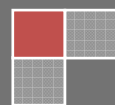


J-1 Scholar Pre-Arrival Guide

A Guide for Visiting Scholars

Georgia Institute of Technology • Atlanta, Georgia • U.S.A.



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I. KNOWING YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Georgia Institute of Technology

Georgia Institute of Technology, one of the premier research universities in the United States, with top-ranked academics, world-renowned faculty, and highly motivated students, was established by Act of the General Assembly on October 13, 1885.

Georgia Tech has broadened its resources over the years to serve more than 20,000 students, more than 6,000 of whom are seeking graduate degrees. Tech students come from more than 100 countries to pursue studies in the colleges of Management, Architecture, Engineering, Computing, Sciences, and Liberal Arts. These six colleges offer more than 40 undergraduate and 80 masters and doctoral programs, representing a wide range of traditional and interdisciplinary studies.

The Institute has also grown to occupy more than 450 acres and 128 major buildings. This expansion includes Technology Square, a \$180 million-dollar multi-facility complex that is home to the College of Management. Technology Square is located in the heart of Midtown Atlanta's vibrant and growing technology corridor, which offers students and faculty extensive exposure to the Atlanta business community.

Atlanta – Your new home away from home!

Atlanta is the capital of the state of Georgia, site of the 1996 Olympic Games, and one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. It is home to approximately 4.5 million people and has the busiest airport in the country.

Atlanta, the undisputed business and cultural center of the southeast, is the place to be for expanding high-tech and international career opportunities. The metro area is consistently ranked among the top 10 for its dynamic business and employment opportunities in a variety of national surveys. There are more than 1,600 international businesses in Atlanta. Fortune 500 companies, including BlueLink Holdings, CNN, Coca Cola Enterprises, Delta Air Lines, Home Depot, SunTrust Bank and UPS are headquartered in the area.

The city combines classic small-town southern hospitality with all the amenities of a cosmopolitan city. The moderate cost of living, which is below the national average, and the pleasant climate, which permits year-round outdoor activities, makes Atlanta very appealing. Atlanta has four distinct seasons, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy a range of comfortable climates. During the fall and spring, Atlanta is quite comfortable with temperatures 70-80° F (21-26° C). Summers can be quite hot and humid, and winters are normally mild with a few colder spells. The annual rainfall is about 48 in (122 cm).

Office of International Education International Student & Scholar Services

Dear Exchange Program Visitor:

As you plan your stay as an Exchange Visitor at the Georgia Institute of Technology, the Office of International Education (OIE) wants to welcome you and provide you with important information to make sure your stay is successful. OIE advisors are liaisons with the Department of State and are here to assist you by explaining the J regulations as well as help you to make a good transition to our university community. An important partner is the Georgia Tech academic school or research center that has offered you an invitation to our campus. Before your arrival in the US and after reading through this material, if you have questions, please first contact the academic administrator for assistance. If they are unable to answer the question, they will refer you to OIE.

Our mission is to serve as a resource, advocate, and expert for the large and diverse population of international students and scholars at Georgia Tech. We strive to create an environment where international students and scholars are able to make a well-integrated transition to Georgia Tech through diverse cultural, educational, and leadership opportunities. Our goal is to be the model in building and maintaining an international community in a campus environment with the aim of creating lifelong global leaders.

Know your Responsible Officer and Alternate Responsible Officers:

Each sponsoring agency has a Responsible Officer (RO) and several Alternate Responsible Officers (ARO). RO and AROs are thoroughly familiar with the J-1 regulations and can assist you with traveling outside the United States, employment authorizations, extension of stay, etc.

OIE Information:

ADDRESS: **Office of International Education** (#38 on the campus map located on the back cover of this book)
631 Cherry Street, Savant Building, Suite 211
Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0284

PHONE: **404.894.7475**

FAX: **404.894.9682**

Office location:

Savant Building Suite 211, #38 at map.gatech.edu

The office is open Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm. OIE staff are available to assist you by phone or e-mail (listed above) between 8:00am-5:00pm Monday through Friday. The office is closed for all official Georgia Tech holidays.

Website:

oie.gatech.edu

General e-mail:

info@oie.gatech.edu

Walk-in advising for quick questions (10 minutes):

Schedule is available at oie.gatech.edu/iss/

By Appointment Advising:

Schedule as needed with a minimum of 24 hour notice

Bi-weekly newsletter: iBuzz

Email info@oie.gatech.edu to request to be added to the newsletter mailing list

Social Media: Follow us on Twitter & Instagram @GT_ISSS

Responsible Officer:

Marisa Atencio, marisa.atencio@oie.gatech.edu

U.S Department of State Exchange Visitor Program:

Mailing Address:

U.S. Department of State
Office of Designation
Academic and Government Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
ECA/EC/D/AG, SA-44, Suite 664
301 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20547

General email:

jvisas@state.gov

Website:

j1visa.state.gov

Exchange Visitor Program Welcome Brochure:

j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Brochure-The-Exchange-Visitor-Program.pdf

Wilberforce Rights & Protections for Temporary Workers:

[travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/LegalRightsandProtections/Wilberforce Pamphlet English April2016.pdf](http://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/LegalRightsandProtections/Wilberforce_Pamphlet_English_April2016.pdf)

II. GETTING STARTED

What is the J Visa

The J Exchange Visitor Program was created by the Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act (Fulbright-Hayes Act) of 1961. The objective of the Exchange Visitor Program is “to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of **education and cultural exchanges.**”

Obtaining a J Visa and Entering the United States

Enclosed is a Form DS-2019 or “Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status.” The DS-2019 has been processed in the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and has a unique SEVIS identification number in the right-hand upper corner of the document. It is very important that you read the entire form thoroughly and once you are sure the information is correct, sign the bottom of page one.

