



Miami, Florida

## Relocation Guide

[www.iorworld.com](http://www.iorworld.com)

*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



*Miami skyline courtesy of [wikimedia.org](https://www.wikimedia.org)*

The history of Miami reveals that the city gets its name from the word “Mayaimi”, meaning big lake in the local Native American language and is thought to be referring to Lake Okeechobee. The area was first occupied by The Tequestas when the first European ships landed on the coast of South Florida. A Spanish explorer named Ponce de Leon came in search of the fountain of youth and later claimed the place for his native country Spain. Florida remained under the control of Spain for almost two and a half centuries. The Spanish introduced modern weaponry and brought with them diseases that caused the native Tequestas to disappear. In 1818, the Seminole Indian Wars started and following its conclusion, the United States bought Florida from Spain in 1821 for \$5 million.

The modern history of Miami began in 1896 when Henry Flagler constructed the railroad to southeast Florida. With this construction, rapid development occurred in the area, and the next century brought various drainage canals and city expansion. Miami changed drastically and turned into a wonderful resort, with great beaches and an advanced transportation network. It’s hard to believe that 100 years ago it was a mosquito-infested swampland, with an Indian trading post on the Miami River.

Greater Miami is many destinations in one. At its best, it offers an unparalleled multicultural experience: melodic Latin and Caribbean tongues, international cuisines and cultural events, and an unmistakable joie de vivre—all against a beautiful beach backdrop. In Little Havana, the air is tantalizing with the perfume of strong Cuban coffee. Grab a Cuban sandwich and ride the vintage carousel at Virginia Key Beach Park. In Coconut Grove, Caribbean steel drums ring out during the Miami/Bahamas Goombay Festival. Experience the bustle of South Beach and its Art Deco District. Miami’s nightlife is vibrant, thanks to a strong Latin influence and spicy salsa culture. Miami Beach, on 17 islands in Biscayne Bay, is sometimes considered America's Riviera, luring refugees from northern winters with its warm sunshine, sandy beaches, and shady palms.

## **Miami-Dade Overview**

Miami is the county seat of Miami-Dade County. The 44th-most populated city proper in the United States, with a population of 430,332, it is the most populous metropolis in the Southeastern United States after Washington, D.C. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Miami's greater metro area is the fourth-largest urban area in the United States, with a population of around 5.5 million.

- [Official Website of Miami](#)
- [Mayor of Miami-Dade County](#)
- Population of City of Miami: 430,332
- Miami-Dade County: 2,662,874
- Total area of city: 55.27 sq miles(143.1km<sup>2</sup>)
- The sales tax in Miami-Dade County is 7%.
- [Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation Department](#)
- [Miami Public Library](#)
- [Weather Today in Miami](#)
- [Miami-Dade Recycling Services](#)

## **History of Miami**

- [Miami Time Line](#)

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

- [Best of Miami- TripAdvisor](#)
- [Miami Travel Guide](#)
- [CNN Insider's Guide to Miami](#)
- [Miami Tourist Guide](#)
- [Guide to Greater Miami and its Beaches](#)

## **Where to Find Arts & Entertainment**

Miami events offer 24/7 excitement. From sports games to world-class dance, theater, concerts and shows, Miami's performances and festivals highlight the best in entertainment, music, film and fashion.

- [Miami calendar of festivals](#)
- [Miami calendar of general events](#)

## **Where to Eat**

Foodies and chefs alike herald Miami for its unique New World cuisine. Created in the 1990's, the cuisine alternatively known as New World, Nuevo Latino or "Florribean" cuisine blends local produce, Latin American and Caribbean culinary tradition and the technical skills required in European cooking.

- [TripAdvisor's Travelers Choice Top 25 restaurants](#)
- [The Eater's 38 Essential Miami Restaurants](#)
- [Urbanspoon's guide to Miami eating](#)

If many of Miami's premiere restaurants don't fit into your daily budget, consider eating during Miami Restaurant Month (better known as [Miami Spice](#)) when restaurants offer terrific deals in August and September. A cool area to eat out is [Lincoln Road](#) and [Miracle Mile](#). They both have many hopping restaurants in the neighborhood that are worth checking out.

