



WELCOME TO THE UNITED STATES: 10 THINGS TO KNOW

Giselle Carson, Esq.

Business Immigration and Compliance

Ph: 904-398-0900 · gcarson@marksgray.com · www.marksgray.com
1200 Riverplace Blvd., Suite 800, Jacksonville, Florida 32207




MarksGray
LAWYERS FOR ENTERPRISE

Table of Contents

Introduction

1. Arriving in the U.S.
2. Finding a Place to Live
3. Obtaining a Social Security Number
4. Applying for your Driver's License
5. Updating your Address with the USCIS
6. Establishing a Credit History
7. Understanding the U.S. Education System
8. Obtaining Health Insurance
9. Verifying your Authorization to Work
10. Paying Taxes

Additional Information

About the Marks Gray Immigration Team and Giselle Carson

Disclaimer

Introduction

Welcome to the United States!

Exciting opportunities await you as you begin a remarkable new journey.

We have created this guide to help you. Inside you will find ten things you should know to facilitate and maximize your integration into our communities and the U.S.

This guide is not intended to replace the personal advice given to you based on the facts of your unique case and goals.

You can also find additional information and updates in our newsletter, blog, and LinkedIn page.

If you'd like to learn more about work visas and answers to other important immigration questions check out Giselle Carson's book, [*Beyond the H-1B: A Guide to Work Visa Options for Employers, Foreign Nationals, and Graduating Students*](#), available on Amazon.



1. Arriving in the U.S.



Upon arrival in the U.S., an immigration officer will ask you to present valid travel documents. The officer will verify that the documents you present match the purpose and intent of your visit.

The officer will also ask you questions about your immigration status and plans. Some of the questions the officer may ask include:

- ✓ What is the purpose of your visit to the United States?
- ✓ How long do you plan to visit?
- ✓ Where will you be staying?
- ✓ How will you be supporting yourself financially while you are here?

If your admission is approved, the officer will log your entry and create an I-94 record. **The I-94 record** is important as you will learn further.

What documents will I need to present to enter the U.S.?

The documents required will depend on your immigration status, nationality and country you are arriving from. You should be ready to present your current passport, a U.S. visa stamp, approval notice and/or current Lawful Permanent Resident Card (“green card”).



Can I bring my medication with me?

Yes. You can bring a 90 day supply of your personal prescription medications in their original containers. If the medications are not in the original container you must have a copy of the prescription with you or a letter from your doctor.

Can I bring my pets with me?

Yes, as long as you follow specific guidelines including vaccinations. For the guidelines applicable to you, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Can I bring money with me?

Yes. You should plan to have some U.S. currency. You can exchange money in your home country and/or at your arriving airport in the U.S. If bringing more than \$10,000 USD or foreign currency equivalent, you must declare it.

Additionally, plan to bring some prepaid travel or debit cards. Most American merchants are set up to accept cashless payments via credit card, PayPal and/or mobile payments. For example, Uber and Lyft, are popular on demand private driver providers. They only accepts payment via debit or credit card. Having a prepaid Visa or MasterCard could facilitate your use of these services and others.

Can I be denied entry?

Yes. The immigration officer has sole discretion concerning your admission to the U.S., even if your visa and travel documents are in order.

If the officer has further questions about the information you provided, the officer may direct you to secondary inspection.

Secondary inspection is a more detailed and lengthy inspection to further determine your admissibility. It allows the U.S. government to conduct additional questioning and investigation to verify your information.

How long can I stay?

Remember that I-94 record that the immigration officer created? This record serves as evidence of your admission and legal status in the United States. It includes your date of entry, class of admission, and *period of authorized stay*. For students, the I-94 is marked “D/S” for “Duration of Status.”

Foreigners should [visit the website](#) of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to retrieve, review, and print a copy of their I-94 record.

Errors in this record should be reported to CBP as soon as possible for correction, because they can cause serious immigration problems.

In general, you can't stay in the U.S. beyond the period of authorized stay in your I-94 record. Below is an example of the I-94 record.



The screenshot shows the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website interface for I-94 record retrieval. The header includes the CBP logo and the text "U.S. Customs and Border Protection Securing America's Borders". On the right, it displays "OMB No. 1651-0111" and "Expiration Date: 11/30/2014". Below the header, there are two tabs: "Get I-94 Number" and "I-94 FAQ", with the latter being selected. The main content area is titled "Admission (I-94) Number Retrieval". It displays the "Admission (I-94) Record Number: 69001333663" and a "Print" button. Below this, it shows the "Admit Until Date (MM/DD/YYYY): 08/24/2013". A section titled "Details provided on Admission (I-94) form:" lists the following information:

Family Name:	Testing
First (Given) Name:	Monday
Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY):	05/06/1985
Passport Number:	123000456
Passport Country of Issuance:	Mexico
Date of Entry (MM/DD/YYYY):	03/13/2013
Class of Admission:	B1

2. Finding a Place to Live (Rental)

Many new residents chose to stay with friends or family members when they first arrive in the U.S. until they find a place of their own.

