



NYS Kinship Navigator

GETTING A SOCIAL SECURITY CARD FOR A MINOR

Who May Apply for the Child:

A Social Security Registration number for a minor may be obtained at the request of *parents or guardians*¹ upon receipt of satisfactory proof needed “to establish the age, citizenship, or alien status, and true identity of such applicants, and to determine which (if any) social security account number has previously been assigned to such individual.” The law is unclear on whether legal custodians or persons with a parental authorization may apply for a child. Congress permits the Social Security Administration to decide who can apply for a child² and it is best to make inquiry at the local Social Security office in order to determine who can apply.

If the application is rejected, and you disagree with a finding of fact that results in a rejection, you may ask for an administrative law hearing² where you may present evidence to support your claim and an opportunity to be heard by an the commissioner or an administrative law judge or ask the department to conduct an investigation to support your position.

Persons who may ask for such a hearing include: a wife, divorced wife, widow, surviving divorced wife, surviving divorced mother, surviving divorced father, husband, divorced husband, widower, surviving divorced husband, child, or parent who makes a showing in writing that his or her rights may be prejudiced by any decision the Commissioner of Social Security has rendered, or by “any such individual.”² This specification fails to list a guardian, a legal custodian or a designated by a parent and thus fails to define who exactly qualifies as “any such individual” or as a “parent,” but appears to leave a measure of discretion and of due process.

Proof of the Child's Identity

You must show the mother's and father's Social Security numbers when the application is for an original Social Security card for a person under age 18.

However, this item may be left blank if the mother was never assigned a Social Security number, or if you do not know the mother's Social Security number and are unable to obtain it. We will still be able to assign a number to a person under age 18.

¹ Federal Code, 42 U.S.C. 405(c)(ii), Social Security Act

² Federal Code, 42 U.S.C. 405(b)(1)

If the child is age 12 or older and has never been assigned a Social Security number before, he or she must apply in person.

If the child is age 18 or older, he or she must sign the application.

If the child is under age 18, he or she or a parent or legal guardian may sign. If the child is physically or mentally incapable of signing the application, generally a parent, close relative, or legal guardian may sign the application.

To apply for an original card, it is necessary to provide at least two documents that prove age, identity, and U.S. citizenship or current lawful, work-authorized immigration status.

In general, you must show your birth certificate.

In some situations, Social Security may accept another document that shows your age. The applicant may be required to show a U.S. driver's license, or U.S. State-issued non-driver identity card, or U.S. passport, U.S. military identity card, Certificate of Naturalization, or employee identity card.

For young children, they may accept medical records (clinic, doctor, or hospital) maintained by the medical provider. They may also accept a final adoption decree, or a school identity card or a school record maintained by the school.

Some of the other documents they may accept are:

- U.S. Hospital record of your birth (created at the time of your birth);
- Religious record established before age five showing your age or date of birth;
- Passport;
- Final Adoption Decree (the adoption decree must indicate that the birth data was taken from the original birth certificate).

This list is not exhaustive and other types of documents may be accepted if you are not able to obtain these documents.

A Program of Catholic Family Center

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