University of South Florida

Postdoctoral Scholar Handbook

2013-2014

Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, Graduate Studies

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome

On behalf of the faculty and administration at the University of South Florida, we wish to welcome you to our dynamic research institution. USF strives to provide you with an excellent postdoctoral experience, one that develops you further as a scholar and gives you the opportunity to enhance our learning communities in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee. Our postdocs engage in research and in some cases, teaching, under the general oversight of a faculty mentor or department chair in preparation for a career position in academe, industry, government or the non-profit sector.

We hope this guide will assist you in navigating the Tampa campus as well as the larger Tampa Bay region.   There is a lot of practical information for new residents of Tampa Bay, from obtaining a driver's license to signing up for health insurance.

The office most immediately responsible for postdoctoral scholars is the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs in the Office of Graduate Studies. They can be reached at (813) 974-0795 or at postdoc@usf.edu if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eric Hoyer
Assistant Director of Postdoctoral Affairs, Office of Graduate Studies

Dr. Peter Harries
Assistant Dean, Office of Graduate Studies

Dr. Dwayne M. Smith
Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Dean, Office of Graduate Studies

Getting a USFCard

The USFCard is the official identification card of the University of South Florida. The USFCard is a multi-functional card with digitized photo and electronic identification and validation for departments needing to verify student and/or employee status. The USFCard was designed as a platform for a multitude of services and functions, such as riding the BullRunner or checking books out at the library.

In order to be issued a USFCard, you must have a UID number, which takes a couple of days after your first day of work to be assigned. When you have been issued a UID number, take your job offer letter to MSC 1505 (Tampa Campus) or BAY 132 (St. Petersburg Campus).

The cost for your original card is $10.00. Replacement/re-make cards are $15.00.

Payment Methods

Customers may pay with Visa/MasterCard, Cash, Check, or BullBucks.

Tampa Campus – Marshall Student Center, first floor room 1505.
St. Petersburg Campus – Cashier's Office, BAY 132.

Setting Up Your NetID

The NetID is your user ID at the University. Students, faculty, and staff are automatically eligible to obtain a NetID. With its associated password, the NetID allows you access to a variety of online services offered at the entire university system, such as Blackboard, USF Google email account, USF Library online services, Parking and Transportation, GEMS Self-Service, the USF Computer Store, the USF Wi-Fi network, and more.

To activate your NetID, follow these steps:

1. Go to https://netid.usf.edu
2. Click on the link which says **Activate Your NetID**
3. Enter your First and Last Names in the fields provided.
4. The information you will need:
   o Your USF ID# (looks like U12345678) or your USF Card# (starts with 6400)
   o Your birthday month and day
   o The last 4 digits of your SSN OR the 4 digit activation code you received from International Services.
5. Follow the on-screen instructions. New users will be asked to select a secret question and provide an answer. Users who have previously activated their NetID will be prompted for the answer to their secret question.
6. If prompted, complete the USF Emergency Notification System update. *Note: You may need to refresh your browser after submitting your update closing the notification window.*
7. Create your password. Note: Passwords must contain both letters and numbers but no dictionary words and must be at least eight (8) characters long.

Your NetID should now be set up.

Setting Up Your HSCNet Account

If you were hired to work in a college in USF Health, you will need to set up a HSCNet account to have access to additional applications and to a USF Health email. USF Health Colleges include:

- Morsani College of Medicine
- College of Nursing
- College of Public Health
- School of Physical Therapy
- School of Biomedical Science
- College of Pharmacy

Apply for this account and have your HSCNet username and password available ***before*** you apply for the USF NetID (Blackboard). If you already have a non-HSC email address registered in Blackboard, see item 6 under "Activate Your USF NetID" for information on changing the address.

1. **Access the IMPRESS + NEW Account Request site located here: https://hsccf.hsc.usf.edu/support_desk/new_account/account_request_step_1.cfm**
2. **Select Your Role at USF HEALTH: Student, Faculty, Residents/Fellows, USF Staff or USFPG Staff.**
3. **Enter Your Date of Birth.**
4. **Enter your Employee ID or Student U Number depending on your Role.**
5. **Enter your own password.** Strong passwords are required, this means the password must be at least seven characters in length and contain three of these four types of characters: one or more upper case characters, one or more lower case characters, one or more numbers, and/or one or more special characters (example: !, @, #, $, %...).
   We recommend "pass phrases" be utilized. To do this, pick a phrase, then use the first character of each word. For example: Phrase: "My cat has nine lives and four legs" Password: "Mch9la4l"
6. **Enter two security questions that only you will know (Elementary School and a Four Digit Pin.) Note: our help desk cannot retrieve this for you, so make sure to remember this information.**
7. **Create Your Account .** An Account will be created instantly. This process will no longer require an authorize signer or a USF ID Card and will speed up account creation significantly. **Note: Your mail will be enabled and accessible in two days.**
8. The HSCNet account allows you to utilize the local network at the HSC. You will have access to e-mail and calendar via MS Exchange and a personal folder for the storage.
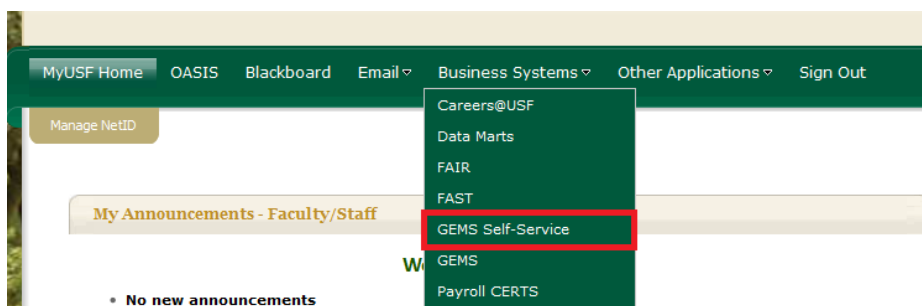
Setting Up Your Direct Deposit

Once you have your NetID, you will have access to GEMS Self-Service, which will allow you to review and change your employment information. Some of the things you can do in GEMS Self-Service are:

- **Leave Information –** request and approve leave.
- **Personal Information -** review personal summary information and, add or change personal information, including home and mailing addresses, phone numbers and emergency contacts.
- **Payroll and Compensation -** view pay check and compensation history and (where appropriate) add or change payroll information, including direct deposit, W-4 and voluntary deductions.
- **Benefits -** review benefits summary information.
- **Training and Development -** view training summary (includes current enrollments and waitlists) and request training enrollments and/or waitlist requests.
- **Job Information -** review current job summary and job history.