#### Utilities

- [AT&T \(formerly BellSouth\)](#)
- [Comcast](#)
- [Florida Power & Light](#)
- [Miami-Dade Water and Sewer](#)
- [Florida City Gas](#)
- [TECO/ Peoples Gas](#)

#### Local Resources

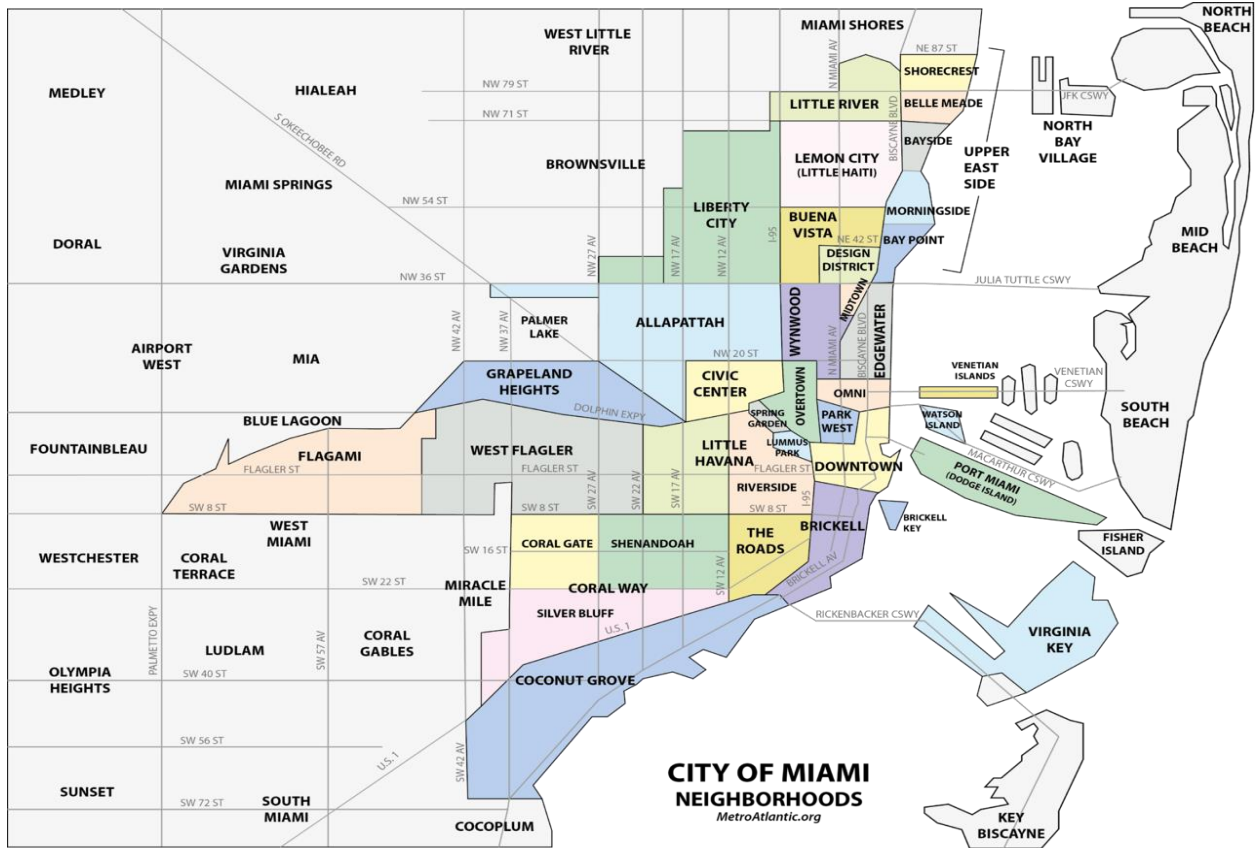
- [American Red Cross-Miami Chapter](#)
- [Humane Society of Miami](#)
- [Miami-Dade Animal Services Department](#)
- [Miami-Dade County Answer Center](#)
- [Miami-Dade Consumer Services \(Report price gouging\)](#)
- [Miami Parking Authority \(MPA\)](#)
- [Miami-Dade Recycling Services](#)

