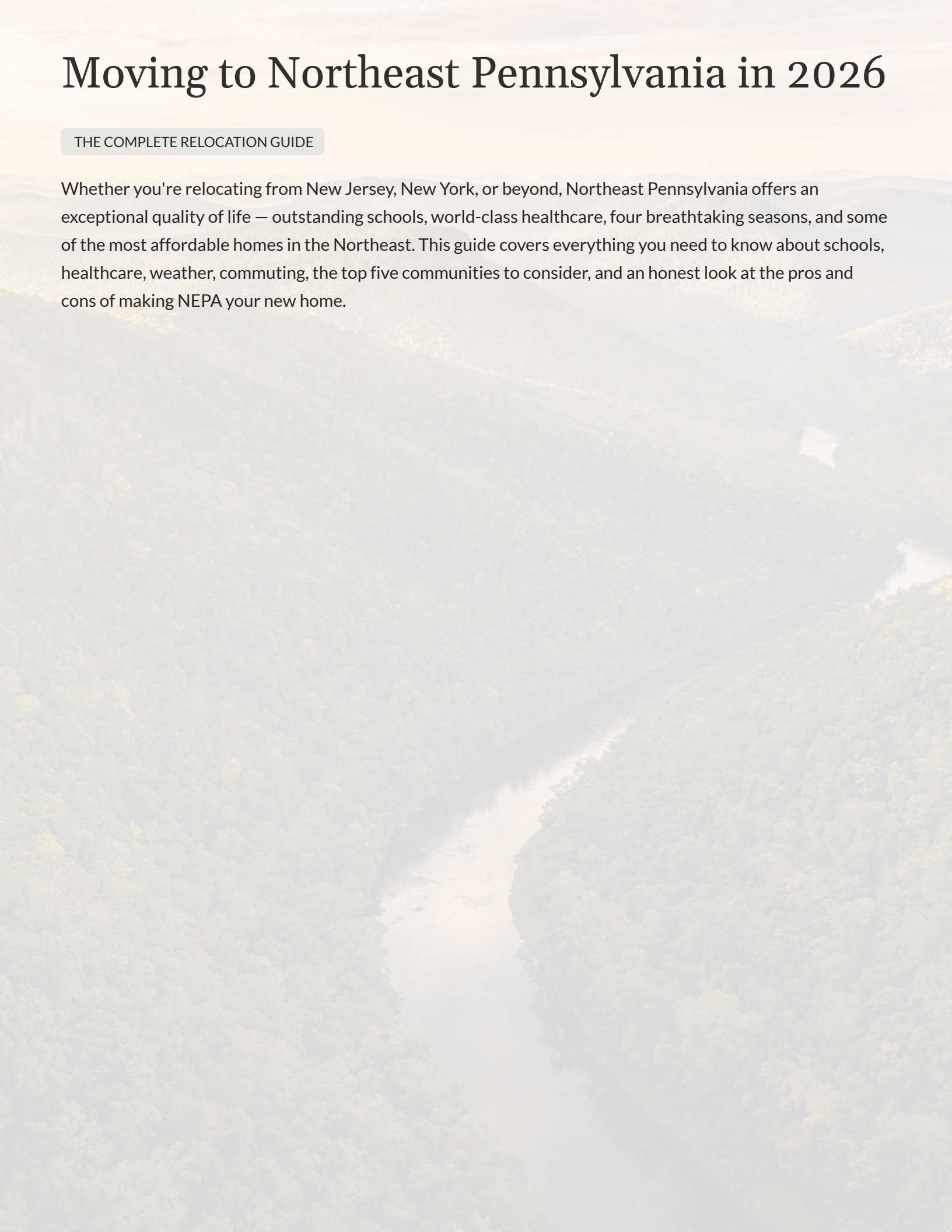


Moving to Northeast Pennsylvania in 2026

THE COMPLETE RELOCATION GUIDE

Whether you're relocating from New Jersey, New York, or beyond, Northeast Pennsylvania offers an exceptional quality of life — outstanding schools, world-class healthcare, four breathtaking seasons, and some of the most affordable homes in the Northeast. This guide covers everything you need to know about schools, healthcare, weather, commuting, the top five communities to consider, and an honest look at the pros and cons of making NEPA your new home.



