirements, effective October 13, 2004, for F-1 international students applying for Social Security numbers (SSNs).

The new SSA requirements stipulate that F-1 students must now submit evidence of on-campus or another form of authorized F-1 employment when applying for SSNs. Previously, F-1 students were allowed to apply for SSNs simply with our office's certification of their eligibility to work on-campus, regardless of their actual employment situation.

**Under the new requirements, any F-1 student who is hired to work on campus and needs to apply for a SSN must obtain a letter from the hiring department or supervisor confirming that he/she is working on campus. The hiring department must issue a signed and dated letter on department letterhead. Please refer to the sample letter on the reverse of this memo for guidance (a Word document version of the sample letter is also available over TC Exchange, in the public folder labeled "International").**

Upon receiving a department letter, the student should then report to the OIS for further assistance with SSN application procedures.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- F-1 students who do not have SSNs are allowed to begin working on the date of hire, although they will need to apply for SSNs as soon as possible after commencing employment to ensure timely processing of payroll and tax information.
- F-1 students who already have Social Security cards do not need to reapply for new SSNs and are not affected by the new requirements.

We regret the added administrative burdens this new procedure imposes on departments, but this is mandated by federal regulation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 3939.

## **SAMPLE DEPARTMENT LETTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**

*(Typed on department letterhead, and containing the employer's original signature)*

### **DATE OF LETTER ISSUANCE**

Social Security Administration  
New York, NY

Re: Evidence of on-campus employment for **F-1 STUDENT SMITH, John**

To whom it may concern:

This is to confirm that the above-named student has been employed by our department. Please refer to the information below regarding the nature of the student's employment:

- **Nature of the student's job:** *e.g. instructor, computer consultant, research assistant, service provider for individuals with disabilities, clerical assistant, library aide, GRA*
- **Start date:** *MM/DD/YYYY*
- **Approximate number of hours per week:** *e.g., approximately 15 hours per week*
- **Department Telephone Number:** *(212) 678-xxxx*

Please contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

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**(SUPERVISOR ORIGINAL SIGNATURE)**

**(PRINT SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND TITLE)**