#### Hospital & Clinics

- [Jackson Memorial Health System](#)
- [Baptist Health South Florida](#)
- [Nicklaus Children's Hospital](#)
- [Mount Sinai Medical Center](#)
- [Larkin Community Hospital](#)
- [Urgent Care Centers Link](#)

To find a doctor in your area go to [WebMD](#)

# Map of Miami Neighborhoods



Miami neighborhood map courtesy of [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_neighborhoods)

**EMERGENCY**

**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

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN \_\_\_\_\_  
WORK PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

**Important Numbers:**

- Police Non-Emergency 305-476-5423
- 311 or 305-468-5900 (Water outage, down trees, public works)
- 511 (state-wide traffic information)

**Hurricane Preparedness Tips:**

It is imperative that you have necessary preparations in place to be prepared for Hurricane season (June 1<sup>st</sup> – November 30<sup>th</sup>). By preparing in advance you'll invest a little time up front, but you will have things in order and can devote time to last minute, less important items should you find yourself under a Hurricane Watch or Warning.

One good way to ease this stress is to have some plans laid in advance. Just think how you will feel having the peace of mind of knowing you are prepared while everyone else in the hot zone is scurrying about trying to buy supplies that are dwindling or non-existent.

Ideally, everyone should have shutters and a secure way to lock down your home. But you can at least make sure you are prepared in every other way.

1. Make sure to inventory your valuables. Make lists and videotape. Then keep this list in a safety deposit box. This includes property deeds, marriage / birth certificates, social security cards, stocks and bonds and other portfolio information, passports, wills medical records and insurance policies.
2. Make a reference list of everything you would absolutely want to take with you should you have to evacuate your home. Include photo albums, important documents, files, jewelry and other precious mementos. You will surely forget something if you had to get out quickly.
3. Compile a list of supports including family and friends that you want to stay in touch with throughout the storm. Decide on who will take what roles, and where and when to meet should phone service be out. Many people will use an out of town contact that may be easier to reach than a local one.
4. If your area is placed under a Hurricane Watch, make sure you wash all dishes and run the dishwasher. Also make sure all the laundry is washed and clean sheets and towels are being used. You don't know when power may be restored and this will avoid you running out of clean clothes too soon.
5. Be sure to have cash on you. You may not be able to find an operating ATM after the storm.
6. Fill up your car with gas. Purchase a portable tank to bring extra gas. Evacuation traffic is slow.
7. Make sure you have adequate supplies such as food and water (1 gallon per day, per person) for everyone in your household. Don't forget the manual can opener! A good rule of thumb is to have enough supplies to last you for seven days.
8. Be sure you have plenty of supplies for baby including formula (powdered) diapers clean bottles and wipes and baby food.
9. Don't forget to have all medications you use or may use filled and readily available.
10. Battery powered radio or television and flashlights. Don't forget batteries for each.
11. Purchase a car charger for your phone
12. Don't forget to make arrangements for your pets and to have adequate supplies for them as well.
13. Also, take adequate measures to account for climate changes.

The summer is a perfect time to tackle any impending projects you have been putting off. Because the world seems to slow down around us, many people are vacationing and school is out, it is a great time to delve into these matters.



### **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, and in most 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 [The Fair Housing Act](#). 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. Here are [Florida's](#).

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 DS 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**

Miami-Dade County provides curbside [recycling services for accepted products](#) 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 you 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

