

## Introduction

This document is designed to provide additional information and guidance regarding the hosting and onboarding of new teachers recruited to participate in Louisiana’s International Associate Teacher Program. Schools and systems are encouraged to create a hosting and onboarding system that best suits their individual needs. For additional information, please reach out to the Department’s World Languages Team at [language.acquisition@la.gov](mailto:language.acquisition@la.gov).

## School or School System Duties Prior to Arrival of IAT

This section outlines the pre-arrival timeline of events and corresponding duties and responsibilities of the hosting school and/or school system.

### School System Contact with IAT Timeline

Schools and school systems should use the timeline below when planning communications with new IATs. Additional information can be found in the [Louisiana International Associate Teacher Program Handbook](#).

<b>On or before May 10</b>	School systems are notified of staffing outcomes and contact information.
<b>By May 15</b>	School systems and principals send welcome messages to new IATs. <i>When appropriate, and with permission, schools may send contact information of the person exiting the position.</i>
<b>By May 31</b>	School systems send Needs Assessment Inventory to IATs.
<b>By June 15</b>	School systems send an Arrival Information Request Questionnaire to IATs.
<b>By July 1</b>	Each school system and principal sends information regarding the IAT’s mentor teacher (including contact information), teaching schedule, and information regarding the first days of school.
<b>Thursday of annual July Orientation</b>	School systems attend IAT Orientation Luncheon to meet IATs. IATs are brought back to school systems by system representatives.

[SAMPLE Welcome Message to New IAT\(s\)](#)

[SAMPLE IAT Needs Assessment Inventory](#)

[SAMPLE IAT Arrival Information Questionnaire](#)

## Duties Upon State Release of IAT to School or School System

This section outlines the hosting school and/or school system duties and responsibilities upon the release of new IATs to the school/system at the conclusion of the orientation course held during the third week of July.

### IAT Welcoming and Onboarding Team Duties

Depending on the number of new IATs your school or school system will be receiving, a team in charge of welcoming and onboarding new IATs may be required. In most cases, a team should consist of one team member per five single IATs or per two to three IATs with families.

Below is a list of IAT needs, along with descriptions, that should be prioritized upon the release of IATs to the school/system.

**Temporary Housing:** Schools and systems are required to provide at least 10 days of housing for new IATs. This may be in a hotel or AirBnB, with a host family, or with a colleague. Additional consideration should be given to planning for IATs with families and/or pets and to determining IAT access to meals during these first ten days.

**Temporary Transportation:** Consideration must be given to how IATs will travel during the first days. Systems may use a school bus to transport a larger group of IATs to joint appointments, but this may not always be the most efficient use of time. Systems may choose to use rental cars to transport smaller groups of IATs to appointments, may solicit PTO members and/or system staff to provide IATs with transportation to appointments/events, or the system may provide a credit for a shared ride service.

**Social Security:** Appointments with the Social Security office should be prioritized, as a Social Security number is a requirement for many of the IAT's first action steps in Louisiana, e.g., background checks, signing a lease, opening a bank account, school system onboarding paperwork.

Appointments can be secured after the teacher has been in the US for at least 10 days. In some cases, offices will permit appointments prior to the 10-day mark. Teachers must bring specific documents with them to their appointment. Upon completion of the appointment, they will receive a letter stating their successful application that can be used as evidence until the time when their Social Security card and number arrive in the mail.

**Permanent Housing:** Based on information received from the welcome surveys, schools or systems may choose to coordinate appointments with various rental properties in advance of IAT arrivals to Louisiana. Schools and systems should consider providing, in advance, information regarding safe, affordable housing located near the IAT's school. This could be in the form of a list of potential properties and websites.

*NOTE: Teachers are advised not to sign a contract or lease prior to arriving in Louisiana without the guidance of their host school/school system.*

**Bank Account:** New IATs will need help in establishing a bank account during their first few days in Louisiana. Teachers should bring with them their letter from the Social Security office, contract from CODOFIL/LDOE, and a letter on school or school system letterhead confirming their employment.

*NOTE: In some cases, new IATs will bring cash with them to deposit into their new bank account. These IATs will need assistance with negotiating exchange rates.*

**Driver's License:** Schools and systems should coordinate with the IAT to secure an appointment to obtain their Louisiana driver's license. IATs will receive a letter during Orientation that grants them a waiver of completion of the required driver's course. Teachers are required to take the written and skills exams to receive their license.

