



# About This Guide

Adjusting to your new life in the United States of America will take time. This guide contains basic information that will help you settle in the United States and find what you and your family need for everyday life. It also summarizes important information about your legal status and about agencies and organizations that provide documents or essential services you may need.

As a lawful permanent resident (LPR), you will want to learn about this country, its people, and its system of government. Use this guide to find out about your rights and responsibilities as a new immigrant, to understand how our federal, state, and local governments work, and to learn how important historical events have shaped the United States. This guide also explains the importance of getting involved in your own community and offers suggestions to help you get involved.

This guide provides a general summary of rights, responsibilities, and procedures related to LPRs. To get more specific and detailed information on these, you should consult the laws, regulations, forms, and guidance of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). You should always consult these more detailed resources for your specific immigration question or case. Most information needed can be found on the USCIS website at <http://www.uscis.gov>. You can obtain USCIS forms by calling 1-800-870-3676 and you can get more information by calling the USCIS National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833 (for hearing impaired).

## Where to Get Help

This guide will help you get started, but it cannot answer all the questions you have about life in America. To find additional information, you may wish to contact a state, county, or city government office to learn about services you need or consult with a local organization that helps new immigrants settle into life here. You can find these offices and organizations by using the free resources described below.

### The Public Library

Public libraries in the United States are free and open to everyone. Libraries are located in every community. The library staff can help you find information on almost any topic and can give you a library card that allows you to borrow items, such as books and video-tapes, free of charge. Most libraries also have local newspapers for you to read and computers that you can use to search the Internet. Ask the library staff to show you how to use the computer to search the Internet.



Some libraries give free classes in how to search the Internet. Some libraries also provide English language tutoring or classes and other programs for children and adults.

### Your Local Phone Book

Your local “phone book” (telephone directory) contains phone numbers and important information about federal, state, and local community services. The phone book has emergency information, local maps, and information about how to get phone service. The white pages list phone numbers of individual people; the yellow pages have phone numbers and addresses for businesses and organizations; and the blue pages show local, state, and federal government office phone numbers and addresses. You can also dial 411 on your phone to get a specific phone number anywhere in the United States. Your community or city also may have a separate book with the yellow pages listings or its own community phone book.

### The Internet

The Internet can link you to many sources of information, including the websites of federal, state, and local government agencies. Most government websites end with “.gov”. If you don’t have a computer at home, you can use one in your public library or at an “Internet

café,” which are businesses that charge a fee for using a computer with Internet service. You can use the Internet to search for jobs, find housing, learn about schools for your children, and locate community organizations and resources to help you. You can also discover interesting information on the Internet about life in America, United States history and government, and your local community.

▶ **TIP:** As an immigrant you should be aware that dishonest people have set up websites that look like government websites to confuse you and take advantage of you. There are many immigration websites that try to look like government websites. Remember that <http://www.uscis.gov> is the official website of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

### Community- and Faith-Based Organizations That Assist Immigrants

There are organizations in many communities that provide free or very low-cost assistance to immigrants. These organizations can help you learn about your

community and the services available to you as an immigrant. You can look for these organizations by searching on the Internet, looking in your local phone book, asking at the public library, and asking your local government social service agency.



## Getting Involved in Your Community

Getting involved in your community will help you feel at home here. Your community is also a good source of information. Here are some ways to get involved:

- Introduce yourself to and get to know your neighbors.
- Talk with or visit community organizations that help immigrants get settled in the U.S.
- Join groups at your place of worship.
- Join your neighborhood association. This is a group of people in the neighborhood who meet to work together on things affecting the neighborhood.
- Volunteer at a community organization, school, or place of worship.
- Enroll in an English language class.

You can find more ideas about getting involved at <http://www.hud.gov>. Look in the “Communities” section for information about communities and suggestions for getting involved.



## TO GET MORE INFORMATION FROM USCIS:



Visit our website at <http://www.uscis.gov>.



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or look on the USCIS website.