

NEW YORK INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY

Vancouver

# GET READY TO JOIN NEW YORK TECH VANCOUVER!

A guide for incoming international students to help them prepare for their arrival to Canada.

New York Institute of Technology Vancouver gathers, works, and studies on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the Musqueam, Squamish, Stó:lō, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. We also acknowledge all non-status peoples and members of other tribes who live in Vancouver.

We look forward to welcoming you to Canada. If you have any questions, please email us at [Vancouver.Orientation@nyit.edu](mailto:Vancouver.Orientation@nyit.edu)



## / PACKING FOR THE WEATHER

Vancouver has one of the most temperate climates in Canada, with much milder winters than other major Canadian cities. Vancouver is well-known for its rainy weather, which may take some getting used to. You may check for weather updates at the [Environment Canada website](#).

When you are packing for your move, you may want to include the following items:

- lightweight clothing that can be layered, such as sweaters and long sleeves
- warm clothes and outerwear
- waterproof windbreaker and/or raincoat
- waterproof boots or shoes
- scarves, hats and gloves
- umbrella
- plug adapter or transformer for using electricity in Canada (Type A; 2 pins)

You should also review the Government of Canada information about restrictions on what you may bring into the country:

Review the [Canada Border Services Agency](#) website for things to consider when bringing goods into Canada





## / RESIDENCE AND HOUSING

New York Tech Vancouver does not provide housing and we are limited in our capacity to advise on housing. Most rental accommodation in Canada is done on a monthly basis. People move out on the last day of the month and move in on the first of the month.

For your first 1 – 3 months (or longer), we recommend using one of the following housing options. You will have to inquire with each option to learn about the cost.

- [Global Education City Student Residence](#) : New York Tech students stay in Viva Tower that is located close to campus. The apartments are fully furnished and include weekly housekeeping. The building has a weight room, a sitting lounge, and underground parking.
- [Canada Homestay Network](#) is the leading homestay program management firm in Canada. You will be matched with a host based on your backgrounds, interests, lifestyles, and educational goals.

For locating longer term private accommodation, we would suggest using [Craigslist](#) or [Facebook Market](#) place. The cost of rental accommodation varies greatly based on location and type of accommodation.

Some basic tips for renting:

- View the rental unit or apartment before you transfer or give the landlord any money
- Pay using cheque or money order. If you pay by cash, request a receipt
- Be careful of housing scams
- Try to find accommodation based on its proximity to public transit.

Some additional information on renting in Vancouver can be found [here](#).





## / LANDING IN CANADA

### What should I expect the day I arrive in Canada?

Prepare for your arrival to Canada by checking [Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada's helpful tips](#).

### Arriving by plane?

If you are arriving by plane, you can get customized step-by-step directions for your journey through the Vancouver International Airport (YVR) by using the [passenger guides](#).

### Need a stamp in your passport as proof of entry into Canada?

If you arrive at one of Canada's busiest international airports (including YVR), you can now verify your identity and make an on screen declaration using primary inspection kiosks.

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) no longer stamps all passports at airports with primary inspection kiosks, such as YVR, so you will need to request a stamp from a border services officer.

See the [CBSA website](#) for more information.

### I've arrived and passed through the border. What's next?

If you have questions about accommodation in the area, purchasing long-distance phone cards and tourism information for Metro Vancouver, you can check the **British Columbia Visitor Centre** located inside International Arrivals at YVR (open 24 hours).

When you arrive, it can be helpful to have some local currency on hand. Currency exchange services are available at YVR and throughout the city.



## / TRANSIT

Translink is the company that runs Vancouver's bus, trains and seabuses in the Metro Vancouver area. To use translink, you will need a [compass card](#), which is a reloadable fare card that you can tap upon entry of a bus, train or seabus. You can choose which fare to upload (day pass, monthly pass, or pay by use), and can be reloaded online or at any skytrain station.

To purchase a compass card, you can do so [online](#) or [in-person](#).

New York Tech Vancouver students are not eligible for the U-Pass program and will need to purchase and load your own compass card to use Vancouver's Translink



Photo credit: <https://B.C.greencare.ca/compass-faresavers-and-day-passes>



## / BANKING

There are many different financial institutions in the Metro Vancouver area, and there are several banks located near campus.

To open a bank account in Canada, you'll need your passport, New York Tech Vancouver Student ID card, proof of enrollment at New York Tech Vancouver and documentation of your address in Canada (such as a phone bill or Residence contract). You may also need to provide your study permit as proof of your status in Canada. You may need to make an appointment before opening an account.

Here are a few bank options to consider:

- [Bank of Montreal](#)
- [Royal Bank of Canada](#)
- [Scotiabank](#)
- [TD Canada Trust](#)
- [CIB.C.](#)
- [HSB.C. Bank Canada](#)
- [Canadian Western Bank](#)

We are a credit based society, and so pin and chip technology (Debit Cards) is quite common, and credit cards are widely used. However, it may be useful to bring at least \$100 CAD in cash (smaller bills if possible) to get you started when you arrive.