*NOTE: IATs who do not hold a valid driver's license in their home country will be required to take the Louisiana driver's course.*

**Permanent Transportation (Car):** Schools and systems should help new IATs with navigating the purchase of a car. Help with locating a car from a reliable company is an important first step. New IATs do not have established credit in the United States, and will not qualify for a traditional car loan. Teachers may purchase a car outright, may deposit money for a secured loan, or may qualify for a global professional loan with certain national car dealerships. As a J1 visa holder IATs are eligible for this type of loan.

*NOTE: Depending on the availability of vehicles for purchase in the area, IATs may need extended time to secure a car or require additional support to travel to other areas to purchase a vehicle.*

**System Level Onboarding Paperwork:** Because new IATs will have to apply for a Social Security number, schools and systems should assign an application number for each teacher so that they complete the paperwork required by Human Resources. This application number can then be replaced once the IAT has received his/her Social Security number.

When completing required onboarding paperwork, a best practice is to invite all IATs to a common computer lab to complete the paperwork simultaneously. Depending on the number of new IATs hired, additional system personnel may be needed to support the onboarding process.

**School Enrollment for Children of IATs:** In some cases, new IATs will be traveling with school age children. Schools and school systems should take time to review with IATs the system's policy regarding new student enrollment. This review should include information regarding zoning, transportation, and any/all policy that relates to the IAT's individual family situation.

## Onboarding Tasks Timeline

This section contains information regarding the estimated time investment required to complete onboarding tasks for new IATs, as well as a sample timeline for completion. Schools and systems should use this as a guide for planning IAT onboarding experiences which are to be conducted during the mandatory housing and onboarding time that begins at the conclusion of the LDOE/CODOFIL orientation session.

*NOTE: Prior to IAT arrivals, schools and school systems should ensure that the responsible staff/onboarding committee members have the capacity and availability to complete these onboarding tasks. In most cases, staff/committee members will need to help facilitate these tasks after hours and on weekends.*

### School/System Steps after Orientation

List includes tasks to be accomplished and expected time at each location.

1. **Social Security Office Visit:** 2-3 hours
  - Teachers will receive a letter of application upon completion of the interview. This letter will be needed as proof to complete other items on the list.
2. **Employee Fingerprinting:** 3 hours
3. **Establishment of Bank Account:** 1-2 hours
4. **Completion of Human Resources Hiring Packet:** 3-5 hours
5. **Department of Motor Vehicles Visit:** 3 hours
  - Road Test with Driving School: 2 hours
6. **Apartment Search:** 1-2 hours (each location) with up to 3 locations
7. **Used Car Search:** 1-2 hours (each location) with up to 3 locations

### [SAMPLE 10-Day IAT Onboarding Timeline](#)

## Supporting the IAT's First Days on Campus

Schools and systems should help to support the new IAT during their first days on campus. It is important to note that the American school experience may differ greatly from that of their home country. Help with understanding processes and school culture components that are in Louisiana/America, will ensure that the new IAT has a smooth transition.

**Mentor Teacher:** All new IATs should be assigned a mentor teacher. This mentor teacher will serve as the IATs point of contact during their first year. Mentor teachers will help the IAT with school related questions or issues such as, but not limited to the following:

- onboarding information and paperwork,
- understanding campus climate/culture,
- understanding/using required school wide/system wide software,
- support with understanding duties and responsibilities, and
- support with understanding the school schedule, aspects of the teaching day, and daily transitions.

**Tour of School / School Map:** To aid in their familiarity of their new school, IATs should receive a guided tour of the school. This tour can be conducted by the principal, assistant principal, mentor teacher, or other faculty member and should include the entirety of the campus. In addition to the campus tour, IATs should receive a printed map of the campus.

**Introduction to Faculty and Staff:** To aid the new IAT with their integration on campus, it is important to introduce them to the school faculty and staff. In many cases, this can be done during the first faculty meeting held during the staff development days prior to the start of school.

**Classroom Setup:** Because expectations vary from country to country, new IATs will need assistance with setting up their classrooms. Assistance should be provided in, but not limited to, the following ways:

- explanation of procedures for gaining access to teaching materials and classroom furniture,
- guidance on the use of schoolwide shared classroom supplies or teacher/class funds (if applicable),
- guidance on classroom preparation prior to the start of school, i.e., cleaning, furniture setup, and
- help with creating a classroom bulletin board.

**Welcome Announcement:** Schools and systems should consider submitting an announcement to the school and/or system's newsletter and social media channels, welcoming the new IAT(s). This announcement could include information about where they are from, limited personal information, and their school placement.