



Relocation Guide

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IOR makes every effort to ensure that the information contained in this guide is as current as possible. If you notice errors, or information which is no longer accurate, please contact us immediately so that we may correct the issue.

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WELCOME AND OVERVIEW



<u>San Antonio</u>

<u>San Antonio</u>, Spanish for "Saint Anthony", officially the City of San Antonio, is the second most populated city in the state of Texas, with a population of roughly 1.5 million people. San Antonio–New Braunfels is an eight-county metropolitan area colloquially referred to as Greater San Antonio, straddling South Texas and Central Texas on the southwestern corner of the Texas Triangle. The city has characteristics of other western urban centers in which they are sparsely populated areas and a low density rate outside of the city limits.

San Antonio was named in 1691 for Saint Anthony of Padua, a Spanish explorer. San Antonio grew to become the largest Spanish settlement in Texas, but a series of battles in 1835-1836 defeated the outnumbered army of the Texian Alamo Mission, and in 1845 the United States decided to annex Texas to include it as a state in the Union. This lead to the Mexican-American War in 1845, costing many lives; but ultimately was won by the United States.

Today, San Antonio has a diversified economy with military, health care, government civil service, financial services, oil and gas and tourism sectors. San Antonio blends the natural beauty of the region with the vibrant charm of its residents, offering experiences unlike any other city. Visitors to San Antonio can enjoy Spanish colonial missions, the Alamo, the River Walk, TexMex food, rodeo, theme parks, the Tower of the Americas, the Alamo Bowl and 300 days of sunshine to enjoy hiking and biking trails, golf, and beautiful parks.

City of San Antonio Overview

- Official Website of San Antonio
- <u>Mayor of San Antonio</u>
- Population: 1.5 million (2017) metropolitan area 2,518,036
- Land Area: 465 square miles
- <u>San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department</u>
- San Antonio Public Library
- <u>City of San Antonio Smartphone Apps</u>
- Weather Today in San Antonio
- <u>Recycling in San Antonio</u>

History of San Antonio

- History of San Antonio
- San Antonio Historic Society

What to See, Sightseeing Tours, Value Packages and Passes, Tourist Information

- Information on Tourism in the San Antonio Area
- <u>Calendar of Events</u>
- Trip Advisor Attractions in San Antonio
- <u>Save money on attractions</u>

Where to Eat

- <u>Yelp</u>
- Best restaurants in San Antonio
- <u>Make online restaurant reservations</u>

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 911 FOR FIRE, POLICE & AMBULANCE

Emergency personnel will ask for the following information so keep this page close to your phone:

NAME ADDRESS PHONE

If you accidentally call 911, please do not hang up. The police will automatically be dispatched to your home to make sure there are no problems. Explain to the Operator the call was an accident.

POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222 **ANIMAL POISON CONTROL** 1-888-426-4435

Other Important Numbers:

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN WORK PHONE NUMBER

• Primary Care Physician

<u>DIAL 311</u> for Non-Emergency to reach any City of San Antonio agency, or to request a City Service (such as replacing a broken street-lamp or removing an abandoned vehicle).

Safety and Security

While San Antonio is relatively safe, it is still a major city. Like every major metropolitan area in the USA, there is some crime.

Take basic precautions: lock your car, lock your doors and windows in your home, be aware of strangers and things that just don't seem right. It is always better to be cautious.

Check here for a list of crime rates per neighborhood in San Antonio.

Urgent Care Centers

An Urgent Care Center is different than a Hospital Emergency Room. An Emergency room would be in an absolute emergency. You may visit an Urgent Care Center if, for example, you have a terrible ear ache and need medicine immediately but your Primary Care Physician's office is closed. Many Urgent Care Centers have extended hours and are open early morning until late evening during the week and also some weekend hours. Be sure to refer back to your health insurance company to clarify which urgent care centers and primary care physicians you are allowed to visit using your health insurance. Your insurance card should have a toll-free 1-800 number on the back for you to call and ask questions and clarify which urgent care center would be closest for you. Please always carry your insurance card with you!

Hospital & Clinics

- <u>University Health System</u> over 25 locations throughout San Antonio to better serve your needs.
- Children's Hospital of San Antonio
- North Central Baptist Hospital
- Methodist Hospital

Veterinary Clinics

- Becker Animal Hospital
- Emergency Pet Center
- Animal Clinics & Hospitals

Pharmacies

There are several major pharmacy chains in San Antonio. Click on "Store Locator" and enter your zip (postal) code to find the pharmacy near you. Check for hours of operation. Also the main grocery stores and Superstores such as Target, and Wal-Mart have full service pharmacies.