Others live on their own by renting a house or apartment. Most people spend 25 to 40% of their income on housing.

How do I find a place to live?

You can look for signs on buildings saying “Apartment Available” or “For Rent.” Additionally, friends, relatives, co-workers, and internet sites can be good sources of information. Working with an experienced and reliable relocation specialist or realtor can also be of significant help.



Below is list of terms you should know to facilitate your rental process:

Tenants – The people who rent housing are called tenants.

Landlord – The owner of the property is called a landlord.

Rental application – This is a document that you complete to apply to rent a place to live. This application may ask for evidence that you are working and have the ability to pay the required rent.

Lease – This is a legal document that you and the landlord agree upon and sign for you to rent a particular place. Most leases are for one year.

You can find housing for less than a one year term but most likely you will have to pay a little more for a shorter lease.

Leases have multiple provisions. If you are uncomfortable reviewing the lease on your own have a trusted family member, friend, co-worker, or lawyer review the lease with you.

Security deposit – This is money paid to the landlord before moving into your new home. This deposit is typically equal to one month’s rent and is paid in addition to the rent. It is given as security that you will keep the place in good condition and comply with the terms of the lease.

If the home is in good and clean condition when you move out then this deposit should be returned to you. Be sure to inspect the home *before* you move in and tell the landlord about any pre-existing problems.

You could create a date stamped video of the home’s condition so that you have a good record of any pre-existing conditions before moving in.

What other costs are involved?

Some rentals require separate payments for utilities such as electricity, gas, cable, heat, loan maintenance or other services. Ask what other costs are or are not included with your rent before you move in. This information should be included in your lease.

How do I update my address when I move?

You must update your address with the U.S. Postal Office (USPS) and with the immigration service as you will learn later in this resource.

How do I register for utilities, such as electricity?

Utilities services vary depending on where you choose to live. For the requirements applicable to you, check with your local utility providers. In general, to start electrical services, you will need:

1. Social security number (for individuals) or Federal Identification Number (for businesses)
2. Driver’s license or state identification card
3. Complete address where service is to be started (If you are renting, a copy of your lease agreement may be required)
4. Date you wish to start service and
5. Deposit, if required

3. Obtaining a Social Security Number



A Social Security Number (SSN) is a nine-digit number issued to U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents (green card holders) and some foreign nationals with temporary work visa status.

SSNs are very important to many aspects of life in the U.S. A SSN serves as a form of identification number for tax purposes and work authorization.

If you are authorized to work in the U.S., you most likely will need to apply for a SSN.

You do not need a SSN to obtain a driver's license, register for school or obtain private health insurance.

If you do not qualify to obtain a SSN, you might need to apply for an ITIN (Individual Taxpayer Identification Number). To find out more about the ITIN, visit [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

How do I apply for a SSN?

1) Complete the application using Form SS-5. You can find the Form at ssa.gov.

Tips for completing Form SS-5:

- ✓ Fill in your name as it appears on your passport
- ✓ Enter your mother's birth surname (maiden name)
- ✓ Note that all requests for Social Security information refer to the U.S. system, not your home country
- ✓ Remember that in the U.S. dates are written month, day, year (i.e. January 1, 2020, or 01/20/2020)

2) Visit your local Social Security office.

If you entered the U.S. for the first time on work authorized status such as H-1B, TN, L-1, E-2, E-3, O-1, P-1, you should wait about 10 days after arriving in the U.S. to apply for your social security number.

To find a Social Security office close to you visit ssa.gov.

Bring to the Social Security office the completed Form SS-5 and at least two original documents to show your identity, work-authorized immigration status, and age.

Plan to bring the following documents (as applicable): your current passport, green card, I-94 stamp allowing you to work, and/or your employment authorization document (EAD). If you're a student, also bring your DS-2019 or Form I-20.

3) Receive your Social Security card. *This can take a few weeks.*

4. Applying for your Driver's License

Obtaining a U.S. driver's license requires various steps.

Each State has its own requirements. Thus, you should check with the office that issues driver's licenses in the state that you reside.

If you intend to reside in Florida, you should plan to obtain a Florida's driver's license within 30 days of establishing your residence here.

In Florida, to obtain a driver's license, you should:

- Visit a local Florida Division of Driver License office
- Present documents to verify your identity such as U.S. naturalization certificate, permanent resident card or current foreign passport with evidence of your lawful immigration status
- Present documents that verify your Florida residence such as rental agreement, insurance policy or bank statement
- Present your Social Security Card, paycheck or secondary proof of identity
- Pass tests including vision, hearing and written traffic laws and signs
- Pass the driving test. You will need to provide your own vehicle which must be insured, registered and pass a vehicle inspection
- Complete a Traffic Law and Substance Abuse Education Course (only if you have never held a driver's license)
- Pay the Florida driver's license fee.