Schools in Northeast Pennsylvania

For many families moving to Northeast Pennsylvania, the quality of local schools is one of the biggest factors in deciding where to buy a home. Fortunately, NEPA offers a diverse range of educational opportunities — from highly regarded public school districts to private schools, charter schools, career and technical education programs, and several respected colleges and universities.

Whether you're moving from New Jersey or New York, you'll find that many school districts provide smaller class sizes, strong extracurricular programs, and a close-knit community atmosphere that's difficult to replicate in larger metropolitan areas. Families consistently report that the transition feels like a genuine upgrade in the quality of their children's educational experience.

Pike County

- Delaware Valley School District
- East Stroudsburg Area School District

Monroe County

- Pocono Mountain School District
- Stroudsburg Area School District
- East Stroudsburg Area School District
- Pleasant Valley School District

Wayne County

- Wayne Highlands School District
- Western Wayne School District
- Wallenpaupack Area School District

Lackawanna County

- Abington Heights
- North Pocono
- Valley View
- Mid Valley
- Lakeland

Delaware Valley School District consistently attracts families relocating from New Jersey because of its strong academic programs, athletics, music education, and proximity to Milford and Interstate 84. Meanwhile, communities like Clarks Summit in Lackawanna County continue drawing families because of their excellent schools, charming neighborhoods, and outstanding suburban lifestyle.

Higher Education in the Region

Northeast Pennsylvania is home to several respected colleges and universities, making the region attractive not only for families with college-bound children, but also for retirees and lifelong learners who want to stay intellectually engaged and socially connected.



University of Scranton

A respected Jesuit university offering undergraduate and graduate programs with a strong reputation for business, health sciences, and liberal arts.



Marywood University

Known for its programs in art, architecture, social work, and health professions. Located in Scranton with a beautiful campus setting.



East Stroudsburg University

A public university in the heart of Monroe County offering a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degrees with strong ties to the local community.



Keystone College & Lackawanna College

Smaller institutions providing accessible pathways to associate's and bachelor's degrees, as well as continuing education and community programs for all ages.

These institutions also provide continuing education courses, cultural events, concerts, and community enrichment programs throughout the year — a significant benefit for retirees seeking active engagement after the move.

Healthcare in Northeast Pennsylvania

Access to quality healthcare is a major concern for families and retirees relocating to any new region. Fortunately, Northeast Pennsylvania has experienced significant investment in healthcare facilities over the past decade, and the result is a network of hospitals, specialty centers, and outpatient facilities that rivals many larger metropolitan areas.

Major Healthcare Systems

Lehigh Valley Health Network serves Monroe County and surrounding communities with emergency medicine, cardiology, cancer treatment, orthopedics, and primary care.

Geisinger is one of Pennsylvania's largest integrated healthcare systems, offering specialty care, surgical services, pediatrics, women's health, neurology, and heart care.

Wayne Memorial Hospital in Honesdale provides excellent local healthcare including emergency services, imaging, rehabilitation, and outpatient care.

Regional Access

Residents throughout the four-county region also enjoy convenient access to major hospitals in Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, East Stroudsburg, and Allentown — ensuring that specialized care is never far away.

For buyers relocating from New Jersey and New York, healthcare access in NEPA is generally excellent, particularly in Monroe and Lackawanna Counties where investment and expansion have been most significant in recent years.

