



# New Castle County, DE Relocation Guide



  
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# INTRODUCING

# New Castle County

New Castle County offers great diversity of neighborhoods, ranging from the mansions of Greenville to the high-rise condos and brownstones in Wilmington. Newark is home to the University of Delaware and a popular location for families due to its walkable, vibrant downtown lined with quaint stores and restaurants. Popular growing residential areas include Townsend and Middletown, which are located south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal.

The City of Wilmington is New Castle County's metropolitan center. With a population of 72,000, Wilmington offers a great variety of entertainment, dining and urban amenities. In the last 15 years, the city has developed its Riverfront district into a popular destination that includes residences, restaurants, museums, shopping, conference center, a riverwalk and Frawley Stadium, the home of the Wilmington Blue Rocks minor league baseball team.

There is no shortage of activities to partake in and sights to see in New Castle County. From the charm and beauty of Colonial New Castle to the Civil War-era Fort Delaware found on Pea Patch Island in the middle of the Delaware River to the early 20th-century townhomes of Wilmington's Ships Tavern District, New Castle County is steeped in historic sites for your enjoyment. New Castle County is also home to a number of world-class attractions and museums, including Winterthur, Nemours Mansion and Garden,



Delaware Museum of Natural History, Delaware Art Museum and Rockwood Museum.

There are many great events, festivals and attractions that shouldn't be missed, including the week-long Clifford Brown Jazz Festival, concerts at the Queen Theatre, the Wilmington Grand Prix and sports at the University of Delaware. Residents

and visitors love tax-free shopping at the Christiana Mall, which has more than 130 stores.

New Castle County is a great area for outdoor enthusiasts. There are more than 16,000 acres of beautiful parkland available for hiking, playing sports, swimming, fishing, camping, biking and picnicking with friends and family. 🌳

# A Quick Look at New Castle County

Delaware, located on the eastern seaboard of the United States, is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and the Delaware Bay, as well as by the states of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland. With a land area of 1,982 square miles, Delaware ranks 49th in area among the 50 states.

New Castle, the northern-most county, affords easy access to the major metropolitan areas of the Northeast, with both New York City and Washington, D.C., just an hour and a half away by rail.

## POPULATION:

- Census 2010: 538,479  
*Source: U.S. Census, 2010*

## INCOME:

- Median Household: \$64,158
- Per capita income: \$31,988  
*Source: U.S. Census, 2010*

## CLIMATE:

- Mean annual temperature: 56 degrees F
- Mean daily temperature: From 38 degrees F in the winter to 76 degrees F in the summer
- Median annual precipitation: 49 inches  
*Source: NOAA*

## COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES:

- Delaware College of Art and Design
- Delaware Technical and Community College
- Drexel University – Wilmington
- Goldey-Beacom College
- University of Delaware
- Wesley College



- Widener University (Delaware Campus)
- Wilmington University

## NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR DELAWARE:

- 1st in economic output per job, *U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Enterprising States 2012*
- In the top 10 for high-tech share of all business, high-speed broadband availability, median family income, export intensity growth, export growth, STEM job concentration, *Enterprising States 2012*
- 2nd for economic freedom, *Economic Freedom of North America 2012, Fraser Institute*
- 1st for legal systems for the eighth consecutive year, *2012 State Liability Systems Ranks, U.S. Chamber of Commerce*
- 5th in business incubation, *Beacon Hill Institute of Public Policy Research, 2013*
- 14th for the state business climate, *The 2012 Tax Foundation's Index*
- 16th for the best states for business cost, *Forbes 2012*

## All Sizes of Businesses Thrive, Grow in New Castle

New Castle County is invested in creating a successful environment for businesses to thrive. Our economic development professionals and partner organizations are able to assist with the growth of businesses of all sizes in New Castle County. Our strategic location, skilled workforce, low taxes and cost of living make New Castle County a great place to establish and grow a business.

The county is the corporate home to more than 60 percent of the nation's Fortune 500 companies and industry



giants. At the same time, many smaller businesses have relocated to the area while home-grown businesses continue to thrive. Companies see great value in New Castle County's quality of life. Due to its small size, Delaware residents benefit from exceptional access to state and local officials who are invested in the success of local businesses.

New Castle County features a business-friendly tax environment, with no sales tax and low property and income taxes. This means that the cost of doing business is substantially lower than in surrounding states and counties.

