

Emerald Isle Immigration Center

J-1 Summer Program 2013 Information Booklet



EIIC.org



Woodside, Queens
59-26 Woodside Avenue
Woodside, NY 11377
Tel: 718-478-5502
Fax: 718-446-3727

Woodlawn, Bronx
4275 Katonah Avenue
Woodlawn, NY 10470
Tel: (718) 324-3039
Fax: (718) 324-7741

Emerald Isle Immigration Center
J1 Program
NEW YORK GUIDE

Contents

Emerald Isle Immigration Center 1

Emerald Isle Immigration Center Services4

Emerald Isle Immigration Center Office Hours.....5

SETTING UP IN NYC6

ACCOMMODATION.....9

JOBS 14

MONEY 17

Irish Consulate.....20

Transportation21

Emerald Isle Immigration Center Attorney Referral List25

General Advice.....27

“CEAD MILE FAILTE”

WELCOME TO NEW YORK



Welcome J1 Students

Welcome to New York and Emerald Isle Immigration Center!

We hope your stay will be safe and enjoyable. We have compiled this booklet to provide you with the information you will need over a summer in New York City. This has been compiled based on our experience of J1s over many years and the questions that we field each year.

We encourage you to use this Guide and the services at EIIC to have a safe and enjoyable summer. We urge you to be responsible and aware that the actions of J1 Students affect the prospects of those who will come to New York in future years.

Our package includes information on the J1 Program, accommodation, transportation, as well as many useful numbers and websites. This brochure is informational; to receive comprehensive services in any of these areas please contact us. It is not an exhaustive list, nor does inclusion in this package imply any type of endorsement of these service providers.

We hope that your experiences will also inform future guides, so please give us your feedback on the services you receive in EIIC and your experience as a J1 in New York.

Enjoy your stay!

Emerald Isle Immigration Center

Photo I.D Required

Since September 11, 2001 a Photo I.D. is required for entrance to most office and governments buildings in New York City, please allow extra time to gain access.

Please be aware of this and have proper Photo I.D. handy.

It is also a wise idea to make a copy of your passport and all important documents. Keep these copies separate from the originals. EIIC will keep a copy of your passport and visa for you.

Emerald Isle Immigration Center Services

Serving the Needs of our Community

Computers:

The EIIC computer room is available for open-house use during our normal business hours, Monday – Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Immigration:

EIIC fields queries on the wide range and ever changing immigration procedures from employer sponsorship, relative petitions, to the DV greencard lottery program. Clients are also referred to reliable legal counsel where appropriate.

Citizenship and Naturalization:

EIIC provides a comprehensive program that leads immigrants to citizenship, from filing documents to preparing for the interview. Counselors meet with clients by appointment in Queens and the Bronx.

Employment Program:

EIIC's Employment Coordinators work with clients one-on-one to help them develop their job seeking strategies and find employment. Check with your local office for details.

Social Services:

EIIC has a licensed clinical social worker on staff as well as a social work intern to assist with any issues that may arise during your stay here. These may include but are not limited to: housing disputes, workplace concerns, alcoholism and drug abuse, healthcare concerns and questions including pregnancy, depression, homesickness, relationship concerns, domestic abuse, or cultural adjustments to the US. Contact EIIC for details.

Advocacy:

EIIC keeps close contact with Washington lawmakers and advocates on behalf of the Irish immigrant community.

General Assistance:

The EIIC staff regularly fields queries on such matters as taxes, education, housing, bank accounts, Irish passports, and driver's licenses.

EIIC is a member of the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers (CIIC), find details on the coalition and other Irish Centers in the US on www.CIIC-USA.org.

Emerald Isle Immigration Center Office Hours

| WOODSIDE, QUEENS | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Monday | 9am to 5pm. |
| Tuesday | 9am to 8pm |
| Wednesday | 11am to 5pm |
| Thursday | 9am to 5pm |
| Friday | 9am to 3pm |
| Saturday | 9am to 3pm (1 st and 3 rd Saturday only.) |
| (Please check for availability first) | |
| WOODLAWN, THE BRONX | |
| Monday | 9:00am to 5:00pm |
| Tuesday | 9:00am to 5:00pm |
| Wednesday | 9:00am to 5:00pm |
| Thursday | 9:00am to 8:00pm |
| Friday | 9am to 5pm |
| Saturday | 9am to 3pm (1 Saturday a month only) |
| (Please check for availability first) | |

» Computer access, internet, job assistance and accommodation listings are available in both offices.

Directions to our Queens Office

- By Subway/LIRR/Bus
- Take **7** train to **61st Street-Woodside**. Walk down one block towards the intersection of Roosevelt and Woodside Avenues. You will see a Duane Reade store, EIIC is directly opposite the store, on the top floor of the Chase Manhattan Bank.
- **LIRR to 61st Street in Woodside** and follow directions above.
- Take bus **Q32** to the **61st Street-Woodside** and follow directions above.

Directions to our Bronx Office

- By Subway and Bus
- Take **4** train to **Woodlawn**, which is the last stop on the 4 line. Walk across from the station to the bus stop and take bus **BX34**. After a few minutes on the bus. The bus will turn left at a **HESS gas station** onto **Katonah Avenue**. Get off the bus at E233 St and Kepler Ave.
- Alternatively take **MetroNorth** from **Grand Central (GCT)** to **Woodlawn** Train Station on the Harlem line (appx. 20 minutes from GCT) and follow bus directions above.

