

# 1 Social Security Number Protection

2 Effective: October 14, 2005

3 Reviewed: July 1, 2019

4 Contact: [Controller's Department](#)

## 5 Introduction

6 Iowa State University recognizes that it collects and maintains confidential information relating to its  
7 students, employees, and individuals associated with the University and is committed to maintaining the  
8 privacy and confidentiality of an individual's Social Security Number (SSN). This policy applies to all  
9 individuals and University organizational units that have access to, collect, or use an individual's SSN.

## 10 Policy Statement

11 University ID shall replace SSN as the primary identifier used by the university. The university will  
12 discontinue the use of SSN as the primary identifier. Therefore, the use of SSN as an identification number  
13 within the university shall be limited as permitted by law.

14 To protect the privacy of persons whose SSN is collected, all university offices will follow procedures  
15 maintained by the policy administrator and managed by university-designated data stewards. These  
16 procedures were to be implemented by June 30, 2007, with requests for extensions of time to implement to  
17 be directed to the Policy Administrator prior to that date.

18 Persons responsible for breaching the privacy of another person by improperly obtaining, using or  
19 disclosing a SSN are subject to discipline as provided in the applicable faculty and staff handbooks or  
20 collective bargaining agreement and the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

21 The following rules of conduct apply:

- 22 • Employees and students shall comply with the provisions of this policy as well as related institutional  
23 policies and procedures.
- 24 • Employees may not request disclosure of a SSN from an individual if it is not necessary for the  
25 purposes of the university and the particular function for which the employee is responsible.
- 26 • Employees and students shall not disclose the SSN of another person to unauthorized persons or  
27 entities.
- 28 • Employees and students may not seek out or use the SSN of another person for their own interest or  
29 advantage.
- 30 • Employees responsible for the maintenance of records containing SSNs shall observe all  
31 institutionally-established administrative, technical, and physical safeguards in order to protect the  
32 confidentiality of such records.
- 33 • Employees shall report promptly to their supervisor any inappropriate disclosure of a SSN.

34 If SSNs are inappropriately disclosed and individuals have been put at risk of identity theft or other harm as  
35 a result of the disclosure, the Office of University Counsel shall be notified promptly.

## 36 **Definitions**

### 37 *Primary Identifier*

38 The primary identifier is the unique number used for identification.

### 39 *University Identification Number*

40 The University Identification Number (University ID or UID) is an assigned number used for the exclusive  
41 purpose of identifying those who are affiliated with the university, or those who desire to acquire services  
42 or access resources owned or operated by the university. The University ID is displayed as the middle  
43 block of 9 digits on the ISUCard.

### 44 *Data Steward*

45 Data Stewards are university executive officers or their designees who have planning and policy-level  
46 responsibilities for data in their functional areas. These data stewards, as a group, are responsible for  
47 recommending policies and establishing procedures and guidelines for university-wide data administration  
48 activities. Data stewards, as individuals, have management responsibilities for defined segments of the  
49 institutional databases such as SSN.

## 50 **Resources**

### 51 **Links**

- 52 • [ISU Card Office](#)
- 53 • [Confidential Data in Electronic Communications](#)
- 54 • [Office of University Counsel](#)
- 55 • [Student Disciplinary Regulations](#)

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### 57 **Files**

- 58 • [SSN Protection Procedure \[PDF\]](#)
- 59 • [SSN Protection FAQ \[PDF\]](#)