- Emergency services throughout all four counties
- Specialist access in Scranton and Stroudsburg
- Urgent care and outpatient facilities expanding rapidly
- Telehealth services covering rural areas

Weather & Four True Seasons

If you're relocating from New Jersey, Long Island, or New York City, one of the biggest lifestyle adjustments you'll experience is the richness of Northeast Pennsylvania's four true seasons. Many residents — and newcomers — consider this one of the region's greatest advantages. Each season brings its own distinct beauty, activities, and rhythm of life that fundamentally changes how you experience your home and community.



Spring

Blooming forests, mild temperatures, waterfalls rushing from snowmelt, and the opening of fishing season. Pike and Wayne Counties are especially stunning as nature reawakens.



Summer

Warm and comfortable — average highs in the upper 70s to low 80s. Weekends fill up fast with lake life at Wallenpaupack, river adventures on the Delaware, and outdoor festivals at local farms and parks.



Fall

Arguably the region's most spectacular season. Brilliant foliage draws visitors from across the Northeast. Apple orchards, pumpkin patches, scenic drives, and Oktoberfests make every weekend feel like an event.

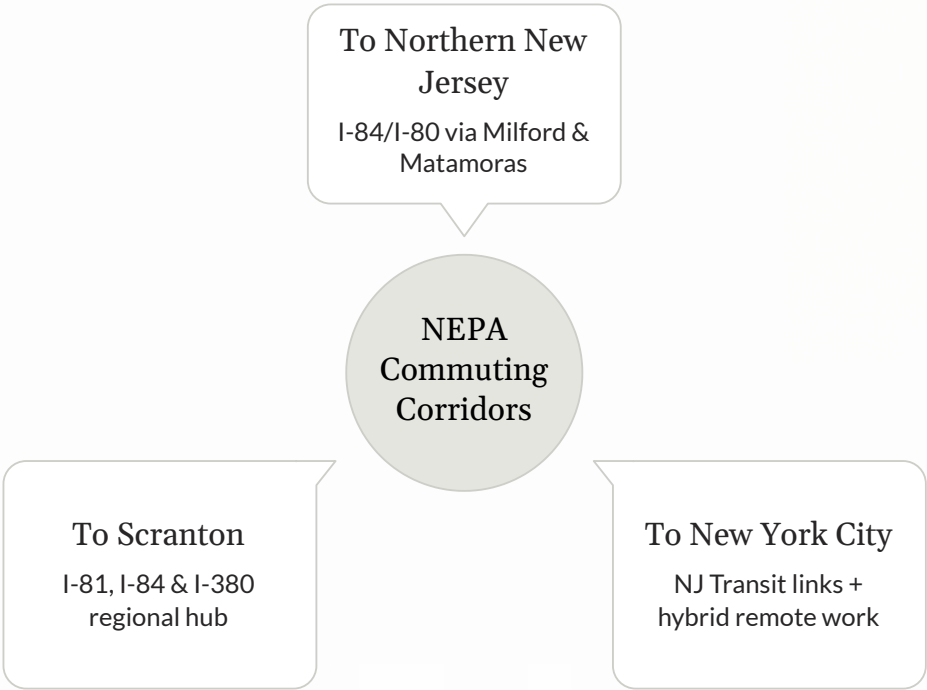


Winter

Yes, it snows — and for most newcomers, that's exciting. Municipalities are experienced at snow removal, and world-class ski resorts like Camelback, Shawnee, Blue Mountain, and Montage Mountain are just minutes away.