Setting up in NYC

SEVIS

SEVIS (the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) is the database in which your exchange visitor record is recorded. From the time you are issued Form DS-2019 you have a record in the SEVIS system. Check with your agency to see what your exact obligations are.

You can register online at www.mysevis.com or call 1888 268 6245.

You must register your US address with SEVIS within 10 days of your arrival in the US. Anytime you change your address you must update this information in the SEVIS database. You cannot register with SEVIS until you have arrived in the US.

Social Security

All J1 students need to apply for and receive a Social Security Number by visiting their local Social Security Office. A Social Security application may take between four and six weeks to process, although most will be processed in a little over a week.

If you do not have a permanent address yet, you can use EIIC.

Apply for a Social Security Number early to avoid complications should you lose the required documentation.

To avoid delays it is important to:

- Register your US address with SEVIS as soon as possible and do not apply for a Social Security number until two days after you register in SEVIS.
- The Social Security Administration advises that you wait 10 days after entering the country before filing a Social security application to avoid potential delays in processing. You must also wait two days after registering with SEVIS before submitting the application.
- To apply for a Social Security number you must take your “Dear Social Security Officer” letter and the following documents to the local Social Security office.
 1. DS-2019
 2. I-94 card
 3. J-1 visa
 4. Passport

You will be asked to complete a Social Security Application at the Social Security office. Enter your US address carefully so your card can be mailed to you. You will be provided with a proof of application receipt which you should keep in a safe place. Once you have applied for a social

security card you must display your name clearly on your letter box, otherwise they will not deliver the social security card.

EIIC will make a copy of your passport, visa and social security number for you and keep it on file for you.

Keep your social security card in a safe place. Do NOT carry it around with you.

What do I do if I don't receive my Social Security number (SSN) right away?

If there are delays in receiving a Social Security number (SSN), you can still begin participation in the program activity for which you are sponsored. The Social Security Administration (SSA) does not require you to have a SSN before you begin participation in the program for which you were issued a J-1 visa. However, the Internal Revenue Service requires employers to report wages using a SSN. While you wait for your SSN, your employer can use a letter from SSA stating that you applied for a number. When you apply for a SSN, make sure you ask for a letter acknowledging you have filed an application (Form SS-5). This letter can be printed and given to you immediately as part of the application process. Your employer may use your immigration documents as proof of your authorization to work in the United States.

Employers can find more information on the Internet at

www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/hiring.htm.

The Internal Revenue Service website also contains information on what employers can do if a worker experiences delays in getting a Social Security number at

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=129227,00.html>

Social Security Offices:

To find the Office nearest you see www.ssa.gov or call 1-800-772-1213.

To apply for a Social Security Number go to one of these offices, depending on where you live:

Queens:

155-10 Jamaica Av., 3rd Floor
Jamaica, NY 11435

Westchester – New York:

20 South Broadway, 10th Floor
Yonkers, NY 10701
Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00pm

Bronx :

3247 Laconia Avenue,
Bronx, NY 10469
Monday – Friday 8:30-4:00pm

Brooklyn:

10 Metrotech Center
625 Fulton St
Brooklyn, NY 11226

US Laws

For the duration of your stay, you will be subject to all US laws, regardless of the legality of certain behaviors in your home country. It is not uncommon for students to experience some degree of uncertainty regarding certain US laws, and some may strike you as peculiar or even 'unjust.' It is important for you to familiarize yourself with the laws that will directly affect you during your stay in the US. These include all major federal laws, as well as the laws of the state in which you are working, and the town where you will be living. Some US laws change from city to city, and state to state. This lack of uniformity may be frustrating, but you should be able to avoid nearly all legal missteps by exercising a bit of common sense, and consulting with your peers, friends, or co-workers. Always use your common sense and whenever you suspect something might be illegal, ask a trusted friend. You do not want to endanger your experience by committing an illegal act that could have easily been avoided.

Sexual Harassment and Racial Discrimination Sexual harassment and racial discrimination are very serious matters in the US. If you feel you have been the victim of either, please contact the US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) at 1-800-669-4000 or EIIC on 718-478-5502.

Accommodation

Do not give any money to a landlord without you or someone else meeting them and seeing the apartment. Asking for an advance is a warning sign. Do not wire money to a landlord even if it is comparatively small sum.

Only give money to a landlord or realtor when you are happy that you can move into the apartment.

The vast majority of realtors will only receive payment once they have secured you a place. If they ask for something to show you apartments consider finding another realtor.

Accommodation Tips for New York

- The primary resource for finding New York apartments outside of real estate agents is Craigslist.org. It is free to advertise on Craigslist, so be careful when viewing apartments from this site, there are many legitimate advertisers, plenty of scams and a lot in between. Read the site's own [instructions](#) on avoiding scammers. It might be a good idea to bring a friend when viewing apartments.
 - To get a sense of the real estate market in New York and elsewhere, try Curbed.com or BrickUnderground.com
 - HotPads.com and Nabewise.com give you a low down on New York's 300 neighborhoods.
- For listings try also NakedApartments.com and RentHop.com, while NYTimes.com/realestate is also worth a visit, though mainly for information rather than listings.
- Apartments are listed each week in local Irish papers. Try *The Irish Voice*, *The Irish Echo* and *Irish Central*. Papers come out every Tuesday.
- There are postings at local Irish delis & diners. Try The Butcher Blocks' Notice board on 43-46 41st Street, Sunnyside, NY, 11104, 61st Deli, Woodside. Also look at postings on the notice boards in both EIIC offices and on our Facebook page.
- Most landlords expect at least one year's commitment; require at least one month's security and first month's rent paid in advance.
- Real Estate companies may also be able to help but there will be an additional charge on top of the regular deposits. Usually they charge one month's rent for commission.
- If you hear about an apartment call immediately as apartments move very fast. Always thoroughly investigate the apartment and the surrounding neighborhood and make sure you feel comfortable and safe.

