

Employers – What You Need to Know About Social Insurance Numbers



As an employer, you have important responsibilities related to the Social Insurance Number (SIN), including a lead role in protecting your employees' personal information and preventing fraudulent use of the SIN. The following information is provided to help clarify these responsibilities.

Employers' responsibilities at a glance

1. Ask to see the SIN card of new employees **within three days** of when they start their job.
2. Verify and record the expiry date of all SINs beginning with a "9."
3. Protect your employees' SINs and personnel records.
4. Inform Service Canada if you suspect that a SIN is being used fraudulently.

Remember: Your employees' SINs are confidential, and should only be used for income-related purposes.

Your key responsibilities

Request each new employee's SIN card and examine it within three days of when they start work.

- You must record the employee's name and number exactly as they appear on the SIN card. Every person working in Canada must have a SIN. This number is used to administer government benefits under the *Income Tax Act*, the *Canada Pension Plan*, and the *Employment Insurance Act*.
- If a new employee does not have a SIN and is eligible to work in Canada, ask that person to apply for a SIN at one of our Service Canada Centers—tell them it's **fast, simple, and secure!** If the new employee's application and identity documents are in order, he or she will receive a SIN at the time of the visit, and will be able to give you written confirmation.
- If you would like to confirm the SIN of a current or former employee, please contact Service Canada's Social Insurance Registration office at 1-800-206-7218 (select option "3"). If calling from outside Canada, dial 506-548-7961 (long-distance charges apply). You will need to provide your

business number (issued by the Canada Revenue Agency), along with information to verify the identity of your company and your employee's identity.

Ensure that your employees' SINs beginning with a "9" have not expired.

- If an employee has a SIN beginning with a "9," you must verify that the date on the SIN card has not expired. SINs that begin with a "9" are issued to temporary workers who are neither Canadian citizens nor permanent residents. These SINs are valid only until the expiry date printed on the front of the card. The expiry date corresponds with the date on the Citizenship and Immigration Canada document authorizing a person to work in Canada.

Protect your employees' personal information, including their SINs, from theft and inappropriate use or disclosure.

- Store all sensitive personal information in a secure area or on an encrypted computer system. Only allow access to it on a need-to-know basis.

- If you find out that an employee's SIN has been stolen or is being inappropriately used or disclosed, take the following steps to minimize the harm that could result:

- o assess the damage;
- o inform the employee(s) concerned;
- o if any criminal activity has occurred, contact the police;
- o contact Service Canada and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada; and
- o contact anyone else affected.

Inform Service Canada if you suspect that a SIN is being used fraudulently.

- You play a leading role in detecting and preventing SIN fraud. Two main examples of this type of fraud are illegal employment and income tax evasion.
- If you suspect that a SIN is being used fraudulently, report the situation immediately to Service Canada.

The *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* sets out rules governing how private-sector organizations may collect, use, or disclose personal information. For more information, consult the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada at www.privcom.gc.ca.

For more information on how to protect the SIN, please see our publication *Your Social Insurance Number: A Shared Responsibility!* (SC-237-12-06).

The Social Insurance Number (SIN) program is delivered by Service Canada. Service Canada brings Government of Canada services and benefits together in a single delivery network. It provides Canadians with one-stop service they can access however they choose—by phone at 1 800 O-Canada, on the Internet at servicecanada.gc.ca, or in person at Service Canada Centres across the country.

How to reach us

CALL 1-800-206-7218.
Select Option "3."

Agents are available Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. local time, except on statutory holidays.

If you are calling from outside Canada, the number is 506-548-7961 (long-distance charges apply).

CLICK servicecanada.gc.ca

See the Web site for more information on how to contact the Government of Canada and access the full range of Government of Canada programs and services.

VISIT any Service Canada Centre

To find the centre nearest you, visit our Web site, or call 1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232). If you have a hearing or speech impairment and use a tele-typewriter (TTY), please call 1-800-926-9105.

You can also write to us at:

Service Canada
Social Insurance Registration Office
P.O. Box 7000
Bathurst, New Brunswick E2A 4T1