- Walgreens
- <u>Rite Aid</u>
- List of pharmacies in the San Antonio area

HOUSING

US Leasing/Housing Guide

A lease is an agreement that outlines the obligations of the owner and the tenants of a house or apartment. It is a legally binding document, so it is important for you to know the exact terms of the lease agreement before you sign it. Please do not sign a lease without reviewing it with your IOR DS Consultant.

Rental Agents

In most situations, your IOR DS consultant will partner with a local realtor to have access to the most current and extensive property listings as well as the realtor's expertise in preparing and negotiating leases. This agent receives a commission for their assistance, in most US locations this commission is paid by the Landlord, not the tenant. Your IOR DS Consultant will discuss this with you.

Renter's Rights

Tenants who lease or rent property are protected against discrimination by <u>The Fair Housing Act</u>. If you think your rights have been violated, you may write a letter or telephone the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) office nearest you. You have one year after the alleged violation to file a complaint with HUD, but you should file as soon as possible.

While you can generally expect the same service from landlords, it's important to know your state's laws. Each state and most major cities have their own tenant rights, laws and protections. <u>Here are Texas's</u>.

You can also visit the HUD website here for a full guide to renters' rights by states.

If your rental property ever suffers any defects that make your place uninhabitable, your landlord has a duty to fix it. While some apartments let you make online requests for repairs, as well as provide a phone number for "emergencies," always make sure you document your request in writing. The landlord will then have a certain amount of time to make those repairs.

Privacy

You have the right to privacy. While the landlord owns the property, they can't access it anytime they want. All states have laws stating renters have a right to privacy while renting. Pretty much the only time the landlord can come into your rental without permission or notice is when they're responding to an emergency that threatens injury or property damage.

Any other time the landlord wants to enter your apartment, they need to have your permission and in most cases give you 24-hours' notice before entering.

What to expect from the landlord:

In most states, you are legally entitled to:

- Safe structural elements including floors, walls, roofs, and secure doors and windows.
- Privacy as described above.

- All electrical, plumbing, heating, and air conditioning systems function.
- Working hot and cold water.
- Exterminating infestations of rodents and other insects.
- Access to trash receptacles.
- Landlords cannot discriminate based on race, gender, sexual orientation, or disabilities.
- Apartment buildings sometimes come with laundry and dryer machines in the basement.
- Water, electricity, and gas bills are up to you to pay. Your IOR consultant will assist you with this process.

Utilities and Appliances

Your IOR DS Consultant will assist you or provide information on connecting your utilities. It is possible some will be included in your rent, but typically most are not.

Recycling

The City of San Antonio provides regular curbside <u>recycling services</u> to residents.

The Lease Process

Review your housing budget with your IOR DS Consultant

Your IOR DS Consultant can help you understand what kind of property you can afford. You also need to take into account that you may be responsible for some of the utility costs of your rental.

Know what you want

What are you looking for in a property? Do you want a studio or a single bedroom? Maybe you want to rent a single family home? Do you need the property to come with appliances, including washer and dryer? Do want it to be close to school or your work? Do you want it to be within walking distance of retail, like groceries or coffee shops? Are you looking for a child friendly area? Keep in mind that outside of the city center in major cities, there is not much public transportation and most locals drive everywhere.

Identify potential apartments

IOR offers home finding services to aid you with this process. Your consultant may work with a local broker who will help to organize appointments and visit properties. They will also assist in the rental application and the leasing process.

Common Abbreviations and Acronyms used in rental housing listings

<u>Acronym</u>	Meaning
24-hr mtn	24-hour emergency maintenance
AC or A/C	Air conditioning

<u>Acronym</u>	Meaning
LA	Living area
LR	Living room

Appls	Appliances	
Apt	Apartment	
ВА	Bathroom	
BR	Bedroom	
Bsmt	Basement	
CAC	Central air conditioning	
DA	Dining area	
Det	Detached	
Dk	Deck	
DR	Dining room	
Dw (D/w)	Dishwasher	
Eff	Efficiency	
EiK	Eat-in kitchen	
Fin bsmt	Finished basement	
FDR	Formal dining room	
FHA	Fair Housing Act	
FMR	Fair market rent	
FP	Floorplan	
Gar	Garage	
H/A	Handicapped accessible	
H/W	Hardwood floors	
Hi ceil	High ceilings	
HVAC	Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning	