To apply for the J-1 visa, you should access the visa application procedures for particular US Embassies and Consulates at the Department of State Web site: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. You will need to pay for the SEVIS fee at least three days prior to your appointment at the US Embassy or Consulate. You can pay the SEVIS fee with a credit card at: www.fmjfee.com. **Print the I-901 receipt and take it, in addition to the DS-2019, passport, invitation letter from the Georgia Tech department and verification of financial support with you when you apply for the visa. Please note that your supporting documents should be in English.** If your spouse or unmarried children (under age 21) are accompanying you to the U.S. they may apply for J-2 visas at the same time. Proof of relationship may be required. Dependents do not need to pay the SEVIS fee.

Entering the United States

J-1 visa holders can enter the U.S. no earlier than 30 days before the start date of your DS-2019 (#3 of the form) and must complete the OIE J scholar check-in within 30 days of the start date listed on your DS-2019. If you cannot enter the U.S. within 15 days after the start date, please contact the administrator in the GT sponsoring department to notify them of your new arrival plans. They will then notify the OIE that your DS-2019 start date should be amended to avoid the cancellation of your DS-2019 record in SEVIS.

At the port of entry into the U.S., you should be prepared to present your passport, verification of financial support, and signed form DS-2019 to the Customs and Border Protection Official. The officer will record your arrival to the U.S. with an I-94 record. The officer will indicate your permission to enter the U.S. by stamping your passport for entry, writing your visa status (“J-1”), and the designation “D/S” on near the entry stamp in your passport, opposite the visa

stamp. The DS-2019, passport and I-94 record are very important to you during your stay in the U.S. You will locate your I-94 record by visiting <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94> after your arrival to the U.S. The I-94 record, DS-2019 and passport stamp are proof of your legal J-1 status and you will need them for such purposes as extending your permission to stay in the U.S., re-entry to this country after temporary trips abroad, applying for a Social Security card, and obtaining a Georgia driver's license.

Canadian Exchange Visitors

Canadian nationals entering the United States as J-1 exchange visitors do not need to apply for a J-1 visa at the U.S. Consulate before entering the U.S. At the pre-flight inspection area, port of entry or border crossing, the Canadian national need only present a document verifying their Canadian citizenship, the form DS-2019, and proof that you have paid the SEVIS I-901 fee. You must complete the SEVIS fee payment at www.fmjfee.com prior to requesting admission to the U.S. and print the receipt. Canadian nationals will also be issued an I-94 record as evidence of lawful admission to the U.S. although it may be a paper document or an electronic record.

Two-Year Home Residency Rule- 212(e)

Some, but not all, exchange visitors are subject to 212(e). Through the residency requirement, the Department of State supports the objective of the J visa and ensures your home country benefits from your educational and cultural exchange activity.

Subjectivity to 212(e) is based on either the [Skills List](#) or being awarded direct funding from your home government or the U.S. for the purpose of participating in the Exchange Visitor Program.

If you are subject to 212(e), you will not be able to change from J-1 status to another visa status while in the U.S. and will not be eligible for an H1-B, L, K or immigrant visa until you have physically resided in your country of residence for two years or obtained a waiver from the U.S. Department of State. For the terms of the 212(e) requirement, please review your DS-2019 form and the [US Department of State website](#).

What to Do After Arrival

COMPLETE THE OIE CHECK-IN WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE START DATE LISTED ON YOUR DS-2019.

Upon arrival in the U.S., you will meet with your department administrator and host faculty to check in. Upon being issued your GT network ID, you will have the ability to complete the OIE check-in. You will visit iStart.gatech.edu and locate the J Scholar Check-in and Health Insurance Upload e-form under the J Scholar Check-in menu. After completing the OIE check-in you will be assigned to a J Scholar Orientation & your DS-2019 will be validated in SEVIS. **Attendance at the J Scholar Orientation provided by the OIE is mandatory.** We will cover the basic regulations involving maintaining good status as a J-1 visa holder, work, travel, Social Security, GA driver's license and making the most of the educational and cultural exchange. **Until you have participated in Orientation, avoid visiting the Social Security or Driver's Services Departments since your J-1 record must be in active status to be eligible for these benefits.**

Please note that you must also inform OIE when your J-2 dependent(s) arrives in the U.S. You can do this by logging into iStart, and completing the appropriate e-form(s). Please contact OIE if you have questions.

E-mail Access

Your Georgia Tech e-mail account is the official means for the institute to communicate with you. After you have arrived in the U.S., the administrative manager in your host department will assist you with getting your Georgia Tech network access and email account. You can set up your Georgia Tech e-mail to be forwarded to another e-mail account if you choose but you must ensure the OIE has a valid e-mail address on record at all times.

The BuzzCard

The BuzzCard is the Georgia Tech identification card that can provide you access to a variety of campus-wide services and systems. The first card is issued free of charge. You will need to take picture identification with you to receive the card.

PHONE: 404-894-2899

WEBSITE: buzzcard.gatech.edu

HOURS OF OPERATION: Monday-Thursday, 7:30am-5:00pm and Friday, 7:30am-4:30pm

Updating Your Address

You will provide an address to OIE when you check-in with our office. If you change your local address after that time, it is necessary to notify the OIE. Log into iStart and submit a change of address e-form. The OIE will send you an email when your address has been updated in SEVIS.

Handling Money

If you have any money with you, especially if it is a large sum, deposit it in a checking or savings account in one of the local banks. **You do not need a Social Security number to open a bank**

account. It is recommended that you get your BuzzCard (see below) and bring it with you when opening a bank account. The closest bank to campus is **Wells Fargo**, located just across from Georgia Tech on Tech Parkway opposite the Student Center. Other banks in the immediate area are **SunTrust** and **Bank of America**. ATM machines also available at the Student Center.

Cost of Living

The cost of living in Atlanta will vary greatly depending on personal choices you make. These choices may include, but are not limited to: living arrangements, living proximity to campus, and purchasing a vehicle. A J-1 visitor can expect to need a minimum of \$1,800 per month in funding.

