



SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER

Information on this handout has been reviewed by a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) and Regulated International Student Immigration Advisors (RISIA) in compliance with the Government of Canada's *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*.

Please be aware that information can sometimes change without notice. For the most current information, always refer to the [Service Canada website](#) and the [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\) website](#).

Do I need a Social Insurance Number?

A Social Insurance Number (SIN) allows you to be paid for work and to access government programs.

How do I protect my Social Insurance Number?

Your Social Insurance Number (SIN) is confidential and needs to be protected. You should be cautious about providing your SIN number to people you do not know, including over the phone to suspicious callers. For information on fraud prevention read the [Fraud and Scam Prevention article](#).

If an organization asks you for a SIN, and it is not legally required, you can explain that you prefer not to provide it and offer different proof of identity.

More information is available on the [Protecting your Social Insurance Number webpage](#).

How can I get a Social Insurance Number?

Apply for your Social Insurance Number (SIN) in person at a Service Canada office. If you have the required documents, you will get a SIN during your visit. There is no application fee.

The Victoria Service Canada Centre is located at Bay Centre, 1150 Douglas Street, 4th Floor, Suite 450.

If you are not able to visit a Service Canada office in person, you can apply by mail.

More information is available at on the [Social Insurance Number – Apply](#) webpage.

Your SIN will be issued on a confirmation of SIN letter. Service Canada no longer issues plastic SIN cards.

What documents do I need to apply for a Social Insurance Number?

As an international student, you are a temporary resident of Canada. To qualify for a SIN, temporary residents must have a valid passport and one of the following documents issued by IRCC:

- valid work permit
- valid study permit that clearly states you are authorized to work in Canada
- valid visitor record that clearly states you are authorized to work in Canada

You must provide your original documents when you apply in person. Photocopies are not accepted.

More information is available on the [Social Insurance Number – What you need before you apply](#) webpage.

How can I get a new study permit with corrected wording?

If you do not have a valid work permit, and your study permit does not clearly state that you “may accept employment” or “may work” in Canada, you must obtain a new study permit with corrected wording.

More information is available on the [Working in Canada webpage](#).

For assistance, please visit or contact the International Centre for Students.

Why does my confirmation of SIN letter or SIN card have an expiry date?

As an international student, you are a temporary resident of Canada, so your SIN begins with a “9” and should be valid for the same duration as your study permit.

Whenever you receive a new document issued by IRCC you will need to update your SIN record. The process to update your SIN record is the same as the initial application process, and you will receive a new confirmation of SIN letter.

What if my SIN expires while I am waiting for a new document from IRCC?

If you apply for a new document from IRCC before your current document expires, and your current document expires before you receive the new document, you will probably have maintained status.

With maintained status, you can continue to use your expired SIN until you receive the new document from IRCC.

When you receive the new document from IRCC you will need to update your SIN record. The process to update your SIN record is the same as the initial application process, and you will receive a new confirmation of SIN letter.

More information is available on the [Temporary residents: Maintained status during processing \(previously called implied status\) webpage](#).

I have a SIN. Can I work in Canada?

A SIN allows you to be paid for work and to access government programs, but it does NOT give you authorization to work in Canada.

More information is available on the [Studying and working in Canada as an international student website](#).

Working in Canada when you are not authorized may result in enforcement action taken by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). It could also negatively impact your current temporary resident status and any future applications you make under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and its regulations.

I have questions about my SIN.

More information is available on the [Social Insurance Number website](#).

If you still have questions after consulting the Service Canada website, contact Service Canada directly, Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm, at 1-800-206-7218 (choose option 3) or visit a Service Canada office.

The Victoria Service Canada Centre is located at Bay Centre, 1150 Douglas Street, 4th Floor, Suite 450.

International Centre for Students

www.uvic.ca/ics | Jamie Cassels Centre B202d | +1 250 721 6361 | icsinfo@uvic.ca