If you have a valid driver's license from another country plan to bring that license as another form of identification.

Your driving privileges are usually tied to your immigration status. If your immigration status expires, so do your driving privileges.

When do I receive my driver's license?

After successfully completing the Florida driver's license requirements, you should receive a 30-day temporary driving permit.

Your actual driver's license should arrive in the mail within 30 days.

Make sure you provide the driver's license office your proper address to ensure the delivery of your license.



Tips for Driving in the United States

- ✓ Drive on the right-hand side of the road.
- ✓ Wear a seatbelt while driving or riding in a car.
- ✓ Place children in a car seat that is appropriate for their age, height, and weight.
- ✓ Maintain valid car insurance.
- ✓ Keep your driver's license, car insurance, and vehicle registration with you, whenever you drive a car.
- ✓ Safely pull over to the side road when emergency vehicles (such as an ambulance, a police car or, a fire truck) need to pass you.
- ✓ Do not pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing

5. Updating your Address with the U.S. Immigration Service

You must notify USCIS of your current address. You must also separately update your address with the U.S. Postal Service when you move.

You can notify USCIS of your address change in one of the following ways:

1. **Online through the USCIS Online Change of Address (recommended):** uscis.gov.
2. **By mail.** Download Form AR-11 and Instructions (PDF, 1 page – 370 KB): uscis.gov.
3. **By calling 1-800-375-5283.** If you call, you will still need to complete and submit the AR-11 form noted above.

https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/fil_0

uscis.gov

Please fill out the following form. You can save data typed into this form.

Highlight Existing Fields

Alien's Change of Address Card

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS
Form AR-11
OMB No. 1615-0007
Expires 08/31/2018

NOTE: An asterisk (*) indicates a mandatory field that must be completed.

Information About You

*Family Name (Last Name) *Given Name (First Name) Middle Name (if applicable)

I am in the United States as a: Visitor Student Permanent Resident Other (Specify)

Country of Citizenship *Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any)
▶ A- _____

Information About Your Address

*Present Physical Address (No PO Boxes)

*Street Number and Name Apt. Ste. Flr. Number

*City or Town *State *ZIP Code

Previous Physical Address

Street Number and Name Apt. Ste. Flr. Number

Non-citizens should notify USCIS of a new address within 10 days of moving.

Remember that simply changing your address with the **post office is not enough**. Do this, and you may not receive important immigration documents. **The US Postal Service will not typically forward USCIS correspondence to your new address.**

To ensure that USCIS correspondence is sent to your current address, you must submit a change of address for every pending application and/or petition that you have with USCIS.

For additional details visit: uscis.gov.



6. Establishing a Credit History

Your credit history and score will impact your ability to rent a home, buy a car, apply for credit cards and much more.

Building a credit history can take time.

Here are a few suggestions to help you get started:



- ✓ **Open a bank account, and use it:** Using your bank account money to pay for purchases is a good way to start establishing a credit history.
- ✓ **Pay your bills on time:** You can set up automatic payments for your bills from your bank account so they get paid timely.
- ✓ **Meet with credit lenders in person:** If you have recently immigrated to the U.S., you might not have a U.S. credit history. Thus, it may be good for you to meet with the credit lender in person which could allow you to explain your situation and demonstrate why you should be extended credit despite your lack of or limited credit history.
- ✓ **Monitor your credit:** Unfortunately, identity theft occurs. Regularly monitoring all your accounts and reporting any suspicious charges on your accounts to the appropriate organization helps prevent identity theft and maintain your credit score.

7. Understanding the U.S. Education System

The American education system offers a rich field of options for international students. The variety of schools, programs and locations can be confusing as you begin your search.

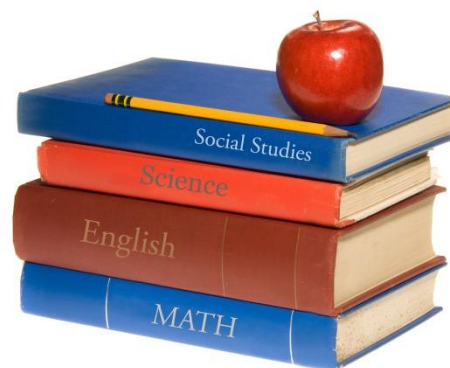
Familiarizing yourself with the system and choices will help you plan for the education of your kids.

America has several primary education options for children from kindergarten through grade 12. Around age six, U.S. children begin primary or elementary school for five to six years. Thereafter, they attend secondary school.

No matter which education program you chose, it is important that your child receives an education. Every state requires that children between 5 and 16 years of age attend school.