If you choose to bring a spouse or child with you, you will need an additional \$600 for spouse or

Wells Fargo

645 State St NW
Atlanta, GA 30313-2493
404.853.1960
1.800.869.3557
www.wellsfargo.com

SunTrust

523 Luckie St NW
Atlanta, GA 30313-2401
404.253.3509
800.SUNTRUST (800.786.8787)
www.suntrust.com

Bank of America

231 Peachtree St. SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-1603
404.332.2700
1.800.432.1000
www.bankofamerica.com

\$400 per child in funding per month to accommodate for the increased cost of insurance and food. Scholars employed by Georgia Tech may be subject to payroll deductions such as: retirement plans such as TRS and ORP, health insurance, and a tobacco surcharge. Your offer letter will list the terms and conditions of your employment.

Affordable Care Act

Exchange Visitors may be subject to the terms of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). A nonimmigrant alien's [tax residency status](#) under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules determines whether he or she is subject to the requirement to carry ACA-compliant insurance or to pay the tax penalty for not carrying it:

- **Nonresident** aliens for tax purposes *are not* subject to the individual mandate
- **Resident** aliens for tax purposes *are* subject to the individual mandate

Health Insurance

The U.S. Department of State regulations and the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations governing Exchange Visitor Programs (22CFR514.14) require J-1 and accompanying J-2 family members obtain health, accident, medical evacuation and repatriation of remains insurance coverage while in the United States. **The insurance must cover the exchange visitor and all accompanying dependents for the duration of the Exchange Program.**

Approximate cost:

Insurance premiums for GT benefits eligible employees range in cost per month for an individual employee (\$150-\$200 per month). Insurance premiums for dependent coverage defined as GT employee + spouse, GT employee + child or GT family coverage -spouse and child(ren), range per month (\$300-\$550 per month with dependents). Scholars who purchase insurance through a group plan will pay between \$80-\$150 per month for an individual and up to \$700 per month additional to insure their family.

Effective January 2015, the US Department of State minimum insurance requirements are:

1. Medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness;
2. Repatriation or remains in the amount of \$25,000;
3. Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of the exchange visitor to his/her home country in the amount of \$50,000; and,
4. A deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness.

The [University System on Georgia Board of Regents has a mandatory health insurance policy](#) (SHIP) applies to all F and J students and scholars participating in programs at USG system schools. The USG SHIP insurance plan offered to USG system institutions meets requirements below:

- Both accident and sickness coverage
- Minimum benefit **\$250,000** per policy year
- A deductible of \$500 or less and/or co-pay per individual, per year*
- In-patient and outpatient, mental and nervous disorder benefits
- Prescription Drug Coverage
- Pay benefits worldwide
- Medical evacuation to one's home country and family reunification of not less than \$50,000*
- Provision for repatriation of remains of not less than \$25,500*

The options for Georgia Tech Exchange Visitors to be in compliance:

J scholars employed by Georgia Tech in a benefits eligible position:

- Enroll in a medical insurance plan offered by GT Office of Human Resources.
 - The HSA Open Access POS plan employees does **NOT** meet the minimum standards for the US Department of State OR USG SHIP requirements. Do **NOT** enroll in this plan.
 - Medical Evacuation & Repatriation is **NOT** included with OHR benefits plans & **must be purchased separately by the J Exchange Visitor**. The Pre-Arrival Notification e-form has a link to an enrollment form for a University System of Georgia plan.

J Scholars not eligible for health insurance as a benefit of employment with GT can:

- Enroll in the insurance plan offered to GT students and scholars or the USG system international student and scholar plan. Links to complete enrollment are included in the Pre-arrival Notification e-form. Both plans offer quality insurance plans at an affordable group rate and ensure compliance with both the Department of State and the University System of Georgia **OR**
- Provide evidence in the form of a health insurance policy summary showing a plan ***purchased before arriving to the U.S.*** that meets or exceeds the U.S. Department of State requirements.

Any exchange visitor who willfully refuses to comply with the health insurance requirement shall be considered to be in violation of his/her exchange visitor status. The program sponsor is obligated to inform the U.S. Department of State of exchange visitor non-compliance.

Be aware that there are insurance companies who promote they are US Department of State compliant. While these insurance plans may be cheaper than a SHIP compliant plan, it is because the cheaper insurance policies exclude common medical needs such as pregnancy, pre-existing conditions, well-care, or injuries that occur due to common activities.

III. CAMPUS SAFETY & HOUSING INFORMATION

Campus Safety

The Georgia Institute of Technology Police Department (GTPD) is a fully operational state certified law enforcement agency devoted to the protection of the campus, its students, faculty, staff and visitors. Because Georgia Tech is an open, urban campus with many students living in surrounding Atlanta neighborhoods, Georgia Tech takes a very proactive stance when it comes to notifying the campus community about safety concerns. Most of all, GTPD encourages everyone to be alert and aware of surroundings and to be attentive to the behavior of others both on and off campus. It takes engagement from the entire Georgia Tech community to ensure a safer campus for everyone. If you see suspicious activity, notify GTPD immediately at 404-894-2500.

Safety tips from GTPD

www.police.gatech.edu

- Always lock your door, even if you only leave for a minute
- Do not allow strangers to enter the premises
- If someone asks to use your phone for emergency purposes, offer to telephone for them instead of allowing them access to your residence and possessions.
- Do not put your address anywhere that a stranger can gain easy access, like a key chain or hang tag.
- On-campus, call 404-894-2500 to report suspicious activity. Immediately give the dispatcher your location and any pertinent information. If possible, stay on the line until help arrives or the dispatcher terminates the call.
- Use ATMs during the day. If you must use the machine at night, go to an indoor or well-lit machine.
- Avoid working or studying alone in a building at night
- Avoid using stairs in remote sections of a building
- Never leave valuables unattended
- Never prop doors open (especially fire doors)
- Advise police of any hazards or security problems
- Walk with a friend at night
- Park in a well-lit areas near other vehicles or in high-traffic areas
- Keep valuables in your vehicle out of sight
- When leaving your vehicle, roll your windows up and lock your door

Temporary Accommodation

Resources you may wish to investigate for initial accommodation include:

[Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center](#) | 404-347-9440

Georgia Tech Rate available

[Courtyard Atlanta Midtown/Georgia Tech](#) | 404-607-1112

[Georgian Terrace Hotel](#) | 404-897-1991

Georgia Tech Rate available

[Hampton Inn Atlanta-Georgia Tech-Downtown](#) | 404-881-0881

Georgia Tech Rate available

Off-Campus Accommodation

You will be responsible for securing your own accommodation. Georgia Tech is located in an urban setting near Midtown and Downtown Atlanta. There are a lot of residential apartments within this area with varied amenities. Because a lease is a binding commitment, it is strongly recommended to view the place before making a final decision or signing a lease.

