Welcome to RTS!

We are excited you are joining us! As an international student, you probably know there are changes you will need to make to adjust to an American way of living. This guide has been created to help you prepare the documents that you will need before you leave your country as well as explain how to acclimate yourself once you enter the US.

Before leaving...

Before leaving your country make sure you have all of these items.

- Passport with appropriate travel visa
- Student visa certificate of eligibility (form I-20)
- Medical and immunization records in English
- Evidence of adequate insurance, if you are already insured
- Birth Certificate and certified English translation
- Driver’s license - if you have one - and certified English translation.
- Secure trasportation from the airport

Upon arriving...

There are several things that you will need to do as soon as you arrive in Florida.

- Get a checking account at a bank
- Obtain a driver’s license
- Buy a vehicle
- Apply for a social security card, if you intend to work on campus
- Establish some sort of telephone service

Please continue reading for explanations of acquiring these essentials to help you settle into your new home.

International Students’ Guide to Moving to the State of Florida

We’re so glad you are coming and are available for any questions you may have.
For more information contact:
ktrouten@rts.edu
800.752.4382 x254
407.366.9493 x254
Secure transportation from airport
Orlando does not have a reliable form of public transportation. Before leaving your country, talk with your admissions counselor or the community relations coordinator to set up a ride from the airport to your new place of residence.

Open a checking account
When you arrive in Oviedo, Florida, getting a checking account at a bank is one of the first tasks you will want to do. You will soon discover that it is nearly impossible to get from place to place without a car. Most auto sellers will not deal with a person unless he or she has an American bank account.

When opening a bank account, we recommend you begin a checking account with a minimum of $100. Banks vary with this qualification, but $100 is a good starting point. In order to get a checking account, you will need to visit the bank and bring with you the following items:

• 2 forms of ID. This may include your passport, birth certificate, foreign or American driver's license, or credit card.
• Money to establish your account
• Your contact information such as a local address and possibly a local phone number.

Banks located close to RTS:
SunTrust
95 E. Mitchell Hammock Road
Oviedo, FL 32765
Phone: 407.359.2002

Bank of America
1555 East Mitchell Hammock Road
Oviedo, FL 32765
Phone: 407.977.8401

A Side Note...
First Baptist Church of Oviedo offers English classes for internationals.
For more information call 407-365-3484 or go to the church website at www.fbcoviedo.com

Get a driver’s license
In order to drive in Florida, you will need a Florida driver’s license. The local Drivers License Office is located at 290 East 434 in Winter Springs. The phone number is 407.327.4761.

Here is a list of things you will need to bring with you when you go:

• Your Passport and Visa
• I-20
• I-94
• $20
• A License from your home country
  If you don’t have a license from your own country, please don’t worry. You can still obtain a license. You will have to take a four hour course on drug and alcohol use before you can take the tests for a license.

  Everyone must take two tests. A written exam on Florida driving laws and road signs and a practical driving exam. You may request a study guide at www.hsmv.state.fl.us, where there is a practice exam online so that you will know what to expect.

  During the practical driving exam, you will drive a car with an evaluator who will accompany you in the vehicle.

  You may take these exams more than once. There is no cost the first time you take them. If you do not pass the exam on the first try, you may take it again but there will be a fee of $5.

  Upon completing these tests, you will receive a document stating that you are allowed to drive. You will receive your official license by mail within 30 days.

Buy a vehicle
The Orlando area does not have a suitable mass transit system. Community stores and banks are not located in close proximity to each other. Therefore, a car is a necessary expense. Many of our international students have bought used vehicles. Plan to spend at least $3000 on a car. You can find a list of used cars for sale at www.orlando.craigslist.org, www.orlandosentinal.com or www.elfcars.com.

Apply for a Social Security card
If you are offered an on campus, you will need to have a social security card. You must apply for a social security card in person at the card office located at 5520 Garlin Avenue, Suite 102, Orlando, FL 32812. You must bring with you your passport, I-94, I-20, a letter from Kim Trouten stating that you are approved to work on campus and an application form. You may download the application form at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Establish a telephone service
You will need to decide whether you would like to have a landline, a cell phone, or both. Typically, you can find a better rate for international calls through a landline or internet company. You can go to www.brighthouse.com, www.bellsouth.com, www.sprint.com, or www.attcallvantage.com to compare the prices of calling to your home country. In the event of a hurricane, the cell phone towers may have problems but the landlines run through the ground and still will be available for use. The advantage of having a cell phone is that you will be able to have it with you at all times. There are a few companies that sell international calling cards for a good price. Please look at www.skype.com, www.pincity.com, and www.vonage.com

One more thing...
One thing to remember when moving to Florida -- our appliances run on 110 volts. Foreign appliances do not work well here. Converters for your appliances are not recommended for long term use.