Below is a summary of some of the educational options for your children:

- ✓ **Public schools:** The U.S. provides free public school education for children in kindergarten through grade 12. In public schools, the state and the local school district establish a curriculum for what your child learns and how he or she is taught. They do not offer religious instructions.



- ✓ **Private schools:** Many communities also have private schools programs for kindergarten through grade 12. Private schools usually require you to pay some type of tuition.

- ✓ **Charter schools:** This is a type of public school that operates within the local school district but is afforded more flexibility with its curriculum. Charter schools are typically free to attend.
- ✓ **Montessori schools:** This type of schooling encourages independence and freedom of choice within approved limits. Children are offered a hands-on style to education and teachers must be specially trained.
- ✓ **Home education:** You may decide to educate your child at home - this is called homeschooling. The requirements for homeschooling differ from state to state. If you are interested in homeschooling, you should contact your state's department of education to get more information.

Most children are in public, private or charter schools for 13 years, from kindergarten through grade 12.

In most schools, your child will be placed in a class (called a grade) based on two things: age and level of previous education.

A school may give your child a test to determine his or her grade level, English proficiency, and class assignment.

The school academic year usually begins in August or September and continues through May or June.

Typical grade levels for U.S. schools:

School	Grades	Ages
Elementary or Primary School	Kindergarten to 5th Grade	5 to 11
Junior or Middle School	Grades 6 to 9 or Grades 6 to 8	11 to 14
Secondary or High School	Grades 10 to 12 or Grades 9 to 12	14 to 18 (up to age 21)
Postsecondary or Higher education	Colleges and University	All eligible adults and young adults

When enrolling your child in school, you typically need the following:

- ✓ Proof of age, including a certified birth certificate or other acceptable documentation
- ✓ A Certificate of Immunization (Form varies by state)
- ✓ Evidence of a medical exam completed no less than 12 months prior to the child's school entry date
- ✓ Official documentation that the parent(s) or guardian(s) is a legal resident(s) of the school district attendance area.

Contact the local school district or the private school you wish for your child to attend to learn more about the specific enrollment requirements.

Questions to consider asking when enrolling your child in school include:

- ✓ Will the school be able to accommodate my child if he or she does not speak English?
- ✓ Will the school be able to accommodate my child if he or she has a learning or physical disability?
- ✓ Does the school provide transportation to and from school?
- ✓ Are meals offered at the school?
- ✓ What books and supplies (including school uniform) are needed for my child to attend this school?
- ✓ How will my child's performance be assessed?
- ✓ How can I communicate with my child's school and teachers?

8. Obtaining Health Insurance

In the U.S., medical care is not typically free and new residents are not always eligible for health insurance coverage or government health programs such as Medicare.

It is most likely that you will have to obtain medical insurance through a medical insurance provider. You should inquire as to whether your employer offers you, and your dependents, medical coverage.



Medical care without insurance can be very expensive. Regardless of how you obtain health insurance it is important that you and your family are covered.

How do I pay for the medical insurance and care?

There is typically a monthly fee known as a “premium.” If your employer offers health insurance, they may cover all or part of your premium. Additionally, some employers will allow you to buy additional insurance for your family.

If you do not have health insurance, you might be expected to pay for the full cost of your care. Some non-citizens are eligible to receive state or federal health care assistance. States typically provide some health care assistance to low-income children, pregnant women, and people living with disabilities.

If you have health insurance, your medical provider will usually send their bills to your insurance carrier. The insurance provider may cover all or some of the bill. Often, you will have to pay a certain amount of money as a “co-payment”.

What if it is an emergency situation?

If you need immediate medical care, you should seek treatment. Most hospitals with emergency rooms are required by federal law to treat individuals with an urgent medical condition regardless of their coverage or ability to pay. However, a bill may still be issued to you or your provider.

9. Employment Verification and the Form I-9

As part of your new employment, you will be asked by your employer to complete a Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification.

What is a Form I-9 and what is its Purpose?

Employers must verify that all newly hired employees are legally eligible to work in the U.S. The Form I-9 is the document employers must use to verify your eligibility to work.

Typically, on your first day of work, you will be asked to fill out section 1 of the Form I-9. Below is an example of that form.



Employment Eligibility Verification
Department of Homeland Security
 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS
Form I-9
 OMB No. 1615-0047
 Expires 08/31/2019

▶ **START HERE:** Read instructions carefully before completing this form. The instructions must be available, either in paper or electronically, during completion of this form. Employers are liable for errors in the completion of this form.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE: It is illegal to discriminate against work-authorized individuals. Employers **CANNOT** specify which document(s) an employee may present to establish employment authorization and identity. The refusal to hire or continue to employ an individual because the documentation presented has a future expiration date may also constitute illegal discrimination.