We assist local and national companies with the permitting process along with other government regulations. In coordination with the Delaware Economic Development Office and other partnerships, we work to attract new businesses and existing ones through marketing and outreach. ↶

# Keeping Taxes Low Benefits Homeowners and Businesses Alike

New Castle County and the State of Delaware maintain a business-friendly environment by keeping taxes low. New Castle County offers its residents a great quality of life with a considerably lower cost of living when compared with surrounding counties.

## Sales Tax

There is no sales tax in the State of Delaware.

## Property Tax

Real property taxes in New Castle County are among the lowest in the nation. There is no statewide property tax. Property taxes are assessed by local governments and school districts. The average county

portion of property taxes is \$503 per year.

## Corporate Taxes

The corporate income tax rate is 8.7%. Taxes are not paid on dividends of foreign corporations that qualify for, and claim, foreign tax credit on federal returns. Investment and holding companies maintaining and managing intangible investments, and

collecting and distributing income from such investments or from tangible property outside Delaware, are exempt from State corporate income tax. Partnerships, sole proprietorships and shareholders of S Corporations are not subject to State corporate income taxes. Businesses should note that Delaware has no tax on inventories and no tax on process machinery or equipment. ↶

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## Business Assistance

The New Castle County Office of Economic Development provides new, developing and existing businesses with the resources they need to grow, remain successful and contribute to our vibrant local economy. Our economic development professionals assist local and national companies with government regulations and the permitting process. In coordination with the Delaware Economic Development Office and other partnerships, New Castle County works to attract new businesses and offer existing ones several innovative programs to invest in the success of your business and help you grow.

### Bond Financing

New Castle County Government offers tax-exempt bond financing for projects relating to infrastructure, energy, community development and other economic development purposes.

### Partial Property Tax Exemption

Businesses that invest at least \$50,000 in new construction of commercial or manufacturing facilities in

unincorporated areas of the county are eligible for a three-year partial property tax exemption for the incremental increase in property assessment due to the new development in excess of \$50,000. The tax exemption is applicable to only the New Castle County portion of real estate taxes.

### New Jobs Infrastructure Program

The New Jobs Infrastructure Fund provides flexible funding for public infrastructure projects that are critical and immediate for large businesses locating or expanding in Delaware. This \$55 million fund can be used for projects relating to transportation, sewer, water, energy, land stabilization and other infrastructure. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and require a public sector co-sponsor. New Castle County Government seeks to co-sponsor projects within the county.

### Brownfield Assistance Program

The Brownfield Assistance Program encourages the redevelopment of environmentally distressed sites within the state by helping to reduce related

capital expenditures. DEDO administers the program in collaboration with the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control.

### Delaware Access Program

The Delaware Access Program is a private-public match program that provides access to bank financing for qualifying Delaware businesses that may have difficulty obtaining conventional financing.

### Delaware Technical Innovation Program (DTIP)

DTIP supports business research through funding transition grants that will bring innovative new products, jobs and revenue to Delaware. SBIR/STTR transition grants provide funds to businesses located in the State of Delaware that have been awarded assistance from the federal program.

### Wilmington Tax Exemption for New or Renovated Commercial or Manufacturing Projects

New or renovated commercial or manufacturing projects located within the corporate limits of the City of Wilmington are eligible to receive a partial tax exemption on the increase in the New Castle County portion of property tax attributable to the new construction. The cost of new construction and/or the cost of site acquisition and construction must exceed \$50,000. The tax exemption is applicable to all new or renovated commercial or manufacturing projects first assessed on the property tax records after August 22, 1978. Residential structures are exempt. ↶



## Enjoy the Great Outdoors with Great Parks and Activities



**N**ew Castle County is a great place for people who love to enjoy the outdoors. There are more than 16,000 acres of parkland. With parks ranging from the 3,300-acre White Clay Creek State Park to numerous neighborhood parks, residents can stay fit and enjoy the outdoors.

The parks offer many unique and historical attractions. Rockwood Park is a 72-acre property that includes a

150-year-old estate and museum with wonderful rural Gothic architecture and a six-acre garden. The Bellevue State park includes the historic Bellevue mansion, as well as equestrian stables. The Port Penn Interpretive Center offers tours and programs devoted to the traditions of the wetland community. On the trails of Alapocas Run, visitors can learn about the historic mills that used to operate along the Brandywine River. Alapocas Run also

offers a rock-climbing wall, although rock-climbing enthusiasts will first need a permit before starting on their adventure.

