

Miscellaneous

Cell Phones

AT&T, Sprint, and Verizon all have service coverage in Puerto Rico, though perhaps not as solid as urban CONUS areas. T-mobile is reported to have good coverage also. Concrete buildings here can impede the signal also. As with any other move, you will need to update your cell phone to Puerto Rico towers (consult your phone company for information on how). Verizon does not own towers here and will not initiate service here, but many with Verizon phones find them to work as well as others (though perhaps on 'extended network' for voice or 'roaming' for data—check to see if your plan includes free roaming). If you find that your Verizon phone does not work here, Verizon will let you terminate the contract without penalty. If you have a different wireless provider, ask.

GPS and other electronic maps

GPS navigation, including single-purpose units (such as a Garmin or TomTom) and smartphones work fairly well in Puerto Rico, but don't trust them blindly. Like anywhere, having a GPS enabled map can be very helpful, especially when new to an area. GPS coordinates (latitude and longitude) are helpful to have when choosing a destination, but most things can be found without them by simply specifying an address, searching for a point of interest, or browsing the map. If you are bringing your GPS from elsewhere be sure it has PR maps loaded before you travel, because it may be less convenient to load new maps on a hotel internet connection. Many people find success with the Google maps on their phones. Single-purpose GPS units with traffic capabilities may not work as well as traffic routing advice from a smartphone. If your GPS or smartphone can't find something, try going to the store's national website and using the store finder before you assume there are no Home Depot stores, for example. Some locations do not have a traditional address like "123 Main St.," but instead have the road and a nearby mile (Km) marker, as in "Rt. 693 Km 2.3." In such a case, it would be helpful to ask the nearest major intersection and which way the destination is from there, or to have GPS coordinates. Sometimes it is simpler to set your GPS to the nearest shopping center to the store.

Personal Firearms

You are strongly advised to not bring a firearm to Puerto Rico, even though it is possible to try. It is illegal to possess a firearm in PR unless you have a license from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; licenses from other states are not recognized or honored here. Bearing, carrying, or transporting a firearm requires the permission of a Superior Court judge of Puerto Rico and to do so without proper documentation is a felony. It can take 6-12 months to obtain this documentation. Additionally, shipping firearms with

your HHG can severely delay the release of your shipment. Further, it is even harder to ship a firearm off of the island if you move off of the island.

Do you have to know Spanish?

No. Many people do quite well without knowing any, but you will benefit greatly from learning a few key phrases. Attempts at Spanish, even if feeble, are appreciated as a sign of respect for the culture, and will help you enjoy your time here more. Living in a Spanish-speaking culture is a great opportunity to learn a language that is becoming more and more prevalent in the US. Newer web browsers and smartphones can be set to automatically translate websites, and web browsers should be able to use <http://translate.google.com> or similar sites.

Are there national chain stores/restaurants?

Yes, we have many of them. See GPS section above regarding not using mapping software as your only search tool. While there are many national chain options, don't be afraid to branch out and enjoy local places!

Why are the movers asking me to fill out a power of attorney?

Household goods (and other items) being moved into PR need to clear customs. Some TSPs (shipping companies) ask for a lot of information from you to just in case they need it. Some of this may be necessary, and you should answer their questions about your shipment, but it is good practice to not sign a form authorizing someone else to represent you for tax matters unless the specific authorizations/limitations are completed. You should also ask for a Notice of Privacy Practices from the TSP, and if you need to provide sensitive information such as a social security number, transmit it by phone or fax and not by email.

What is there to do?

Lots! In addition to community listings, ask your contacts what their favorite activities are. Check out www.puertoricodaytrips.com for a wealth of information on fun activities; this is a review website that many people find very helpful.

What is the weather like?

Tropical! It is warm enough for year-round swimming, volleyball, etc. With today's technology, you can add Dorado to the locations that your favorite website or app provides weather for. For averages over time, here are two websites that allow you to compare the typical weather in one or more locations:

Simple: <http://adstest.climate.weather.com/outlook/travel/vacationplanner/compare>

More complex: <http://outflux.net/weather/noaa/index.php>