Section 1. Employee Information and Attestation *(Employees must complete and sign Section 1 of Form I-9 no later than the first day of employment, but not before accepting a job offer.)*

Last Name (Family Name)		First Name (Given Name)		Middle Initial	Other Last Names Used (if any)	
Address (Street Number and Name)			Apt. Number	City or Town		State ZIP Code
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	U.S. Social Security Number [] [] [] - [] [] [] - [] [] []		Employee's E-mail Address		Employee's Telephone Number	

I am aware that federal law provides for imprisonment and/or fines for false statements or use of false documents in connection with the completion of this form.

I attest, under penalty of perjury, that I am (check one of the following boxes):

<input type="checkbox"/> 1. A citizen of the United States	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. A noncitizen national of the United States (See instructions)	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. A lawful permanent resident (Alien Registration Number/USCIS Number): _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. An alien authorized to work until (expiration date, if applicable, mm/dd/yyyy): _____ Some aliens may write "N/A" in the expiration date field. (See instructions)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> QR Code - Section 1 Do Not Write In This Space </div>
<i>Aliens authorized to work must provide only one of the following document numbers to complete Form I-9: An Alien Registration Number/USCIS Number OR Form I-94 Admission Number OR Foreign Passport Number.</i>	
1. Alien Registration Number/USCIS Number: _____ OR	
2. Form I-94 Admission Number: _____ OR	
3. Foreign Passport Number: _____ Country of Issuance: _____	

Signature of Employee	Today's Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
-----------------------	---------------------------

As part of the employment verification process, you must also give your employer original documents to show your identity and authorization to work. You should be able to choose which document(s) to present as proof of your right to work in the U.S.

To help you prepare for this important part of your employment process, review the list of acceptable documents shown below.

LISTS OF ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTS
All documents must be UNEXPIRED

Employees may present one selection from List A
or a combination of one selection from List B and one selection from List C.

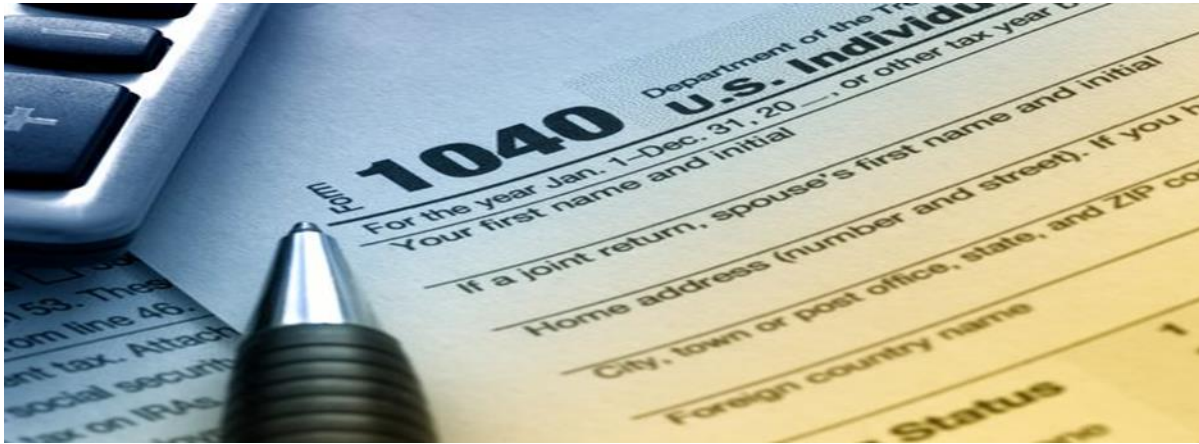
LIST A Documents that Establish Both Identity and Employment Authorization	OR	LIST B Documents that Establish Identity	AND	LIST C Documents that Establish Employment Authorization
1. U.S. Passport or U.S. Passport Card		1. Driver's license or ID card issued by a State or outlying possession of the United States provided it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address		1. A Social Security Account Number card, unless the card includes one of the following restrictions: (1) NOT VALID FOR EMPLOYMENT (2) VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH INS AUTHORIZATION (3) VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH DHS AUTHORIZATION
2. Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551)		2. ID card issued by federal, state or local government agencies or entities, provided it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address		2. Certification of Birth Abroad issued by the Department of State (Form FS-545)
3. Foreign passport that contains a temporary I-551 stamp or temporary I-551 printed notation on a machine-readable immigrant visa		3. School ID card with a photograph		3. Certification of Report of Birth issued by the Department of State (Form DS-1350)
4. Employment Authorization Document that contains a photograph (Form I-766)		4. Voter's registration card		4. Original or certified copy of birth certificate issued by a State, county, municipal authority, or territory of the United States bearing an official seal
5. For a nonimmigrant alien authorized to work for a specific employer because of his or her status: a. Foreign passport; and b. Form I-94 or Form I-94A that has the following: (1) The same name as the passport; and (2) An endorsement of the alien's nonimmigrant status as long as that period of endorsement has not yet expired and the proposed employment is not in conflict with any restrictions or limitations identified on the form.		5. U.S. Military card or draft record		5. Native American tribal document
		6. Military dependent's ID card		6. U.S. Citizen ID Card (Form I-197)
		7. U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Card		7. Identification Card for Use of Resident Citizen in the United States (Form I-179)
		8. Native American tribal document		8. Employment authorization document issued by the Department of Homeland Security
		9. Driver's license issued by a Canadian government authority		
		For persons under age 18 who are unable to present a document listed above:		
		10. School record or report card		
		11. Clinic, doctor, or hospital record		
		12. Day-care or nursery school record		
6. Passport from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) or the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) with Form I-94 or Form I-94A indicating nonimmigrant admission under the Compact of Free Association Between the United States and the FSM or RMI				