Commuting from Northeast Pennsylvania

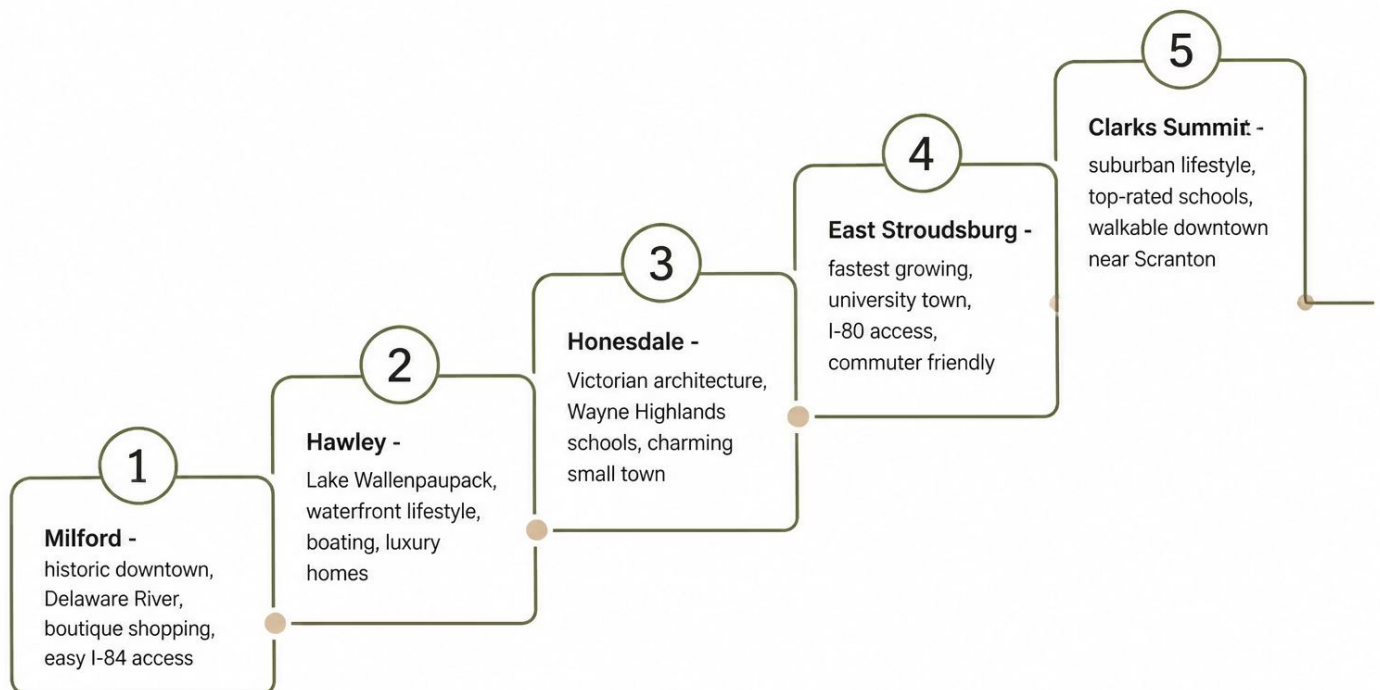
Many relocation buyers continue working in New Jersey or even New York after making the move — and the good news is that several NEPA communities offer genuinely manageable commuting options. The rise of hybrid work models has made this arrangement even more practical, and it's become one of the biggest drivers behind the region's continued popularity with relocating families.



Communities like Milford, Matamoras, and Dingmans Ferry in Pike County provide convenient access to Route 206, Route 23, Interstate 84, and Interstate 80 — allowing residents to commute daily into Sussex, Morris, Passaic, and Bergen Counties in New Jersey. For those commuting to New York City, many residents drive to NJ Transit stations before taking the train into Manhattan. Scranton continues to grow as a regional employment hub for healthcare, education, logistics, manufacturing, and technology.

The Top 5 Communities in Northeast Pennsylvania

Choosing the "best" place to live depends on your lifestyle, budget, commuting needs, and personal goals. After years of helping buyers relocate to Northeast Pennsylvania, these are the five communities I most frequently recommend — each with a distinct character and appeal that suits different types of buyers.



1. Milford — A Buyer Favorite

Milford is consistently one of the most requested destinations among buyers relocating from New Jersey and New York. Nestled at the confluence of the Delaware River and quick access to Interstate 84, Milford combines historic charm with outdoor adventure and an arts-forward community culture that feels genuinely unique in the region. The downtown is walkable, vibrant, and full of personality — a rare quality in a town of its size.