New Castle County parks and Delaware State parks regularly offer events, ranging from concerts, children's summer camp programs, hay rides and the like. More than 12,000 individuals and 740 teams participate in New Castle County's many sports leagues. These include programs for all



ages and skills, competitive leagues and informal drop-in events ranging from flag football and soccer to senior golf clinics and softball tournaments.

New Castle County is also a bike-friendly community for both recreation and transportation. The Northern Delaware Greenway project has helped to connect a 30-mile-long series of bike paths through parks and designated roads stretching from the borders of Pennsylvania to Maryland.

There are also special biking events, such as the Wilmington Grand Prix and the Bike to the Bay event, in which participants can choose from six course options ranging from 17 miles to a two-day 175-mile ride.

Whether looking to spend some leisure time outside with family, join a sports league or participate in a marathon or bike race, there are plenty of ways to keep active in New Castle County.

## Special Events

County Executive Gordon has brought back the popular Sleep Under the Stars event at New Castle County-owned parks. These events are designed as free, fun opportunities for families and friends to enjoy the outdoors in our wonderful County parks. Planned activities for the Sleep Under the Stars events include: camping, bonfires, hay rides, food, games and crafts, as well as other activities for all ages. The evenings are then capped off by a safe area for overnight family tenting.

The Old Fashioned Ice Cream Festival at Rockwood Park hosts more than 15,000 visitors annually at New Castle County's Rockwood Park and Museum. The event kicks off the summer in June with local vendors, live music, local restaurants, craft beers and, of course, local creameries serving the region's best ice creams and desserts. ☞





## Extensive Programs Meet the Needs of Every Student



**N**ew Castle County businesses benefit from the strength of high-quality public and private educational systems and a highly skilled workforce.

New Castle County public and private schools and colleges and universities are recognized for excellence, which is best reflected in the many educational programs made available to students.

The School Choice Program allows students to attend any public school in New Castle County, provided there is capacity. Our six public school districts have extensive programs that

are bound to meet the specific needs of every child and adult learner. In addition, New Castle County has four vocational technical high schools. These schools afford the unique opportunity to blend high-level academic concepts with technical skills through an integrated, applied curriculum.

Under the Charter School Program, students may apply for entrance to these public schools, which are governed by an independent board of directors. In Delaware, 6% of the student population attends a public charter school, including the Newark Charter School, Delaware Military

Academy, Cab Calloway School of the Arts and Charter School of Wilmington, a nationally recognized high school focusing on math and science education.

Because of the state's dedication to students and educational reforms, Delaware was showcased as the first recipient of the federal Race to the Top grant award, totaling \$119 million. Initiatives include developing strong partnerships between local schools, communities and businesses; a focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education; and teacher effectiveness.

## Higher Education

Delaware offers broad opportunities for post-secondary education through five colleges and three universities. More than 90 Associate and 140 Bachelor Degree programs are available in many fields, including agriculture, allied health, business, computer science, criminal justice, education, engineering, liberal arts and nursing. Delaware institutions offer more than 90 programs leading to a master's degree, as well as doctoral degrees in a number of fields.

The University of Delaware, which is ranked #75 by *U.S. News and World Report* among "Best National Universities," is home to more than 19,000 students. Cutting-edge

translational research is conducted at its 60 research centers, including The Center for Composite Materials, Institute of Energy Conversion, and Center for Neutron Science.

The State of Delaware SEED (Student Excellence Equals Degree) Program offers students graduating from Delaware high schools with a GPA of 2.5 or higher free tuition for two-year Associate's programs at Delaware Technical & Community College and the University of Delaware. Today, more than 1,300 Delaware high school graduates are attending college as a result of this program, which has opened doors to many students and made higher education more affordable. ↶

## EDUCATION SNAPSHOT

- Public school districts, 2011-2012: 6 (115 schools)
- Charter schools, 2011-2012: 14
- Total public/non-public and charter enrollment, 2011-2012: 96,971
- Educational Attainment of Population Age 25+
  - High School Graduate and higher: 88.9%
  - Bachelor's Degree and higher: 32.7%

Source: Census, 2010



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## By Road, Rail or Air – Your Ride is Here



**N**ew Castle County's strategic location in the Northeast Corridor allows easy access to the nation's centers of finance, government and leisure.

