EmigrantAdvice

ADVICE LEAFLET FOR 2007 J-1 STUDENTS

The following pointers are based on some of the difficulties that Irish J-1 students have faced in the US in recent years. Information received from Irish consulates and Irish immigrant organisations in the US who have been working with J-1 students down through the years have been the main source of information for this leaflet.

Students should make use of all support services available, including
USIT and **SAYIT** orientation and information packs:
these contain valuable pre- and post-departure information.

Social Security Number

- It is very important that you contact your program sponsor and register with the Student and Exchange visitor Information System (SEVIS) to provide them with you local address and to provide them with details of where you will be employed.
- It usually takes 7-10 days for you information to be updated in SEVIS. This update is necessary for you to get a Social Security Number
- Once this has been done apply for a Social Security Number (SSN) as soon as possible.
- Delays of 6-8 weeks in previous years in some cities in obtaining a SSN have meant that some students have been unable to get work, as some larger employers will not employ someone without a SSN. This is not a legal requirement on the employer but some larger firms have this policy. Bring back-up funds to see you through an extended period of not being able to find work.
- The following link will take you to the application form (SS-5) for your social security number and information on how to find your nearest office in the USA: http://www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ss-5.html

General Information

- It is very important to open a bank account as soon as possible after you arrive in the US to avoid the possibility of having your money stolen

Finding a Job

- Do some research on jobs before you leave for the US. Do an American style resume before you go and/or bring your CV.
- If possible talk to friends/other students who were there last year and ask them for tips on jobs and accommodation.
- Contact any friends and family you have in the area you are travelling to and ask their suggestions or leads on jobs and accommodation.
- The earlier you arrive in the US the better chance you have of getting a job.
- www.craigslist.org is a widely used site across the US: there are sections for searching for employment.

Accommodation

- Costs for deposits for accommodation are very large. They can range from up to $1000 to $3000 depending on the area and what is required.
- Some landlords request the first month, the last month and another month deposit in advance.
- Be aware that accommodation will not have furnishing, so read your rental agreement carefully. It is easy to pick up second-hand furniture that will do you for the summer.
- Check out www.craigslist.org, a widely used site across the US: there are sections for searching for accommodation.
- How you treat your accommodation this year will affect the prospects of Irish students getting accommodation next year, so leave your apartment in the same condition you found it.

Identification

- Irish Consular Services in the US report that lost, stolen and confiscated passports are issues every summer with Irish J-1 students.
- It is recommended by Consular official that J1 students should take a copy of the biographical page of their passport. It will make the replacement process easier if you lose or have your passport stolen.
- Make a copy of your DS-2019 (your J-1 Visa) – it is extremely difficult to replace.
- Store and use your passport safely.
- If you dishonestly use a friend or relative's passport as your own identification it can be confiscated.

- Rather than risk taking out your passport to prove your age you can get less valuable and equally effective ID from your local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office. To find your local office in the US go to http://www.usadmv.org/

Mexico

- Irish organisations and Consulates on the West Coast and the Irish Embassy in Mexico have asked students to take extra caution with personal security if they intend to travel to Mexico.
- There are reports that there is a market for stolen passports in Mexico, so store your passport safely and use alternative ID or a photocopy of the personal information page of your passport when possible. Make copies of your passport and DS-2019 and leave them in the US when you travel.
- You will not be able to re-enter the US from Mexico if you have no passport.
- Your American mobile phone may not work in Mexico, check this before you travel.
- The Irish Embassy in Mexico has issued the following advice to J-1 students who travel to Mexico this summer:

  - Keep your travel documents and valuables securely at all times. You will **NOT** be allowed back into the US if you do not have a valid machine-readable passport and it can take several days to obtain an emergency replacement.
  - Do not walk alone after dark, and even if in a group be very vigilant
  - Use only authorized taxis from taxi ranks
  - Be very careful when withdrawing money from ATM machines, withdraw only small amounts and ensure that you use ATM machines in secure areas and during daylight hours
  - Exercise due caution at all times; remember that the consumption of a large amount of alcohol may impair your judgment and lead you into serious difficulties

Breaking the Law

- Some students have misjudged what a publicly acceptable level of partying is and have ended up in trouble with the local police force. Students should be aware that some public disorder offences and what might be perceived as misdemeanours in Ireland are penalised more severely in the States. Most people do not get away with a proverbial 'slap on the wrist'.