- Find the closest subway station and find out if the line is reliable.
- Check out smaller cities - The Manhattan skyline is visible from the shores of Hoboken New Jersey, and the two are connected by a 24/7 light-rail service.
- **As a general rule always see the apartment before you put any money down, meet your roommates before you commit to an apartment, and bring someone with you if you don't feel completely safe visiting an apartment on your own. Be aware that some housing is very cheap for a reason.**
- It is advisable to have a hostel booked for your first couple of nights so you have somewhere to stay when you land.
The following links may be of help:
<http://www.hostels.com/new-york/usa>
http://www.yelp.com/search?find_desc=hostels&ns=1&find_loc=New+York%2C+NY#

A company called **Internship USA** offers the following rates to J1 students. It would provide a landing pad for a week or two until you find suitable accommodation. The charges for **Internship USA** are as follows:

Two week rates

Single room = \$1,077 for 2 weeks (equivalent to \$76 per night)

Double room = \$696 for 2 weeks per person (share with another student/guest)

Daily Rates

Just need a place for a few nights?

\$99 / night per person in a single room.

\$72 / night per person in a double room. (share with another student/guest)

Failte 32, an Irish Networking Organization here in New York have teamed up with Internship USA to secure an accommodation deal for J students needing 2-4 months accommodation. Situated on the Upper West Side in Manhattan, it includes a gym, laundry and games room and you can choose either a one or two bedroom. Free wifi is also included and there is 24 hour security on site.

The rates are as follows:

- Single Room - \$1600 per month
- Double Room - \$1300 per month

This includes all bills. If students are coming for 3 months and taking a double room, the payment for the 3 months, i.e. \$3900 and is due in full upfront.

They do not take deposits except for a small one (\$100) to cover keys etc but this is refundable at the end.

You can access pictures of the residence at - <http://www.international-study-usa.com/accommodation.htm> or www.international-study-usa.com

Cell Phones

A cell phone can be purchased from a number of providers. The following are a selection of provider's websites so you can check out their nearest store.

www.metropcs.com

www.virginmobile.com

www.att.com

www.boostmobile.com

www.verizonwireless.com

www.t-mobile.com

www.radioshack.com

Different monthly plans can be organized so you can budget easily and get free calls to Irish landlines depending on your provider's service.

Utilities

Check with you landlord before you rent what utilities you need to pay and who the provider is. While you may find that they are running when you move in, ultimately everything will be shut down if you do not open an account with the company. Most tenants in New York pay for Electricity, Gas and any telecommunications (cable television, internet, etc).

National Grid (Gas hook-up for Brooklyn, Staten Island, and Queens)

Customer Service (718) 643-4050

Con Edison (Gas for some boroughs & electricity hook-up)

Customer Service (800) 752-6633

Time Warner Cable

Customer Service (718) 358-0900

Consumer Concerns

Air/Water/Sewer/Noise Complaints (718) 699-9811

Better Business Bureau (212) 533-6200

Bus & Subway Complaints (718) 330-3322

Useful Phone Numbers

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC): (212) 741-2783 or (973) 645-5974

N.Y. State Division of Human Rights (212) 961-8400 (note: NY law covers discrimination based on sexual orientation, marital status or status as a victim of domestic violence, while Federal law does not.)

N.Y. City Commission on Human Rights (212) 306-7500

N.Y. State Attorney General's Office, Civil Rights Bureau: (212) 416-8250

Important New York City Phone Numbers

Emergency

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Ambulance-Fire-Police | 911 |
| Directory Assistance | 411 |
| NYC Dept. of Health | (212) 447-8200 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous | (212) 870-3400 |
| Crime Stoppers Hot Line | (212) 577-8477 |
| Crime Victims Hot Line | (212) 577-7777 |
| Doctors on Call | (718) 745-5900 |
| Help & Crisis Center | (212) 532-2400 |
| Lead Poisoning Hot Line | (212) BAN-LEAD |
| Missing Persons | (212) 374-6913 |
| Narcotics Anonymous | (212) 929-6262 |
| Poison Control | (212) 340-4494 |
| Rape Hot Line | (212) 267-7273 |
| Substance Abuse Hot Line | (800) 522-5353 |
| Suicide Prevention | (212) 673-3000 |
| Women's Health Line | (212) 230-1111 |

Traveler Information

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Convention and Visitors Bureau | (800) 692-8474 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|

Coach Information

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Carey Bus/Coach | 718-632-0500 |
| Olympia Trails | 212-964-6233 |

Airports

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Air Ride (Port Authority) | (800) 247-7433 |
| JFK International Airport | (718) 244-4444 |
| La Guardia Airport | (718) 533-3200 |
| Newark International Airport | (973) 961-6000 |

Social Security

(To find the office close to you)

(800) 772-1213

Consulate General of Ireland

(212) 319-2555

Non Emergency Information Line

(Information about all things)

311

Emerald Isle Immigration Center

(718)-478-5502

Aisling Irish Community Center

(914)-237-5121

New York Irish Center

(718) 482 0909

JOBS

While EIIC links J1 Students with employers in New York, each year demand for positions exceeds the supply of jobs. Therefore the primary service that we offer many students is orientation on the jobs market, resume assistance and the experience of the many J1s that have come to New York for decades.