*For a full list of Off-Campus Housing options, see the **Off-Campus Housing Directory** at:*

<http://housing.gatech.edu/techlife/Off%20Campus%20Housing/Pages/default.aspx>

The preceding off-campus housing information consists of general information about apartment complexes, however other less commercial options are also available. You can look for smaller rental properties, rent a room directly from another individual, or share a house with other individuals. These options can often be less expensive and may provide more furnished options.

- ◆ Check Classifieds at:
[AJCExchange.com](#) | [atlanta.craigslist.org](#) | [atlanta.creativeloafing.com](#) | [Sublet.com](#)
- ◆ Stay in temporary housing and walk or drive around neighborhoods near campus looking for “For Rent” or “For Lease” signs
- ◆ Look for apartment options which allow you to access to public transportation/MARTA train lines at <https://martaguide.com/apartments/>

Some Helpful Tips to Assist You in Your Housing Search

- If you are arriving early and need a place to stay during your search for housing, talk with your faculty host and the department administrator know so they can assist with short term/temporary housing options.
- Explore opportunities to stay with an American host family.
- Contact an **apartment locator service** (apartments are usually rented in person, but apartment locator services may assist you before you arrive)

PROPERTY NAME	LOCATION	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS	PRICE RANGE	LEASE TERM	DISTANCE FROM GT
100 Midtown	Midtown	100 10th Street NW Atlanta, GA 30309 100midtown.com	2 and 4	\$699- \$898/month (per student)	9-12 months	1.6 km (1 mile)
				Furnished		Parking \$80/month
				Includes All Utilities		
<p>100 Midtown is made specifically for student living and is a very popular housing option for international students. Its location just off Georgia Tech campus (East) makes getting there easy by walking or taking the Tech Trolley. There is a Publix grocery store right across the street and a Marta station just 2 blocks away. 100 Midtown is decently priced for its central and convenient location.</p>						
Westmar Student Lofts	West Midtown	800 West Marietta St. Atlanta, GA 30318 westmarlofts.com	2 and 4	\$680- \$790/month (per student)	3-12 months	1.6 km (1 mile)
				Furnished		Parking Included
				Includes Cable & Internet		
<p>Metropointe Lofts is close to Georgia Tech campus (West) and provides a regular shuttle service to Georgia Tech, other nearby universities, and Marta. Metropointe Lofts is specifically for students but its location is a bit isolated from stores or restaurants.</p>						
M Street Apartments	Midtown	950 Marietta Street Atlanta, GA 30318 mstreetatlanta.com	Studio, 1 to 3	\$799- \$1600/month	3-12 months	1.2 km (0.75 mile)
				Unfurnished		Community Parking Available
				Does Not Include Utilities		
<p>M Street Apartments is just off Georgia Tech campus (West), so walking to campus is very easy. Some shops and restaurants are in the community. Rent does not include furniture or utilities, which could be inconvenient and/or costly to students. The variety and quality of options available at M Street Apartments is nonetheless appealing.</p>						
The Flats at Atlantic Station	Atlantic Station	450 16th Street NW Atlanta, GA 30363 theflatsatlanticstation.com	2 and 4	\$740- \$999/month (per student)	12 months	2.7 km (1.7 miles)
				Furnished		Parking Included
				Includes Water, Cable, Internet		
<p>The Flats at Atlantic Station is not too far from Georgia Tech (shuttle service to campus and Marta provided). Its location in Atlantic Station is ideal, with a Target and IKEA right across the street and extensive shopping, dining, and entertainment close by. The Flats at Atlantic Station is specifically for students and is a safe and comfortable choice.</p>						

e.g. Apartment Guide - www.apartmentguide.com or PROMOVE- www.promove.com

Above is a SHORT list of apartments near Georgia Tech that has been compiled to assist you with your search. Neither Georgia Tech nor OIE can verify that all the information is accurate, or

recommend or directly promote any of these options. Information in this table is subject to change. Contact the companies directly for up-to-date pricing information.

IV. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATION

On-Campus Transportation

Transportation within Georgia Tech campus, handled by GT Parking & Transportation, is adequately provided by the **Stinger** and **Tech Trolley** bus services. Route maps are provided in the inside back cover of this guide.

The **Stinger** bus service offers three different routes on campus –Red Route, Blue Route, and Green Route. The Red and Blue Routes generally service the core of Georgia Tech campus, while the Green Route extends north and south of campus, to areas such as Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) to the north and Techwood Parkway to the south.

The **Tech Trolley** provides service between Technology Square, Midtown MARTA Station, and the main campus.

For detailed information about On-Campus Transportation, including maps & schedules, visit: www.parking.gatech.edu

Off-Campus Transportation

MARTA

Georgia Tech's campus is accessible by Atlanta's public transportation system, MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority). MARTA offers rail and bus service throughout metropolitan Atlanta. The trains stop throughout the city, with two stops convenient to Georgia Tech campus: North Avenue and Midtown Stations. MARTA single one-way fare is less than \$5. MARTA also offers weekly and monthly passes.