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>24-hr mtn</b>	24-hour emergency maintenance	<b>LA</b>	Living area
<b>AC or A/C</b>	Air conditioning	<b>LR</b>	Living room
<b>Appls</b>	Appliances	<b>MBR</b>	Master bedroom
<b>Apt</b>	Apartment	<b>MBTH</b>	Master bathroom
<b>BA</b>	Bathroom	<b>Neg</b>	Negotiable
<b>BR</b>	Bedroom	<b>Ofc</b>	Office
<b>Bsmt</b>	Basement	<b>OSP</b>	Off-street parking
<b>CAC</b>	Central air conditioning	<b>Pkg</b>	Parking
<b>DA</b>	Dining area	<b>PM</b>	Property manager (management)
<b>Det</b>	Detached	<b>Pvt</b>	Private
<b>Dk</b>	Deck	<b>Pwdr rm</b>	Powder room (1/2 bath)
<b>DR</b>	Dining room	<b>RE</b>	Real estate
<b>Dw (D/w)</b>	Dishwasher	<b>Renov</b>	Renovated
<b>Eff</b>	Efficiency	<b>Rf</b>	Roof
<b>EiK</b>	Eat-in kitchen	<b>Rm</b>	Room
<b>Fin bsmt</b>	Finished basement	<b>SF</b>	Single-family
<b>FDR</b>	Formal dining room	<b>SFA</b>	Single-family attached
<b>FHA</b>	Fair Housing Act	<b>SFD</b>	Single-family detached
<b>FMR</b>	Fair market rent	<b>Sp, PI (S/p)</b>	Swimming pool
<b>FP</b>	Floorplan	<b>Sq. ft</b>	Square feet
<b>Gar</b>	Garage	<b>Th (T/H)</b>	Townhouse
<b>H/A</b>	Handicapped accessible	<b>Vw (vu)</b>	View

<b>H/W</b>	Hardwood floors
<b>Hi ceil</b>	High ceilings
<b>HVAC</b>	Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning

<b>W/A</b>	Wheelchair accessible
<b>W/W</b>	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 make-up of the other tenants? Are they mainly younger students? Married couples with families? Older folks?
- 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 Social Security number, Driver's License 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 IOR will assist with the lease approval process.

## **Signing the lease**

DO NOT SIGN THE LEASE until it has been reviewed by IOR.

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 your IOR DS Consultant, make sure to talk with them and ask questions 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 [Allstate](#) and [StateFarm](#).

Parents will need to carefully evaluate their priorities, and then choose an institution that can best satisfy their preferences. It's worthwhile considering how much you can afford to pay for your child's schooling, the proximity of the school from home and the workplace, the curriculum you'd like your child to learn, and what kind of teaching style or environment is best for your child.

### **Miami Public Schools**

Grades K-12 are under the umbrella of the [Florida Board of Education](#). Schools in Florida are graded according to how well students have mastered the Sunshine State Standards. These standards are the skills Florida teachers determined the students must learn at each grade level and are measured by the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) each school year. Schools earn points based on student achievement and are assigned a grade at the completion of each school year. The ratings are given by the Governor's A+ Plan for Education.

- **Magnet and Charter Schools** - Miami-Dade County Public Schools offer a large array of [choice options](#). Approximately 40% of Pre-K through 12 students have made an active choice in the school or program in which they are enrolled.
- **International Studies Program** - Miami-Dade County Public Schools [International Studies Program](#) is a highly demanding curriculum that allows the IS Students who complete the program through the 12th grade to receive a "Bachiller" degree from the Ministry of Education and Sciences of Spain and a High School Diploma from the State of Florida.

### **Miami Private Schools**

- [The Archdiocese of Miami Catholic Schools](#) is a school system of 34,149 children in 61 elementary and secondary schools in Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.
- [Miami Country Day School](#)
- [List of Miami Montessori Schools](#)

### **Additional Resources for Miami Area Schools**

- [US News Rankings](#) of Miami-Dade County Public High-schools.
- [GreatSchools.org](#) for ratings for Public and Private Schools.
- Miami has an extensive system of Public and Private [International Baccalaureate Schools](#).
- You can find information on [Florida's ratings of schools](#) here.

## MIAMI AREA UNIVERSITIES

- [Barry University](#)
- [Carlos Albizu University](#)
- [Florida International University \(FIU\)](#)
- [Florida Memorial University](#)
- [Johnson and Wales University](#)
- [Keiser University](#)
- [Manchester Business School](#)
- [Miami Culinary Institute](#)
- [Miami Dade College](#)
- [Miami International University of Art & Design](#)
- [Nova Southeastern University](#)
- [St. Thomas University](#)
- [Talmudic University](#)
- [University of Miami](#)



*University of Miami*



## OBTAINING A FLORIDA DRIVER'S LICENSE

### **Obtaining a Driver's License/State ID Card**

The Division of Driver Licenses, Bureau of Field Operations, has [driver license offices](#) located throughout the state. Appointments are provided at all full service offices. The [Driver License Office Directory](#) has addresses, telephone numbers, days and operating hours. Appointments are recommended. A new resident exchanging a valid out-of-state license for a Florida license will be required to pass the vision and hearing tests only. Requirements listed [here](#).