MBR	Master bedroom
МВТН	Master bathroom
Neg	Negotiable
Ofc	Office
OSP	Off-street parking
Pkg	Parking
РМ	Property manager (management)
Pvt	Private
Pwdr rm	Powder room (1/2 bath)
RE	Real estate
Renov	Renovated
Rf	Roof
Rm	Room
SF	Single-family
SFA	Single-family attached
SFD	Single-family detached
Sp, Pl (S/p)	Swimming pool
Sq. ft	Square feet
Th (T/H)	Townhouse
Vw (vu)	View
W/A	Wheelchair accessible
w/w	Wall-to-wall carpeting

Visit

Make this process as efficient as possible by visiting as many potential properties as you can in one or two days. Try to go sometime during the week if possible. Your IOR DS consultant will work with you to set an appropriate schedule and to ensure that the properties you visit meet your needs as closely as possible.

What to do once you're there

As you look at the rental unit, be sure to ask a lot of questions. While you should keep small concerns to yourself about the unit while looking at it, feel free to ask the landlord or apartment manager any questions you might have that will help in your decision. Here are some possible questions you may consider asking:

- What's the monthly rent?
- Are any utilities included with the rent?
- How much is the security deposit?
- When is rent due? Do you have auto-pay?
- What's the parking situation like? Do you pay for a parking spot?
- Do you take care of small maintenance issues or am I responsible for some of the repairs in the property?
- Am I able to re-paint the walls or make other modifications?

Again, be friendly and polite when you ask these questions.

The Application

The next step in the leasing process for an apartment is to submit a rental application for the location you want. The manager or landlord will be able to give you the application as well as anything else that they may need to have filled out. Your IOR DS Consultant will assist with this process. For a single family home there will likely be a rental application.

You will need your driver's license/passport, Social Security number and proof of employment. Some landlords may charge you an application fee which could be between \$20 to \$400 dollars, depending on the landlord. This could be a combination of an application fee and move-in fee.

Once you've done this, it can take up to a few days to hear back from the property manager. Once your application has been approved the lease approval process will begin with IOR and likely your employer.

Signing the lease

DO NOT SIGN THE LEASE until your IOR DS Consultant has reviewed it in full and given their approval.

The lease is a binding contract, so it is very important to pay attention as a leasing agent goes over it with you. It is perfectly normal for you to take your time and read all the fine print for yourself. If you are working with an IOR DS Consultant, make sure to talk with them and receive approval before signing. You will also be given a copy of the lease to take with you and keep for your records, but it is very important to know everything included in your lease from the start.

Some things to look for in a lease:

- Term of the lease and any important dates such as when the rent is due.
- Extra fees for parking spaces or storage, garbage collection, and pets.
- Information regarding utility providers and whether you or the landlord is responsible for those bills.
- Notification requirements in case of renewal.
- Requirements/responsibilities of the tenants to do routine repairs such as lawn maintenance, cleaning or notification of repairs.
- Clauses that allow the landlord to change the terms of the lease after it is signed.
- Restrictions that would prevent you from living normally or comfortably in the home.

Sometimes landlords will ask for a security deposit before you sign the lease. This is normal, but you shouldn't pay in cash. Make sure all payments are made out as a check or money order just in case.

What to expect from the lease

Most leases include the following or a variation thereof:

- Your employer requires that all leases include a Break Clause in case you are transferred for work or personal needs.
- Contracts will often be for periods of a year or more.
- Minimum stay. Typically three fourths of your lease contract time. If you choose to move out before this date, you will lose your security deposit. If you move out afterwards, you are still required to give a specified number of days notice.
- Security Deposit. Landlords will expect you to leave them with a deposit (usually about one to two month's rent) that they will hold for the duration of your lease. You will receive your security deposit back at the end of the lease provided you don't break any specific clauses in your lease, such as moving out without proper notice, not paying rent, causing damages to the property, etc.
- Landlords should not be given unchecked access to your apartment. If there isn't anything in your lease about landlord's rights to enter the leased premises, suggest the following clause:

Entry by the Landlord. Landlord or his agent will not enter Tenant's home except to deal with an emergency; to make necessary or agreed repairs; to supply necessary or agreed services; or to show the unit to potential purchasers, tenants, or repair persons. Unless there is an emergency, Landlord will give Tenant at least 24 hours' written notice of the date, time, and purpose of the intended entry and will schedule entries during normal business hours, Monday–Friday.