Here is a comprehensive guide of [Banking in Canada](#).

## / MOBILE PHONE PLANS

Getting a Vancouver mobile number may be one of the first things you will want to do. Prices and data plans vary from one mobile company to another. The documentation you require to enter a mobile phone contract will also vary, depending on the company. Most companies require students to present proper photo identification (for example, a government-issued document such as a passport or driver's license), and some also require proof of funds.

We recommend you contact individual providers for more details. Major Canadian mobile phone companies include:

- [Bell Mobility](#)
- [Rogers](#)
- [Telus Mobility](#)
- [Fido](#)
- [Koodo](#)
- [Freedom Mobile](#)
- [Virgin Mobile](#)

Wondering how to get the mobile plan that is best for you?

Make sure you understand what is covered under your contract and how much you will pay for additional texts/minutes. Many operators will work on fixed contracts, so it's a good idea to shop around to find yourself a flexible month-to-month plan for your exchange. Or come with a phone that is unlocked.

If you brought your own cell phone, you may want to ask providers to see if it's possible for you to use your own phone.



## / HEALTH INSURANCE

All students are required to have medical insurance to study in Canada and at New York Tech Vancouver. Without proper coverage, medical costs can be very expensive.

### GUARD.ME

All international students are automatically enrolled in temporary health insurance with Guard.me (<https://www.guard.me/nyit>) once they arrive to Canada. Your health insurance is active for 4 months.

#### Coverage

Guard.me is comprehensive health insurance with a range of coverage. To find out your exact coverage, please refer to this [link](#) under “Policy Documents”.

If you have dependents that will be joining you in Vancouver (such as a spouse or child), you are able to purchase additional coverage for them [here](#).

#### Opting Out

This temporary health insurance cannot be substituted by any other health insurance from your home country. You may only opt out of the guard.me plan if you currently have coverage with the Medical Services Plan of British Columbia.

You can opt out of Guard.me by providing a copy of your MSP card through or if you will not be joining New York Tech Vancouver in person this term. Once the process has been approved, you will get the guard.me fee reimbursed to your account.

If you receive your MSP coverage after the opt out deadline, you will not be considered for reimbursement. We do not offer partial refunds to your guard.me coverage.

To watch a full orientation about GUARD.ME, please watch the video [here](#)

guard.me<sup>®</sup>  
International Insurance





## / B.C. MEDICAL SERVICES PLAN (MSP)

Once you have arrived in Vancouver, you can apply for the B.C Medical Services Plan (MSP), which is the health care plan administered by the government. It is mandatory to enroll in MSP as a resident of British Columbia.

Your coverage may start up to three months after your arrival date in British Columbia so apply as soon as you are able to. It is easiest to [apply online](#) for MSP. You will be asked some questions and to upload a copy of your study permit.

[Please find more information here](#)

## / B.C. GOVERNMENT ISSUED ID CARD

In Canada, it is safest to always have two pieces of B.C. Government issued ID on you at all times. This is so that you do not need to carry your passport around with you as identification. With your MSP coverage, you will receive a B.C. Services Card, that will act as a one B.C. Government issued ID. For the second piece, you have two options: B.C.

Driver's License or B.C. ID.

### **B.C. Driver's License**

Getting a B.C. Driver's License will not only help provide you with a B.C. Government Issued ID when asked, but will also allow you to drive in Canada.

If you currently have a driver's license from your home country, here are some options you can look into to [convert it into a B.C. Driver's License](#).

If you have never had a Driver's License before and would like to learn, here is some [information for you to get started](#).

### **B.C. ID**

Applying to get a B.C. ID card is very simple and the best option if you do not want to get a B.C. Driver's License.

Bring two pieces of approved ID to any driver's licensing office, and they will be able to process your request on the spot.

[More information about this and the approved ID's required here](#).

## / WORKING IN CANADA

### **Social Insurance Number (SIN)**

If you are thinking of working in Canada, you will need a Social Insurance Number (SIN)

To apply for a SIN, you must have a work permit OR a study permit which includes a condition or remark to work on and/or off campus. You can apply for a SIN in person at a [Service Canada Office](#). Your SIN will be issued the day you apply.

[Here is more information about what you need to apply for your SIN number in Vancouver.](#)

### **Terms of Working in Canada as an international student**

There are certain terms and conditions that are placed on International Students who are looking to work in Canada whilst pursuing their studies. These terms are outlined on the [Government of Canada's website here](#).

New York Tech Vancouver is unable to advise on any immigration topics and would advise any students seeking further information to refer to the [Government of Canada's website](#).