JOB WEBSITES

www.hotjobs.com

www.jobfind.com

www.monster.com

www.careermarketplace.com

www.employmentguide.com

www.rileyguide.com

www.jobbankusa.com

www.career.com

www.gojobs.com

www.funjobs.com

www.wetfeet.com

www.blastmyresume.com

www.careerbuilder.com

www.craigslist.com

www.indeed.com

www.vault.com

www.hirediversity.com

www.recruitersnetwork.com

www.flipdog.com

www.salary.com

www.job.com

www.nationjob.com

www.jobsonline.com

www.nettemps.com

www.hcareers.com

www.dice.com

www.jobs4hr.com

www.hireability.com

www.brassring.com

Irish Business Networks in New York

You may be interested in branching out your job search into the broader Irish community in New York. A good way of doing this is to attend the networking and social events of the following organizations:

Fáilte 32

A networking organization that meets regularly in New York that is particularly useful for new arrivals.

www.failte32.org

Irish Business Organization

A network focused on small to medium sized Irish businesses in New York. They meet twice monthly, while they run many other events. See their website for details:

<http://www.ibo-ny.com/>

Irish Network NYC

A networking organization geared to professionals in New York. Great contacts to be at their regular social and networking events.

<http://irishnetwork-nyc.com/>

Approaching Employers

Always make it clear that you will have legal status to work in the US when communicating with potential employers.

- i.e.: “I will be participating on the Work and Travel USA Program sponsored by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE). As my sponsor, CIEE is authorized by the US government to issue the necessary documentation for me to obtain a J1 visa, allowing me to work legally within the US for up to four months.”
- When applying for an advertised vacancy make sure to carefully follow their instructions as to how to apply for the position. Most employers will require you to post, fax or email a copy of your information
- Be persistent. Make follow up calls on your job applications after a few days. That way you'll stand out from the many applications that employers receive
- Talk to friends and family members who may be able to give you some leads or put in a good word for you.
- **Beware of listings that don't have a job description.** If the employer doesn't clearly spell out what the position is, don't respond to the ad or go to an interview. It's probably a commission job.

NEW YORK STATE MINIMUM WAGE LAWS

MINIMUM WAGE ACT (GENERAL EMPLOYMENT)

- The General Industry Minimum Wage Act states that all employees in New York State, including most domestic workers, must be paid at least \$7.25 per hour.
- The basic rate may be modified by certain requirements set under regulations known as “wage orders.” These provisions of the minimum wage law cover jobs in the restaurant, hotel, and building service industry, and miscellaneous industries and occupations. They set an hourly rate plus overtime and allowances in four General Industry Wage Orders, based on meals and lodging supplied by an employer.
- Some industries make allowances for tips, thus they set a lower hourly rate. For example, food service workers may earn \$4.65 per hour because their total compensation includes expected tips. When required uniforms are maintained by the worker, certain allowances also apply. Other service workers have a minimum rate of \$5.50 per hour. There are also allowances for meals and lodging supplied by an employer.

MONEY

As of May 21 2013 the exchange rate is:

1.00 EUR = 1.29009 USD

(Source www.xe.com)

This rate is subject to change so keep an eye on trends. You should be aware of the current rate to ensure that when you make a financial transaction that you are getting close to market value. Financial Institutions often take a small percentage from the listed rate.

Opening a Bank Account

In order to open a US bank account, you may need to bring the following with you. Check with your local branch as to their requirements:

- Passport
- Driver's license or state identification
- Social Security Card
- Proof of address
- Letter verifying status as an Intern/Trainee

A checking account allows you to deposit and withdraw money from your bank account. Checks can be used to pay utility bills. An ATM card will allow you to access your money 24 hours a day. Note that although you can withdraw money from a competitor bank's bank there will usually be a small fee of approx \$2.

Bank account and Money Transfer

The cheapest way to access money from Ireland is often at an ATM, where fees are generally \$1 to \$3. Make sure that you are getting a competitive exchange rate from the bank. The major Banks in New York (Chase, Bank of America, etc.) generally give you a reasonable rate to the Euro.

You can also transfer money through Western Union Financial Services or MoneyGram. ***Money Orders from the Post Office cannot be used outside the U.S.***

Transfers are used by people without traditional banking relationships, expatriates who send money to their home country, traditional bank customers in need of emergency money transfer services, tourists without local bank accounts, and businesses that need rapid and economical wire transfer services.

Note: EIIC does not endorse the services of any of these providers.

PayPal

Paypal is an extremely efficient and comparatively cheap way of transferring money. See details at www.PAYPAL.com.

Currency Exchange

Not all banks will exchange currency. Allied Irish Bank located at 405 Park Ave [(212) 339-8153] will have Euro currency. The following offices in Manhattan will also exchange foreign currency. It is always wise to check rates and commission charges before handing over your money. Most of the larger banks in New York City will have currency exchange. Check in your local bank as they may offer currency exchange services.