Examples of many of these documents appear in Part 8 of the Handbook for Employers (M-274).

10. Paying Taxes

Taxes are money we pay to the U.S. government to pay for services like public schools, parks, roads, and other services.

Below is an overview of some of the types of taxes that we pay in the U.S.



Income Tax: Income tax is paid to federal, most states, and local governments. Money that you earn from employment, tips, self-employment, and the sale of property counts as “taxable income.”

The amount of money you pay in federal income tax depends on the amount of money you earn, which will place you into a certain tax bracket. Those who make more money are taxed at a higher percentage. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is the federal agency that collects income tax.

Every year tax payers file Form 1040, U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, with the IRS. Your tax return tells the government how much you earned and how much in taxes was taken out of your paychecks for the year.

If you had too much taken out in taxes you should get a return. However, if you had too little taken out in taxes you will owe the government money and be legally required to pay the IRS.

Social Security and Medicare Taxes: These Federal taxes are withheld from your paycheck. Social Security provides benefits and services for certain retired or disabled workers and their families. Medicare Taxes pay for medical services for most people age 65 or older.

Sales Taxes: These are established by state and local governments and vary depending on where you live. These taxes are added to the cost of buying certain items. Sales taxes are used to help pay for state and local government services such as roads, police, and fire departments. Certain items may be exempt from sales tax depending on state and local government law.

Property Taxes: These are state and local taxes on your house and/or land. Typically, these taxes help support local public schools and other services.

When is my federal tax return due?

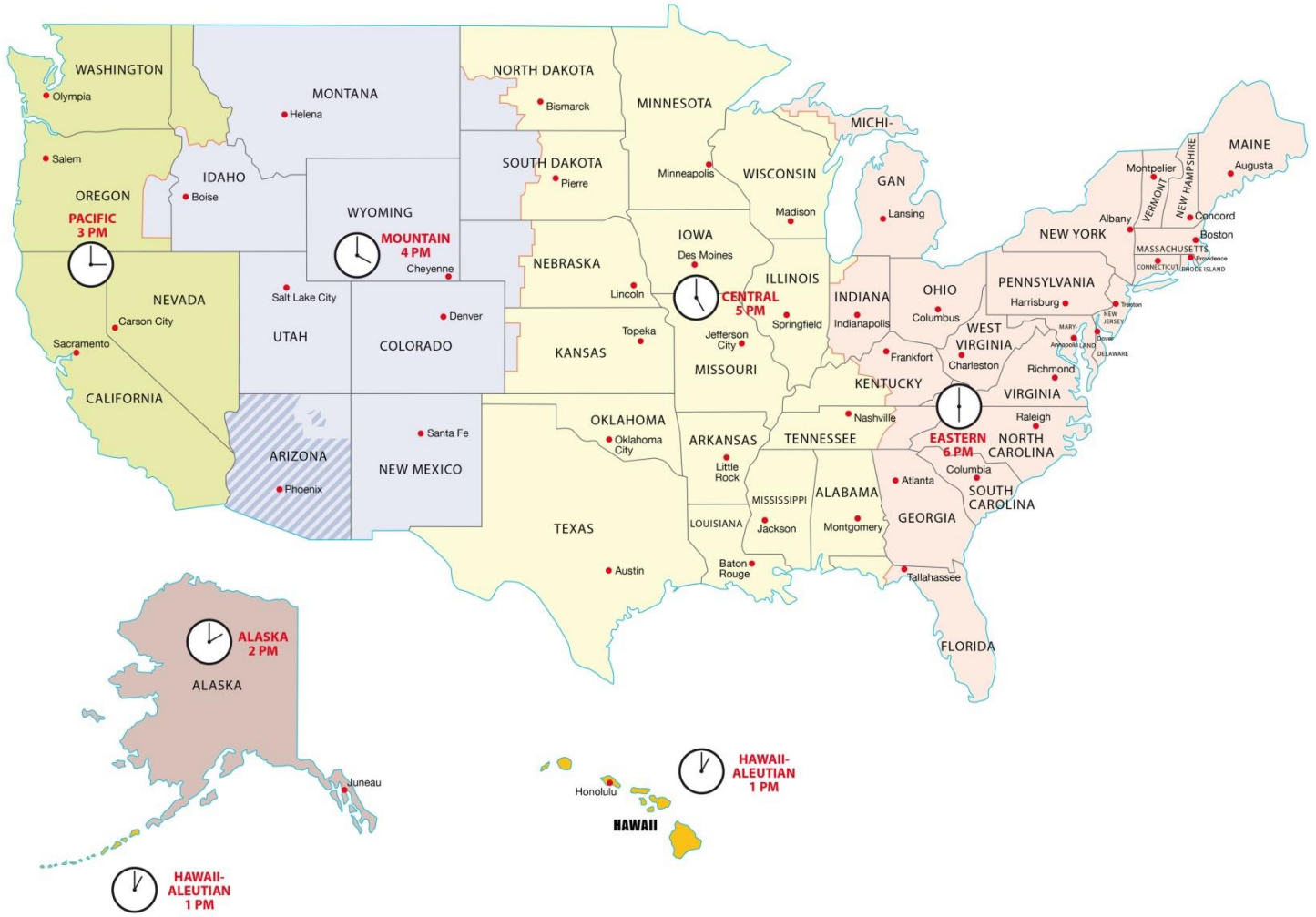
You are required to file a federal income tax return every year you are working in the U.S. This return is based on your earning from January to December of each year. You usually will be required to file your return by April 15th of each year.