Why Buyers Love Milford

- Historic, walkable downtown
- Delaware River access
- Boutique shopping and art galleries
- Excellent farm-to-table restaurants
- Weekend events year-round
- Easy access to Interstate 84
- Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area

Ideal For

Milford attracts a wonderfully diverse mix of buyers — professionals seeking a manageable commute to northern New Jersey, families drawn by the tight-knit community and outdoor recreation, retirees looking for culture and beauty, and weekend homeowners wanting a true escape from city life.

Home prices remain more approachable than comparable towns in New Jersey, yet the lifestyle amenities are remarkably comparable. It's easy to understand why Milford tops so many buyers' wish lists.

2. Hawley — Waterfront Living at Its Best

Located near beautiful Lake Wallenpaupack — Pennsylvania's largest man-made lake — Hawley combines small-town charm with genuine resort-style living. The town has undergone a remarkable revitalization over the past decade, with new restaurants, craft breweries, boutique hotels, and lakefront developments drawing buyers who want more than just a house; they want a lifestyle.

Hawley is especially popular among luxury buyers, vacation homeowners, and retirees who want to wake up to water views and spend their weekends boating, fishing, and dining along the waterfront. The community has a relaxed, welcoming energy that makes newcomers feel at home almost immediately.

Waterfront Lifestyle

Boating, kayaking, paddleboarding, and fishing on Lake Wallenpaupack right outside your door.

Dining & Breweries

A thriving culinary scene with acclaimed restaurants and craft breweries drawing visitors from across the region.

Luxury Homes

A growing selection of lakefront properties, lake community homes, and premium new construction.

Year-Round Appeal

Ideal for vacation homeowners, second-home buyers, and full-time retirees seeking resort-quality living.

3. Honesdale & 4. East Stroudsburg

Honesdale — Pennsylvania's Charming Small Town

Often referred to as one of Pennsylvania's most charming small towns, Honesdale offers a wonderful combination of history, Victorian architecture, and thoroughly modern conveniences. The town serves as the Wayne County seat and is home to Wayne Memorial Hospital, providing residents with excellent local healthcare without a long drive.

The community is ideal for families who want an excellent school district — Wayne Highlands consistently earns high marks — along with rural acreage, nearby lakes, and independent local businesses that give the town a genuinely distinct character. Remote workers particularly love Honesdale for its balance of connectivity and peace.

- Victorian architecture and historic downtown
- Wayne Highlands School District
- Excellent local healthcare
- Nearby lakes and rural acreage
- Independent shops and restaurants

East Stroudsburg — Fast-Growing & Commuter-Friendly

East Stroudsburg has become one of the fastest-growing communities in Northeast Pennsylvania, and for good reason. Its location along Interstate 80 makes it one of the most accessible entry points from New Jersey, and many commuters begin their home search here because of that convenience.

The presence of East Stroudsburg University brings energy, cultural programming, and a steady supply of healthcare and educational employment. Residents enjoy a full range of shopping, hospital services, restaurants, and entertainment — making it one of the most self-contained communities in the region.

- Fastest-growing community in NEPA
- East Stroudsburg University campus
- Direct Interstate 80 access to NJ
- Full range of retail and healthcare
- Popular with commuters and young families

5. Clarks Summit — Suburban Excellence

Located just outside Scranton in Lackawanna County, Clarks Summit offers an outstanding suburban lifestyle that consistently ranks among the best in the entire region. This is the community that surprises buyers who arrive expecting a rural experience and instead discover beautifully maintained neighborhoods, a walkable downtown, excellent parks, and some of the most highly regarded schools in Northeast Pennsylvania.