The following offices in Manhattan have currency exchange service available:**Travelex**

1590 Broadway (at 48th St in Times Square)
(212) 265-6049

Choice

200 Park Ave (at 44th St, Met Life Building)
Third Floor East, Room 332
1-800-258-0456

Medical/Dental Info

It is vital to be aware of the medical system in the US. Review your insurance before arriving in New York.

If you have travel or medical insurance that covers you in US become familiar with the nature of the coverage. Many travel and short term plans will partly cover medical costs, but may require that you foot the bill and apply for restitution.

Check if your coverage has a network of medical practitioners. “In-Network” treatment is often cheaper than “Out of Network” treatment, where costs can be extremely high.

For assistance with your policy and accessing healthcare contact the social services staff at EIIC in Queens and the Bronx.

Consulate General of Ireland New York

The Consulate General of Ireland in New York is open to the public from Monday – Friday from 10.00 to 15.00. The Consulate's telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 08.30 to 17.00

The Consulate General of Ireland in New York provides assistance to Irish citizens in Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, New York, North and South Carolina, Pennsylvania, West Virginia.

If you lose your passport you should report it to the police also.

The nearest subway station is 51st Street and Lexington Avenue on the 6 line.

Consulate General of Ireland
345 Park Avenue
17th Floor
New York
NY 10154-0037

Tel: + 1-212-319-2555

Fax: +1-212-980-9475

www.consulateofirelandnewyork.org

Diplomatic Staff

Consul General: Mr. Noel Kilkenny

Deputy Consul General: Ms. Jackie O'Halloran Bernstein

Press and Information: Mr. Peter Ryan

Vice Consul: Ms. Fiona McCabe

Administrative Attaché: Ms. Monica Horgan

Out of Hours Service

If you are in need of emergency assistance, please contact the Consulate at + 1-212-319-2555 and leave a message on the answering machine. The answering machine is monitored regularly, and the Duty Officer will contact you as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may contact the Duty Officer at the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin at + 353-1-4082000

Transportation

Transportation Websites

www.mta.info (New York City Transit, subway, rail, bus schedules, metro cards, maps)
www.hopstop.com (To plan travel by subway, bus, rail, or walking: www.hopstop.com)
www.amtrak.com (trains)
www.nycsubway.org (includes subway maps)
www.panynj.gov (Port Authority of New York and New Jersey – includes maps also)

There are a number of smart phone apps that can be extremely useful in navigating the New York mass transit system:

MTA and Hopstop both have good app resources:

<http://www.mta.info/apps/>
[http://hopstop.com/mobile?xfr=header__link\](http://hopstop.com/mobile?xfr=header__link)

Public Transportation Telephone Numbers.

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Grand Central Station (Metro North Directory Asst) | (212) 340-3000 |
| Long Island Railroad | (718) 217-5477 |
| Metro North (MTA Metro North Railroad) | (212) 532-4900 |
| Bronx Break for the Border (Cab Company) | (914) 664-4444 |
| Queens Caprice (Cab Company) | (718) 424-9300 |

Subway

- The subway is probably one of the fastest ways to get around New York City and runs 24 hours a day. Most stations are underground. Subway maps are posted in most cars and stations and are available free at token booths inside the station. You'll also find a detailed map of the subway system in the front section of the Manhattan Yellow Pages. A single subway ride costs \$2.25 each way. You must use a MetroCard to get through the turnstile. Once you've passed through the turnstiles and are inside the station, you can transfer between lines or ride as long as you like. MetroCards can be purchased at token booths with cash or credit/debit cards. The attendant can only accept cash and cannot accept bills larger than \$20.
- MetroCards can also be purchased at any newsstand, pharmacy, or grocery store bearing a MetroCard sticker in the storefront window. You can also purchase unlimited cards: \$29/weekly and \$104/monthly. MetroCards can also be used for subway-bus, bus-subway, and bus-bus transfers. The city has set up a helpful information line (212) 638-7622] to answer any questions.

- Inside the station, signs point to the appropriate platform for the uptown (sometimes “Bronx/Queens-bound”) or downtown (“Brooklyn-bound”) train you want. The line number or letter, information about whether it’s a local or an express, and the name of the last stop are written on the side of each subway car. Keep an eye out for “express” trains -- they’re great time-savers but make sure they stop at the station you want (they are called express because they do not make all stops).
- If you have any questions or need assistance in figuring out your route, call the Metropolitan Transit Authority any day 24 hours at (718) 330-1234.

Word of Warning

Don’t ride the trains late at night or early in the morning, particularly if you are alone.

Don’t enter deserted stations.

Don’t ride in a deserted car; ride in the middle car, where the conductor usually sits.

Don’t wear flashy jewelry.

Don’t stand too close to the tracks.

Don’t use the bathroom inside any station.

Do watch your wallet or purse, particularly when riding in a crowded subway train.

Don’t put feet on seats or lie across seating- MTA Transit Police Ticket \$50 fine

Buses

- Buses run up and down most avenues and on most major cross streets. Uptown buses stop at designated stops every two or three blocks and cross-town buses stop on every block. Many bus lines have a limited “express” version that stops only every ten blocks or so, an orange “limited” sign is clearly visible on the front. Many bus stops have covered waiting areas and route maps with time schedules on them, and all have blue signs with route numbers on them. Most stops are used by more than one route, so check the screen on the front or side of each bus for its route number or simply ask the driver.
- The bus costs \$2.25 for a local ride and \$5.50 for an express ride. You must use a MetroCard or change. Using the MetroCard, subway-bus, bus-subway, and some bus-bus transfers are free (see Subway above). The fare box will not take pennies or bills and the driver will not make change. If you are going to ride the bus with frequency use a MetroCard. Many buses run all night, although service is less frequent late at night, and on weekends.

