

Instructions for Arriving Postdocs and Professors

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The present document is aimed at giving some useful suggestions on how to proceed on getting started in Concepción avoiding as much as possible bureaucratic troubles. It is not an official guide, but rather a series of guidelines. The suggestion is to follow them as close as you can and in the order in which they appear. As I said, this is not an official document and is based on my personal experience and on the experience of other postdocs and professors who arrived in Chile from overseas before or shortly after myself.

Before you arrive (I)

NB: Do not make any travel plan to Chile before getting a visa!

Before you arrive (II)

When you accept your offer please ask for a copy of the contract to be sent to you or for a letter of offer/invitation from the university. The latter should have the characteristics of an official document, with a signature and a stamp. If you were awarded a FONDECYT grant you should ask for the *certificado de adjudicación*. This document is released by CONICYT, and you should contact your project coordinator to obtain it. These documents/letters/certificates are **very important** because they are usually necessary for the obtainment of the visa.

The second thing you want to do after you have accepted your job offer is to **contact the closest Chilean embassy or consulate in your country or the country where you live**. When you do this, please explain to them what exactly you are going to do in Chile and ask them which is the visa that applies to your case. Normally, they will tell you the type of visa to apply for and give you an application form and the list of all the documents you need to provide. The latter may change depending on your country of citizenship, thus it is important that, if you live in a country which is not your country of citizenship, you tell the consulate/embassy what are you citizen of.

Before you arrive (III)

The required documents to obtain a legal and valid visa can be numerous, and in some cases may be time consuming to obtain (e.g., fully legalising birth certificates from countries other than that of current residence). Therefore this process should be initiated as early as possible, and often such steps can and should be started before or while the actual contract is being processed by the university.

Before you arrive (IV)

In Chile it is not possible to open a bank account without having an ID card and a RUT (see Page 10), so in most cases you will not be able to get a salary for 1-1.5 months. Furthermore, the salary may be paid at the end of the month, so it may happen that if you get your ID after 0.5 or 1.5 months you might have to wait until the end of the month in which you receive it.

Before you make your travel plans you want to make sure that you have enough funds in your bank account to survive for 2-3 months. I advise you to discuss these matters with your work supervisor when you are applying for the visa. Also, make sure that your debit and credit cards work in Chile; ask this to your bank as you don't want to experience the unpleasant feeling of discovering that your debit card is disabled for withdrawals in the Chilean ATMs.

When you Arrive

When you go through passport control to enter Chile, you will get a stamp in your passport. It is very important at that moment to check that the entry stamp is both correct and legible: it should contain the three letters "ENT". If the border agent makes a mistake, try to fix it then. If this is not possible, there will be a chance to address this later by requesting a *Certificado de viaje* (Travel Certificate) from the PDI (see Page 9 of this document). However, this process will add you one more bureaucratic step to do. It is recommended, when you go to register your visa (see Page 9), to check with the police officer who will be attending you that everything is in order with stamps and visa label in your passport.

After your Arrival (Visa Registration)

When you arrive in Chile you need to register your visa. For temporary residence visas, which are the visas usually granted to postdocs, **the registration must be done within 30 days of your arrival** in any office of the *Policía de Investigación* (PDI). **In Concepción the PDI is in Angol 815 (at the corner with Los Carrera)**. The cost of the document is approximately CLP 800.

The police will issue a certificate of your visa registration with the receipt of the payment. Please make a photocopy/scan of both documents for your records. The certificate of visa registration is needed in the application for the Chilean identity card, which will be the most important document during your stay in Chile (see next page).

After your Arrival (ID Card, 1)

Once you have registered your visa at the PDI, you are ready to apply for a Chilean ID card. This is the most important document, and you will be asked to show it in many cases (e.g. notarisation of signatures, opening of a bank account, registration to the tax system). The ID card has a number associated, the *Rol Único Tributario* (RUT), also known as *Rol Único Nacional* (RUN). This will become your identification number in Chile. Even when you arrive from an overseas trip (e.g. a conference or vacation), the officer at the passport control will ask you to exhibit the ID card in addition to your passport with the valid visa label in it.

After your Arrival (ID Card, 2)

To apply for the Chilean ID card (*Cédula de Identidad para Extranjeros*), you need the following documents (all photocopies; also bring the original documents as a backup in case you are asked to provide them):

- page of your passport with entry stamp;
- page of your passport with the visa label;
- page of your passport with your generalities;
- certificate of visa registration (see Page 9).

