

# YOUR CHILD'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

*... What You Need to Know About Applying for Your Newborn's Social Security Card*

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## **Your Child's Birth Certificate and Social Security Number**

Your child's birth certificate is his or her legal proof of age, identity, parentage, and U.S. citizenship. Social security numbers are also required for such things as income taxes and deductions, insurance, public assistance programs, savings accounts, medical care, etc.

## **Applying for Your Child's Social Security Number**

Applying for your newborn's social security number at birth is voluntary. If you decide to take advantage of this opportunity, simply check 'Yes' when asked on the birth worksheet. Your child's social security card will be sent to you directly from the federal Social Security Administration (SSA).

### **Ten Months or Older (Home Births)**

Check 'No' on the birth worksheet if your child is over ten months old when the birth is registered. You will need to apply directly with the federal office of the Social Security Administration.

### **When you say 'No' on the Birth Worksheet**

When you say 'No' on the birth worksheet, you must apply later at your nearest SSA office to obtain a social security card. You will need to:

1. Obtain and complete an SS-5 application through your nearest federal Social Security Administration field office and supply all the information you have just provided on the birth worksheet, plus hospital documentation;
2. Show a certified copy of your child's birth certificate; and
3. Provide satisfactory proof of your own identity.

## **Disclosure of Parent's Social Security Number**

Federal law changes effective April 2000 require that parents provide a valid social security number on their newborn's application, either through the birth registration process or a field office of the Social Security Administration.

Parents' social security numbers are required in accordance with 42 U.S. Code 405 (c)(2), as amended by Section 1090(b) of Public Law 105-34, which addresses taxpayer relief issues. The law authorizes the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to use the social security numbers for determining Earned Income Tax Credit compliance on income tax returns. The IRS may not share the information with any other agency, including the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

## **When Parents Do Not Have a Social Security Number**

Parents do not need a social security number themselves in order to apply for a number for their child. If a child is a U.S. citizen, he or she is eligible for a social security number even if the parents do not have a number and regardless of the parents' citizenship status. With very rare exceptions involving foreign diplomats, every child born in the United States is a U.S. citizen.

Applying for a social security number for a U.S.-citizen child is voluntary. However, your child will need a number for many reasons, including medical care. Parents are encouraged to apply for the number through the birth registration process by saying 'Yes' on the birth worksheet at the hospital. Neither the child's social security number nor the birth certificate will be delayed if either parent does not have a social security number or if an incorrect number has been entered on the record.

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*Side Two*

## **Fee for Social Security Number**

There is NO fee to obtain a social security number, either when you apply through the birth registration process or with a federal field office of the Social Security Administration.

## **Corrections to a Child's Social Security Card and Application**

The parent must contact a federal field office of the Social Security Administration to make any corrections or changes to a child's social security card or the original application information. The SSA office may ask to see the corrected birth certificate and supporting documentation, such as a copy of a Paternity Affidavit (for unmarried parents only) that was submitted to the state vital records office.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is a federal agency, whereas your child's birth record has been registered at the Iowa "state" Office of Vital Records. The state vital records office does not have the authority by law to make changes to a newborn's social security card after the information has been transmitted to the SSA. Look in your local telephone book under federal government agencies (blue pages) for the location and phone number of your nearest SSA field office.

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Lucas State Office Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
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and distributed in cooperation with your local hospital