

THE IRISH PASTORAL CENTRE

BOSTON J1 SUMMER GUIDE



ANSEO LE CHEILE - HERE TOGETHER



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J1 SUMMER IN BOSTON

Boston also known as "Beantown" or "The Hub" is a great choice for your J1 experience. A city full of history and also innovation, there is something new around every corner depending on your interests.

For many, the J1 experience is a once in a lifetime experience of working and living abroad. Boston is a short 6 hour flight away, and has a wonderful Irish Community; you never feel far from home here!

This guide serves to help students navigate the daunting experience of securing a visa, employment, housing and general life in the city of Boston.

We hope your experience is a positive one and you have the opportunity to experience all that is Boston.



GUIDE TO BOSTON

Boston is a great city to spend the Summer. With beautiful weather and close proximity to beaches you are guaranteed the Summer of a lifetime.

Check out the local beaches

- [Southie Beaches](#)
- [Cape Cod](#)
- [North Shore Beaches](#)

It is easy to get around Boston using public transport - buses, trains and the commuter rail are all accessible from most neighbourhoods.

- [General transportation in and around Boston](#)
- [T map - Subway in the city](#)
- [Fare information](#)

There are many different bars, restaurants and cafes to check out, as well as many other tourist attractions . Apply for a [Boston Public Library](#)_Card - this can gain you free entry to some attractions.

- Museum of Science
- Aquarium
- Boston Common and Public Gardens: swan boats, The Frog Pond
- State House
- Freedom Trail
- Museum of Fine Arts
- Trinity Church
- Charles River Tours
- Duck Tour
- Boston Harbor
- Fenway Park: Home of the Redsox (oldest ball park in US)
- Codzilla
- Harvard
- John F. Kennedy Museum
- Castle Island
- Boston Public Library
- Td Garden: Home of the Boston Celtics and Boston Bruins
- Faneuil Hall
- Quincy Market @ Faneuil Hall
- Prudential Center



GUIDE TO BOSTON CONTD.

- Boston is home to many of the best sports teams in the USA. If you get a chance you should take a game in. Red Sox play through the Summer and The Patriots pre-season begins at the end of Summer.
- There are lots of great Summer and vacation spots close by - some accessible by ferry and bus but worth the trip. Some examples of beautiful places include:
 - Block Island
 - Cape Cod - any area (Marthas Vineyard and Nantucket are off the Cape)
 - Ogunquit and York (Maine)
 - New Hampshire - hiking, trails, white water rafting etc
- There are also amusement parks and water parks including
 - [Six Flags](#),
 - [Water Country](#)
- There are always different concerts and shows on in Boston and surrounding areas - check online and locally for shows and events at parks etc.
 - <https://www.boston.gov/events> - City Sponsored events
 - [The Boston Calendar](#) has lots of fun events listed
- [Canoeing on the Charles River](#) is a wonderful experience.
- For all things Irish we recommend checking our ongoing events at the [Irish Pastoral Center](#). [The Irish Cultural Center](#) in Canton is the home of [Boston GAA](#) and hosts many events and concerts.



HOUSING

Student summer housing is the best option for J1 students, while these may seem expensive they do come furnished, pricing and applications are available at the below links:

- [UMass Boston Summer Housing \(full Summer \\$2,625\)](#)
- [Suffolk University Summer Housing](#)
- [MassArt Summer Housing](#)

If you decide not to pursue the College Summer Housing route: beware of SCAMS! It can be quite hard to detect scams. We would NOT recommend sending money 'site unseen'.

Accommodation is quite expensive and most apartments are unfurnished; sublets are ideally suited to those who are only planning on staying short term in the City. A one bed in Boston starts at around \$1,200+

- Renting in Boston – means you rent the space *only* – you need to furnish it yourself!
- Bring some bed linen with you – sleeping bags and air-pillows
- Ask area realtors if they charge a fee when renting an apartment
- *You will most likely need the first month rent, last month and at times a security deposit which can be 50% of the rent or an entire month!*
- As you may be unfamiliar with an area, it might be worth calling the local police station to find out specific details on a particular street.
- This [link](#) shows crime rates for particular areas - safety should be #1 concern
- College areas: JFK UMass (Dorchester); MIT/Harvard (Cambridge); Tufts University (Somerville) Boston College (Brighton/Brookline)

