



BALL STATE UNIVERSITY SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER POLICY

Ball State University recognizes that it collects and maintains confidential information relating to its students, employees, and individuals associated with the University and is dedicated to ensuring the privacy and proper handling of this information. This should be understood as the spirit of this policy statement.

This policy will be phased in, with a goal of Fall 2006 for full implementation. The language required by Ball State University Social Security Number Guidelines Section I.4 will be placed on all relevant forms and documents as soon as is reasonably practicable.

The primary purpose of this Social Security number policy is to establish the necessary procedures and awareness to ensure that University employees and students comply with both the letter and the spirit of the federal and state laws governing and restricting requests for and uses of Social Security numbers. The University is guided by the following objectives:

1. Broad awareness of the confidential nature of the Social Security number;
2. Reduced reliance upon the Social Security number for identification purposes;
3. A consistent policy towards and treatment of Social Security numbers throughout the University; and
4. Increased confidence by students and employees that Social Security numbers are handled in a confidential manner.

I. POLICY/REGULATIONS

I.1. A Ball State University ID Number (BSU ID) will be assigned to all students and employees. It will be uniquely associated with the individual to whom it is assigned. The BSU ID will be used in all future electronic and paper data systems to identify, track, and service individuals associated with the University, except in cases where use of the Social Security number is mandated by federal or state law.

I.1.1. The BSU ID will be considered the property of Ball State University, and its use and governance shall be at the discretion of the University, within the parameters of the law;

I.1.2. The BSU ID will be created and maintained by University Computing Services;

I.1.3. The BSU ID will be a component of a system that provides a mechanism for both the identification of individuals and a method of authentication.

I.2. Grades and other pieces of personal information will not be publicly posted or displayed in a manner where use of all or part of the BSU ID or Social Security number (including use of the last few digits of the Social Security number) identifies the individual associated with the information.

- I.3. Social Security numbers will be electronically transmitted only through encrypted mechanisms.
- I.4. All University forms and documents that collect Social Security numbers will contain the appropriate language stating the reason for the request and whether the request is voluntary or mandatory. Refer to the guidelines document section (I.2) for more detailed information.
- I.5. Paper documents and electronic data containing Social Security numbers, when no longer needed by the University, will be destroyed or disposed of using a method designed to prevent or significantly inhibit their recovery or use thereafter by anyone.
- I.6. Except where the University is legally required to collect a Social Security number, individuals will not be required to provide their Social Security number, verbally or in writing, at any point of service, nor will they be denied access to those services should they refuse to provide a Social Security number. However, individuals may volunteer their Social Security number as an alternate means of locating a record.
- I.7. Social Security numbers will be released by the University to entities outside the University only:
 - I.7.1. As allowed by law; OR
 - I.7.2. When permission is granted by the individual; OR
 - I.7.3. When the external entity is acting as the University's contractor or agent and adequate security measures are in place to prevent unauthorized dissemination to third parties; OR
 - I.7.4. When University Legal Counsel has approved the release.
- I.8. The Social Security number may continue to be stored as a confidential attribute associated with an individual. The Social Security number will be used as:
 - I.8.1. Allowed by law;
 - I.8.2. A key to identify individuals, such as University contractors and agents, for whom a BSU ID is not known or has not been assigned.
 - I.8.3. A key to identify historical records such as those in payroll/benefits and student records.
- I.9. This policy does not preclude Ball State University employees from using the Social Security number as needed during the execution of their duties, if a primary means of identification is unavailable. The other aspects of this policy statement restrict such usage.

II. ENFORCEMENT

- II.1. Ball State University ID Committee will work with the Executive Director of University Compliance to ensure compliance with this policy and to recommend changes if appropriate.
- II.2. Employees and students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the University for violating this policy, such as by breaching the confidentiality of Social Security numbers. Any such disciplinary action shall be governed by the regular University policies and procedures applicable to the situation.