As soon as you have access to GEMS Self-Service you will need to set up your direct deposit, which allows USF to transfer funds to your personal banking account without the hassles associated with paper checks. The following instructions outline the process:

1. Visit https://my.usf.edu to enter your NetID and password.
2. Once you have logged in, click on **Business Systems → GEMS Self-Service.**

3. Under the **Menu**, click on **Self Service.**
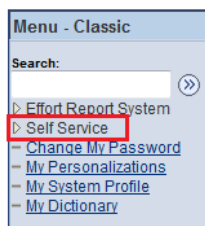
4. Under the Self-Service menu, click on **Payroll and Compensation → Direct Deposit.**

5. Enter your banking institution's routing number and your personal account number. This information can be found in the bottom of one of your personal checks, as shown below. Click on **Save** when you are done.

Now every other Friday your paycheck will be deposited directly to your bank account.

Making Changes to Your Benefits

Benefit changes may be made **only** during the annual open enrollment period usually during the summer. Certain changes may be made if you have a qualifying status change event, such as:

- Marriage or divorce.
- Death of a spouse or dependent.
- Birth or adoption or legal guardianship of a dependent.
- Change from part-time to full-time employment of vice versa for you or your spouse.
- Change in health coverage attributable to your spouse's employment.
- Spouse's employment or termination of employment.

These benefit changes must be made:

- Within 31 days of the event (60 days for death, birth, or adoption). Documentation supporting the qualifying status change event will be required within 60 days.

For additional information regarding a qualifying status change event, contact Human Resources at 813-974-2970.

Medical Insurance

Postdoctoral scholars and their eligible family members are eligible to participate in the USF health insurance program. The employee **must enroll within 60 days of beginning employment at USF**, and a portion of the premiums is paid by USF.

Medical insurance is underwritten by UnitedHealthcare StudentResources, serviced by Gallagher Koster, and is based on policy 2011-363-2. USF contributes 80% of the premium for the postdoctoral scholar and 50% of the premiums for the spouse and dependent children. For questions regarding medical insurance coverage, how the plan works, how to file a claim, etc., contact Gallagher Koster at 877-539-3492 or USFstudent@gallagherkoster.com. To review the 2013/14 USF Postdoctoral Scholars Health Insurance Plan brochure visit https://www.gallagherkoster.com/brochures/5962.pdf.

To sign up for health insurance please visit: http://usfweb2.usf.edu/human-resources/pdfs/benefits/postdoc-medical-enrollment-guide.pdf

Premiums are based on an employee's percentage of full-time employment (FTE). A change in FTE will result in a change to employee's premium amount. Employee contributions are paid via payroll deduction. The 2013/2014 premiums are as follows:

Coverage	Monthly Premium	Employee Contribution	Employer Contribution
Employee Only	$167.67	$33.53	$134.13
Spouse*	$435.41	$217.71	$217.71
One Child*	$317.00	$158.50	$158.50
Children*	$381.67	$190.84	$190.84

*__This premium does not include cost for Postdoc Only coverage. To calculate the full monthly premium add the contribution amount for Postdoc Only coverage__. For example, a postdoc's total monthly contribution for employee and spouse would $251.24, with spouse and one child, $409.74, with spouse and two or more children $442.08.

Vision Discounts

Vision discounts are available through the UnitedHealth Allies Discount Card as a part of the medical insurance offered through UnitedHealthcare at no cost to the employee. For more information, visit http://www.sr.unitedhealthallies.com/ha/public/index.jhtml;sessionid=PLEYVNZNYAQVUCTXNC5BQBY?_requestid=5989 (The discount card will be issued after enrollment into the medical insurance)

Dental Insurance

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida provides dental coverage. USF contributes 100% of the premium for the employee. The employee may purchase coverage for family members at full price. If you wish to enroll, fill out the form found at http://usfweb2.usf.edu/human-resources/pdfs/benefits/postdoc-dental-enrollment-form.pdf and turn it into HR (SVC 2172). For questions regarding dental coverage, contact Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida Member Services at 1-800-664-5295.

Premiums are based on an employee's percentage of full-time employment (FTE). A decrease in FTE will result in an increase in an employee's premium amount. Employee contributions are paid via payroll deduction.

Coverage	Monthly Premium	Employee Contribution	Employer Contribution
Employee Only	$16.24	$0.00	$16.24
Employee + Spouse	$35.32	$19.08	$16.24
Employee + Child	$34.46	$18.22	$16.24
Family	$55.42	$39.18	$16.24

Temporary Employee Retirement Plan (TERP)

Since postdoctoral appointments are temporary in nature, postdoctoral scholars are not eligible for USF's retirement plans. In response to this, The Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA 90) introduced into the law IRS Section 3121(b)(7)(f). As a result, temporary

employees of a government entity may deposit money into a private retirement plan instead of Social Security.

The Temporary Employee Retirement Plan, or TERP, is a defined contribution plan authorized under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code. BENCOR, Inc. is the plan administrator for the University of South Florida. U.S. Bank is the trustee and handles all deposits into and distributions of the plan for the university and BENCOR.

For more information about individual investments, participants may contact BENCOR Administrative Services at 1-888-258-3422 or visit the BENCOR website.

How the Plan Works

Social Security payroll taxes are collected under authority of the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA). Social Security is currently withheld at 6.2% of eligible wages and matched by the university. Participants (Temporary, formerly OPS, employees) in this plan do not contribute to the Social Security Administration, nor is the amount contributed by the employee matched by the university. Instead, employees contribute 7.5% of their wages into an investment account in their name. Medicare contributions at 1.45% are still withheld and matched by the university. The plan is mandatory for eligible employees. Employees are automatically enrolled or un-enrolled based on their salary plan status during the affected pay period. There is no minimum age or service requirement.

Once a contribution has been made to the plan, the employee will receive an Enrollment/Designation of Beneficiary form and an introduction letter from BENCOR, the Plan Administrator. Employees may choose between a Guaranteed Pooled Fund (an interest bearing account) and a variable investment option, and will be asked to designate a beneficiary. If employees do not direct the investment of their funds, they will automatically be placed into the Guaranteed Pooled Fund.

Withdrawals from the Plan

Withdrawals from the plan may be made at the following times:

- Separation/termination of employment (a 10% IRS penalty will apply if you are younger than 55 years of age)
- Retirement
- After age 70 ½ or retirement, if later, when the IRS requires that the minimum distributions be made to the participant each year
- Participant's total disability
- Participant's death

Distributions can be made to the participant one month (30 days) after the date of termination from the university. International scholars should maintain a US bank account until funds are retrieved from BENCOR.

Withdrawals from an account may be made in a lump-sum cash payment (the IRS 10% penalty on early withdrawals does not apply to withdrawals upon separation at age 55 or later), or plan balances may be rolled over to an IRA or other eligible retirement plan. No IRS penalty applies to these transfers.

Exceptions

Postdoctoral scholars on a J-1 visa, in most cases, are exempt from Social Security, Medicare, and TERP deductions for the first 2 years of their appointment. Once they have reached the first day of the month of their third year, they are considered resident aliens for tax purposes and treated as any other U.S. citizen.

For further information regarding TERP or exemptions, contact Human Resources at 813-974-2970 or visit http://usfweb2.usf.edu/human-resources/benefits/terp.asp.