Other Options:

<https://www.rent.com/massachusetts/boston-apartments>

<https://www.sublet.com/apartments-for-rent/boston-area>

<http://www.brightonpads.com/>

www.hotpads.com

www.furnishedfinder.com

<https://offcampushousing.suffolk.edu/>

www.airbnb.com Look for long-term rental options

www.vrbo.com Ask for long-term options

www.apartments.com



EMPLOYMENT

- Minimum wage in Boston is \$15 per hour (depending on size of business). Tipped employees (servers/bartenders) must be paid a minimum of \$6.75 per hour.
- The employment you receive must be seasonal or temporary.
- Areas in Boston that offer many seasonal jobs: Seaport, Boston Harbor, Marina Bay (Quincy), Cape Cod (1.5 hours outside Boston)
- You must contact your sponsoring agency if you want to change employment. Your J1 Visa status is tied to your employment, any unauthorised employment changes may result in Visa termination.
- There are federal laws in place in the US prohibiting discrimination in the workplace. If you feel that you have been a victim of discrimination in the workplace please contact your sponsor and the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
- A well formatted resume may be a great help in your job search.
- A social security number is required when working on the J1 visa. Employers can hire you before you have been issued your social security number as long as you have evidence you have applied for one and have a legal right to work in the US. You need to apply at your local Social Security Office when you find somewhere to reside in Boston. [Here](#) is the link to SSO Locations.
- IPC is not affiliated with any employers.



SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

- Within one week of arrival, please contact your sponsor to activate your visa on SEVIS. If your sponsor does not receive this information within the first few weeks of your arrival, your visa will automatically end.
- Once your sponsor validates your visa, it can take 2 - 4 days to become active on SEVIS, so please allow sufficient time before visiting your local Social Security Office, if you need to obtain a Social Security number, or need your card replaced. Note: your SEVIS record must be updated prior to applying for a Social Security number.

Applying for a Social Security Number:

1. You will need to bring your passport, DS-2019, and I-94 record. To obtain your I-94 record: [click here](#) & choose the option "Get Most Recent I-94."
 2. You must apply for a Social Security number, or replacement card, in person. Please expect to wait 4-6 weeks for the card.
 3. For more information on applying, and to locate the closest Social Security office, go to: <https://www.ssa.gov/number-card/request-number-first-time> or scan the QR CODE on the following page.
- Do not carry around your Social Security card in your wallet or purse. Keep this at home in a safe place. Keep your number confidential.
 - Do not alter your social security card under any circumstances. This includes lamination.
 - **** KEEP YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARD EVEN AFTER YOU LEAVE THE US. YOU WILL NEED THIS WHEN FILING A TAX RETURN OR IF YOU RETURN ON ANOTHER WORKING VISA SUCH AS THE J1 GRADUATE VISA ****





Need a Social Security card? ¿Necesita una tarjeta de Seguro Social?

Scan the QR code to get started. You may be able to start or complete your request online.

Escanee el código QR para comenzar. Es posible que pueda comenzar su solicitud por internet.



Open the camera app on a smart phone or tablet.

1

Abra la aplicación de la cámara en un teléfono inteligente o tableta.

Point the camera at the QR code.

2

Apunte la cámara al código QR.

Tap the banner that appears.

3

Toque el banner que aparece.

SSA.gov | SeguroSocial.gov

VISA REQUIREMENTS

- Be sure to keep in touch with your sponsoring agency and notify them of your arrival in the US. Do not forget that you must check in with your Sponsor every 30 days to keep your visa active.
- You must let your sponsor know about any change of address so that they can notify SEVIS.
- You must get approval from your sponsor before traveling outside of the US while on a J1 SWT visa. Failure to do so may prevent you from re-entering the US.

DO NOT OVERSTAY YOUR VISA

- You should make every effort to look after your passport and keep it in a safe place. If your passport is LOST or STOLEN, please contact the Irish Consulate immediately.
- Scan or take a picture of the photo page of your passport, your visa, and your DS-2019 so that you will have a spare copy if you need it.
- We recommend that each J1 participant apply for an Irish Passport Card prior to their stay in Boston. A Passport Card is easily kept in your wallet and will allow you to keep your passport in a safe place when you are out and about.