Taxis

- All of the officially licensed medallion taxicabs in New York City are known as Yellow Cabs. They have the words “NYC Taxi” and fare information written on their side doors and have their medallion number in a box on the roof.
- Inside you’ll see a meter and the driver’s license (with their picture) and medallion number displayed on the dashboard. The cost of a ride in a medallion cab is calculated per trip rather than per person, which means that a short trip for four adults in a cab can actually be cheaper than a bus or subway ride. That said, fares can add up quickly especially if you are stuck in heavy traffic.

- The charge begins the moment you get in. The meter in front keeps a running total of your fare, and the driver is required to give you a receipt if you request one. A tip of 15% to 20% of your fare is expected and you probably will need to pay in cash.
- Drivers often cannot make change for bills larger than \$20.
- Drivers are required to take you anywhere within the five boroughs of New York City, to Westchester and Nassau counties, and to Newark Airport. That's the law, but the reality is that many cab drivers will make a fuss if you want to go to one of the airports, out to one of the suburban counties, or even to lower-income neighborhoods. If you have such a problem, jot down the driver's name and medallion number and write the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (221 West 41st Street, New York, NY 10036) or call (212) 639-9675 to complain.

Car Services

- Because cabs can only be hailed in Manhattan usually if you need to get somewhere from one of the other boroughs, Bronx, Queens, or Brooklyn, you will need to call a car service. These are usually black or white cars with large antennas on them. There is no meter like there is in a cab. Feel free to ask how much your trip will cost. These cars should have license numbers and identification in the back for you to see like cabs do. When you call a car they will come to the address or intersection you request.

Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

J1 Summer Students do not qualify to apply for a US driver's license, but you can use an Irish license to drive in New York.

For General Information about Driver Licenses check out www.dmv.org and http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/dmv_factsheet.pdf

You must have a NYS driver license or a valid driver license from another US state or from Canada to drive in NYS. In most cases, you can drive in NYS if you have a valid driver license from another country. See "[Drivers From Other Nations](#)". The minimum driving age in NYS is 16.

If you become a [resident](#) of NYS, you must get a NYS driver license within 30 days and surrender your out-of-state driver license. Normally, you cannot have a NYS driver license and a driver license from another state, but there are exceptions. It is a violation of Federal law to hold more than one commercial driver license (CDL).

International Drivers License - Drivers From Other Nations

A valid driver license from another country is valid in NYS. You do not need to apply for a NYS driver license unless you become a [resident of NYS](#).

According to NYS law, a resident of another country **can** get a NYS driver license. The DMV **does not** recommend this because:

- NYS recognizes your foreign driver license if you remain a resident of the nation that issued the license. You do not need to have a NYS driver license to drive in NYS unless you become a [resident of NYS](#).
- If you have a driver license from any nation except Canada, you must pass a written test, complete a 5-hour pre-licensing course and pass a road test to qualify for a NYS driver license. See "[New Drivers - How to Apply](#)".
- **You must show a Social Security Card.** If you are **not eligible** for a Social Security Card, you must provide a letter or form SSA-L676 from the US Social Security Administration (SSA) that states that you are not eligible. The SSA Letter or form must have been issued no more than 30 days before the date of your application. You must also show the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) documents that the SSA used to determine that you are not eligible for a Social Security Card. Read [the specific requirements on the identification requirements page](#).
- When you receive your NYS driver license, you must surrender your foreign driver license to the DMV road test examiner. The local DMV office keeps your foreign driver license, and then destroys the license after 60 days. If you plan to return to your home country and use your foreign driver license, ask the road test examiner how to make sure that your foreign driver license is not destroyed. If you need to get your foreign driver license, go to the local DMV office where you applied for your NYS driver license.

International Driving Permit: *An International Driving Permit is not a driver license.*

The permit only verifies that you hold a valid driver license in your home country. Your foreign driver license, **not** the International Driving Permit, allows you to drive in NYS. Contact the authorities in your home country to get an International Driving Permit. If you are not a resident of the US, you cannot apply for an International Driving Permit in the US.

You are not required to have an International Driving Permit to drive in NYS, but the permit has value. The permit verifies, in several languages, that you have a valid foreign driver license. A police officer who cannot read the language on your foreign driver license can read the permit.

Non-Driver Photo ID Cards

A person of any age who does not have a driver license can apply to the DMV for a non-driver photo ID card. You must provide acceptable [proofs of identity and date of birth](#).

To get more information, read the DMV brochure, [Non-Driver Photo IDs -- Secure Proof for Non-Drivers](#).