Clarks Summit is especially popular among families relocating from suburban New Jersey communities like Westfield, Summit, or Ridgewood — places where walkability, strong schools, and community events are non-negotiable. The town delivers all of that at a fraction of the cost.



Top-Rated Schools

Abington Heights School District consistently earns outstanding academic reviews and strong extracurricular offerings.



Walkable Downtown

A charming main street with local restaurants, boutiques, coffee shops, and community gathering spaces.



Community Events

Year-round events, farmers markets, parades, and local celebrations that build genuine neighborhood connections.



Healthcare Access

Proximity to Scranton's full hospital network means specialist and emergency care is always close at hand.

The Pros & Cons of Living in Northeast Pennsylvania

No place is perfect — and one of the reasons relocation clients trust my guidance is that I don't try to convince anyone that Northeast Pennsylvania is right for everyone. My goal is to help you determine whether it's the right fit for your lifestyle, career, retirement plans, and family. Let's take an honest, balanced look at both the genuine advantages and the real-world challenges of life in NEPA.

Pros

- 1 More home for your money with larger homes and acreage
- 2 Beautiful four-season scenery with forests lakes and mountains
- 3 Year-round outdoor recreation hiking boating skiing
- 4 Slower less stressful lifestyle with quiet neighborhoods
- 5 Strong sense of community with local events and small-town values
- 6 Convenient access to NYC NJ and Philadelphia

Cons

- 1 Winter weather with significant snowfall requiring preparation
- 2 Rural areas mean longer drives for groceries and services
- 3 Internet availability varies in remote locations
- 4 HOA rules in Pocono communities restrict some uses
- 5 Well and septic systems unfamiliar to city buyers

The Biggest Advantage: More Home for Your Money

This is by far the most powerful reason buyers begin looking at homes in Pike, Monroe, Wayne, and Lackawanna Counties. Compared to many areas of New Jersey and southeastern New York, the difference in purchasing power is genuinely remarkable. Buyers who have spent years feeling priced out of the home they really wanted suddenly discover that their budget goes much, much further in Northeast Pennsylvania.

2-3x

More Square Footage

The same budget that buys a modest home in NJ often purchases a spacious property with finished basement and garage in NEPA.

50%+

Cost Savings

Many buyers report saving 40-60% on comparable square footage compared to their prior home in New Jersey or New York.

5+

Acres Available

Properties with five or more acres of land are readily available at prices that would seem impossible in the tri-state area.

Instead of sacrificing space or settling for less, many families find they can finally purchase the home they've always wanted — larger bedrooms, a finished basement, an attached garage, a backyard, and acreage — while staying comfortably within their budget. Waterfront properties and mountain views become attainable goals rather than distant dreams.

Outdoor Recreation: Year-Round Adventures

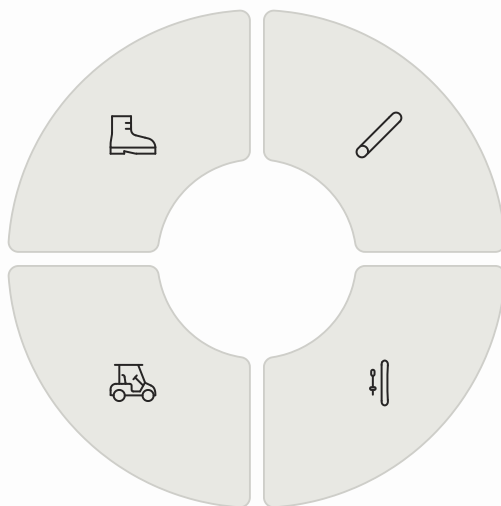
If you enjoy spending time outdoors, it's genuinely difficult to find another region in the Northeast that offers as much variety across all four seasons. Many residents tell me that moving to Northeast Pennsylvania has completely changed their relationship with the outdoors — they spend far more time outside than they ever did before, and their overall sense of well-being has improved dramatically as a result.