Tips to prepare to pay and minimize your tax liability

- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the latest tax brackets and rates
- ✓ Contribute to a flexible spending account
- ✓ Maximize your contributions to retirement savings plan. For example, contribute to an employer-sponsored retirement plan like a 401K
- ✓ Donate to charity
- ✓ Self-employed individuals should explore tax deductions including: business-related vehicle mileage, advertising, website fees, professional memberships, business-related travel, office supplies and others.

Additional Information

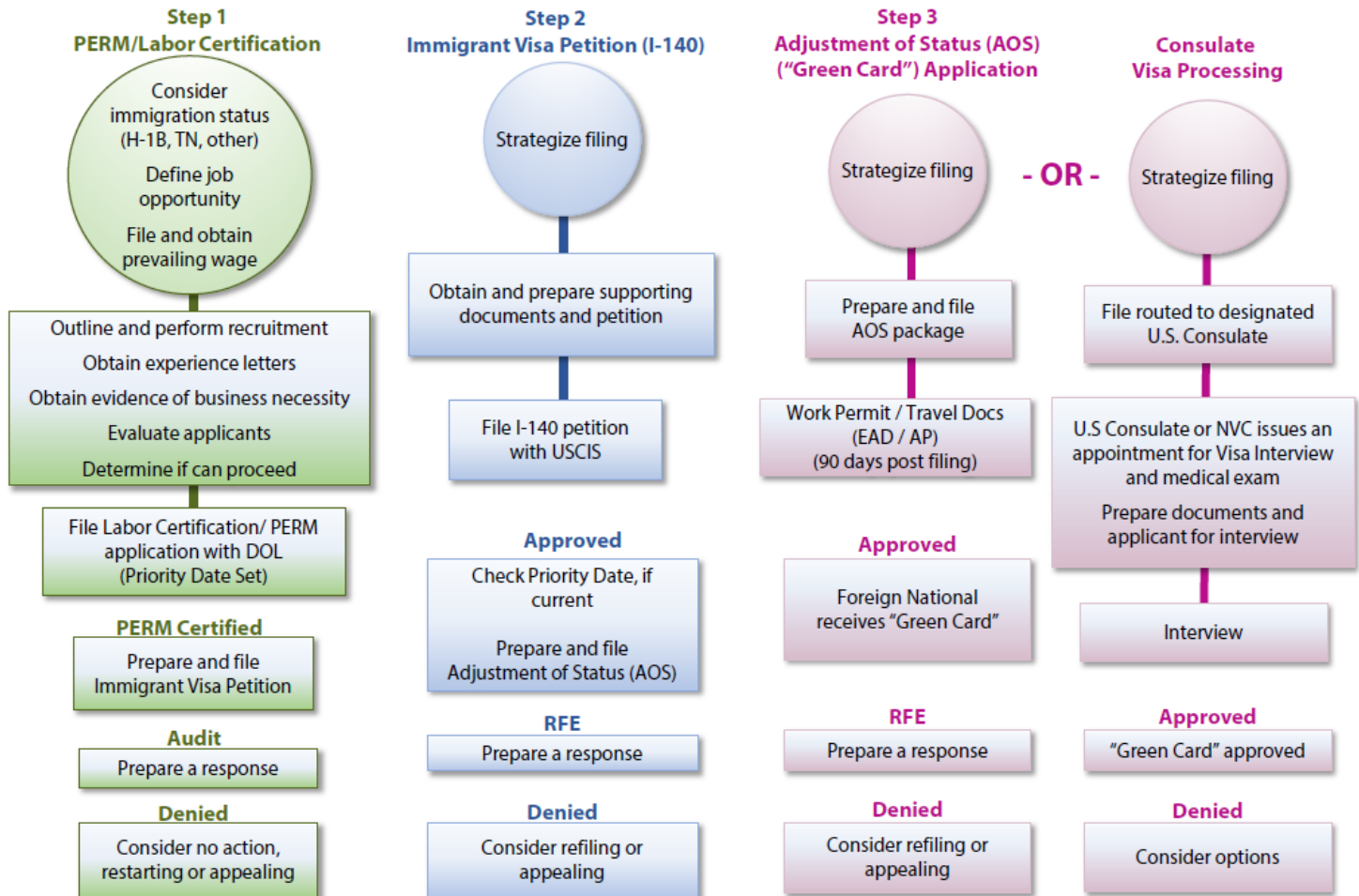
Map of the U.S. with Capitals and Time Zones