Most landlords will be hard-pressed to say no to such a reasonable clause. If the landlord refuses, it's a sure sign that he won't be reasonable in other respects, too. Continue on in your housing search.

Moving In

On your selected move-in date, after the lease has been signed, and deposits have been paid...you should be given your keys and more than likely a move-in form to fill out. Your IOR DS Consultant will assist you with an initial walk through of your apartment. Look for dings in the walls, cracked windows, or other irregularities and report them on this form. This will indicate that these things were there before you moved in and you will not be held responsible for them at the end of the lease term.

Get Renter's Insurance

Renter's insurance covers any loss to your personal property due to robbery or accidents. It also covers any damage you might cause to other tenant's property. For example, let's say your washing machine springs a leak and water seeps through the floor and ruins your neighbor's antique dresser. Renter's insurance would cover that.

Renter's insurance will cost approximately about \$15-125 a month, less if you tack it onto another policy (like auto) you have with an insurance company. A few popular options are <u>Allstate</u> and <u>StateFarm</u>.

OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENSE

Transferring an Out of State Driver License to Texas

New Texas residents can legally drive with a valid, unexpired driver license from another U.S. state, U.S. territory, Canadian province, or qualifying country for up to 90 days after moving to Texas. Prior to the end of the 90 day grace period, a new Texas resident must apply for a Texas license in person at any driver license office to continue to drive legally. When applying for the new Texas license the individual must surrender any unexpired driver license in their possession from another U.S. state, U.S. territory or a Canadian province.

Individuals applying for a Texas driver license must gather documents that verify their:

- identity
- Social Security Number
- U.S. citizenship or lawful presence status
- Texas residency
- Complete the application. (This form is also available at any driver license office.)
- Present either: Proof of Texas vehicle registration and evidence of financial responsibility for each vehicle owned by the applicant or
- A statement affirming that the applicant does not own a motor vehicle.
- Pass Vision Exam
- Pass the knowledge and driving tests, unless exempt. (Read about testing in other languages.)
- Must complete a driver education course if under 25 years of age

For more information on general reciprocal driving provisions, please review the <u>Driving Privilege</u> <u>Reciprocity</u> page.

Website of the Texas State Department of Public Safety

Your Destination Services Consultant will assist you with the proper procedure.

SCHOOLS IN YOUR AREA

Generally, to register your child for school you will need to have a passport and/or birth certificate, proof of immunizations, any applicable past school records and proof of residency. Most public schools have boundary areas, and you must show proof (i.e. copy of lease or home purchase agreement) to be allowed to register in that particular school. Please always confirm requirements with the school you are interested in before assuming that your child will be able to attend that school.

Public Schools

San Antonio Independent School District - SAISD ranks third in student population among the 15 Bexar County-area school districts and is the 13th largest of Texas' 1,057 school districts. The <u>Magnet and</u> <u>Charter School Department</u> assists parents and students in choosing educational programs customized to suit their individual learning styles, interests, and needs. Programs include special-interest areas include engineering, technology, law, health professions, media production, and the rigorous International Baccalaureate program.

Private Schools

There are 120 private schools (35 high schools) in San Antonio serving 25,351 students.

• List of <u>Private Schools</u>

Additional resources to compare Public and Private schools, view ratings, reviews and test scores

- <u>www.greatschools.org</u>
- <u>www.eschoolprofile.com</u>
- <u>www.schooltree.org</u>
- US News Rankings

Area Universities

- Alamo Community College District
- Our Lady of the Lake University
- <u>St. Mary's University</u>
- Texas A&M University–San Antonio
- Trinity University
- University of Texas at San Antonio



Trinity University

BANKING

Checking and Savings Accounts

To open a local checking or savings account you will need the following information:

- Two forms of picture identification including but not limited to your passport, driver's license or work ID.
- Social security number
- Local mailing address. You may use your office address as your mailing address, but be prepared to call your bank branch as soon as you have your permanent address.
- Letter of Employment
- Cash for the initial deposit can range from \$25-\$150 dollars.