For more information on MARTA, visit: www.itsmarta.com



Obtaining a Social Security Number

What is a Social Security number? A Social Security number is a permanent nine-digit identification number/card issued by the Social Security Administration. It is used primarily to identify participants in the federal government's Social Security Program, but because it is unique to each person, the number is now used by many other public and private organizations. J scholars are eligible to apply for an SSN but not required to obtain one unless they will be **employed** by Georgia Tech. Information will be provided at J Scholar Orientation.

If you would like to obtain a driver's license and are not eligible for an SSN, you will need to be issued Form SSA-L676 from the Social Security Administration.

ADDRESS & DIRECTIONS:

Social Security Administration
 Peachtree-Summit Federal Building
 401 W. Peachtree St, Suite 2860
 Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Located at the corner of Ralph McGill Blvd and W. Peachtree St

If using MARTA: Get off at the Civic Center Station

HOURS: Monday-Friday, 8:30am-3:00pm

PHONE: 1.800.772.1213

WEBSITE: www.ssa.gov

Requirements for Social Security Number

J-1 students/scholars must first complete check-in with OIE before they apply for a Social Security number (SSN). You must apply in person to the Social Security Administration and will need to present your **passport, I-94 Record, and the following documents:**



J-1 Scholars

- **DS-2019**
- **Letter of invitation from Department**

Once you have successfully applied, you will receive the card by mail in 2-4 weeks. You will also receive a receipt indicating that you have applied successfully for a card.

- ❖ You do not need a SSN to be initially hired by Georgia Tech in the Office of Human Resources, although you will need to give them the number once you have it.

Obtaining a Driver's License or ID Card

You may apply for a driver's license at any Department of Driver Services office.

For the most convenient location for written & driving exams, visit: www.dds.ga.gov

Requirements for Driver's License

J-1 students/scholars must apply in person to the Department of Driver Services and will need to present your **passport, original I-94 Form, proof of local residence** (such as a signed lease agreement, a utility bill with your name & local address, or a bank statement), **\$20 cash or money order, and the following documents:**

J-1 Students/Scholars with SSN

- **Current DS-2019**
- **Social Security Card**

J-1 Students/Scholars without SSN & J-2 Dependents

- **Current DS-2019**
- **Form SSA-L676 from the Social Security Administration**

Recommendations

- Wait at least 10 business days after your entry to the U.S. before applying for a GA license.
- Wait until you have received the required documents from the Social Security Administration before applying for a GA license.

- If you are planning to purchase a car, GA state laws require you to have a GA driver's license to register your car. A benefit is less expensive car insurance.



Requirements for Identification Card

All documents necessary to obtain a driver's license (shown above) are also needed to obtain an ID card. Be sure to bring cash or money order to pay for the fee for a GA ID card.

Buying/Leasing a Car

Buying a Car

Buying a car is a serious financial matter. You are advised to be careful when purchasing any car, especially a used car. While most car dealers are reputable, some try to deceive customers by selling defective cars. You may want to find a friend who knows a lot about automobiles or read a magazine like *Consumer Reports* to help you decide which model of car will be best for you. It is wise to test-drive the car and to have a mechanic inspect it before you buy. This is to ensure that there are no major defects. For a small fee you can also purchase a vehicle history report from carfax.com by providing the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) from the car.

Once you have negotiated a buying price, make sure that you receive the title certificate for the car and that the seller has signed over the car's ownership to you. If you are buying a used car, it is important to realize that when you pay the money and sign all the papers, the vehicle is yours. You do not have the right to return the vehicle and ask for your money back if you find something wrong.

Owning and operating a car is no simple matter. Besides the cost of buying the car, there are other costs involved:

- Automobile insurance (required by State of Georgia Law)
- Gasoline, regular motor oil changes, and other car maintenance and repair costs
- Annual emissions inspections, registration, and taxes

Campus Parking Areas

If you choose to purchase a car and drive to campus, there are designated parking areas available throughout Georgia Tech campus. You will need to purchase a permit to park on campus. Parking permits must match the designated permit area in which you park. Visitor and motorcycle parking is also available in various locations.

For online parking registration, visit: www.parking.gatech.edu

Zipcar

You can get 24/7 access to Zipcars parked right on campus to borrow for short-term use. Simply reserve online, let yourself in with your Zipcard, and drive. Zipcar's low hourly and daily rates include gas and insurance. You only need to be 18+ to join. Members age 18-20 can use the Zipcars that are parked on campus. Members age 21+ also have access to thousands of Zipcars all around Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, London, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver and Washington DC.

For more information on Zipcars, visit: www.zipcar.com/gt

Car Rental

Below are just a few of the websites for the many rental car companies available in Atlanta. For a complete listing you can do an internet search or check the yellow pages of the telephone directory under "Rental Cars".

www.avis.com

www.budget.com

www.enterprise.com

[erprise.com](http://www.enterprise.com)

WIRELESS SERVICE PROVIDER	PLAN TYPES	ID	SSN	CREDIT REPORT	PHONE & WEBSITE
Sprint	Prepaid	No	No	No	1.800.SPRINT1 www.sprint.com
	2-Year Contract	No	Yes	Yes	

Cell

Cell phones are the most common means of communication after e-mail. Below is a list of the major wireless service providers in the area along with plans offered and their requirements.

Please Note: A credit or debit card is not needed if initial set-up is done in-store.



Phones

phones most

Verizon Wireless	Prepaid	No	No	No	1.800.256.4646 www.verizonwireless.com
	1- or 2-Year Contract	Yes	Yes	Yes	
AT&T	Prepaid	Yes	No	No	1.888.333.6651 wireless.att.com
	2-Year Contract	Yes	Yes	Yes	
T-Mobile	Prepaid	Yes	No	No	1.800.T-MOBILE www.t-mobile.com
	2-Year Contract	Yes	Yes	Yes	

VI. CAMPUS LIFE & FACILITIES

Georgia Tech campus is a dynamic & vibrant place, with a constant array of activities designed for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors. From athletics to concerts, from lectures to social gatherings, great things are always happening at Tech. From music, dance, & comedy acts at the Ferst Center to wonderful productions by the student-run DramaTech Theater, Tech performances are a hot ticket! Don't forget that exciting sporting events such as football, basketball, baseball, golf, swimming & diving, and many others have long been an integral part of Georgia Tech tradition.