Creating Simplicity Out of Complexity

Green Card Flowchart

Employment-Based "Green Card" flowchart



*This material is only a general process overview and is not intended to substitute as legal advice.

The Marks Gray Immigration Team and You

Giselle Carson

Lead Business Immigration Attorney



You



Thyra Newby

Immigration Specialist



Gabriela Buenano

Immigration Legal Assistant



Ellen Mazujian

Immigration and Relations
Specialist

About the Firm

Marks Gray has solid roots in Jacksonville, as well as throughout Florida and the Southeast United States. Founded in 1899, we are proud to be in our second century of service to our clients and our community.

Judges, lawyers, and community leaders know that Marks Gray stands for integrity, quality, and responsiveness. Our peers have given us an “AV” rating, the highest Martindale-Hubbell® rating available.

Whether our clients are looking to sponsor a foreign national, form a business, set up a will, or litigate a business matter, we work as a key partner with the companies, organizations, and individuals we serve.

We help our clients navigate the opportunities and challenges of today’s business world.

We understand that legal issues can be stressful, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Our goal is to focus on your needs and work together with you throughout the process.



**“Alone we can do so little, together we
can do so much”**

Helen Keller

About Giselle Carson, Esq.



Immigration is not just one of my areas of practice - it is my only area of practice. I help employers create an awesome workforce with the infusion of foreign talent and remain in compliance with immigration laws so they can thrive in a global economy.

As a two-time immigrant, I have experienced the challenges and joy of immigration. I was born in Cuba, escaped to Canada, and later immigrated to the United States. I benefited from the advice and guidance of caring and experienced immigration attorneys to achieve my goals and dreams, and now I have the opportunity to help others like you.

I am driven by my own immigration experiences, my established practice and outstanding clients, and the joy and benefits we all receive when petitions and applications are approved. Every approval is step closer to crossing the finish line! For over ten years, I have successfully helped employers obtain work visas and green cards for foreign nationals and helped immigrants from over sixty countries achieve their immigration dreams.

I am a published author and recognized speaker on immigration matters. I am an AV[®] peer review rated attorney which is the highest rating possible from my peers through Martindale-Hubbell[™].

I am also passionate about health and fitness. I believe that a fit lawyer is also your best lawyer. I am a 4x Ironman finisher and 15x marathon finisher. In business and in life, I have crossed many finishing lines and I look forward to helping you cross your finish line.

We look forward to partnering with you!

Special Thanks

Throughout the process of writing this e-book, many individuals and organizations from the community have taken time to help review, suggest and provide content. We'd like to give a special thanks to the JAXUSA Partnership, Jax Chamber, Florida Blue and others for their feedback and contributions.

Contributing Authors

Linda Lindenmoyer, Vice President of Relocation for Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Network Realty.



With over 18 years of experience in the relocation industry, Linda enjoys supporting corporations in successfully managing their relocation programs and assisting transferees with a smooth transition to and from any city in the United States. In addition to the sale of the departure home and the purchase of a new home in the destination city, Linda's team can also assist with temporary housing needs and the shipment of the household goods and vehicles. Linda is a long-time member of the Worldwide Employee Relocation Council, Southeast Regional Relocation Council, and the Relocation Director's Council. She has earned and maintains the prestigious Certified Relocation Professional (CRP), Global Mobility Specialist (GMS) and Certified International Property Specialist (CIPS) designations. For relocation assistance, please contact Linda at 904-672-4350 or at Linda.Lindenmoyer@FloridaNetworkRealty.com.

Disclaimer

The material contained in this guide is for information purposes only. Individual circumstances vary and are highly dependent on the facts. While this document serves as a general guide, it should not be used as legal advice, nor does the document create any type of attorney-client relationship.