Help Me Leave!

Your First Month in Your New Country

Settling into a new country takes planning, patience, and community. These are the key steps to focus on in your first month.

Legal & Administrative Setup

☐ Register your residence (if required by local law).

☐ Apply for a residence permit or confirm visa status.

☐ Open a local bank account (helps with rent, salary, bills).

☐ Get a local SIM card/phone plan.

☐ Register for healthcare or buy private health insurance.

☐ Learn local emergency numbers and nearest hospital/clinic.

Housing & Daily Life

☐ Finalise housing (short-term rental → long-term lease).

☐ Set up utilities: electricity, gas, water, internet.

☐ Register your address (may be required for visas/banking).

☐ Explore transport options (public transit cards, driving licence recognition, bike/scooter rentals).

☐ Locate nearby supermarkets, pharmacies, and essential shops.

Work, School & Finances

☐ Register children in school or childcare.

☐ Provide school with vaccination/education records.

☐ File any required tax or social insurance registrations.

☐ Track expenses — expect extra costs in the first month.

Building Community & Support

☐ Join local expat or immigrant support groups.

☐ Connect with community organisations (LGBTQ+, faith groups, cultural associations).

☐ Start learning the local language (free classes, apps, libraries).

☐ Attend local events, markets, or meetups.

☐ Reach out to neighbours — even small connections help.

Safety & Wellbeing

☐ Keep important documents in a safe place; make copies.

☐ Check in regularly with family/friends back home.

☐ Identify safe spaces in your area (community centres, supportive organisations).

☐ Allow yourself time — culture shock and homesickness are normal.

👉 Tip: Make a "First Month Binder" with all your new documents, contacts, and notes. It will help you feel more in control as you adjust.