All these choices for leisure and entertainment are an ideal complement to the renowned work ethic of Georgia Tech students who know how to balance hard work in the classroom and lab with fun activities outside the academic arena.

This guide is only a starting point for you to learn about what Tech has to offer. The best way to learn is to get out and explore your new campus!

Campus Facilities

Campus Recreation Center (campus map #140)

www.crc.gatech.edu

Opened in Fall 2004, the Campus Recreation Center (CRC) is widely regarded as the finest college fitness and recreation facility in the country. The CRC includes:

6 basketball courts, racquetball and squash courts, indoor hockey rink, game room with large-screen television, 50-meter competition pool with separate diving well, 185-foot water slide, current channel, hot tub, 15,000-square-foot fitness center, climbing wall

Non-credit classes are available for both workout purposes and learning skills. Please visit the CRC website for application and fee information.

*Membership fee required to use the CRC facilities.

Student Center (campus map #104)

www.studentcenter.gatech.edu

Beyond meeting spaces, the Student Center complex offers a wide variety of restaurants, services, and entertainment venues. The Student Center & Student Center Commons includes retail outlets such as College Optical, Kaplan Test Prep & Admissions, Hair Cuttery, and more. The Student Center houses the post office, box office, bowling & billiards facilities, video games, a craft center, a music listening room, a ballroom, a computer lab, ATMs, and several lounge & study areas.

Barnes & Noble @ Georgia Tech (campus map #172)

www.bookstore.gatech.edu

Barnes & Noble operates the campus bookstore, Barnes & Noble @ Georgia Tech. The bookstore is located in Technology Square and serves students' textbook and technology needs. It is also a great place to purchase GT apparel!

Technology Square (campus map #170-179)

Designed with the idea of extending Tech's campus into the Midtown Atlanta business community, Technology Square is a multi-building complex along 5th Street. It contains a variety of facilities, including the Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center, College of Management building, Global Learning Center, and more. Serving to enhance that college town feel, there are a host of retail shops and restaurants as well. Anchored by Barnes & Noble @ Georgia Tech, Technology Square features Moe's Southwest Grill, The Spence, Tin Drum Asian Café, Starbucks, Ray's New York Pizza, Great Clips, and LA Fitness. Sidewalk dining, bike racks, Water Haven, St. Charles Deli and Waffle House make Technology Square an ideal hangout for students on the go.

Library and Information Center (campus map #77)

www.library.gatech.edu

The Georgia Tech library functions as a client-oriented information center focusing on the data and information needs of students, faculty, and staff. The library contains more than 1 million volumes, a complete collection of U.S. patents, and more than 2 million technical reports, government documents, and industrial standards. The explosion of scientific and technical information and the advent of computing, networking, and multimedia technologies are the foundation of the evolution of the library from a building of books to a learning and information center. The library leads the nation in providing a technologically robust environment in support of student learning.

The library is affiliated with the University of Georgia Information Dissemination Center, which provides computer-based searches of published literature. The Georgia Tech Electronic Library (GTEL) provides online access to the catalog and other databases through the campus computer network. GTEL also contains databases that index the contents of periodicals, conference proceedings, and research reports.

Library orientation sessions are usually organized to provide an overview of library services that are offered to students (such as Interlibrary Loan) and a review of selected library databases that are useful to students in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering (such as GIL Catalog, NTIS, etc.). Although customized for Electrical and Computer Engineering students, other students are welcome to attend these sessions.

Ferst Center for the Arts (campus map #124)

www.ferstcenter.gatech.edu

The Ferst Center for the Arts, located in the heart of Georgia Tech campus, was conceived as a brilliant showcase for the presentation of concerts, recitals, lectures, dance, film, and theater. This state-of-the-art facility, housing an intimate 1,155-seat auditorium featuring a proscenium stage, orchestra pit, and theatrical lighting & sound systems, provides a wealth of diverse & enriching opportunities for both Tech and the greater Atlanta community.

The Ferst Center serves as a shining example of Tech's dedication to a holistic educational experience. Its programs include an outstanding season of music, theater, dance, and opera performances from September to May. Tickets are sold through the Ferst Center Box Office at 404-894-9600 and student/staff discount tickets are available through the Student Center Box Office.

Student Organizations

There are a number of very active cultural, ethnic, and nationality student organizations at Tech. Knowing more about the activities being offered by student organizations is a great way for you to connect with others while at Georgia Tech.

For a full listing of these groups and contact information, visit:
involvement.gatech.edu/pages/organizations.php.

One of the organizations, **Global Jackets**, facilitates an annual Culture Fest each spring, which includes a Food Fair and many other cultural events.

International Activities

OIE facilitates several international events throughout the year. All of the events will be advertised through iBuzz, the electronic newsletter that all international students at Tech receive from OIE and that J scholars can receive upon request.

One of these activities is the **International Education Week**, which occurs in November. Another activity is the monthly **International Coffee Hour**, which is a great way to meet new friends in an informal setting over a cup of coffee.

VII. SUPPORT PROGRAMS

At Georgia Tech you will find a vast network of supportive and caring people to help you not only make the transition to Georgia Tech, but also to create an exchange experience that is truly your own.

“AMIS” - Atlanta Ministry with International Students

www.amis-inc.org

AMIS is a non-profit organization in Atlanta that serves all of Atlanta’s international students and scholars. This organization’s purpose is to introduce international students to the people of Atlanta through a number of programs. One of these programs is the Amigo Friendship Family Program, where a new student is assigned to a member of the Atlanta community who would like to meet, share a meal, and show a new international student Atlanta. Another one of the AMIS programs is the International Student Welcome Reception, which includes a concert by the Atlanta Youth Symphony and is followed by an international food reception.