- Offences such as drinking alcohol in public can result in a court date.
- Criminal arrests/convictions in the US may affect your future entry prospects.
- **Treat US police officers with respect**. They will assume you are a threat to them until you prove otherwise, so do everything you are told to do. Don't argue with or annoy them: they will have no hesitation in handcuffing you and putting you in a cell to cool off.

Conclusion

- While exam time is an extremely busy time for students, job and accommodation prospects should be researched before travelling. While this is not always possible students should at the very least know what to expect to pay in rent and what the work availability situation is like.
- Every year students return home early as they have misjudged the amount of money they need to bring with them or have misjudged how difficult it will be to get a job. Use your opportunity well and try to avoid such a situation.

This leaflet was produced by:
Emigrant Advice,
1 Cathedral St.,
Dublin 1, Ireland
Phone: +353-1-8732844.
Email: info@emigrantadvice.ie
Web: www.emigrantadvice.ie

Emigrant Advice is a project of Crosscare (www.crosscare.ie),
the social services agency of the Dublin Diocese.

Emigrant Advice provides an information and advocacy
service to migrants and returning Irish emigrants.

Websites to check for accommodation and employment

Irish immigrant organisations in the US have suggested the following sites:

New York

Check the Classifieds Section of www.irishecho.com and www.irishvoice.com for accommodation and employment adverts in the New York area.

Ocean City

www.oceancity.org

San Diego

http://www.sdreader.com/

http://www.signonsandiego.com/

San Francisco

ACCOMMODATION:

www.thefillmorecenter.info

www.goldengatewayapts.com

www.oakwood.com

www.housing.berkeley.edu - The University of California at Berkeley offers summer housing from June 1st to Aug 11th

www.thevillasparkmerced.com

HOSTELS:

www.hostels.com

www.adelaidehostel.com

www.norcalhostels.org

JOBS:

http://sfgate.com/jobs/ - This is the San Francisco Chronicle's website (the main daily newspaper

www.blueandgoldfleet.com, www.hornblower.com - Many students get work with these tour companies.

http://jobsearch.traderjoes.newjobs.com/ - Many also get jobs in grocery stores like this.

http://www.irishabroad.com/Resources/J1/

Contacts

Consular Services

The following link is a listing of Irish Consular Services in the USA: http://www.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=5535

Please note the Embassy and Consulates do not assist people in finding accommodation or employment

Please follow this link to access the Consular Division's advice for J-1 students: http://www.dfa.ie/home/index.aspx?id=283

Irish Embassy in Mexico

Cda. Boulevard Avila Camacho 76-3,
Col. Lomas de Chapultepec
C.P. 11000
Mexico, D.F.
Phone: (from outside Mexico 0052 55 5520 5803
(from within Mexico) 01 55 5520 5803
Email: embajada@irlanda.org.mx

The embassy has an emergency answering service that operates during the evenings and at weekends

Irish Immigration Centres in the US

Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers
Contact: Sheila Gleeson
551 Washington Street, Suite 4
Brighton, MA 02135
Phone/Fax: 617-987-0193
Email: sheila@ciic-usa.org
Web: www.ciic-usa.org

Irish Apostolate USA
Contacts: Geri Garvey &
Fr. Brendan McBride
Irish Apostolate USA
1005 Downs Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20904
Phone/Fax: 301-384-3375
Email: administrator@usairish.org
Web: www.usairish.org

CALIFORNIA

Irish Immigration Pastoral Center
Contact: Celine Kennelly
5340 Geary Blvd., Suite 206
San Francisco, CA 94121
Ph. #: 415-752-6006 / Fax #: 415-752-6910
Email: iipc@pacbell.net
Web: www.sfiipc.org

San Francisco IIPC compiles an accommodation and job handout for J1students.