#LIFE

Bank Account

We recommend [Rockland Trust](#) or [Citizens Bank](#) for your banking needs. You will need the following to open a bank account:

- Passport
- Proof of address
- Visa

Useful apps to set up

- [Uber](#)
- [Venmo](#)

Phone Providers

- E-Sims are available from [Mint](#)
- [T-mobile](#)

***The IPC is not affiliated with any of the above and we are simply providing information.**



PROTECT YOUR PASSPORTS

- Getting replacement travel documentation can take time and will add to your expenses so make sure you keep your passport safe at all times and try not to carry it in public.
- Bring alternative photo identification with you, such as a driving license or a passport card, and keep photocopies of the identification page of your passport in a secure place in case you have to apply for a replacement.
- Note that the majority of bars/ nightclubs in Boston do not accept European Passport Cards or Irish Drivers licenses as a form of ID, if you decide to use your passport as a form of ID for the summer it is extremely important you keep it safe.
- If your passport is lost/stolen/damaged, please contact the Consulate General of Ireland in Boston at +1 617 267 9330. You will need to speak to the Consulate in order to obtain a travel document that will enable you to make your return journey back to Ireland.
- Remember that if you travel to Canada/Mexico or anywhere outside of the US, you won't be allowed to re-enter the US without a valid machine-readable passport.
- Falsifying or altering a passport is a criminal offence and in the USA a federal offence, punishable by fine, imprisonment and/or refusal of future entry to America.

Consulate General of Ireland- Boston

Website: www.dfa.ie/boston/

Telephone: +1 617 267 9330



Ard-Chonsalacht na hÉireann | Bostún
Consulate General of Ireland | Boston



LOCAL LAWS & SAFETY

- Familiarize yourself with US laws. They can vary from state to state. These laws apply to various substances and activities. While Marijuana use is legal in the state of Massachusetts, it is still considered a Schedule I Drug under federal law. As a J1 visa participant you are subject to federal law and use of federally illegal substances can invalidate your Visa.
- Law enforcement in the US rarely gives a warning for offenses. They act swiftly, so be aware of your actions. Ensure that you are compliant with US laws.
- Keep in mind the disposition of law enforcement personnel may be different in the US than in Ireland. You must treat US police officers with respect. Speak to police officers politely and follow directions.
- Do not drink alcohol (even if you are 21) in public spaces as that is illegal in Boston.
- Do not damage or disrespect your housing or neighbours. Damaging your housing is a crime which can lead to arrest and have serious implications on future travel to the US.



LOCAL LAWS & SAFETY CONTD.

- **Do not tamper with your Passport or someone else's passport in an attempt to get around the US legal drinking age of 21 and/or to gain entry to over 21 bars and clubs. Falsifying passports is a federal offence. The punishment can include a fine or imprisonment. Those convicted will also almost certainly be refused entry to the US from that point forward.**
- **While you are still getting used to the city and finding your way around, exercise precautions. You should always be aware of your surroundings and stick to areas that are well lit and populated especially at night time. Avoid shortcuts you are not familiar with.**
- **Always carry enough cash for emergency situations (generally enough to get a taxi home).**
- **Avoid ATMs in dark isolated areas. If you go out on your own or in a small group make sure that you are contactable and that a friend knows where you will be.**
- **Make sure that you leave the contact details of your family back home with a close friend in case of an emergency.**
- **In case of a life threatening emergency call 911.**
- **In case of non-emergency call 311 or the Irish Pastoral Centre 617-265-5300**



DEPARTURE REQUIREMENTS

- Leave your home address with your employer so that they can send you your final pay check if necessary and your tax documentation (W2) at the end of the year.
- Be sure to close your bank account and utilities before you leave the US, if the account remains open it will collect dormancy fees and you will have debt to pay if you try to use the account in the future.
- Remember to fill out a US tax return form between JANUARY and APRIL 15, 2024. You may be eligible for a refund of any taxes you paid whilst in the States. Companies like taxback.com and sprintax.com can help you.
- We recommend that participants book flights that are flexible, as plans often change.
- DO NOT overstay your J1 Visa by even one day!
- Keep your Social Security Card extremely safe- it is yours forever! (DO NOT LAMINATE OR ALTER)
- Leave your housing in good condition! CLEAN! Conduct a walk through with the landlord and take photos before returning the keys.



DEPARTURE REQUIREMENTS

CONTD.