Major U.S. Banks

Below is a list of links to some of the larger U.S. banks. Not every bank is represented in all U.S. locations; in some cases you may find that the local bank is a better option for you than some of the larger banks. Your IOR DS Consultant can help you in selecting a bank by sharing the various options available locally.

- Bank of America
- <u>Chase</u>
- <u>Citibank</u>
- <u>HSBC</u>
- <u>TD Bank</u>
- US Bank
- Wells Fargo
- Banks in San Antonio

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION/DRIVING

Local Bus Transportation

The city's metropolitan transit authority, <u>VIA Metropolitan Transit</u> has numerous bus routes at your service. Some operate more frequently than others. Some operate with fewer stops along the way. Some routes run seven days a week while others operate weekdays only. Whatever your needs, VIA has a bus route to match it.

Airport

The <u>San Antonio International Airport</u> (SAT) is located in uptown San Antonio, about eight miles north of downtown.

Rail

<u>Amtrak</u>, the national passenger rail service, provides service to San Antonio operating lines to such faraway places as Chicago, Los Angeles and New Orleans.

Biking around San Antonio

There are over 8000 bike trails in San Antonio.

Transportation "App" Options

Payment is automatic through the smartphone app and fares may be cheaper than a taxi.

- <u>Uber</u>
- <u>Lyft</u>

AAA Travel Protection

AAA is a membership organization that offers benefits such as roadside service and towing, discounts on car products and services, maps, reference materials, etc.

Call 1-800-352-5382 for additional information and cost. www.aaa.com



LIVING AND SHOPPING

TV, Cable, Telephone, and Internet

The main service providers for TV cable, landline telephone and internet all offer combination packages. They are in stiff competition with each other, so special offers change monthly, sometimes even weekly.

- <u>AT&T</u>
- <u>Comcast</u>
- DirecTV
- <u>Dish</u>

Food Shopping

- <u>H-E-B</u> supermarket chain based in San Antonio.
- Trader Joe's
- Whole Foods Market
- <u>La Fiesta</u> locally-owned, privately-held, Texas-based company with 7 grocery stores throughout San Antonio.
- Grocery Stores in San Antonio

Farmer's Markets

- San Antonio Farmer's Market is your neighborhood farmer's market
- <u>Pearl Farmer's Market</u> vendors are located within 150 mile radius of San Antonio, Texas, providing fresh, local, and seasonal products that they themselves planted, raised, and harvested.

General Shopping

- <u>Rivercenter Mall</u>
- The Shops at La Cantera
- <u>Shopping Directory</u>



Rivercenter Mall

PET RESOURCES

Dog Licenses

On April 30, 2015, the San Antonio City Council unanimously approved the elimination of the City's pet <u>licensing program</u> (*the metal Texas-shaped tag*). An ordinance amendment was approved making a registered microchip the primary means of licensing for pets living within the San Antonio city limits. Residents do not have to formally register their pet's microchip with the City or ACS - microchips only need to be registered with the microchip manufacturer.

Veterinary Clinics

- Becker Animal Hospital
- Emergency Pet Center
- Animal Clinics & Hospitals

Area Dog Parks

The San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department offers seven off-leash <u>dog parks</u> around the City. <u>Here</u> are the rules for the dog parks.

- San Antonio Rampage American Hockey League
- San Antonio Missions Minor league baseball

RECREATION

Entertainment

- **Cactus Pear Music Festival**
- The River Walk, which meanders through the Downtown area, is the city's second-most-visited attraction, giving it the additional nickname of "River City." Lined with numerous shops, bars, and restaurants, as well as the Arneson River Theater, this attraction is transformed into an impressive festival of lights during the winter holidays, and is suffused with the local sounds of music during the summer, during the Fiesta Noche del Rio.
- San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo
- San Antonio Zoo
- SeaWorld
- Six Flags Fiesta Texas

Museums and Culture

- The Alamo Mission in San Antonio ("the Alamo") located in Downtown, is Texas' top tourist • attraction. Because of the mission, San Antonio is often called the "Alamo City".
- Ballet San Antonio
- **Buckhorn Saloon & Museum**
- Briscoe Western Art Museum •
- McNay Art Museum •
- San Antonio Children's Museum
- San Antonio Botanical Garden
- San Antonio Museum of Art
- Witte Natural History Museum



River Walk



Area Parks

San Antonio has about 136 miles (219 km) of bike lanes, routes or off-road paths. Off-road trails travel along the San Antonio River, linear greenways, and city parks. Although largely disconnected, the progress to create a bicycle-friendly environment was recognized when San Antonio was designated a bronze-level "Bicycle Friendly Community" by the League of American Bicyclists.