Several major highways lead directly to and through New Castle County, including I-95, I-495, I-295 and the New Jersey Turnpike. These roadways permit travel to Philadelphia and Baltimore in less than an hour and to New York City or Washington, D.C., in less than two hours. Delaware Route 1 is a 103-mile-long, four- to six-lane limited access highway running from the Maryland-Delaware line on the eastern Atlantic shoreline to the

Delaware Turnpike (I-95). The highway provides easy access to the beach resort towns of Rehoboth and Bethany Beach from New Castle County in less than two hours, and to the state capital, Dover, in less than an hour.

The Wilmington Train Station, which recently completed a \$38 million restoration project, is Amtrak's 12th-busiest station, offering 70 station stops daily to points north and south. Amtrak Acela high-speed trains offer a 20-minute ride to Philadelphia and an 80-minute ride to Washington, D.C. The Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) provides regular commuter service between Philadelphia and New Castle

County. DART First State provides daily commuter buses. Residents can also enjoy a great network of walking and biking trails.

The New Castle Airport is one of the largest and most complete general aviation service airports on the East Coast. Earlier this year, Frontier Airlines began services from New Castle using 168-seat airplanes, with service to Chicago-Midway, Houston, Denver and Orlando and Tampa, Fla. The airport has 72 T-hangers, 30 aircraft tie-down spaces, three major runways and 10 taxiways. It also has four full-service fixed-base operators, and offers corporate flight operations, aircraft maintenance and aerotaxi.

Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) is just 15 miles from New Castle County. In 2010, PHL accommodated 30.8 million passengers, including 4.2 million international passengers, and handled 460,779 aircraft takeoffs and landings. Twenty-nine airlines offer nearly 620 daily departures to 123 cities, including 36 international destinations.

The Port of Wilmington is a full-service deep-water port and marine terminal located at the confluence of the Christina and Delaware Rivers. It handles more than 400 vessels and four million tons of cargo annually, and is the number one port in North America for imports of fresh fruit, bananas and juice content. It has the nation's largest dockside cold storage facility, with six temperature-controlled freezer units comprising more than 800,000 square feet. The port also contains 50 acres of open storage space and 250,000 square feet of dry warehouse space.

Two railroads - the CSX and Norfolk Southern - provide cargo services throughout New Castle County for easy and efficient transport of goods. 🚚



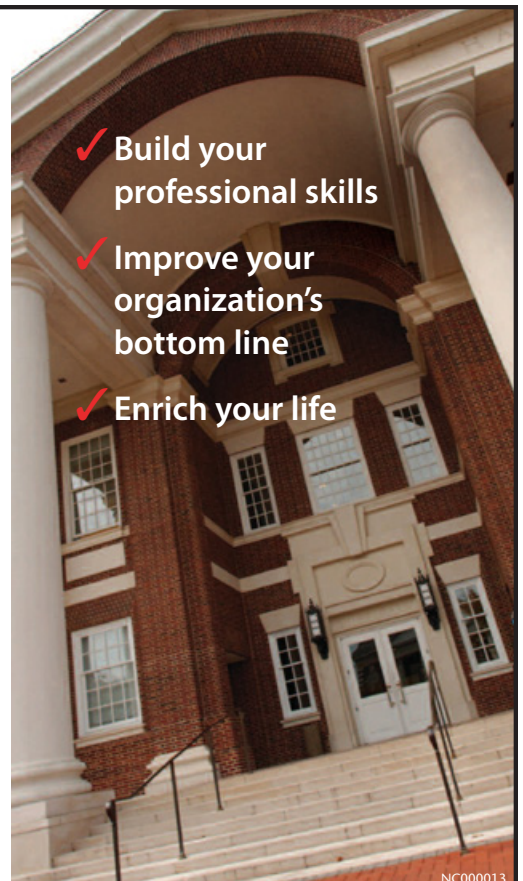
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## Incentives Help Those Buying or Repairing a Home



If you're looking to purchase a home, or if you have an existing home that you'd like to rehabilitate or make more energy efficient, many great incentives and financing programs are available in New Castle County.

The **Neighborhood Stabilization Program** offers affordable homes for sale throughout New Castle County. Each home has been extensively rehabilitated and updated

with various green technology improvements to provide new owners with long-term affordability.