Trails & Hiking

Hundreds of miles of state park trails through Promised Land, Tobyhanna, Delaware Water Gap, and beyond.

Golf & More

Numerous golf courses, mountain biking trails, ATV parks, and paddleboarding destinations throughout the region.



Fishing & Boating

World-class freshwater fishing and boating on Lake Wallenpaupack, the Delaware River, and dozens of smaller lakes.

Skiing & Snow Sports

Camelback, Shawnee, Blue Mountain, and Montage Mountain offer excellent skiing, snowboarding, and tubing.

The Honest Challenges You Should Know

Every relocation comes with real adjustments, and I believe informed buyers make the best decisions. Here are the key challenges prospective buyers should carefully consider before committing to Northeast Pennsylvania.

Winter Weather

Snowfall varies by location but can be significant. Preparation matters — snow tires, a generator, a snow blower, and proper winter clothing are practical necessities for many properties. Most newcomers adapt well after their first season.

HOA Rules & Regulations

Many popular Pocono communities operate under homeowners associations that may restrict fences, exterior changes, rentals, parking, and short-term rental activity. Amenities like pools, beaches, and clubhouses are often included. Understanding the rules before buying is critical.

Longer Drives in Rural Areas

Privacy comes with a tradeoff. Rural mountain homes and lake properties may mean 20–30 minute drives to grocery stores, medical appointments, and restaurants. For many buyers, this is a worthwhile exchange.

Well & Septic Systems

Many rural homes rely on private wells and septic systems. For city-raised buyers, this can seem daunting at first — but with proper inspections and routine maintenance, both systems are highly reliable and well understood by local professionals.

Internet Availability Varies

High-speed internet continues expanding throughout NEPA, but availability still varies by location. If you work remotely, always verify provider, download speed, upload speed, and reliability before purchasing.

Not for Urban Lifestyles

If your ideal life requires dense urban living, extensive public transportation, or nightlife every evening, NEPA may not be the right fit. Honesty upfront saves everyone time.

Is Northeast Pennsylvania Right for You?

Finding the right community is about matching your lifestyle — not simply finding a house with the right number of bedrooms. Northeast Pennsylvania is an exceptional fit for many buyers, but being honest with yourself about your priorities makes all the difference.

✓ Northeast PA May Be Perfect If You Want...

- More affordable housing and greater purchasing power
- Outdoor recreation year-round
- A slower, less stressful pace of life
- Excellent retirement opportunities
- Larger lots, acreage, and privacy
- Beautiful four-season scenery
- Family-friendly communities with strong schools
- Reasonable access to NJ and NYC

⚠ Consider Another Location If You Require...

- Dense urban living and constant city energy
- Extensive public transportation networks
- Nightlife and entertainment every evening
- Walking to everything without a car
- Daily commuting convenience to Manhattan

There's no wrong answer — only the answer that's right for your life. The most important thing is making an informed decision based on realistic expectations and a genuine understanding of what each community offers.

Your Top Questions Answered

After helping hundreds of families relocate to Northeast Pennsylvania, these are the questions I hear most often. Honest answers make for confident buyers.

Is Northeast Pennsylvania a good place to retire?

Absolutely. Many retirees relocate here because of the lower cost of living, beautiful scenery, outdoor recreation, quality healthcare, and quieter communities. Popular retirement destinations include Milford, Hawley, Honesdale, and Clarks Summit — each offering distinct character and amenities for an active retirement lifestyle.

Is moving from New Jersey to Pennsylvania worth it?

For many families, yes — buyers typically gain more home, lower monthly housing costs, additional outdoor space, and an improved quality of life. However, comparing taxes alone doesn't tell the full story. It's essential to evaluate commuting costs, utilities, insurance, HOA fees, healthcare access, and school quality before making your final decision.

Can I commute to New Jersey from NEPA?

