



Welcome to the United States

A Guide for New Immigrants



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

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WELCOME TO THE UNITED STATES!

You are part of a long tradition of immigrants who have come to the United States and contributed to a strong and vibrant nation. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, offers resources to help you prepare for your new life in the United States.

Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants is a publication for lawful permanent residents available in 14 languages at uscis.gov/newimmigrants. This guide:

- Introduces the basic information you and your family need for everyday life in the United States;
- Describes your rights and responsibilities;
- Suggests ideas for getting involved in your local community; and
- Helps you plan for applying for U.S. citizenship.

Getting Settled in the United States

Inside this guide, learn how you can build a new life in the United States by taking these important first steps.

- Find a place to live
- Find transportation
- Get a Social Security number and driver's license
- Get a job
- Register your children for school
- Find healthcare
- Take care of your money
- Improve your English language skills
- Find free information in your local community
- Connect with community organizations that help immigrants
- Prepare for emergencies

How to Get the Guide

You can download or print your own copy of *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants* from uscis.gov/newimmigrants. You can purchase printed copies in English, Spanish, and Chinese through the U.S. Government Bookstore at <https://bookstore.gpo.gov>.

Your Rights and Responsibilities

As a lawful permanent resident, you have both rights and responsibilities in the United States. For example, as a lawful permanent resident, you have the right to:

- Work in the United States;
- Own property in the United States;
- Attend public school;
- Apply for a driver's license in your state or territory;
- Apply to join certain branches of the U.S. armed forces; and
- Receive Social Security and Medicare benefits, if you are eligible.

As a lawful permanent resident, you have certain responsibilities, for example, you must:

- File taxes with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to report your worldwide income and report foreign bank and financial accounts. Please visit irs.gov/newimmigrants for more information on filing your federal taxes with the IRS, including helpful technical topics for new immigrants.
- Register with the Selective Service (if you are a male between 18 and 26). To register or learn more, call 1-847-688-6888 or go to sss.gov.
- Inform USCIS of your new address no later than 10 days after you move. To change your address online, go to uscis.gov/addresschange. You must notify USCIS each time you change your address.

Be sure to also change your address with the U.S. Postal Service so it can forward your mail to your new address. To change your address with the Postal Service, visit usps.com/umove.

- Maintain permanent residence in the United States. If you are planning a temporary trip outside the United States for one year or more, you must apply for a re-entry permit using Form I-131 before you leave. If you go abroad with the intent to reside abroad temporarily you will fail to maintain permanent residence. Any trip outside the United States may affect your eligibility for citizenship. Visit uscis.gov to learn more.

The guide provides more detailed information on your rights and responsibilities. You can also learn about federal laws that protect you from discrimination in housing and employment. The guide also alerts you to the serious consequences for lawful permanent residents who commit or are convicted of a crime in the United States. Your conduct, including failure to meet the responsibilities of a lawful permanent resident can affect your ability to become a U.S. citizen.



Becoming a U.S. Citizen

If you are considering U.S. citizenship, the Citizenship Resource Center at uscis.gov/citizenship has resources that will help you learn about U.S. citizenship, the naturalization process and eligibility requirements, and how to apply.