The **First Time Homebuyer Program** provides loans between \$1,000 and \$5,000 at a low rate of 3% for the purchase of any home under \$202,900. This eight-year loan, which serves to assist with closing and settlement costs, is segmented into two periods: The first three years are a deferral period, with simple interest

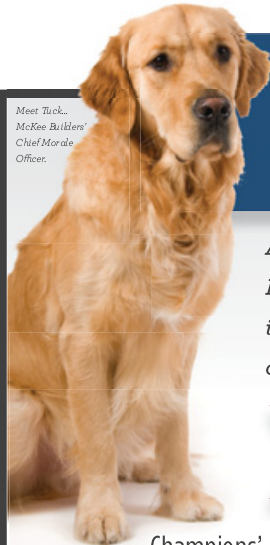
accruing and optional payments, while the next five years require monthly payments and accrued interest. Buyers earning less than 80% of median income (determined by HUD guidelines) qualify for the loan.

Eligible homebuyers may qualify for a 0% interest, deferred loan of 6% of sale price (up to \$10,000) for down payment and settlement assistance through the **Vacant Homebuyers Assistance Program** (VHAP). The

VHAP loan has been created to stimulate sales of long-term vacant properties in communities throughout Bear, Newark, New Castle and Claymont. VHAP applicants are not required to be first-time homebuyers, and no payback is required while remaining in the home as a primary residence.

Several other programs help rehabilitate homes and make them handicap accessible. The **Homeowner Rehabilitation Direct Loan (HRDL)** program assists homeowners throughout the county with general repairs that bring their homes up to current housing code standards. Owner-occupied residents can borrow up to \$55,000 in home repairs, and loan payments can be spread over 20 years with a 0% interest rate. Homeowners in HIP communities have a special HRDL program that provides loans of up to \$20,000 to make repairs and improvements, with the same loan terms as the HRDL.

The **Emergency Home Repair Program** allows homeowners to borrow up to \$5,000 to fix housing issues that are dangerous to their health or safety, such as a broken heating system or roof damage. These loans are at a 0% interest rate and can be spread over 36 to 60 months. The **Architectural Accessibility Program** provides grants of up to \$5,000 to install accessibility ramps, grab bars or other modifications to make residences handicap accessible. The **Senior Minor Home Repair Program** provides grants of up to \$2,500 to address projects that focus on the health, safety and security conditions of the home. 🏠



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## Wilmington's Rebirth Provides Livable City for Both Businesses and Residents



**W**ilmington is often referred to as the “corporate capital of the world.” More than half of the Fortune 500 companies call Wilmington their corporate home. The unique synergism that exists between government, business and labor has successfully addressed the issue of infrastructure rebuilding, leading the City to its position as financial, governmental and corporate hub of the State and region.

Efficient mass transportation, ample parking and a dynamic environment for more than 40,000 workers who live, work and play downtown, are evidence of the City's rebirth. A number of public/private partnerships have contributed to an outstanding growth record.

Outdoor enthusiasts appreciate Wilmington's 552 acres of picturesque parklands, which include the

Brandywine Zoo, jogging trails and wooded picnic and recreation areas. Wilmington is home to the Playhouse Theatre and the Grand Opera House, preeminent centers for the performing arts, where one can enjoy performances by world-renowned entertainers and Broadway theatrical productions. The Delaware Theater Company, the State's first professional theater group, occupies a newly constructed facility along the City's Christina River. Performances of fully staged professional opera may be enjoyed at the Grand Opera House. The rich historic legacy of the DuPont Family can be experienced by visiting the area's internationally acclaimed Nemours Mansion and Gardens, Winterthur, Hagley Museum and Longwood Gardens.

Wilmington welcomes a diversity of lifestyles. An exclusive downtown address may be an impeccably

restored Victorian townhouse, a sleek, high-rise condominium community or a handsome single-family dwelling in a friendly neighborhood. Extraordinary communities nestled in lush, verdant hills offer the comfort of country living but are only minutes from the business pulse of the city. Housing is abundant and affordable in Wilmington, and profitable resale values reflect the healthy progress of the City. From kindergarten to college, Wilmington offers quality education, with curricula focused on employment opportunities. A pedestrian concourse leads to cosmopolitan shops, quaint sidewalk cafes, artisans' boutiques and charming galleries. Rebirth of the City's Waterfront as evidenced by the comprehensive, mixed-use Christina Gateway development is a reflection of the City's past, present and future. A city rich in history - Wilmington offers a unique blend of the old and new. ☺