Many residents do successfully, particularly from communities in Pike and Monroe Counties that provide direct access to Interstate 80 and Interstate 84. Hybrid work schedules have made this arrangement even more practical, with many buyers commuting two or three days per week rather than daily.

Are the Poconos only vacation homes?

Not anymore. While vacation homes remain popular, the region has evolved dramatically. Today you'll find full-time families, retirees, remote workers, entrepreneurs, healthcare professionals, teachers, and business owners living year-round in communities that were once considered purely seasonal destinations.

More Questions Buyers Always Ask

→ Are there jobs in Northeast Pennsylvania?

Absolutely. Major industries include healthcare, education, logistics, manufacturing, hospitality, construction, retail, government, and professional services. Additionally, the rise of remote work has opened significant opportunities for residents who work for employers located in other states — arguably the single biggest economic shift the region has experienced in a generation.

→ Is healthcare good in Northeast Pennsylvania?

Yes. Major healthcare systems including Lehigh Valley Health Network, Geisinger, and Wayne Memorial Hospital continue expanding throughout the region. Residents have access to hospitals, specialists, urgent care centers, primary care physicians, and outpatient facilities throughout all four counties. For most buyers, healthcare access in NEPA meets or exceeds what they experienced in New Jersey or New York.

→ Is Northeast Pennsylvania good for families?

Yes, overwhelmingly so. Families appreciate excellent school districts with smaller class sizes, larger homes with room for children to play, parks and outdoor recreation, active youth sports communities, community events, and a lower population density that allows kids to grow up with genuine freedom and connection to nature.

Explore Before You Decide

One of the most important pieces of advice I give every relocation client is this: **don't choose your home before you've chosen your community.** The perfect house in the wrong town will never feel quite right. The lifestyle you're buying is just as important — arguably more important — than the specific property you select.

"The more time you spend exploring Northeast Pennsylvania, the more confident you'll feel when it's time to make your move."

I recommend spending a weekend — ideally two — exploring the region before making any decisions. Drive through the neighborhoods that interest you at different times of day. Eat at local restaurants. Visit the parks. Walk the downtown areas. Stop and talk to residents. Experience what a Saturday morning actually feels like in Milford, Hawley, Honesdale, East Stroudsburg, and Clarks Summit.

Every town in Northeast Pennsylvania offers something unique, and finding the right fit is a deeply personal process. A lake community that sounds perfect in the abstract may have HOA regulations that don't match your goals. A rural property with ten acres may feel isolating once you realize you're twenty-five minutes from the nearest grocery store. A home close to Interstate 84 might save hundreds of commuting hours per year compared to a similar property farther north. These are the kinds of insights that only come from time spent on the ground — and from working with a Realtor® who genuinely knows the region.

- ❏ One common mistake: focusing only on the house instead of the lifestyle. The right community makes every other decision easier.

Ready to Make the Move?

If you're considering moving to Northeast Pennsylvania, I'd be happy to help make the process as smooth and stress-free as possible. Whether you're relocating from New Jersey, New York, or another part of Pennsylvania, my team specializes in helping buyers understand the unique differences between Pike, Monroe, Wayne, and Lackawanna Counties — and finding the community that truly fits your life.



Compare Communities

Get an honest, side-by-side comparison of the top communities based on your lifestyle, commute, and budget priorities.



Personalized Home Tours

Schedule guided tours across multiple communities so you can experience the lifestyle before making any commitments.



Evaluate Every Factor

We'll help you assess school districts, HOA communities, lake properties, commuting routes, and local market conditions.



Make a Confident Decision

Our goal is simple: help you make an informed decision with full confidence — and love where you land.

Coming up in **Part 4**: A detailed cost comparison between New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania — plus why so many families continue choosing Pike, Monroe, Wayne, and Lackawanna Counties, and a final conclusion packed with relocation tips designed specifically for buyers working with DiscoverPAHomes.com.

[Start Your Search at DiscoverPAHomes.com](#)[Read Part 3 Next](#)