

Preparing to Relocate: A Checklist for LGBTQIA+ People & Families*

*A practical preparation guide — not legal advice

Relocation can be complex and emotional. Whether you are preparing just in case or actively planning a move, having key documents and plans in place can offer peace of mind and protection. This checklist is meant to support your safety, dignity, and agency.

Complete this checklist for every member of our household.

Helpful Notes

- This checklist is **preparatory, not predictive**
- Laws and requirements vary by state and country
- Consider consulting a qualified legal or immigration professional when possible

Identity & Travel Documents

- Passport** (valid and unexpired)
Check expiration date (many countries require 6+ months validity)
Apply or renew early
- Birth certificate** (certified copy)
- State ID or driver's license**
- Social Security card**
- Name and gender marker change documents** (court orders, amended certificates)
- Immigration documents** (visa, residency, asylum paperwork, if applicable)
- Digital copies stored securely (encrypted cloud or USB)

Health & Medical Records

- Health insurance cards and policy information
- Medical records (physical & digital copies)
- Medication list and prescriptions
Include prescribing provider and pharmacy info
- Documentation related to **gender-affirming care**
- Mental health records (if you choose to carry them)
- Vaccination records

- Digital copies stored securely (encrypted cloud or USB)
- Identify providers in potential new locations

Legal & Decision-Making Documents

- Power of Attorney** (financial)
- Health Care Directive / Medical Power of Attorney**
- HIPAA authorization** (who can receive medical information)
- Will or Estate Planning documents**
- Custody, guardianship, or adoption paperwork (if applicable)
- Marriage, domestic partnership, or civil union documents
- Know which documents may need updating after relocation
- Digital copies stored securely (encrypted cloud or USB)

Family & Care Planning

- Emergency contacts (written and shared)
- Care plan for children, elders, or dependents
- School records and IEP/504 plans
- Pet records (vaccinations, microchips, travel requirements)
- Trusted person designated to act if you are unavailable
- Digital copies stored securely (encrypted cloud or USB)

Employment, Education & Finances

- Resume/CV and copies of licenses or certifications
- Employment records and references
- Student records, transcripts, and diplomas
- Bank account access and emergency funds
- Credit cards and financial account logins secured
- Understand banking and tax implications of relocation
- Digital copies stored securely (encrypted cloud or USB)

Safety, Community & Support

- Develop a communication plan with trusted people
- Know how to safely store and share sensitive information
- Prepare a small “go folder” with essentials

- Identify affirming organizations or mutual aid networks in new location
- Save contact info for LGBTQIA+ legal aid or advocacy groups
- Digital copies stored securely (encrypted cloud or USB)

Digital Safety & Records

- Update passwords and enable two-factor authentication
- Secure personal devices and cloud storage
- Backup important files
- Review privacy settings on social media

Emotional & Spiritual Care

- Identify spiritual or community supports
- Name grounding practices or rituals for transition
- Give yourself permission to grieve, hope, and rest
- Remember: needing to prepare is not a failure — it is wisdom

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