Life Insurance & Long Term Disability Insurance

Postdoctoral life insurance and long term disability insurance is handled by The Gabor Agency. For additional information, visit http://www.gaboragency.com.

Life Insurance

Universal Life Extra Insurance is a flexible premium life insurance policy that is guaranteed to stay in force throughout the life of the primary insured. As long as the premium is paid consistently on time, the policy will not lapse and premiums will never increase. There is no maturity date, so even though premiums end at age 100, protection continues. Coverage allows for the adjustment of the death benefit as needs change. The plan is portable upon leaving USF with no increase in rates. The plan features Guaranteed Issue Coverage for eligible employees up to four times salary, to a maximum of $250,000 and for eligible spouses up to $25,000. Employees may enroll within 60 days of beginning employment at USF.

Long Term Disability Insurance

Long Term Disability provides a monthly benefit equal to 66 2/3% of monthly base salary at the time of the disability, less any benefits from other income and subject to a maximum monthly benefit of $9,000. Please note that there is a pre-existing condition exclusion. If a period of disability begins before age 60, a monthly benefit is payable until age 65. If a period of disability begins after age 60, monthly benefits are payable according to a schedule. The thirty-day Long Term Disability option begins at the 31st day after disability,

and will cost $0.94 per $100 of salary. The ninety-day Long Term Disability option begins on the 91st day after disability, and will cost $0.61 per $100 of salary. Employees may enroll within 60 days of beginning employment at USF.

Holidays

Postdoctoral scholars (salaried temporary employees) working their regularly required work schedule are paid for holidays. University offices are closed on the official university holidays. USF typically observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day (January 1st)
- Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4th)
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- Christmas Eve
- New Year's Eve

Paid Time Off

Postdoctoral scholars receive ten (10) days of paid time off (PTO) per calendar year. PTO may be used for vacation, sick or personal time off at the discretion of the employee with supervisor approval. PTO may be used in four (4) and eight (8) hour increments only. PTO is not carried over from year to year. Any unused PTO at the end of the calendar year is forfeited. Unused PTO time will not be paid out at the time of separation from employment.

In the next page there is a chart that indicates the number of PTO days that you will be eligible for in your first year of employment with the university (dependent upon the month you begin your employment). Every year thereafter, your PTO bank will automatically be credited with ten (10) days in January to be used during that calendar year. Postdoctoral scholars appointed at .50 to .99 FTE would receive a prorated allocation. Postdoctoral scholars appointed at less than .50 FTE do not receive PTO.

Days of PTO		
Start in:	**1.00 FTE**	**.50 to .99 FTE**
January	10	5
February	9	4.5
March	8.5	4.25

April	8	4
May	7	3.5
June	6	3
July	5	2.5
August	4	2
September	3	1.5
October	2	1
November	1	0.5
December	0	0

Paid Time Off is requested via GEMS Self Service.

USF Tampa – Housing on Bull Runner Route

Currently USF does not offer on-campus housing for postdoctoral scholars, but there are several housing options available that offer the Bull Runner shuttle service in case you are not planning to acquire a personal vehicle. The following link provides a map of the Bull Runner routes that fall outside of campus: http://usfweb2.usf.edu/parking_services/maps/bull_runner_map.pdf.

Some of the apartment complexes that have access to a Bull Runner stop include:

- Lodge at LakeCrest – www.lodgeatlakecrest.com
- University Club Apartments
- **The Province – www.livetheprovince.com
- *40/50 Lofts – www.4050lofts.com
- *Avalon Heights – www.avalonheights.net
- Campus Lodge – www.campuslodge.com
- Cambridge Woods – www.cambridgewoods.com
- Willow Brooke – www.livewillowbrooke.com
- *42nd North – www.42-north.com
- **Sterling 42nd – www.sterlinghousing.com
- Eagles Point – www.eaglespointapts.com
- Bavarian Village Condos – www.bavarianvillagecondos.org
- The Oaks Condos
- Ashford Green Condos
- Oak Ramble – www.oakramble.milestonerents.com
- Fairway Oaks – www.fairwayoakstampa.com
- Sweet Water Oaks
- **On50 – www.on50tampa.com

- Park Avenue – www.parkavenueapartmentstampa.com
- Urban Place – www.urbanplaceapts.com
- Greenwich Commons – www.greenwichcommonsapartmenthomes.com

*These locations do not offer family housing/one-bedroom apartments, but their rooms are furnished.
** These locations offer family housing/one-bedroom, furnished apartments/townhomes.

Note that due to the proximity to campus, some of these locations have residents whose majority are students at USF. Also, some of these apartment complexes have resident units with 3x3 or 4x4 configurations. These apartment complexes have been included since we have observed that some postdoctoral scholars choose to take a sub-lease or a short-term lease in one of the places above while they get acquainted with the Tampa Bay area, that way they can make an informed decision of where they want to sign a long-term lease.

For additional housing options near the USF Tampa Campus visit www.usfapartments.com. www.rentnewtampa.com

USF Tampa – Housing Near Tampa Campus

There are other apartment complexes around the USF Tampa Campus area that do not fall in the Bull Runner route, but are accessible by bicycle, by foot, or are a short drive to campus. These complexes include, but are not limited to:
- *Collegiate Hall – www.collegiatehalltampa.com
- *Reflections – www.reflectionsusf.org
- *Boardwalk at Morris Bridge – www.boardwalkusf.net
- **The Pointe – www.pointeatsouthflorida.com
- Hidden Palms - www.hiddenpalmsapartmenthomes.com
- Vista Grande - www.vistagrande-apts.com
- Grand Reserve - www.thegrandreserveliving.com
- Bristol Place - www.bristolplaceapts.com
- Lakeview Oaks - www.lakeviewoaks.net
- **Korman at Riverchase - www.kormanriverchase.com
- Compton Place - www.gardencommunitiesfl.com
- Carlton Arms - www.carltonarmsnorth.com
- The Vinings at Hunter's Green - http://huntersgreen.riverstoneres.com/
- St. Croix Apartments - www.stcroixtampa.com

For additional housing options near the USF Tampa Campus visit www.usfapartments.com or www.rentnewtampa.com.