The ID card needs 15-30 days to be processed. It costs about CLP 4500, and you can check the status of the application process at <https://www.registrocivil.cl/>

The office that processes the applications for ID cards is the Registro Civil, which in Concepción is located at Chacabuco 548.

After your Arrival (ID Card, 2)

After your application is lodged you will be issued a certificate with the RUT number: that will be your temporary Chilean ID card until the real one will be ready for collection. You can do limited things with the RUT certificate (e.g. starting a bank account or signing a lease).

If your application for the Chilean ID is successful, you MIGHT be notified via email that your document is ready for you to collect at the office. However, if your application is rejected you will not be informed via email. Therefore, the best thing to do is to check the status of the *Cédula* regularly at <https://www.registrocivil.cl/>. When you go to collect the ID bring the RUT certificate with you as the employee that will give you the card will retain it.

After you get your ID Card

When you get your ID card, go to the police (PDI) and register the document. You will have **30 days time from the granting of the ID** to register it. Note that the police require you to notify them every time you change your address.

When you get your ID card, please resume any suspended bureaucratic process in which your ID is required. This may include contract signature/notarisation, bank account opening, registration to the tax system (see next slides).

Housing and Rentals

Apartments and rentals are relatively easy to find here. Many on line companies exist, but these charge a commission. Therefore a reasonable approach is to request help from the department in finding a temporary accommodation (1-2 weeks) on arrival. After arrival, one can then begin searching for apartments/rentals. As an example, one method that works well for finding an apartment in a building near campus is to simply ask at the *conserje* (conciierge) if anything is available. Often you will obtain one or two numbers of owners looking to rent, whom you can then contact.

Bank Account

In order to receive your salary, you need a bank account (two separate bank accounts, one for funds and one for salary in the case of FONDECYT). While you need the *Cédula* (ID card) to open a bank account, in some cases you can already start the bank account process with the temporary ID (RUT certificate). This step may help you acquire access to a fully functioning bank account more quickly upon the arrival of your *Cédula*, but not all the banks may accept the temporary ID to open an account.

Opening a bank account may be slow (up to 2-3 weeks), so start it as soon as you get your temporary ID card if possible. Some banks may require you to provide documents (**sometimes a photocopy of your PhD certificate, so get one before arriving in Chile**).

There are several banks near the campus and in the City (e.g. Banco de Chile, Santander), and you can choose the one that best suits to your case once you have arrived and settled. The requirements and documents to open a bank account may change from bank to bank.

You will have to pay taxes out of the salary that receive and, in order to declare how much do you earn, you need to be registered to the *Servicio de Impuestos Internos* (SII). To register to the SII you need a password, which you obtain by going in person to the SII and showing your *Cédula*. The SII will release you a temporary password which you will use for your first log in to the system. Once you have logged in, you will change the password and do the *Iniciación de Actividades*. This step is necessary, as before you start paying taxes on what you earn you need to tell the Chilean Government why you are earning that money in the country. The *Iniciación* can be done at home on the SII web site. However, since there are many types of paid activities and sadly “postdoc” is not one of them, I would advise you to do this step by going in person to the SII. It will cost you a little more time and perhaps a long queue but may spare you some annoying situations later.

The SII is located in O'Higgins 749.

Tax Declaration

The tax declaration is done in two steps: the issue of the bill (*emisión de boleta*) and the payment. The bill can easily be issued from the SII web page (www.sii.cl). Do that as soon as you get your salary. Regarding the tax payment, you can do that on line too from the SII web page. **You have to do that within the first 12 days of the month following the one in which you issued the bill.** For the tax payment you have to open the *Formulario 29* and write the 10% of the salary that you received in the box no 152. Once you have paid this 10% of your salary, you are done with the taxes until next salary.

Please make sure whether it is you or the university who will do the issue of the bill and/or tax payment (if you have a FONDECYT you will have to do both steps).

Health insurance is not compulsory but is recommended. There are several private providers available and you can check on line which is the one that best suits to your needs.

Note that a pay-as-you-go SIM card can be obtained easily without the actual ID card. The internet contract for your apartment (which you will want as soon as possible) likely requires the ID but can be obtained by using someone else ID on a temporary basis.

Most government offices (*Registro Civil*, SII) and banks are open from 8:30 am to 2:00 pm. Other offices (e.g. PDI, post office) may be closed from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm because of the lunch break. It is a good practice to conduct any paperwork in the morning.