Driver license handbooks, motorcycle handbooks and commercial driver license handbooks are available for your use from your local driver license offices. There is no charge for the handbooks and may be returned for re-use. These handbooks can be viewed [online](#).

### **New Resident of Florida**

- Other pertinent [information](#) regarding vehicle registration, tags, and titles.

For more information on how to obtain a driver's license, see the website of [Florida's DMV](#).

**Your Destination Services Consultant can also assist you with the proper procedures.**

### 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 located in the Miami area. 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](#)
- [TD Bank](#)
- [Citibank](#)
- [CHASE](#)
- [HSBC](#)
- [List of Miami Banks](#)

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION/DRIVING

Miami's public transit system is the most diverse and extensive of any locality in Florida. If you aren't in a hurry, it's not difficult to get around the city without a car.

### By Metrorail

The [Metrorail](#) is a 25-mile dual track, elevated rapid transit system serving Miami and surrounding cities. The 23 accessible Metrorail stations are about one mile apart, providing easy access for bus riders, pedestrians, and passengers who are dropped off and picked up. It connects many areas of tourist interest, including downtown Miami, Dadeland Mall, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, Lowe Art Museum, Miami Museum of Science, Village at Merrick Park and many other nearby shopping areas. Coconut Grove and downtown Coral Gables can be reached via short shuttle bus from various stations. [Schedules](#) are available online, and [Train Tracker](#) allows you to see the estimated time of arrival of the next train approaching your station.

Metrorail operates between roughly 5AM and midnight, with a bus serving all Metrorail stations operating in the overnight hours, effectively providing 24-hour service. To ride Metrorail, you must use an [EASY Card](#) or EASY Ticket as the fare gates do not accept cash. EASY Card may be purchased [online](#).

[Transit Fares](#) for Metrobus and Metrorail may be discounted when a monthly pass is purchased.



Miami Metrorail Map Courtesy of [MiamiDade.Gov](#)

### By Bus

Miami's [bus system](#) covers the entire Miami-Dade County and connects to bus lines serving Broward County and the Greater Fort Lauderdale area. Recent developments have made the bus system more reliable than in the past. Even with the changes, and because of high local traffic, buses tend to have a hard time remaining on schedule. System wide real-time Metrobus [tracking](#) will become a reality by April 2016. Many of the major bus routes operate 24 hours a day, seven days week.

To easily pay your [bus fare](#), use an [EASY Card](#) or EASY Ticket. Just tap your card or ticket on the farebox and board the bus. You can also pay with cash (no pennies), but change will not be provided. The EASY Card or EASY Ticket offers free Bus-to-Bus Transfers. Cash-paying customers must pay the full fare each time they board a bus, as paper transfers have been eliminated.

[Park and Ride](#) is available at many Metrobus surface lots. Parking rates range from free to \$4.50/day, with [discounts](#) available for monthly parking permits.

### By Metromover

Downtown Miami is served by a free elevated people mover system known as [Metromover](#), which connects to Metrorail at two stations at Government Center in the central business district and at Brickell Station in Brickell. Metromover is free of charge and is the most efficient way to move around Downtown Miami. It is a great way to take a rest when walking around downtown, and a great time to take pictures of the skyscrapers and growing Miami skyline from above.

### By Taxi

All taxis are fitted with maps of the barrier islands which state the cost per location. The same applies for passengers leaving the islands onto the mainland, though normal rates apply for person traveling by taxi within the islands or within the mainland.



