



BRISTOL BEYOND BORDERS

The United States of America



While global mobility programs continue to expand, with relocation volumes growing into many locations, the U.S. remains the number one destination/host country for most companies. With the need for U.S. assignments and transfers remaining high, it is essential to review the current trends, issues, and questions surrounding moves to the U.S. For this edition of Bristol Beyond Borders, we sat down with Andrea Gullickson, Senior Manager, Global Client Solutions, with IOR Global Services, to discuss the current state of U.S. Global Mobility.

Tariff and Immigration Concerns Impacting Move Volume

Significant questions surround the impact of changing immigration policy on work visas. Additionally, the ongoing changes to tariffs have created cost concerns and shipping issues that may continue indefinitely. While it remains to be seen how these issues will be resolved, there has been a trend of fewer moves into the U.S. while the situation unfolds. There is anticipation that relocation volumes to the U.S. may continue to be lower throughout 2025.

Social Security Number Processing Changes

The method for obtaining a Social Security number has changed recently. While the process was implemented in some locations over the past couple of years, all Social Security offices have moved to this process as of January 20, 2025. The new model begins with an online application, followed by a scheduled in-person appointment with the office. Due to government reductions in force, we are now seeing a backlog of available appointments at the Social Security offices countrywide, which is pushing the wait times out by weeks or even months in some locations. We recommend booking an appointment as soon as an expatriate knows their arrival date to avoid extensive delays.

Housing Issues

Lack of Single-Family Home Inventory: There has been a push to build new multifamily and apartment units throughout the U.S., making them broadly available nationwide. However, the availability of single-family homes in most markets is extremely low. This is primarily due to high interest rates, which create reluctance for current owners to sell and then buy a new property. This has been the most significant housing challenge for relocating employees.

Impact of Recent Court Rulings on Renters: While the lawsuit ruling against the National Association of Realtors is perceived as impacting home sales, it also impacts rentals. A tenant representation agreement must be signed with a real estate agent before property viewings, and the agreement states that a fee amount is owed once a property is selected. Historically, landlords have been responsible for paying broker fees in most locations except New York City, parts of New Jersey, Boston, and Rhode Island. While the agreement outlines the amount that the tenant's agent will receive, the landlord usually pays this commission. However, if the landlord won't pay the commission, the tenant must pay the agreed-upon amount.

New York City – The FARE Act: The Fairness in Apartment Rental Expenses (FARE) Act, effective June 11, 2025, introduced a major change in New York City rental agreements by requiring landlords to pay broker fees when they hire brokers to list or show properties and tenants having responsibility for paying the broker if they engage them to assist in a rental search. Tenant-paid fees must be clearly disclosed, and relocating transferees will need to sign a Tenant Representation Agreement outlining broker fees, which typically range from 8% to 12% of annual rent.

The new law may lead landlords to increase rental rates to offset costs or choose to self-represent, potentially slowing the leasing process. As the market adapts to these changes, practices may evolve, and further updates will be shared.





Thank you to Andrea Gullickson of
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Questions or comments? Please connect with us at info@bristolglobal.com.