Emerald Isle Immigration Center Attorney Referral List

| Attorney's Name | Address / Website | Phone Number | Area of Specialty |
|---|--|---|--|
| American Immigration Lawyers' Association Referral Service | http://www.ailalawyer.com/ | (800) 954-0254 Email: ils@aila.org | AILA is the only legal association in the United States for immigration attorneys. |
| Association of the Bar of the City of New York - Legal Referral Service | http://www.nycbar.org/index.php/get-legal-help/legal-referral-service | (212) 626-7373 | Legal referrals to attorneys in all areas: first ½ hour consultation is \$35.00 |
| Cheryl David | 299 Broadway, Suite 1120 New York, NY 10007 http://www.cheryldavidlaw.com/ | (212) 791-7608 | Immigration Deportation and Removal |
| Eamonn Dornan | Dornan & Assoc., LLP 10-40 Jackson Avenue, 3fl Long Island City, NY 11101 http://www.dornanlaw.net/home.html | (718) 707-9997 | Immigration, work visas |
| Michael Gilbert | Mitchell C. Zwaik & Associates 3900 Veterans Memorial Highway, Ste 120 Bohemia, NY 11716 http://www.zwaik.com/ | (631) 588 4040 | Immigration (speaks Spanish) |
| Eve Guillergan | 875 Avenue of the Americas, Suite No. 2108 New York, NY 10001 http://www.knowyourvisa.com/ | (212) 279-9020 | Immigration (speaks Korean and Tagalog) |
| Lisa Johnston | 1032 McLean Avenue Yonkers, NY 10704 52 Duane Street, 5 th Floor, New York NY 10007 | (914) 237-6635 | Immigration, Family Law (Divorce, Adoption, etc.) |
| Caro Kinsella | 10 Fairway Drive Deerfield Beach, FL 33441 http://www.legalprofessionals.us/index.html | (954) 304-2243 | Immigration, work visas |
| Grant Lally | Lally & Misir, LLP 220 Old Country Road Mineola, NY 11501 http://lallymisir.com/ | (516) 741-2666 | Immigration, |
| Barbara McCormack | McCormick & Dooley PLLC 10-01 50th Avenue, 3rd Floor Long Island City, NY http://www.mccormickdooleylaw.com/ | (718) 349-2482 | Immigration, work visas |
| Deirdre O'Brien | 233 Broadway, 22 nd floor New York, NY 10279 http://www.obrienandassociates.com/ | (212) 965-1148 | Immigration, work visas |

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------|----------------------------|
| James O'Malley | 299 Broadway, Suite 1005, New York, NY 10007 http://omalleyimmigrationlaw.com/ | (212) 619-8387 | Immigration, work visas |
| Jessica Salles | 61 Broadway, 25 th floor New York, NY 10006 http://koehler-isaacs.com/ | (917) 551-1341 | Immigration |
| Barbara McCormack | McCormick & Dooley PLLC 10-01 50th Avenue, 3rd Floor Long Island City, NY http://www.mccormickdooleylaw.com/ | (718) 349-2482 | Immigration, work visas |
| Deirdre O'Brien | 233 Broadway, 22nd floor New York, NY 10279 http://www.obrienandassociates.com/ | (212) 965-1148 | Immigration, work visas |
| James O'Malley | 299 Broadway, Suite 1005, New York, NY 10007 http://omalleyimmigrationlaw.com/ | (212) 619-8387 | Immigration, work visas |
| Jessica Salles | 61 Broadway, 25th floor New York, NY 10006 http://koehler-isaacs.com/ | (917) 551-1341 | Immigration |

The Emerald Isle Immigration Center neither endorses nor recommends any particular attorney.

We suggest that as with most matters of importance, you make inquiries of any professional, including attorneys, and be a careful and informed consumer. This may include asking the attorney for references (such as names and phone numbers) to other satisfied clients, inquiring about process at the outset, and other questions that you may have.

You may wish to ask if the attorney has much experience in assisting recently arrived immigrants – both legal and undocumented – with the type of matter you need help with.

Remember, you hire the attorney; he or she does not hire you!!

General Advice

Entertainment/Meeting People

Time Out and New York Magazine have exhaustive lists of everything that's going on in NYC. New York Magazine has a great website where all the information is available.

Check the Entertainment Section in the Irish Voice and the Current Events listing in the Irish Echo to find out what's happening in your area. The Irish Emigrant is another popular entertainment source. This publication can be found in local delis every Monday. www.irishnetwork-nyc.com is an Irish Network based in NYC and is a great way of meeting people. See also Murhpyguide.com for events in Irish bars and around town. Getting involved in sports is a great way of networking and meeting people.

Tipping

Tipping is an expected practice in New York. It is considered rude not to tip in a bar, restaurant, or taxi cab. Between 15-20% of your pre-tax restaurant bill or fare is appropriate or 1\$ a drink in a bar.

Drinking

The legal drinking age in New York is 21. Alcohol cannot be consumed in public areas. It is illegal to have open containers in your car (even if you are a passenger). Be prepared to show your ID when you order a drink.

Smoking

Like many cities, New York has become increasingly hostile to smokers in recent years. It is against the law to smoke in pubs/restaurants. If you are a visitor in someone's home it is advisable to get permission to smoke before lighting up.

The legal age for smoking in NY is 18 and you may be asked for proof of this when buying cigarettes.



You are required by NY law to carry a photo ID with you at all times.

Streetwise Survival Strategies

Crime has been falling in New York City for five years in a row and the city's streets are safer than ever. The remains, however, that there are still people who are robbed every day in New York City.

How can you avoid becoming one of those victims? The key is to avoid looking like an easy target. A few general tips:

- Always look as though you know where you are going (even if you don't).
- Walk quickly and confidently (like most New Yorkers do), petty criminals prey on the unwary, the wide-eyed and the slow-moving.