Miami Metromover Map Courtesy of [MiamiDade.gov](http://MiamiDade.gov)

Service is available throughout Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Monroe counties regardless of pick-up location. The normal service charges apply for these four counties, but it is wise to ask for a pre-determined price beforehand as most drivers are willing to negotiate when leaving the county. If you wish to be taxied to a location outside of those four counties, you must negotiate a price and advise the cab company first. Drivers may refuse to drive outside of the metropolitan area if they are not advised to do so beforehand.

All taxi drivers must have a valid license to operate. It is uncommon to hear of crimes involving unlicensed taxis anywhere in the metropolitan area since Dade County keeps track of all taxi activity in and around Miami and cooperates with other counties in getting this information. If you enter a cab and do not see a valid license placed in front of the passenger's seat, you should not enter the taxi and instead call another cab company regardless of what the driver says. If you willingly enter a taxi without a license or with an expired license and there is an incident or accident, it is possible that you may not be able to hold the driver accountable by law. When entering a cab you should make note of the driver's name, license number and cab number if any problems arise during the trip. This information should be easily found inside the taxi. It may be able to help you identify the cab driver to the police or the cab company.

### **By Car**

You will find that a car is very convenient in Miami, and car rentals are cheap in comparison to other major US cities. You can find cheap car rentals off terminal from the Miami Airport from such companies as E-Z Rent-A-Car and Ace Rent A Car. The major car rental companies found in airport terminals can often be more expensive for the same service and vehicles.

Surface roads in Miami are usually easy to navigate. The area's roads are designed around a grid system, where most roads are numbered based on their distance from the city center. All avenues run north to south, while all streets run east to west. For example, the address, "9500 NW 30th Street" would be at the intersection of NW 30th Street and NW 95th Avenue. Most roads in Miami conform to this nomenclature, but due to the more than 30 municipalities within Miami-Dade County, there are a few exceptions to be aware of. Examples include Coral Gables, the Coconut Grove section of Miami (city proper), Miami Lakes, and Hialeah. Hialeah is particularly notorious since it uses its own grid system, in addition to the overall county system.

New visitors to Miami should be aware that the area's drivers are particularly aggressive. This shouldn't discourage anyone from using the roadways, but a passive approach to Miami driving can save you from an unwanted exchange with another driver, or even worse an accident. Posted speed limits are ignored by most drivers, especially on larger roads with lower speed limits.

### **Transportation "App" Options**

Several web based phone applications to secure a driver are available throughout the Miami area. The driver knows your approximate location based on your phone GPS. Payment is automatic through the app and fares may be cheaper than a taxi.

- [Uber](#)
- [Lyft](#)

### **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. <http://www.aaa.com>

### TV, Cable, Telephone, and Internet

The main service providers in Miami 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.

- [AT&T](#)
- [Comcast](#)
- [Cox Communications](#)
- [Time Warner Cable](#)

Ten digit dialing is in effect in the Miami area. All calls from or within the area, even local calls, require dialing the area code.

### Food Shopping

Miami's biggest grocery chain is [Publix](#), and you'll find them in almost all the neighborhoods. Other grocery stores are [Milam's Market](#), [Whole Foods](#) (mostly organic), [The Fresh Market](#), and [Target](#). For buying in bulk whole sale stores like Costco, Sam's Club, and BJ's can come in handy. For those who want a more personal touch, go to the farmers market! Check where and when your [local farmers market](#) is. [Grocery Taxi](#) will also deliver food to you (for a fee). You can find a longer selection of grocery stores in the area [online](#).

### Pharmacies

There are several major pharmacy chains in Miami, found on nearly every block on commercial streets. Several pharmacies are open 24 hours. Also the main grocery stores like Publix, Target, and Wal-Mart have full service pharmacies.

- [Walgreens](#)
- [CVS](#)
- [List of Pharmacies in Miami](#)

### Licensing Your Dog

In Miami-Dade County license tags are required for all dogs over 4 months of age. License tags are issued by [Miami-Dade County Animal Services](#) and must be renewed annually. New residents bringing any dog over four (4) months of age must register the dog with the Department and obtain a license tag. Licensing your dog lets people know your pet has a home and a human family which can help ensure a quicker return should they become lost. [Miami-Dade Pet Laws](#) also state that dogs are not permitted to roam free off your private property. They must be leashed at all times.