- Take responsibility! If something is broken, replace it or offer to pay the damages. Leave a positive lasting impression of Irish J1 Students!
- If your neighbors or landlord have been unhappy, it is never too late to make it right – leave a note or apologize in person.
- Keep in touch with your employer and other new contacts as they may be able to provide you with a reference or connections if you return to the US.
- If you have been arrested or received a ticket or violation, be sure to take care of it **BEFORE** you leave for Ireland. Consult an attorney if necessary. The IPC can assist with recommendations. These records **DO NOT** go away and can impact future travel to the US. Be sure to obtain a **CERTIFIED** copy of any court report. This proves that any infraction has been taken care of correctly. You will need this for future travel to the US or for a J1 Graduate visa application.



DO'S



&

DONT'S



- **Keep in touch with your Sponsor and notify of them of your arrival in the US.**
- **Respect the local laws and police officers.**
- **Apply for your Social Security number as soon as possible.**
- **Leave a positive lasting impression of Irish J1 participants.**
- **Reach out to Irish Community Services if you are having difficulty adjusting to life away from home.**
- **Get a Boston Public Library card - this gets you free entry to some attractions.**
- **Do not get in trouble with the law.**
- **Do not overstay your Visa.**
- **Do not engage in any unauthorised work. If you are in the US on the Visa Waiver Program you are NOT authorised to work in the US.**
- **Do not forget to think about how much money you need to bring. Keep in mind your living costs, including food and rent. Remember that you may not receive your first pay check immediately.**
- **Do not damage or disrespect your housing.**



USEFUL CONTACTS

Irish Pastoral Center

Website: <https://www.ipcboston.org/>

Telephone: +1 617 265 5300

Email: info@ipcboston.org OR j1@ipcboston.org

Address: 540 Gallivan Boulevard, Rear, Dorchester, MA 02124

Consulate General of Ireland- Boston

Website: www.dfa.ie/boston/

Telephone: +1 617 267 9330

USIT

Website: www.usit.ie

Email: info@usit.ie

Telephone: +353 01 602 1906

SAYIT

Website: www.j1.ie

Email: J1visa@sayit.ie

Telephone: +353 21 4279 190

J1 Ireland

Website: www.j1ireland.com

Email: info@j1ireland.com

Telephone: +353 (0)90 6661410

CIEE Website: www.ciee.org

Email: contact@ciee.org

Telephone: 1-800-407-8839

Interexchange

Website: www.interexchange.org

Email: info@interexchange.org

Telephone: (212) 924-0446

Police

Website: <https://bpdnews.com/directory>

Telephone: 911 (Emergency)





The Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers advances its members through collaboration and education to benefit the Global Irish in the United States.

Established in 1996, the Coalition has member centers from coast to coast that provide a unique array of services, outreach & assistance to Irish immigrants, prioritizing confidentiality and cultural competency.

Find contact details for your regional Irish center below, and follow the Coalition at @IrishCoalition for access to current, accurate & reliable information.

Irish Immigration Pastoral Center

San Francisco

www.sfiipc.org

415.752.6006

info@sfiipc.org

The Irish Outreach Center

San Diego

www.irishoutreachcenter.org

619-291-1630

help@irishoutreachcenter.org

Irish Community Services - MW

Chicago

www.irishchicago.org

773.282.8445

info@irishchicago.org

Irish Pastoral Centre

Boston

www.ipcboston.org

617.265.5300

info@ipcboston.org

Rian Immigrant Center

Boston

www.riancenter.org

617.542.7654

info@riancenter.org

Aisling Irish Community Center

New York

www.aislingcenter.org

914.237.5121

info@aislingcenter.org

Emerald Isle Immigration Center

New York

www.eiic.org

Woodside: 718.478.5502; jstahl@eiic.org

Bronx: 718.324.3039; carmel@eiic.org

New York Irish Center

New York

www.newyorkirishcenter.org

718.482.0909

info@newyorkirishcenter.org

Irish Diaspora Center

Philadelphia

www.icphila.org

610.789.6355

info@idcphila.org

Seattle Irish Immigrant Support

Seattle

iwww.IrishSeattle.com

360-474-7488

SIISG@irishclub.org

The Coalition is generously funded by



Government of Ireland
Emigrant Support Programme



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

THE IRISH PASTORAL CENTRE

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