- Don't feel compelled to stop for someone who wants a light or spare change, is better to be brusque than to be bruised.

Don't Let Pickpockets Pick YOUR Pockets

Pickpockets always look for the easiest mark. To make sure it isn't you:

- Be alert: don't wear headphones and don't look lost in thought.
- Be discreet with valuables such as expensive cameras and jewelry.
- Gentlemen: keep your wallet in your front pants pocket rather than in a jacket pocket or back pocket
- Ladies: hold your purse handle tightly and keep it close to your body; if using a bag with a shoulder strap, bring the strap diagonally across the front of your body.
- If you are using a bag pack, make sure your valuables are not in pockets easily accessible to those behind or beside you.
- Don't place your purse on the back or your chair or on the floor in restaurants; don't put it on an empty seat in a movie theater either.
- Don't tempt anyone by carrying lots of cash or using large bills. Use travelers checks, a credit card or visit the ATM more frequently.
- Be especially wary in crowds and on the subway.

Beware of Con Artist and Scams

While new scams are being created all the time, there are a few classics you should look out for. Remember:

- No one ever wins at Three Card Monte (except the team involved in the scam!)
- Someone who spills mustard or ketchup (or anything else) all over you and diligently tries to clean up the mess is probably trying to pick your pocket, just walk away fast and deal with the stain later.
- If someone approaches you with lottery winnings or any other prize that they want to share with you for any reason (usually some sort of sob story,) it is guaranteed to cost you money.
- Be careful with your laptop at the airport security gate: don't put it on the belt to be scanned until the person in front of you has gone and picked up their belongings.
- Be aware that pickpockets work in pairs.
- Be aware of staged distractions, when someone suddenly stops in front of you while an accomplice picks your pocket behind you.

What to do if you're...

Locked Out

Most locksmiths charge a flat of \$35 to \$65 (depending on where you live), Just to show up and open your door. Depending on the job, it could cost more, add an extra \$15 for service charge. If you need to change the lock on your door, consider replacing the cylinder, not the whole lock. Prices for this procedure star at about \$35.

Manhattan

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Champion Locksmiths | (212) 362-7000 |
| University Locksmiths | (212) 627-0777 |

Queens

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| All State Locksmiths | (718) 651-4400 |
| Budget Locksmiths | (718) 927-4400 |
| Peter's Locksmiths | (718) 424-1642 |

Staten Island

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| All Star Locksmiths | (718) 966-9100 |
|---------------------|----------------|

Brooklyn

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Top Security Locksmiths | (718) 469-3900 |
| All Brooklyn Locksmiths | (718) 826-2800 |

Bronx/Yonkers

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Westchester Lock & Alarm | (914) 237-6464 |
|--------------------------|----------------|

Arrested

If you are arrested for a minor violation (disorderly conduct, harassment, loitering, rowdy partying, shoplifting, etc.) and you are very polite to the officer during the arrest, you'll probably get fingerprinted and photographed at the station and be given a precinct desk-appearance ticket with a date to show up at criminal court. Then you go home.

Arguing with a police officer or engaging in something more serious than jaywalking (possession of a weapon, drunk driving, gambling, or prostitution) might get you "processed." You will be put through the system, and that can take 24 to 30 hours. You can make a phone call after you've been fingerprinted.

If the courts are backed up (and they usually are), you'll be held temporarily at a precinct pen. After you've been through central booking, you'll arrive at 100 Centre Street. Arraignment occurs in one of two AR (arraignment courtroom) units, where a judge decides whether you should be released on bail and then sets a court date. If you can't post bail, you'll be held at Rivers Island.

Unless a major crime has been committed, a bail bondsman is unnecessary.

The bottom line: Try not to get arrested; and if you are, stay calm and be polite.

Robbed

If you've been burglarized, don't touch anything. Report the incident immediately to the police. They'll help you make a list of stolen items and note the points of entry.

To protect your belongings Allstate and Nationwide offer rental insurance policies that cover personal property loss due to theft or fire. In Manhattan, Allstate's plans start at \$263 per year for coverage up to \$ 30,000; Nationwide sells a \$20,000 plan for \$176 per year (that's about what a student household needs). Other premiums vary depending on where you live: They are generally more for Brooklyn, less for upstate regions and doormen buildings. Nationwide will not insure unrelated people under one policy; With Allstate, two roommates can split the cost of the same insurance.

Lose Your Passport

If you lose your passport you can replace it through the Irish Consulate in New York at comparable rates to renewing your passport in Ireland. There is an additional fee for postage. Passports that are lost or stolen should be reported to the police. To find your local station see:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/precinct_maps/precinct_finder.shtml#

The process generally takes five to six weeks and costs \$123, including additional mailing fees. Expedited passports can be issued by the Consulate with proof of travel. Contact the Center for full details of the process and assistance with completing the forms and assembling the required document. You can also contact the consulate for assistance.

Other Sources of Information

Immigration, Visa and Customs

Immigration and Custom Enforcement – Arrivals Fact Sheet

http://www.ice.gov/sevis/factsheet/100104ent_exchng_fs.htm

Department of State J1 Page

www.j1visa.state.gov

Agencies

Many of the J1 Agencies provide good information on their websites. Here are some of those.

Usit

www.usit.ie

Go 4 Less

www.go4less.ie

Sayit

www.sayit.ie