International Spouse Programs

www.gtspousegroup.wix.com/gt-spouse-group

There are special programs designed for spouses of new international students and scholars at Georgia Tech. Each fall, an orientation for spouses is presented as a way for them to learn about the community and campus resources available, and it offers an opportunity for new spouses to meet one another. There are also a number of ongoing events throughout the year designed for new spouses.

Women’s Resource Center

www.womenscenter.gatech.edu

The Women’s Resource Center (WRC) provides resources, referrals, and programs on issues specific to female students and scholars at Georgia Tech. Along with other campus women’s programs, the WRC works to provide a supportive and welcoming campus environment.

The Language Institute

www.esl.gstech.edu

The English Language Institute offers affordable English language courses. There are two different types of courses that are geared to the GT J-1 scholar community (academic English) and to J-2 dependents (day to day beginner skills and intermediate to advanced professional skills). For further details, including location of the English Language Institute and course offerings, please visit the GT Language Institute in person or review their website.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Atlanta Attractions

Atlanta has many attractions and events year-round. Below are listed some of the most popular places to visit. *For current listing of events in Atlanta, visit:* www.accessatlanta.com/events

Atlanta Botanical Gardenwww.atlantabg.org

The Garden features 15 acres of outdoor display gardens, the Upper Woodland showcasing five acres of shade-loving ornamentals from around the world and the 10-acre Storza Woods with natural undergrowth and walking trails. In addition, the Conservatory green-house contains rare and endangered plants from the tropics to the deserts.

The Atlanta History Centerwww.atlantahistorycenter.com

Learn about the rich history of the city of Atlanta from pre-civil war to today. Tour the 1928 Swan House mansion, explore the lush gardens, and visit an 1840's southern farmhouse to understand how southern farmers worked.

The Carter Presidential Centerwww.cartercenter.org

The Carter Presidential Center, located on 30 acres of land, features a museum detailing Jimmy Carter's life and presidency through films, videos, and displays. A restaurant and Japanese garden with a view of the Atlanta skyline are other features of the center.

Chattahoochee Nature Centerwww.chattnaturecenter.com

A community center for the understanding and enjoyment of nature, the center offers forest and marsh trails, wildlife exhibits on and around the Chattahoochee River, educational programs, and the Nature Store.

Fernbank Museum of Natural History and Science Centerwww.fernbankmuseum.org

Home to a world of dinosaurs, artifacts, science interactives, shells, wildlife, IMAX® films and more. Unique permanent exhibitions, such as "A Walk Through Time in Georgia, Sensing Nature and Giants of the Mesozoic," combine with distinctive special exhibitions and special educational programming and unique travel opportunities to teach visitors about the earth's history, the physical universe, the environment, and human culture.

Georgia Aquariumwww.georgiaaquarium.org

The World's Largest Aquarium, housing more than 100,000 animals representing 500 species from around the globe, including two whale sharks – the largest fish on the planet. Also located at the aquarium is the popular 4-D theater, café and gift shop.

High Museum of Artwww.high.org

The High Museum of Art is a leading art museum in the Southeastern United States. The High Museum holds more than 11,000 works of art in its permanent collection. Included in this collection are 19th and 20th century American art, European art, decorative arts, African American art, modern and contemporary art, photography, and African art.

Lake Lanier Islandswww.lakelanierislands.com

Four islands on the southern shore of Lake Lanier, one of the most popular lakes in the country, offers water sports and many other outdoor activities. The main attraction is the Lake Lanier Islands Beach and Water Park. A great day-trip for a hot summer's day!

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Sitewww.nps.gov/malu

This national historic site is a memorial to America's most revered civil rights leader and the place where Dr. King was born, lived, worshipped, and is now buried. National Park Service rangers provide guided tours of Dr. King's birth home as well.

Stone Mountain Park

www.stonemountainpark.com

Home to the world's largest relief carving on the world's largest mass of exposed granite. Visited by over 4 million visitors annually, it is one of the most popular attractions in the country. Visitors can explore 3,200 acres of beautiful scenery, pristine lakes, forestland, spectacular flora, & miles of nature trails. In addition, it offers a great variety of recreational & entertainment activities including unique attractions, tennis, golf, fishing, hiking, & camping. The nightly summer Laser Show & fireworks display are not to be missed.

World of Coca-Cola

www.woccatlanta.com

Dedicated to the history and future of the Coca-Cola drink. Explores the 100 year-old relationship between Coca-Cola and its consumers. Features the world's largest collection of Coca-Cola memorabilia. Taste every drink that Coca-Cola makes worldwide, and learn how Atlanta contributed to the success of this dark, sugary drink.

Zoo Atlanta

www.zooatlanta.org

Zoo Atlanta is home to nearly 1,000 animals - large, small, furry, scaly, feathered, hooved, winged, striped, and horned. They live among the trees, in the hills, alongside streams and watering holes, in naturalistic habitats that look and feel like their homes in the wild. This encourages the animals to "act naturally". Zoo Atlanta is considered one of the top zoos in the country.

Measurements

The US is gradually changing over to the metric system, but most measurements will continue to be made with the English system.

Linear

Personal height is expressed in feet & inches.

1 ounce =	approximately	28 grams
1 pound =	16 oz =	450 grams
2.2 lb =	35 oz =	1000 grams
1 dry qt =	2 pints =	1.10 liters
1 dry pt =	½ quart =	0.55 liters
1 dry gal.=	4 quarts =	4.40 liters

Centimeters → Inches: multiply #of centimeters by .39
Inches → Centimeters: multiply #of inches by 2.54

Kilometers → Miles: multiply #of kilometers by .621
Miles → Kilometers: multiply #of miles by 1.61

Measure

1 inch (1")	=	2.54 cm
1 foot (1') 12 inches	=	30.58 cm
1 yard 3 feet	=	91.44 cm
39.4 in 3.28 ft 1.09 yd	=	1 meter
1 tbsp./l.	=	tablespoon
3 tsp.	=	1 tbsp.

