Week 2: Housing

Finding appropriate housing as a student is an important step. **On-campus housing** is available primarily for undergraduate freshman, undergraduate transfer students (especially those with freshmen or sophomore standing), and exchange students. We highly encourage all new international undergraduate students to consider living on campus their first year, because it will allow you to be closer to campus resources and to more easily make new friends.

The majority of our graduate students choose to live **off-campus**. Students choosing to live off-campus must arrange their own housing but we have included resources below to help you.

**On Campus Housing**

Watch this Information Video first.

Undergraduate freshmen are guaranteed on-campus housing. New undergraduate students with sophomore class standing are also required to live on campus. New Transfer upperclassmen (juniors/senior), student abroad and exchange students, and graduate students may apply to live on campus but space is not guaranteed. The earlier you apply, the better your chances of getting a room.

For information on living on campus, as while as to sign up for housing, please visit the website for the Department of Residential Life.

You will be eligible to sign up for on-campus housing starting in June after your required health forms have been approved by Student Health Services. Once your health forms are approved you can sign up for on-campus housing by following these steps:

- Sign up in MyUAlbany under the Campus Life tab; select housing application on the left-hand side
- Housing assignments will be sent to your Albany.edu email address in August
- You may move into your room according to the dates on the housing email you receive (new international students are allowed to move in starting at noon on August 15, 2023). If you arrive before your scheduled move-in, please arrange for a hotel
- Students living on campus must submit proof of vaccination for COVID-19 and MMR prior to housing sign up and move in.

**Off-Campus Housing

Resources to Search for Off-Campus Housing**

Here are some resources to help you start your search for off-campus housing. Remember to check your I-20 for your earliest admission date to the U.S. Some students choose to arrive a few weeks before classes start, stay temporarily at a hotel or with friends, and search for an apartment before Orientation.

- **UAlbany Off Campus Housing Marketplace**
  - The platform allows local landlords to list properties that have been granted Residential Occupancy Permits (declaring them up to code) via the City of Albany. The platform also allows users to create roommate profiles, search for subleases and has educational videos on leases, security, deposits, etc. Additionally, the entire site can be translated in various languages with a click of a button.
- **ISSS' Off-Campus Housing Website**
• ISSS's Off-Campus Housing Presentation, which includes a helpful map for where students typically live (you want to try to live nearby the bus lines, if possible).
• Information from Off Campus Student Services
• Tenant and Landlord Rights and Responsibilities
• UAlbany International Student Facebook Page: Many students post available rooms for rent on the Facebook page:
  • Please note: You will need to verify the authenticity of any postings you find on Facebook. If you find a suspicious post please report it to ISSS@albany.edu. Again, do not exchange any money without seeing an apartment in person.

What to Know When Searching for Off-Campus Housing

There are many things to pay attention to when looking for a off-campus apartment, especially when you're trying to find a place thousands of miles away in another country.

We advise students to not sign a lease or make any payment for off-campus housing until after you have arrived in Albany and viewed the apartment in-person. This is to help you avoid potential frauds and/or scams. Leases are legally binding documents in the United States, so you want to certain you will be satisfied with the living arrangements before signing the lease. Please be prepared to stay somewhere temporarily, such as a local hotel, until you find permanent housing. Student groups (such as the Indian Student Organization) may be able to help arrange for you to stay temporarily with a current student when you first arrive. Below are important reminders when launching your search for off-campus housing:

1. Don't make a commitment until you see the place. Do not sign housing contracts or exchange money for securing off campus housing when you have not physically seen the property and met the individual leasing that property. In the past, students have experienced unfortunate problems when they did not see the premises or neighborhood/community in advance, or were asked to make transactions they later learned were fraudulent (resulting in lost monies).
2. Read your apartment application carefully. Do not sign a contract unless you understand the "terms and conditions" of the lease. Be aware of who the contract signatories are, including other tenants (or Lessees) as well as the landlord/real estate manager (or Lessor). This individual is usually the apartment or home owner, or an appropriate real estate company representative. If someone other than the landlord/real estate manager is signing the contract as the Lessor (e.g. son of the home owner), you are encouraged to seek advice from the United Tenants of Albany organization or the UAlbany Off Campus Student Services Office
3. Be careful when you apply for apartment/room. Read all the terms of the application as well as the "fine print" For example, some deposits are not refundable if you decide not to sign the lease, even if you find a more suitable place to live (One year we had a student who paid $1200 just to apply for an apartment, and lost the deposit because he decided to live somewhere else).
4. Be careful how you find the apartment. Be wary of unmoderated online listings, such as those on Craigslist or Facebook. Never pay a deposit or transfer money without seeing the apartment or verifying the authenticity of the listing.
5. You are protected by the state laws and regulations. We suggest our students read all the details in the lease, application and state laws and regulations, and only make payments after arriving to only trusted landlord and agencies.