

INTERNATIONAL STAFF

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)

SEVIS is an internet-based system of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that tracks and monitors information on nonimmigrant J-1 exchange visitors, including summer camp staff.

J1-VISA REGULATIONS & PAYROLL ISSUES

International staff on J-1 Visas are required to have a US social security number (SSN). *Previous international staffers should already have an SSN.* Newly entering non-residents often apply for their SSN's within days of arriving in the US and possibly before online Immigration & Naturalization (INS) data is available for them. The Social Security Administration (SSA) expects immediate verification from the INS in most cases. But if the verification is not available online, the SSA must request paper verification before the exchange visitor can be assigned an SSN.

FEDERAL LAW ALLOWS J-1 VISA HOLDERS TO BE ADDED TO THE PAYROLL WHILE THEY WAIT FOR THE SOCIAL SECURITY CARD.

SEVIS and Social Security Procedures for 2012

NEW STATE DEPARTMENT REGULATION FOR 2012: Due to new State Department regulations, each International Visa Agency will be asking for your Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Workman's Comp Policy information for their records.

SEVIS AND VISA VALIDATION - Most international staff working at your camps this summer will enter the US on a J-1 visa. The SEVIS security system tracks J-1 visa holders while in the US. The J-1 visa needs to be validated after their arrival at their work place (your camp). This validation process is mandatory and failure to do so will result in cancellation of the visa. **In most cases, sponsoring agencies will validate their staff but only after your camp confirms your staff arrivals. It is always the camp's responsibility to notify the staffing agency if an international staff member fails to arrive at camp or leaves early for any reason.**

SEVIS: 10 DAYS IN COUNTRY REQUIRED: The agencies recommend that internationals should be in the country for 10 days before applying for social security cards, so that their SEVIS is activated and in the system. A helpful document is at www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/hiring.htm, entitled "Employers Responsibility for Hiring International workers."

It is the camp's responsibility to assist their staff in applying for a Social Security Card. See "Applying at Social Social Security offices" (below).

Employers may request their local Social Security Office to do the following:

- Issue a notice acknowledging a non-resident's SSN application while his/her documents are being verified,

- Provide a non-resident with a copy of his/her UNCERTIFIED SSN application,
- Notify a non-resident of the SSN assigned before the SSN card is received in the mail, and
- Send an SSA-7028, Notice to Third Party of SSN Assignments to you, the non-resident's camp employer.
-

The employer must accept this in lieu of the actual Social Security Number until the Third Party Notice arrives.

The IRS knows that cards often get lost and has made it easy for you to still pay your staff, even without their card. Please go to this address for more information: <http://www.ssa.gov/employer/hiring.htm>.

Form SSA-7028: Request for SS number. Camps with a number of international staff can ask the local Social Security office for a supply of Form SSA-7028 ahead of time; you can complete the form with your address and have the international staff sign Part B, the consent statement, which allows you to receive information about them. The international staff should bring or send the pre-completed form to the SS office when they apply for the SSN. The application will then be coded so *you* will receive the social security number when available.

Applying at Social Security Offices: Camps must bring international staff to their regional SSA office to get SSA numbers. The Portland SSA office again requests that you call to make an appointment; they hope to keep waiting to a minimum. (Local number is (207) 771-2851 -You may want to emphasize your pre-camp dates). National SSA phone: 800-772-1213. There are nine (9) SSA field offices in Maine's key cities; to find yours visit www.socialsecurity.gov/boston/ME.htm.

To apply for a Social Security card, staff need to bring the following items:

Passport + 2 copies

DS2019 + 2 copies

J-1 visa - 2 copies

I-94 card + 2 copies (front and back)

Support Letter from Visa Agency

Completed Application for Social Security Card

Call ahead to your Social Security office for a complete list and instructions.

PAYROLL PROCESSING NOTE: some computerized payroll systems require a nine-digit number to add an individual to the payroll. Employers may need to create a "dummy number" (such as 000-00-0000) to satisfy their payroll requirements. Once the actual SSN is received, the employer must remember to change this code. The actual Social Security Number will be needed to issue the W-2 form at year end.

Please verify these suggested guidelines with the international agencies that you work with. They will provide you with specific details and requirements and answer any questions you have.

Two helpful resources from the American Camp Association regarding Hiring of International staff:

<http://www.acacamps.org/international/checklist.php>

<http://www.acacamps.org/international/practices.php>