Communities in the Tampa Bay Area
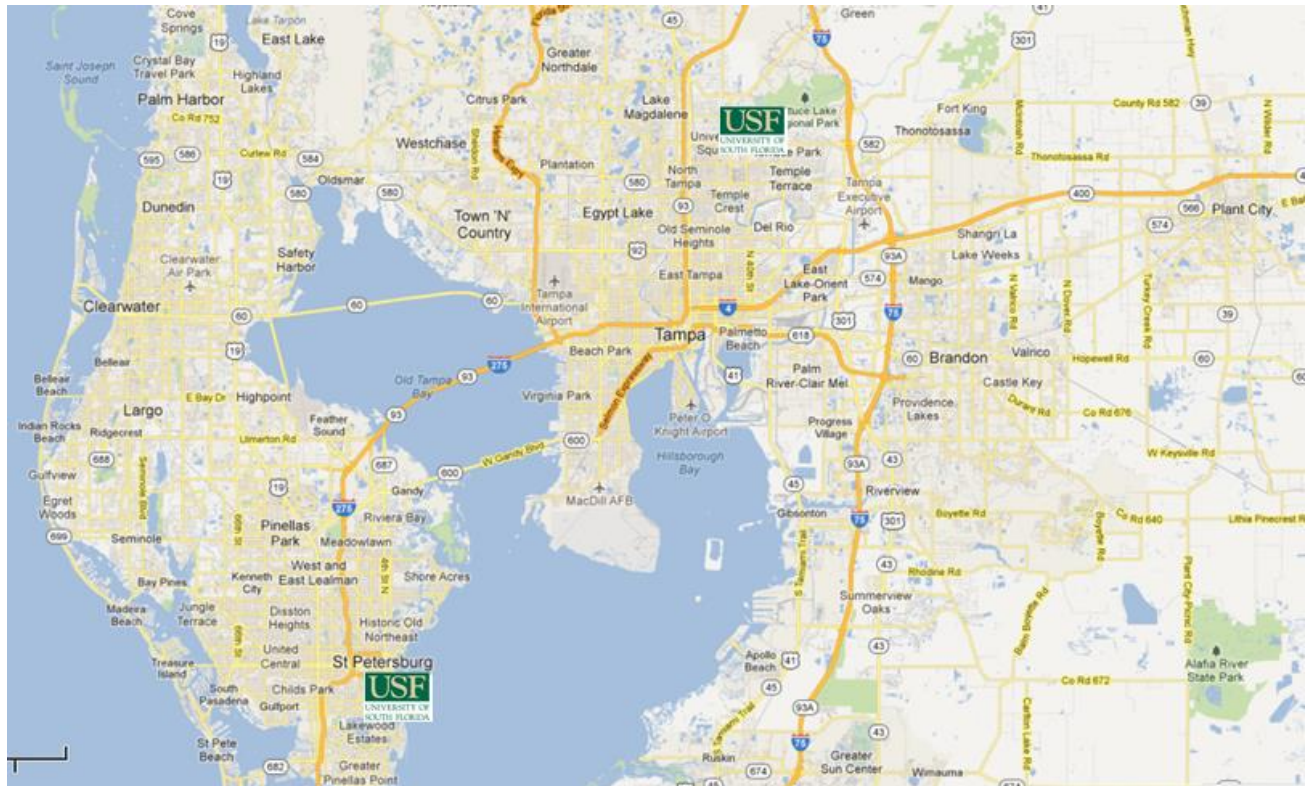
Brandon

It is located in southeastern Hillsborough County approximately **17 miles from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **25-30 minute commute**. Convenient location and plentiful shopping make Brandon, FL a favorite for families. Brandon provides easy access to both Tampa and Orlando, and it is one of the Tampa Bay area's rapidly growing communities. Formerly a mostly rural area, Brandon is quickly becoming a place of refuge for city dwellers seeking a little peace in a convenient location. Brandon boasts strip centers, a regional mall, and a variety of neighborhoods to suit any lifestyle.

Carrollwood

It is located in West Tampa, approximately **8 miles from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **20-25 minute commute.** It is an unincorporated planned community in northwest Hillsborough County, Florida. It is located within the Census Designated Place of Greater Carrollwood (zip codes 33618 and 33624). It was one of the first planned communities

within the State of Florida and the first in Hillsborough County. It remains one of the most popular places to live within suburban Tampa because of its close proximity to the city compared to new developments. Carrollwood as about 7 miles northwest from downtown Tampa and occupies area of 10.3 sq. miles.

Channelside District

It is located near downtown Tampa, approximately **13 miles from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **25-30 minute commute**, and **22 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **30-32 minute commute.** Urban luxury is at its best in the Channelside District, where you can work and play in an upscale way. New condominium developments in the area offer luxury lofts, office space, and retail space in the heart of a hot area. There are also a host of fine restaurants in the area, or you can hop on the Teco Street Car and head to Ybor City for even more dining and nightlife. Channelside is where luxury living meets urban convenience and style.

Citrus Park

It is located in West Tampa, approximately **11 miles from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **25-30 minute commute,** and **29 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **35-40 minute commute.** You will find variety of home styles and an easy commute to just about any part of Tampa. This large community extends through many areas. Many starter homes are available, as well as large, luxurious estate homes. Just minutes from Tampa International Airport, the Westshore business district, and downtown Tampa, residents are sure to love the community's excellent location. Should you prefer to stay in town, you will find Westfield Shopping Town, with over 1 million square feet of shops and a 20-screen Cineplex. In addition to its great location, other Citrus Park benefits include a bounty of lakes, parks, and sports facilities.

Lutz

It is located in northern Tampa, approximately **9 miles from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **15-20 minute commute.** The over 100 lakes in the Hillsborough County community of Lutz are just one reason why its residents are so proud of the community's balance of country comforts with urban growth. Not only is the area conveniently located near major highways (I-275, Veteran's Expressway, Dale Mabry), it is also peppered with beautiful Florida scenery that is a welcome break from city congestion. Among the lakes and groves, you will find an array of custom homes in rapidly growing communities. Most communities in the Lutz area are gated for the ultimate in security and privacy.

New Tampa

It is located approximately **8 miles north from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **15-20 minute commute.** As the fastest-growing community in Hillsborough County, New Tampa real estate has splendid offerings for its residents. New Tampa spans 24 square miles. Not only is it home to a spread of master-planned communities, these communities were

designed with recreation and leisure in mind. From sports and swimming facilities to nature trails, residents can enjoy a variety of recreational activities right within their communities, or venture just a short drive to some of the country's best attractions.

Riverview

It is located approximately **22 miles north from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **30 minute commute,** right near Brandon. Riverview has convenient access to city amenities in a great suburban setting. From golf to conservation areas, residents are sure to enjoy life here. Riverview is blessed with a host of natural beauty, resources, and activities all within a short trip from the town. From bubbling natural springs of Lithia Springs State Park to the meandering Alafia River which empties into Tampa Bay and affords residents direct access to The Gulf of Mexico. Fishing, surfing, boating, kayaking, water skiing, and diving are just minutes away from Riverview.

South Tampa

It is located approximately **20 miles north from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **30 minute commute,** and **16 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **25 minute commute**. South Tampa is one of the area's oldest and most well preserved areas. Located right near the water, it offers a host of recreational activities at a more comfortable pace than in the city. Still, anywhere you live in the area will be conveniently located just minutes from downtown shopping, dining, and entertainment. Several of South Tampa neighborhoods boast beautifully preserved historic homes from the 1920's in a vast array of architectural styles. Most anywhere you go will offer a water view that will be a daily reminder of just how wonderful it is to live among Florida's natural beauty. Several exclusive neighborhoods can be found in South Tampa, featuring enormous estate homes that will delight both their owners and visitors.

