

# Fast Facts – North Dakota

**Business Hours** -- The following are general open hours; specific establishment may vary. Businesses and offices are open from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Banks' hours are usually Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm; Saturday, 10am to 1pm. Many banks and other outlets offer 24-hour access to ATMs. Shops' operating hours are likely to be 9am to 9pm during the week, and 10am to 6pm on Saturdays and 12-6 on Sundays. Bars and nightclubs close at 1am.

**Electricity** -- The U.S. uses 110 to 120 volts AC (60 cycles), compared to 220 to 240 volts AC (50 cycles) in most of Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

**Emergencies** -- Call tel. **911** for emergencies, fire, ambulance, or police.

**Internet Access** -- Many hotels offer Wi-Fi to guests for free or at a nominal charge. If you aren't bringing your laptop with you, know that many hotels offer business centers with internet access.

**Liquor Laws** -- The legal age to purchase and consume alcoholic beverages in the U.S. is 21; proof of age is required at bars, nightclubs, and restaurants, so bring ID when you go out. Beer, wine, and hard liquor can be purchased at liquor stores. Do not carry open containers of alcohol in your car or any public area that isn't zoned for alcohol consumption. Driving while intoxicated is considered a criminal offense.

**Mail** -- At press time, domestic postage rates were 28¢ for a postcard and 44¢ for a letter. For international mail, first-class postcards and letters weighing up to 1 ounce cost 98¢ (75¢ to Canada and Mexico). You can buy stamps and mailing supplies at any post office or go to [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).

**Newspapers** -- Many of the cities in North Dakota have daily newspapers, including the Fargo Forum, Bismarck Tribune, Minot Daily, Grand Forks Herald, Jamestown Sun, Williston Daily Herald, Wahpeton Daily News, Valley City Times Record, Devils Lake Journal and Dickinson Press. Other communities have weekly newspapers.

**Pets** -- There are a number of "Pet-Friendly accommodations in the state. Please check directly with the community you are looking to visit.

**Safety** -- North Dakota has consistently been named to the top of "Safest States to Travel to." To preserve your safety, simply take the usual common-sense precautions: Keep money and valuables out of sight, always lock your hotel door, and don't carry too much cash.

**Smoking** -- Smoking is prohibited in public places including restaurants. Exceptions include designated smoking rooms in hotels.

**Taxes** -- Hotel rooms are subject to a % to 3 ¼% tax. The state sales tax is 5% for general tax with 7% for alcohol but cities may have additional liquor/alcohol tax. In the U.S., there is no value-added tax (VAT) or other indirect tax at the national level.

**To Make International Calls** -- To dial international numbers, dial 011, then the country code, then the phone number. The telephone system in the U.S. is run by private corporations, so rates, especially for long-distance service and operator-assisted calls, can vary widely. Generally, hotel surcharges on long-distance and local calls are remarkably expensive, so you're usually better off using a public pay telephone or a cell phone if you have one with you. Many groceries and convenience stores sell prepaid calling cards; this can be the least expensive way to call overseas.

**Time Zone** -- Much of North Dakota is in the Central Time Zone, which puts it 6 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time (GMT-5). Part of western North Dakota, including Dickinson, Medora and Bowman are in Mountain Time Zone, which is 7 hours behind GMT.

**Tipping** -- Gratuities are not usually included in rates. Here are guidelines to follow when tipping: In hotels, tip **bellhops** at least \$1 per piece of luggage and the **housekeeping staff** \$1 per person per day (more if you've left a mess). **Cab drivers** should get at least 15% of the fare. In restaurants, bars, and nightclubs, tip **wait staff** 15% to 20% of the check, and **bartenders** 10% to 15.

**Water** -- The tap water in North Dakota is considered safe to drink.

**People** -- The University of Cambridge, UK, has released results from a “personality map” of the United States showing that North Dakota is the friendliest state in the U.S. According to the report, North Dakota was the highest-scoring state in Extraversion (sociable, energetic and enthusiastic) and Agreeableness (warm, compassionate, co-operate and friendly).