Sports

•



Volunteer Opportunities

- Volunteer Match
- United Way

Parent & Children Resources

• <u>Mom's Clubs</u> - social groups offering events and outings with mothers and their young children.

Smart Phone Apps for Travel:

- <u>Uber</u> : Similar to a taxi service but all web based. Payment also handled online, do not pay or tip driver directly. Uber driver knows your approximate location based on your phone GPS.
- <u>Lyft</u> : Wherever you're headed, count on Lyft for rides in minutes. The Lyft app matches you with local drivers at the tap of a button. Just request and go.
- <u>Apple Maps :</u> Map by direction
- <u>Map Quest</u> : Map by direction
- <u>Waze</u> : Community based traffic & navigation with alternate route suggestions
- <u>CityMaps2Go</u> : The #1 travel app lets you discover exciting new places. Beautiful photos and insider tips at the touch of a button. You will receive stories about places you like and can instantly save and find them on your maps and in your lists.

Smart Phone Apps for Communication:

- <u>WhatsApp</u> : Free local & international Real Time messaging
- <u>Line</u> : Exchange free instant messages with friends whenever and wherever with one-on-one and group chats. LINE is available on all smartphone devices (iPhone, Android, Windows Phone, Blackberry, Nokia) and even on your PC.
- <u>Viber</u> : Free text, calling, photo messages and location-sharing with Viber users. No registration, alias or invitations required. Instantly integrates with your own contact list. Best-quality mobile calls using 3G or Wi-Fi.
- <u>Skype</u> : Stay in touch with your family and friends for free on Skype. Download Skype today to chat and call on desktop and mobile.

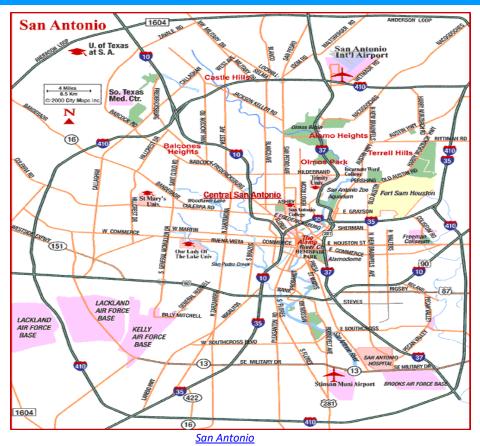
Smart Phone Apps for Local Information/Reviews:

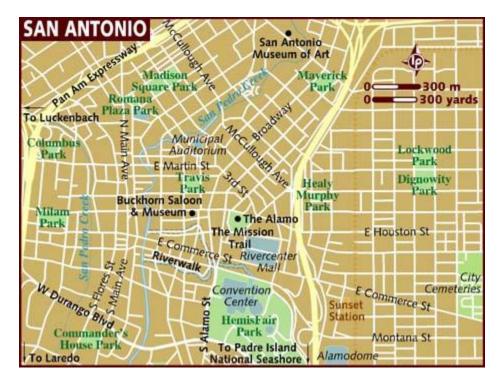
- <u>Angie's List</u> : Referrals for doctor, dentist, child care, maid, mechanic, painter, plumber, etc.
- Yelp! : Find local businesses, restaurants, bars, clubs, events, etc. with map, lists, and reviews
- <u>Next Door</u>: Neighbors share community events, items for sale, recommendations for babysitters, doctors and handymen, crime reports, ideas about how to improve their neighborhood and more.
- <u>Meet Ups</u> : Meetups are neighbors getting together to learn something, do something or share something. Cultural groups advertise gatherings here as well.

Smart Phone Apps for Weather:

- <u>WTHR13</u> : Local weather and closings; includes radar and forecast
- <u>Weather Channel</u> : National and international time, temperature & weather
- <u>Tornado</u> : Set up tornado alerts & siren

AREA MAPS





Map of San Antonio courtesy of Lonely Planet

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Federal Holidays

Texas Legal Holidays

The following are legal holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans' Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

January 1* January 21 March 29 Last Monday in May July 4* First Monday in September November 11* Fourth Thursday in November December 25*

*If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the day following is observed as the legal holiday.



San Antonio