Wesley Chapel

It is located approximately **10 miles from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **25 minute commute.** It is located north of New Tampa, where undeveloped land and citrus fields are rapidly becoming beautiful master-planned communities and golf courses. The luxurious Saddlebrook Resort is in the center of this community, and offers visitors and residents the ultimate resort experience. The lower tax rates in Pasco County are just an added incentive to make Wesley Chapel a desirable location to buy a home.

Westchase

It is located approximately **16 miles from the USF Tampa Campus**, or a **35-40 minute commute,** and **30 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **40 minute commute**. Quiet and conveniently located, Westchase is situated near the Hillsborough/Pinellas County line. Westchase boasts a 2,030-home award-winning community featuring the best in

recreational enjoyment for its residents, including an 18-hole golf course, parks, swimming, tennis, nature preserves, and soccer fields. The added convenience of West Park Village Town Center and West Chase Square provides residents with retail shopping, markets, cafes, banks, restaurants, professional offices, daycare, and preschools. With easy access to Citrus Park Mall and the Tampa International Airport, residents of Westchase enjoy a host of amenities as well as the ultimate in convenience.

Communities in Pinellas County (USF St. Pete)

Clearwater Beach

It is located approximately **22 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **35 minute commute**. This stunning beach is not only a tourist destination, but many people are realizing it's a fantastic place to live too. With its gorgeous beaches, and view of the Gulf of Mexico, it's easy to see why. It offers a great place to relax while swimming, fishing or just sunning on the sand. This beach offers shopping, dining, and outdoor activities to attract people of all ages. The Clearwater Beach Marina houses many charter boats which cater to a great day of fishing for a large assortment of fish. It also has a pirate ship, dolphin site seeing adventure, and wave runner and Jet Ski rentals.

Downtown St. Petersburg

It is located **less than a mile from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **5 minute commute**. The downtown area features six world-class museums and more than 20 galleries. More than 700 events take place each year in St. Petersburg. St. Petersburg's shoreline is longer than Delaware's and New Hampshire's combined. Known as the sailing capital of the South, the city's Municipal Marina is the largest in the state.

Largo

It is located approximately **18 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **30 minute commute**. Largo is found just south of Clearwater and north of St. Petersburg. Tampa is a short commute eastbound across either of the two scenic bridges that cross over Old Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Largo covers about 14.1 square miles and has enjoyed rapid growth, with great values, and a population of more than 68,500. Largo is a quiet, largely residential community, with friendly stores and shops, beautiful parks and recreational facilities, and diverse affordable neighborhoods.

Pinellas Park

It is located approximately **9 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **15-20 minute commute**. You can find it just east of Seminole between the larger cities of Clearwater and

St. Petersburg. Still located close to the beaches and other attractions the Tampa Bay area has to offer. A trip to Orlando and its attractions is only a short 90 minute drive away, making an exciting day trip or a weekend getaway very convenient. The larger cities of Clearwater, St. Petersburg and Tampa are so close that a commute to either city is surprisingly short.

Seminole

It is located approximately **15 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **30 minute commute**. Seminole is conveniently found close to all the major cities such as Clearwater, St. Petersburg and Tampa owning only a short commute to each. Seminole is located just south of Largo and northwest of St. Petersburg. Parts of this city are considered to be within Largo, lending to Seminole's smaller hometown feel within a larger metropolitan area. **Real estate in Seminole** is very appealing in this well-established town located so close to some of Florida's most beautiful beaches and lakes.

St. Pete Beach

It is located approximately **11 miles from USF St. Petersburg**, or a **20 minute commute**. This area has a large variety of condominiums, and single family homes that have a private boat dock to get you enjoy the water near your own backyard. Each condominium community has a large swimming pool and many offer waterfront views that are second to none. This beach is perfect for those who need to commute to nearby cities such as Tampa or Bradenton. You can hop on I-275 or the Sunshine Skyway Bridge and be to any destination in minutes.

Public Schools

Education in the U.S. is provided primarily by the public sector, and child education is obligatory. Education is divided in three levels:

- **Elementary School** – Offers primary education and does not always include pre-school education. Typically, students attend elementary school from kindergarten to 5th grade (5 - 6 years).
- **Middle School** – It is also known as junior high school, and it was created to bridge the gap between the elementary and the high school. The grades included in middle school are 6th, 7th, and 8th.
- **High School** – It is also known as secondary education. The grades included in high school are 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th.

Students attend the school that is designated to their place of residence. Below are the links to find the schools that correspond to your area of residence:

- Hillsborough County – http://apps.sdhc.k12.fl.us/locator/
- Pasco County – https://webdb.pasco.k12.fl.us/fmi/iwp/cgi?-db=PascoBoundaries_11_12&-loadframes
- Pinellas County – https://sap.pinellas.k12.fl.us/PubInfo/

Buying a Car

You can buy a new or used car from dealers or private individuals. What and from whom you want to buy depends entirely on your budget and the type of car that you are interested in. Please keep in mind that, just as in any other country, there are people who will try to sell you a car that may be damaged in some way. New cars are usually beyond the budget of most international scholars. Nonetheless, you may be lucky enough to be able to afford one. When the time comes, your preparedness can make the difference between paying the full "list" price or a price that is fair in today's marketplace.

The USF Credit Union offers auto advisors to assist with new or used car purchases. Some of the benefits of this program include straight talk on cost, financing, rebates, and trade-ins; avoiding the hassle of negotiating with car dealers; unbiased advice on new or used cars; and assistance filling out financing paperwork. For more information visit the USF Credit Union or visit www.autoadvisors.com. Linda Heitz is currently the agent that can help you. Her number is (813) 569-2000 ext. 1211.

If you have a permanent driver's license, and buy your car from a car dealer, the car dealer will give you a temporary license plate. That plate is good for a maximum of 30 days. You must register the car to get a new plate before the 30 days expires.

You must also show proof of automobile insurance coverage. It is against the law to drive a car without having insurance. Search the internet for car insurance and compare prices before making a decision. Below are some popular companies offering car insurance:

- Progressive, www.progressive.com
- Nationwide Insurance, www.nationwide.com
- State Farm, www.statefarm.com
- Esurance Online Car Insurance, www.esurance.com
- Geico, www.geico.com

If you need assistance deciding how much to pay for car insurance, visit this link http://www.edmunds.com/auto-insurance/10-steps-to-buying-auto-insurance.html for helpful tips on finding the right coverage for the right price.

Once you have purchased you vehicle, be sure to keep the following in your glove compartment:

- **Bill of Sale** – This is a receipt that the car dealer gives you when you pay for the car.
- **Title and Registration Card** – When you buy a car, the dealer sends information to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. They send you the title to the car as well as a registration card. If you have financed the car through a local bank, the title to the car will go to the lending institution, not to you. However, you will have a registration card.

- **Proof of Auto Insurance** – You must have an auto insurance card or letter to verify that you have coverage on your automobile.

Keep in mind that each year you will have to renew your vehicle's registration, which means you will have to pay a fee usually between $40 and $400—depending on the price you pay for your car and the model year of the car.