In Miami, there are two dog-friendly [beach front parks](#) for letting your pet off leash for some beach fun. The [North Shore Open Space Park](#) also has beachfront dog parks for a breezy way to let your dog run around. When you're on dry land, take Fido for a stroll along Lincoln Road, where all the fashionable South Beach dogs like to hang out.

Note that cats are not required to be licensed.

### Additional Pet Information

- [Pet Care](#) if you need help taking care of your pet
- [Pet Services](#) reviewed on Yelp
- [Veterinarians](#) in Miami
- [PetSmart](#) for pet supplies
- [Humane Society of Miami](#)
- [Miami-Dade Animal Services Department](#)
- [ANIMAL POISON CONTROL](#) 1-888-426-4435

### Excursions

- [Star Island](#)

Biscayne Bay

Star Island is an artificial island within Miami Beach. The houses are colossal and the architecture is worth taking a look at. Most of the houses are gated. The houses on Star Island are homes to or have been homes to celebrities such as Will Smith, Shaquille O'Neal, Lenny Kravitz, Gloria Estefan, Rosie O'Donnell, Madonna, P. Diddy and many more. If you are planning a trip to Miami this is a good bit of free sightseeing for you.



[Star Island](#)

- [Frost Art Museum](#)

10975 SW 17th Street

Located at Florida International University, the Frost Art Museum has a large variety of 1960's and 1970's American photography, pre-Columbian artifacts dating back from 200 to 500 AD, ancient African and Asian bronzes, and a growing number of Caribbean and Latin American paintings and artwork.

- [Lowe Art Museum](#)

1301 Stanford Dr.

With many antique art, ceramics, pottery and sculptures ranging from Greco-Roman times, Renaissance, Baroque, Art of Asia, Art of Latin America, and ancient potteries, the Lowe Art Museum offers a great range of art through the centuries.

- [Venetian Pool](#)

2701 DeSoto Blvd (in Coral Gables)

In the 1920s Denman Dink transformed this limestone quarry into a pool with a waterfall, an area for kids and an area for adults. The water in this pool comes from a spring and is drained daily. In addition to the swimming facilities, there is a snack bar (you cannot bring outside food into the Venetian Pool) and lockers.



[Venetian Pool](#)



- [Vizcaya Museum and Gardens](#)  
3251 South Miami Ave  
European-inspired estate built by James Deering in the 1910s and today is a National Historic Landmark. Includes a main house filled with art and furnishings and ten acres of gardens on Biscayne Bay.



[Vizcaya](#)

- [Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden](#)  
10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables, Florida  
Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden is home to the only outdoor rainforest in North America, several famous outdoor art installations (including world famous Chihuly glasswork), the January Chocolate Festival and world-famous Mango Festival.

- [Fruit and Spice Park](#)  
24801 S.W. 187th Avenue, Homestead, Florida  
The Preston B. Bird & Mary Heinlein Fruit & Spice Park is the only tropical botanical garden of its kind in the United States. The unique 37-acre public facility is owned and operated by the Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Open Spaces. The Park's tropical climate can be found nowhere else in the continental U.S., and hosts over 500 varieties of fruits, vegetables, spices, herbs, and nuts, and other commercially important plant specimens from around the world.

- [Robert is Here Fruit Stand and Farm](#)  
19200 SW 344th St, Homestead, FL 33034  
This fruit stand and farm is popular with both tourists and local residents. It offers many of the most sought after varieties of locally-grown tropical fruits and vegetables as well as widely-acclaimed smoothies, ice creams, and other prepared foods. It also features a petting zoo and is located only minutes from one of the main entrances to Everglades National Park as well as an alligator farm.



- [Haulover Beach](#)  
10800 Collins Avenue, Miami, FL  
Unlike other Florida beaches, Haulover Beach experiences some noticeable waves. The park is popular among local residents for its nudist area, fishing, and crabbing, although it also offers golf, tennis, and nearby restaurants. Dog-friendly areas both on the beach and off provide opportunities for recreation for dogs and their companions. And lastly, kite-flying fun has been a staple at the park for over 20 years, with a biannual kite festival and kite store which operates year round.