1 km	=	5/8 mile or 0.6 mile
1 mile	=	1.6 kilometer

Dry Measure

Americans use the avoirdupois system, based on a pound (lb) weighing 16 ounces (oz).

Personal weight is expressed in pounds. Avoirdupois weight is also used for weighing many commodities, including meats, vegetables, sugar, coffee, butter, etc.

Grams → Ounces: multiply # of grams by .03527
Ounces → Grams: multiply # of ounces by 28.35
Kilos → Pounds: multiply #of kilos by 2.2046

tsp./t.	=	teaspoon	8 oz	=	1 c.
c.	=	cup	4 tbsp.	=	¼ c.
oz	=	ounce	4 c.	=	1 qt 32 oz
lb	=	pound	2 c.	=	1 pt 16 oz
pt	=	pint	4 qt	=	1 gal.
qt	=	quart	16 oz	=	1 lb
gal.	=	gallon	2 tbsp.	=	1 oz

Liquid Measure

Liquid measure usually applies to dry items as well as liquid, if they are to be used in recipes. Recipes calling for '1 cup', '1 tablespoon', '1 teaspoon', etc. refer to special cooking utensils. If you use tableware, portions may not be correct.

1 tsp.	=	1/6 oz	=	5 mL
1 tbsp.	=	1/2 oz	=	15 mL
1 c.	=	8 oz	=	227 mL
2 c.	=	16 oz	=	454 mL
4 c.	=	32 oz	=	907 mL
6 ² / ₃ tbsp.	=	3.5 oz	=	100 mL
1 c.+1 T.	=	8.5 oz	=	250 mL
4 ¹ / ₃ c.	=	2.2 lb	=	1 kg

Temperatures

The Fahrenheit system is used to read temperature in the US.

Water boils at 100 °C or 212 °F.

Water freezes at 0 °C or 32 °F.

Fahrenheit → Celsius: subtract 32° from °F, divide by 1.8

Celsius → Fahrenheit: multiply °C by 1.8, add 32°

Celsius	-40 °C	-30 °C	-20 °C	-10 °C	0 °C	10 °C	20 °C	30 °C	40 °C
Fahrenheit	-40 °F	-22 °F	-4 °F	14 °F	32 °F	50 °F	68 °F	86 °F	140 °F

Cooking Temperatures

The table below gives a range of typical cooking temperatures from a very slow oven to a very hot oven.

Slow	→	Fast
107 °C 149 °C 177 °C 218 °C 232 °C 260 °C		
225 °F 300 °F 350 °F 425 °F 450 °F 500 °F		

Body Temperature

Normal body temperature (by oral thermometer) is 98.6 °F or 37.0 °C. Normal body temperature can vary within 1°F above or below.

Low Fever	High Fever
37.8 °C – 38.3 °C	38.9 °C – 40.6 °C
100 °F – 101 °F	102 °F – 104 °F

Time

The continental USA is divided into four time zones:

Eastern | Central | Mountain | Pacific

Atlanta is in the Eastern Time zone.

Traveling from the east coast to the west coast, the time goes back 1 hour each time a new time zone is entered.

The US uses daylight saving time from the beginning of spring to the end of fall. The news and television will remind you to set your clocks forward 1 hour in the beginning of spring and back 1 hour in the end of fall. A saying to help you remember is, “spring forward, Fall back.”

The 24-hour day is divided into two 12-hour periods:

A.M. (ante-meridian): 12:00 midnight → 12:00 noon

P.M. (post-meridian): 12:00 noon → 12:00 midnight

Consulates in Atlanta (For complete/up to date list, visit Georgia.org)

CONSULATE	ADDRESS	PHONE	WEBSITE/E-MAIL
Consulate of the Kingdom of Belgium	230 Peachtree St. NW, Suite 2710 Atlanta, GA 30303	404.659.2150	www.diplobel.us
Consulate General of the Federative Republic of Brazil	3500 Lenox Road, Suite 800 Atlanta, GA 30326	404.949.2400	info@atlantaconsulatebrazil.org
Consulate General of Canada	1175 Peachtree St. NE 100 Colony Square, Suite 1700 Atlanta, GA 30361-6205	404.532.2000	www.atlanta.gc.ca
Consulate General of the Republic of Colombia	5901 Peachtree Dunwoody Rd. Suite 405 Atlanta, GA 30328-5382	770.668.0512/0552	www.consuladodecolombiaatlanta.com
Royal Danish Consulate	1100 Spring St. NW, Suite 550 Atlanta, GA 30309	404.876.5511	sselig@seligenterprises.com
Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany	Marquis Two Tower, Suite 901 285 Peachtree Center Ave. NE Atlanta, GA 30303-1221	404.659.4760	www.germany.info/atlanta
Honorary Consulate of the Republic of India	980 Hammond Drive, Suite 1100 Atlanta, GA 30328	404.3124044	he@indiaconsul.com
Consulate General of Japan	One Alliance Center, Suite 1600 3500 Lenox Road Atlanta, GA 30326	404.240.4300	www.atlanta.us.emb-japan.go.jp
Consulate General of the Republic of Korea	Cain Tower, Suite 500 229 Peachtree St., Northeast Atlanta, GA 30303	404.5221611	koreaconsul@gmail.com
Honorary Consulate of the Kingdom of Spain	1010 Huntcliff, Suite 2315 Atlanta, GA 30350	770.5182406	itaboada@aol.com
Honorary Consulate of the Kingdom of Sweden	945 East Paces Ferry Road 2600 Resurgens Plaza Atlanta, GA 30326	404.695.5212	www.swedenabroad.se/Start 6989.a spx
Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Atlanta	1180 Peachtree Street, NE Suite 850, Atlantic Center Plaza Atlanta, Georgia 30309	404.870.9375	www.roc-taiwan.org/US/ATL
Honorary Consul General of Turkey	1266 West Paces Ferry Rd. NW Suite 257 Atlanta, Georgia 30327-2306	404.848.9600	www.honturkishconsulga.org