Helpful Guidelines

- Decide beforehand how much money you can spend, and stay within that amount. When you visit the car dealership, avoid falling in love with the first car you see. Make sure you shop around; there are many dealers carrying identical models.
- Do not let dealers and salespeople impair your ability to make a rational decision.
- After deciding on a particular model, consult the New Car Buyer's Guide. This guide contains the "list" price and "dealer cost" on base models. If you are looking at an upscale model, the publication also lists the dealer cost on factory-installed options (sunroof, leather seating, etc.). The Kelley Blue Book is another such publication, available in print or on the Web. Calculate and add taxes to the "list" price along with a reasonable dealer profit ($200-$500) before making the dealer an offer.

Purchasing a Used Car

The hard part of buying a used car is determining whether or not the car is in good condition. The following guidelines may help you through the process:

- Determine how much money you can afford to spend.
- Know where to look. In the US, used cars are sold by dealers and private individuals. Dealers advertise in most newspapers, television, and radio. Private individuals place advertisements in the classified sections of newspapers and special-interest papers such as the Trader or Wheels and Deals.
- Compare the price quoted with the price listed in the Kelley Blue Book, a guide to used car prices.
- Do not buy a used car without a maintenance record. This record can more or less tell you what the car has been through since it was bought (when the oil was changed, etc.).
- Always drive the car before buying. Check for oil leaks, chassis damage, brakes wear, transmission problems, window damage, door problems, exhaust deterioration, etc.
- Once you're satisfied with a car, take it to a mechanic for a diagnostic check (this will cost money, but is often worth the price).

You can find tips on buying used cars in books, on the web, and in magazines. A good web site with advice on new and used car buying, car insurance, and car maintenance is www.cartalk.com.

Roadside Assistance

When you are broken down by the side of the road, your motor club membership card becomes your most precious possession. AAA (www.aaa.com) offers USF employees a discounted roadside assistance program. USF employees are eligible to get 14 months of membership at the cost of 12 months. Enjoy the peace of mind of AAA's legendary road service, plus shopping & dining discounts, travel services and special member savings. Contact Robert Hogan at 813-289-5962 or via email at rhogan@aaasouth.com.

Helpful Articles

- Top Five Ways to Get Pulled Over by the Police - http://www.edmunds.com/driving-tips/top-5-ways-to-get-pulled-over-by-the-cops.html
- How Much Car Can You Afford? http://www.edmunds.com/car-loan/how-much-car-can-you-afford.html
- 10 Steps to Finding the Right Car for You - http://www.edmunds.com/car-buying/10-steps-to-finding-the-right-car-for-you.html
- 5 Questions to Ask Before You Say Yes to a New Car Deal - http://www.edmunds.com/car-buying/5-questions-to-ask-before-you-say-yes-to-a-new-car-deal.html
- Buying vs. Leasing vs. Buying a Used Car - http://www.edmunds.com/car-leasing/compare-the-costs-buying-vs-leasing-vs-buying-a-used-car.html.

Getting a Driver's License

If you a planning to drive in Florida, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (http://www.flhsmv.gov/) should be your first stop. Below are the local offices which you can visit to be issued your driver's license or identification card:

3011 University Center Dr. (***This office is the closest one to the USF Tampa Campus***)
Suite 150
Tampa, FL 33612
Ph. 813-635-5200

6283 W. Waters Ave.
Tampa, FL 33634
Ph. 813-635-5200

601 E. Kennedy Blvd.
14th Floor (County Center)
Tampa, FL 33602
Ph. 813-635-5200

1515 North Westshore Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33607
Ph. 813-635-5200

Brandon
10137 East Adamo Drive, St. 800A
Tampa, FL 33619
Ph. 813-740-7533

14755 North Dale Mabry Hwy
Tampa, FL 33618
Ph. 813-871-7376

4100 West M.L. King Jr Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33614
Ph. 813-871-7375

1067 62nd Avenue South (***This office is the closest one to the USF St. Petersburg Campus***)
St. Petersburg, FL 33705
Ph. 727-464-7777

1800 66th Street North
St. Petersburg, FL 33710
Ph. 727-464-7777

1663 Gulf to Bay Blvd
Clearwater, FL 33755
Ph. 727-464-7777

29399 Hwy 19 North,
Suite 100
Clearwater, FL 33761
Ph. 727-464-7777

Once you have decided which location suits you best, you will need to follow these guidelines to be issued your Florida driver's license:

- **For U.S. Residents** – You need either a certified birth certificate, a valid passport or a certificate of naturalization. Alternatively, you may present a driver's license issued by Alaska, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington or Wisconsin.
  - A second form of ID is also required, and can be anything from a baptism certificate or voter registration card (at least three months old) to a marriage certificate. In short, anything official with your name on it.
- **For Non-U.S. Citizens** – are required to bring identification, proof or date of birth and social security number. Some acceptable forms of ID are an Alien Registration Card, I-551 stamp on passport, and an I-797 with the customer's A-number stating the customer has been granted asylum or refugee status.
- For regular passenger vehicles, some tests may be required, especially for a new license. These include a hearing, vision, driving, road rules and road signs test. If you're exchanging a valid out-of-state license, only the hearing and vision are required.
- **First Time Drivers** – In addition to taking a test, you are required to complete a traffic law substance abuse education course commonly known as *Drugs, Alcohol Traffic Awareness* (DATA) and *Traffic Law Substance Abuse Education* (TLSAE).
  - In order to pass your driving test, you must study the *Florida Driver's Manual* which can be found at http://www.flhsmv.gov/handbooks/EnglishDriverHandbook.pdf. The last three pages of the manual contain sample questions that will be on the test. The examination will include 20 road side and 20 road rule questions. In order to pass the exam you must choose the right answer to at least 15 road signs and 15 road rules questions.
  - The traffic law substance abuse education course can be taken online. Some websites offering this service are:

    - www.idrivesafely.com/Florida-TLSAE
    - www.lowestpricetrafficschool.com/
    - www.traffic-school-florida.com/
    - www.tlsae-course.com/

- The schedule of fees for a Florida driver's license can be found at http://www.flhsmv.gov/dhsmvfees.htm.

Helpful Articles

- How do I add Emergency Contact Information to My Florida Driver's License? http://orlando.about.com/od/communityinterests/f/emergcontact.htm
- How to Get a Disabled Parking Permit – http://orlando.about.com/cs/seniors/ht/parkingpermit.htm

Transferring a Vehicle Registration to Florida

In the state of Florida, a motor vehicle is required by law to be registered within ten days of becoming employed, placing children in public school, or establishing residency. In preparation to do this, you must do the gather the following documents before going to your local tax collector's office:

- **Car Insurance** – get appropriate insurance from a company that is licensed to sell in the state. Proof of insurance is required to register a vehicle.
- **VIN & Odometer Verification** – Fill out a *Vehicle Identification Number & Odometer Verification* form. The form can be found at http://www.flhsmv.gov/dmv/forms/BTR/82042.pdf.
- **Calculate the Fees** – They range from $46.10 to $141.30 depending on taxes, county fees, and whether it's paid annually or bi-annually. Additionally, there is a $225 Initial Registration Fee. For a schedule of the fees visit http://www.flhsmv.gov/dmv/faqmotor.html#4.