Irish Outreach San Diego
Contact: Bernadette Cashman
2725 Congress Street 2G
San Diego, CA 92110
Ph. #: 619-291-1630
Email: help@irishoutreachsd.org
Web: www.irishoutreachsd.org

Irish Outreach San Diego has scheduled orientation days for J-1 students with job handouts available. An employer and bank representative will be present. Community Relations Police representatives are there to give advice on how to stay out of trouble in San Diego. Irish Outreach also allows J-1 students to use their address to get a social security card quicker.

ILLINOIS

Chicago Irish Immigrant Support
Contact: Breandán Magee
640 North LaSalle, Suite 390
Chicago, IL 60610
Ph. #: 312-337-8445 / Fax #: 312-337-8446
Email: irishoverhere@sbcglobal.net
Web: www.ci-is.com

MARYLAND

Irish Student Outreach Center
Contact: William. J. Ferguson
13701 Sailing Road
Ocean City, MD 21842
Ph. #: 410-250-0362 and 443-783-7893
Email: wfergus4@aol.com

MASSACHUSETTS

Irish Immigration Center
Contact: Sr. Lena Deevy
59 Temple Place, Suite 1010
Boston, MA 02111
Ph. #: 617-542-7654 / Fax #: 617-542-7655
Email: ldeevy@iicenter.org
Web: www.iicenter.org

Irish Pastoral Center
Contacts: Sr. Marguerite Kelly & Fr. John McCarthy
953 Hancock St.
Quincy, MA 02170
Ph. #: 617-479-7404 / Fax #: 617-479-0541
Email: ipcboston@yahoo.com
Web: www.ipcboston.org.

NEW YORK

Aisling Irish Community Center
Contact: Orla Kelleher
990 McLean Ave.
Yonkers, NY 10704
Ph. #: 914-237-5121 / Fax #: 914-237-1723
Email: orla@aislingcenter.org
Web: www.aislingirishcenter.org

Emerald Isle Immigration Center
Contact: Siobhan Dennehy
59-26 Woodside Ave.
Woodside, NY 11377
Ph. #: 718-478-5502 / Fax #: 718-446-3727
Email: siobhand@eiic.org
Web: www.eiic.org

Project Irish Outreach
Contact: Patricia O'Callaghan
1011 First Avenue, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10022
Ph. #: 212-371-1011, ext. 3640 / Fax #: 212-755-1526
Email: patricia.ocallaghan@archny.org

New York Irish Center
Contact: Fr. Colm Campbell
10-40 Jackson Avenue
Long Island City, NY 11101
Ph # (718) 482-0909 / Fax # (718) 482-0908
Email: info@newyorkirishcenter.org
Email: fatherc@newyorkirishcenter.org
Web: www.newyorkirishcenter.org

PENNSYLVANIA

Irish Immigration Pastoral Center
Contacts: Tom Conaghan & Serena White
7 South Cedar Lane
Upper Darby, PA 19082-2816
Ph. #: 610-789-6355 / Fax #: 610-789-6352
Emergency Pager: 610-912-9040
Email: irishimmigration@aol.com
Web: www.irishimmigrants.org

WASHINGTON

Seattle Immigration Support Group
Contacts: John Keane & James Cummins
5819 St. Andrew's Drive
Mukilteo, WA 98275
Ph # 425-244-5147 / Fax # 425-977-0244
Email: SIISG@IrishClub.org
Web: www.IrishSeattle.com

WISCONSIN

Irish Immigrant Service of Milwaukee At The Irish Cultural and Heritage Center of Wisconsin
Contact: John Gleeson
2133 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53233-1910
Email: gleeson@uwm.edu
Web: www.ichc.net

April 2007