

Your Complete Guide to Moving to Hobart, Indiana

Welcome to Hobart

Hobart offers an appealing blend of small-town charm and suburban convenience, making it one of Northwest Indiana's most desirable communities for families leaving Chicago. Located in Lake County about an hour from downtown Chicago, this growing suburb provides residents with a genuine downtown area, lakefront access along Lake George, and diverse housing options ranging from historic homes to modern developments. The community maintains a distinct identity with local shops, restaurants, and parks while offering easy access to Chicago via I-94, creating an ideal balance for commuters who want more space and affordability without sacrificing connectivity.

What sets Hobart apart from other Northwest Indiana communities is its established downtown district and strong sense of community. Unlike newer suburban developments, Hobart has preserved its character while growing strategically. The city features excellent recreational amenities including Festival Park, multiple golf courses, and miles of lakefront property. Residents enjoy a genuine town center where local businesses thrive, farmers markets draw crowds, and community events create connections among neighbors—something increasingly rare in bedroom communities surrounding major cities.

Planning Your Move

Timing your move to Hobart strategically can make the entire process smoother and more cost-effective. Summer months are the most popular for family relocations, particularly for those coordinating with the school year, so booking 3-4 weeks in advance during peak season is essential. Fall and spring offer excellent availability with less competition for moving dates and often more flexible scheduling options. Cross-state moves between Illinois and Indiana require extra planning time compared to local relocations, so experienced [Hobart movers handle these logistics daily, coordinating timing, toll routes, and the specific requirements of crossing state lines with household goods.](#)

The logistics of moving to Hobart involve several considerations unique to this cross-state relocation. The primary route from Chicago follows I-94 to I-80/94 (Indiana Toll Road), requiring toll payments that typically range from \$10-15 total including the Chicago Skyway. Professional moving companies factor these costs into estimates upfront and plan routes to avoid Chicago rush hour congestion, which can significantly impact move times. Most residential areas in Hobart offer straightforward truck access, though some older neighborhoods near downtown may have narrower streets requiring careful navigation. Unlike high-rise city moves, you won't typically need to reserve freight elevators or obtain special building permits, but checking with homeowners associations in newer developments is wise.

Living Here

Daily life in Hobart centers around community amenities and easy regional access. The Hobart school district attracts many families moving from Chicago, who cite excellent schools and smaller class sizes as primary factors in their relocation decision. The downtown area along 3rd Street provides local shopping, dining, and services within walking distance for central neighborhoods. Lake George offers year-round recreation including boating, fishing, and beaches during summer months. Residents appreciate having Southlake Mall nearby in Hobart, plus quick access to additional shopping and entertainment options in Merrillville and Michigan City.

Transportation patterns differ significantly from Chicago living. While public transit is limited, most residents find the trade-off worthwhile for larger homes, bigger yards, and lower property taxes. Primary highways including I-94, I-80/94, US-30 (Lincoln Highway), and state roads connect Hobart efficiently to surrounding areas. Commuters to Chicago typically drive to South Shore Line stations in nearby Hammond or Gary, combining driving with rail service. The community offers numerous parks, sports leagues, and family-oriented activities that create a lifestyle focused on outdoor recreation and neighborhood connections rather than urban entertainment options.

Moving Tips

1. ****Schedule around rush hour****: Plan your move arrival and departure times to avoid Chicago rush hour (7-9 AM and 4-7 PM), as congestion on I-94 and I-80/94 can add significant time to your move
2. ****Prepare toll payment****: Ensure you have I-PASS or E-ZPass for toll routes, or budget for cash tolls including Chicago Skyway (\$6) and Indiana Toll Road (\$4-8)
3. ****Check HOA requirements****: Newer subdivisions may have restrictions on moving truck parking, required move-in times, or notification requirements—contact your HOA before moving day
4. ****Coordinate utilities early****: Set up Indiana utilities (NIPSCO for gas, utility companies differ by neighborhood for electric) at least two weeks before your move date
5. ****Update your registration quickly****: Indiana requires vehicle registration within 60 days of establishing residency, and you'll need to obtain an Indiana driver's license
6. ****Consider storage timing****: If closing dates don't align perfectly, several storage facilities along US-30 offer short-term solutions for cross-state moves

Getting Settled

Your first week in Hobart should include registering vehicles at the Indiana BMV (located on E. 37th Avenue), establishing utility accounts, and updating your address with the post office. Connect with community resources including the Hobart Public Library on Main Street, which offers resident cards and hosts community events. Register children for school through the School City of Hobart if moving during the school year, or attend summer registration events for fall enrollment. Join local Facebook groups and neighborhood apps to quickly learn about

trusted service providers, family activities, and community events. Visit downtown Hobart to familiarize yourself with local businesses, and explore Lake George's parks to discover your new community's recreational offerings.

FAQs About Moving to Hobart

Q: How much does it cost to move from Chicago to Hobart?

A: Cross-state moves from Chicago to Hobart typically cost \$800-\$2,500 depending on home size and belongings volume. A 2-bedroom apartment averages \$900-\$1,400, while 3-4 bedroom homes range \$1,600-\$2,500. Reputable companies include toll costs in their estimates. Summer peak season may increase rates by 15-20%, while fall and spring often offer better pricing.

Q: When is the best time to move to Hobart?

A: Fall (September-October) and spring (April-May) offer ideal conditions with better availability and competitive rates. Summer is most popular for families coordinating with the school year but requires booking 3-4 weeks ahead. Winter moves can save money but Lake Michigan weather occasionally impacts travel. Avoid peak Chicago traffic hours regardless of season.

Q: Do I need special permits to move to Hobart?

A: Most Hobart residential areas don't require moving permits, unlike Chicago buildings. However, newer subdivisions may have HOA restrictions requiring advance notification, designated moving hours (typically weekdays), or specific truck parking locations. Check with your HOA or property management before scheduling. Street parking for moving trucks is generally straightforward in established neighborhoods.

Q: What makes Hobart appealing for families leaving Chicago?

A: Hobart offers significantly lower housing costs (often 40-50% less than Chicago suburbs), excellent schools with smaller class sizes, safe neighborhoods, and actual yards with space for children. Families gain square footage, outdoor recreation at Lake George, and strong community connections while maintaining Chicago access for work or entertainment via an hour commute on I-94.

Q: How do I handle the Indiana Toll Road when moving?

A: The Indiana Toll Road (I-80/94) is the primary route from Chicago to Hobart, with tolls of approximately \$4-8 depending on your exit. Professional moving companies factor this into estimates. If driving your own vehicle, use I-PASS or E-ZPass for fastest passage, or have cash ready. The Chicago Skyway adds another \$6 toll for most routes.

Q: What should I know about Lake County versus Cook County living?

A: Indiana property taxes are generally lower than Illinois, though rates vary by specific

location within Lake County. You'll register vehicles in Indiana (within 60 days), obtain an Indiana driver's license, and adjust to limited public transportation compared to CTA/Metra service. Sales tax is slightly lower in Indiana. Many services and amenities cost less, but you'll drive more for daily activities than typical Chicago living.

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