If you have gathered all the information above, now you can visit your local tax collector's office or license plate agency to get your new Florida license plate and registration. These are the locations in the Tampa Bay Area:

2814 E. Hillsborough Ave.
Tampa, FL 33610
Ph. 813-272-3773

601 E. Kennedy Blvd.
14th Floor (County Center)
Tampa, FL 33602
Ph. 813-635-5200

1515 North Westshore Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33607
Ph. 813-635-5200

Brandon
10137 East Adamo Drive, St. 800A
Tampa, FL 33619
Ph. 813-740-7533

800 Second Ave. S.
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Ph. 727-547-7686

1067 62nd Ave. S.
St. Petersburg, FL 33705
Ph. 727-464-7777

1800 66th Street North
St. Petersburg, FL 33710
Ph. 727-464-7777

1663 Gulf to Bay Blvd
Clearwater, FL 33755
Ph. 727-464-7777

29399 Hwy 19 North,
Suite 100
Clearwater, FL 33761
Ph. 727-464-7777

Motorist Assistance on Campus

To request motorist assistance call **813-974-8040**. This service is only offered in the Tampa Campus Monday through Thursday from 8:00 am to 8:30 pm, and from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm on Fridays. This service is available to provide air in the event of a flat tire or assisting you jump start your car.

For after-hours emergencies or safety issues, contact **University Police at 813-974-2628**. If you have locked yourself out of your vehicle, and you are a member of an automobile club such as AAA, please call them for service. If you are not a member of an automobile club, call the University Police at 974-2628. Ask the dispatcher to contact a local locksmith for you. This service will cost you approximately $50.00, depending on the company that responds.

If you feel unsafe while you are waiting for the locksmith service to arrive, please ask the dispatcher to send an Allied Barton security officer, a parking enforcement specialist, or a police officer to wait with you until help arrives.

In the event of an emergency where the delay in response time from a local locksmith will create an unnecessary hazard or injury, the University Police, Parking Enforcement, or Allied Barton will unlock your vehicle in accordance to their policies.

Parking on Campus

Any motor vehicle parked on university property must display a valid university parking decal or permit.
Postdoctoral scholars are eligible to purchase yearly parking permits via payroll deduction for Staff (E), Gold Zone Staff (GZ) or reserved parking. Yearly permits are valid from August to August. Employees who are eligible for payroll deduction will see that option when they go online to purchase their permit. Employees may select either pre-tax or post-tax payroll deduction (note: no refunds are available on pre-tax payroll deduction). Payroll deductions begin in August each year and run for 18 pay periods. Payroll deductions for permits purchased after August are reduced by the number of deductions missed since August. Depending on your termination date, it may be more cost effective to purchase a semester permit rather than a yearly permit. If you anticipate leaving USF during the academic year, contact Parking Services to discuss parking rates and options. For additional information, contact Parking Services at **813-974-3990** or visit
www.usf.edu/parking_services/default.asp.

Alternative Modes of Transportation

Bicycles

For many scholars, a bicycle represents an inexpensive and environmentally safe form of transportation. Additionally, many postdoctoral scholars find that they save time because parking is more convenient and closer to campus.

In order to ride a bike a driver's license is not mandatory, but bicyclist are required to know and obey all traffic laws (see the *Florida Driver's Manual* at http://www.flhsmv.gov/handbooks/EnglishDriverHandbook.pdf) such as stopping at stop signs and signaling before turning or changing lanes. Here are some rules of the road for your safety:

- **Never ride against traffic.** A high percentage of all car/bike collisions result from cyclists going the wrong way. Stay to the right if you are moving slower than other traffic, maintain a constant position in the lane about three feet away from the curb or parked cars.
- **Do not weave in and out of parked cars.** Maintaining a presence on the road will help drivers see you and will reduce the chance that motor vehicles will pull in front of you.
- **If lanes are too narrow to share with motor vehicles, the safest place to ride your bicycle is in the middle of the lane.** If the lanes become wider, move over to the far right side again. Many cyclists believe they are safer and more comfortable riding further to the right than suggested here, but riding too far to the right puts the cyclist in greater danger. Poor sightlines, opening car doors, and unforeseen roadway hazards can lead to serious injuries, and even death.
- **When you're about to cross an intersection, maintain a direct path through the intersection.** Don't veer to the left or right.
- **Practice looking over your shoulder, behind you for traffic.** This simple but essential skill allows you to move safely left or right to avoid a hazard, change lanes, or make a turn. Looking over your shoulder makes drivers pay attention to you. Master this skill even if you have a mirror.
- **Communicate the direction you are turning with hand signals at least 100 feet prior to a turn or change in lanes.** Traffic flows smoother when drivers predict what others will do based on traffic laws. By following traffic laws and being aware of your surroundings your bicycle rides will be much safer.
- **Off-Street Biking** – On multi-use paths, bicycles should yield to pedestrians, and do not pass unless there is room. Slow down and call out "on your left" or "on your right" before passing cyclists, skaters, runners or walkers. Riding on the sidewalk is normally not safe because bicyclists move faster than pedestrians and are hard to hear.
- **Always yield to pedestrians when you are in their space**, and dismount if pedestrian traffic is high. Be alert where sidewalks cross alleys, driveways and streets - look left, right and left again before proceeding.

If you do not have a bike you can borrow one from USF's *Borrow Our Bikes* program, located in the campus Recreating Center. Free helmets are provided with each rental. For more information call 813-974-3177.

USF's Bull Runner Shuttle Bus Service

All USF students, faculty, postdoctoral scholars, and staff have fare free access to the Bull Runner with their USFCard. Visitors must be accompanied by someone with a valid USF ID Card or have a daily bus pass. The USF Bull Runner is intended to provide you with mobility options for transportation on campus and designated locations outside the University. For additional information, such routes and schedules, visit www.usf.edu/bullrunner.

Zimride Ride-Share

Zimride is a private network for commuter ridesharing, using Facebook integration to create an easy way to find friends to share commutes or one-time rides and a new outlet for USF students, faculty, postdoctoral scholars and staff to coordinate commutes to campus, reduce traffic and parking congestion, while providing a substantial cost-savings for the USF community. You can access the free USF Zimride system at http://zimride.usf.edu/.

WeCar Carsharing Program

If you need to go farther than your bicycle can take you, USF WeCar provides instant-access to a pool of four hybrid cars on USF's Tampa campus, 24 hours-a-day, 7 days per week. You get a low hourly rate, without commitment or inconvenience.