- [Oleta River State Recreation Park](#)

3400 N.E. 163rd St

The largest urban park in Florida has trails for biking, a beach for swimming, picnic areas and a playground for kids. Get a canoe or kayak to row to a mangrove island within the park. Several animals such as eagles and fiddler crabs also make their home here.



*Photo courtesy of [Oleta River State Recreation Park](#)*

- [Zoo Miami](#)

12400 SW 152nd St Miami

Zoo Miami is the largest and oldest zoological garden in Florida. It houses over 1,200 wild animals and is a free range zoo with global conservation initiatives. Its climate allows it to keep a wide variety of animals from Asia, Australia and Africa like no other zoo in the country.

- [Jungle Island](#)

1111 Jungle Island Trail, Miami

Jungle Island is a lush, tropical garden that features animal shows and exhibits. This is a great outing for the family to enjoy.

- [Miami Seaquarium](#)

4400 Rickenbacker Causeway

This 38 acre tropical island paradise features marine shows and marine life exhibits. Expect to stay around two to three hours touring the large aquarium.



*[Miami Seaquarium](#)*

- [Barnacle Historic State Park](#)

Coconut Grove

Built in the late 1800s, the former home of Ralph Middleton is one of the oldest homes in the county and is situated on the shore of Biscayne Bay in Coconut Grove. The forest surrounding the home is hardwood hammock and is the last of its kind in the area.

## Events

- [Ultra-Music Festival](#) is an annual outdoor electronic music festival that occurs in March.
- [Coconut Grove Art Festival](#) The three-day festival showcases the works of over 350 of the finest artists and craftsmen in the world. A signature event of the South Florida cultural calendar, the Arts Festival is a true “Celebration of the Arts”, offering live entertainment and the tropical waterfront views of Coconut Grove.
- [Miami/Bahamas Goombay Festival](#) This very special festival celebrates Bahamian-American contributions to Miami with Bahamian Food, Arts and Culture.
- [Carnaval Miami](#) is a ten day festival during the weeks of late February and early March. A major part of Carnaval is Calle Ocho, the largest Hispanic street festival in Miami.
- [Miami Fashion Week](#) consists of exhibitions, fashion shows and sponsor lounges as the world’s fashion elite flock to Miami.
- [Miami International Boat Show](#) held each February is the largest marine show in North America.
- [FedEx Orange Bowl Football Game](#) is a major Bowl Championship Series (BCS) game held in Miami’s Sun Life Stadium. Top teams battle for this prize.



### Volunteer Opportunities

- [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)

### Parent & Children Resources

- [Mom's Clubs](#) - social groups offering events and outings with mothers and their young children.

### Smart Phone Apps for Travel:

- [Uber](#) : 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.
- [Lyft](#) : 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.
- [Apple Maps](#) : Map by direction
- [Map Quest](#) : Map by direction
- [Waze](#) : Community based traffic & navigation with alternate route suggestions
- [CityMaps2Go](#) : 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:

- [WhatsApp](#) : Free local & international Real Time messaging
- [Line](#) : 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.
- [Viber](#) : 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.
- [Skype](#) : 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:

- [Angie's List](#) : 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
- [Next Door](#) : Neighbors share community events, items for sale, recommendations for babysitters, doctors and handymen, crime reports, ideas about how to improve their neighborhood and more.
- [Meet Ups](#) : 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:**

- [WTHR13](#) : Local weather and closings; includes radar and forecast
- [Weather Channel](#) : National and international time, temperature & weather
- [Tornado](#) : Set up tornado alerts & siren

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

[Federal Holidays listed through 2020](#)

[Florida Holiday List](#)

The following are legal holidays in Florida and need to be treated as such by employers:

- New Year's Day                      January 1\*
- Martin Luther King Day            Third Monday in January
- Memorial Day                        Last Monday in May
- Independence Day                  July 4\*
- Labor Day                              First Monday in September
- Columbus Day                        Second Monday in October
- Veterans' Day                        November 11\*
- Thanksgiving Day                  Fourth Thursday in November
- Christmas Day                        December 25\*

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