- Fees and Rates (Subject to Change)

    o Annual Membership Fee - $35
    o $8.50 per hour or $70 per day for the Chevy Sonic and Ford Focus.
    o $9.50 per hour or $84 per day for the Ford Escape.
    o $30.00 overnight (8 pm to 8 am)
    o $0.25/mile over 200 miles

For additional information about the USF WeCar program, visit www.carsharing.usf.edu.

Emergency Ride Home Program

The Emergency Ride Home (ERH) Program is sponsored by the Tampa Bay Area Transportation Authority and it ensures that you'll never be stranded at work. If you carpool, vanpool, ride the bus, bicycle or walk to work at least two (2) days a week, you may be eligible for a FREE (or low cost) taxi ride home. The ERH Program will pay for your ride home in the following cases:

- Personal or family emergency
- Unscheduled overtime
- Sickness
- Carpool/Vanpool partners have an emergency

Once registered, you'll receive information on how to use the program, along with your first ERH voucher. All you need for your emergency trip home is the completed voucher and a picture I.D. That's all you have to do. And you can use the ERH Program up to four (4) times a year. For the guidelines and to register for the Emergency Ride Home program, visit www.tampabayrideshare.org/erh.html.

Public Transportation

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART)

HART serves the people of Hillsborough County (Tampa) with affordable public transportation. Their services are designed with today's commuter in mind, from convenient bus services, to In-Town Trolleys, money-saving vanpools, park-and-ride services and more. For maps, schedules, and rates visit www.gohart.org.

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)

PSTA is the public transit provider in Pinellas County (St. Petersburg/Clearwater) providing more than 13.1 million passenger trips in 2010. 191 buses serve 5,159 bus stops on 37 routes in Pinellas County including two express routes that travel to Tampa. For maps, schedules, and rates visit www.psta.net/index.php.

Taxi Services

The following are taxi companies serving Tampa:

- Cab Plus, Inc. – 813.288.8888
- United Cab Co. – 813.251.5555
- Yellow Cab – 813.253.0121
- Town & Country Taxi Cab Services – 813.422.8650
- Payless Taxi – 813.234.0000

The following are taxi companies serving Clearwater/St. Petersburg:

- Yellow Cab – 727.821.7777
- United Taxi – 727.535.0000
- Coral Cab – 727.215.0429
- Independent Taxi Service Co. – 727.327.3444
- Clearwater Yellow Cab – 727.518.9406

Airport Shuttles

If you need a ride to or from the Tampa International Airport, the following are companies offering that service:

- SuperShuttle – www.supershuttle.com/Locations/TPAAirportShuttleTampaBay.aspx
- Shuttlefare – www.shuttlefare.com

Intercity Transportation

Greyhound

If you are looking for an affordable ride to another city, consider using Greyhound, which is the largest provider of intercity bus transportation. For fees and schedules visit www.greyhound.com.

Amtrak

Amtrak is a nationwide rail network, serving more than 500 destinations in 46 states and three Canadian provinces on more than 21,200 miles of routes, with more than 20,000 employees. It is the nation's only high speed intercity passenger rail provider, operating nearly 60% of its trains at top speeds in excess of 90 mph/145 kph. For fees and schedules visit www.amtrak.com.

Joining the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA)

Joining the NPA is <u>free</u> for all postdocs at USF. The NPA was started 10 years ago to advocate for the needs of postdoctoral fellows. The Association, based in Washington, D.C., is a great way to keep up-to-date on important postdoc events and trends. Please visit their website at http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/home to get more information and click "join" in the upper right corner to get an Affiliate membership. If you have any questions or problems getting a membership, please contact Eric Hoyer (ehoyer@usf.edu).

The NPA is:

A 501(c)3 educational non-profit organization that seeks sustainable change and improvement for the postdoctoral experience through collaboration with all stakeholders.

The NPA believes that:

- Postdocs make invaluable contributions to the research enterprise.
- Postdocs share personal responsibility for the progression and outcomes of their careers.
- Inequities within the postdoctoral community should be rectified to the maximum extent practicable, while recognizing the unique needs of each stakeholder.
- The U.S. research community should make every effort to attract the best and the brightest men and women from all groups, including international scholars, under-represented minorities, and persons with disabilities.

It is upon these beliefs that we base our Mission, Vision, Values, and Diversity Statement.

Our Mission

The mission of the NPA is to advance the U.S. research enterprise by maximizing the effectiveness of the research community and enhancing the quality of the postdoctoral experience for all participants.

Our Vision

Working in collaboration with the entire research community, the NPA envisions changing the culture of those individuals and institutions engaged in the U.S. research enterprise so that the contributions of postdoctoral scholars are fully valued and recognized.

Our Values

- Grassroots participation in the decision-making process, both internally and externally.

- Professional satisfaction and meaningful career opportunities for postdoctoral scholars, which recognize the importance of balancing work and personal needs.

- Collaboration and dialogue to achieve consensus among all stakeholders on the best methods for addressing issues and obtaining desired outcomes for the postdoctoral community.

- Objective data to inform critical decision-making.

USF Postdoctoral Scholars Association (PSA)

The USF-PSA seeks to provide resources, information, career development and representation for all postdoctoral scholars at the University of South Florida (comprised of USF Tampa & USF Health) as well as its Institutions (comprised of USF St. Petersburg, USF at Lakeland & USF Sarasota- Manatee). The USF-PSA also strives to create a stronger sense of Community through an e-mail listserv, the internet and social/networking activities.

The PSA hosts important events throughout the year such as the **Welcome Happy Hour** for all postdocs in September, the **Graduate Student & Postdoctoral Scholars Research Symposium** in March and the **Postdoctoral Scholars Vendor Fair**, which raises money for the PSA.

The PSA holds monthly meetings to which all postdocs are invited to come and discuss issues and plan events.

USF-PSA website: www.usfpostdocs.org

Information for International Scholars

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs is not main contact for visa or tax issues though we can point you in the right direction. If you're not sure who to contact, please email or call us.

Here is some general information for international scholars.

Visas

The main office for handling visa issues (for postdocs this means mainly F-1s or J-1s) is International Services located in the Patel Building on the First Floor. Marcia Taylor (taylor@iac.usf.edu) is the director of International Services and Erin Dudley (edudley@usf.edu) is the primary contact for J-1 scholars. If you are obtaining a new visa, renewing or changing status, it is best to schedule an appointment at International Services so they can guide you through the process.

http://global.usf.edu/is/scholars.php

(813) 974-5102

Taxes and Tax Treaties and Payroll Deductions

Depending on your visa status and whether or not your home country has a tax treaty with the United States will how your Federal Withholding Tax will be assessed. In some cases, you may be exempt from paying taxes for the first two calendar years. Any portion of a year is considered a full year by the IRS. This means that if you were hired in October 2010, you would begin to pay federal withholding tax in January of 2012.

If you have any questions about the tax deductions on your paycheck, please contact Barbara Holleman at (813)974-8401 or at bholleman@usf.edu.

If you have questions about the deductions for health insurance, please contact Le'Danjeanette Frazier at lfrazier@admin.usf.edu or at (813)-974-5715.