



Housing

Consider your options

Review these resources:

- ➔ [Listing website](#) to look for an available apartment and/or roommate.
- ➔ [735 S. Main St](#) is a living community for graduate international students.
- ➔ [Downtown apartment complexes](#), all are “appropriate for a more mature student.”
- ➔ [Housing Guide](#) for what various apartment complexes have to offer and where they are located
- ➔ [Off-Campus Guidebook](#) to familiarize yourself with how to go about living off-campus, what you should be thinking about, and what signing a contract/lease means.

Keep in mind:

- When reaching out to potential roommates, ask them if they are undergraduate or graduate students. *Undergraduate student lifestyles can differ greatly from those of graduate students.*
- While most of the apartments may be around JMU, make sure to ask where the **nearest bus stops** can be found.

I do not have a Social Security Number...

- A social security number is not required to complete housing/interest forms or to rent an apartment.
- A *social security number* is what allows a company to check someone’s financial history in the US. If property managers/landlords cannot do so, they will ask for a co-signer or a financial guarantor (from the US).
- Finding a financial guarantor can be almost impossible for international students. To resolve this situation, provide a proof of source of revenue:

Option A- Ask your graduate assistantship (GA) supervisor to provide you a **letter** which stipulates what your assistantship pays and covers.

Option B- If Option A did not work or does not apply to you, contact ➔ [Thomas Lavenir](#) (International Student & Scholar Services) and ask for a letter stipulating that you have provided **proof of funding** to the ISSS office to obtain a student visa.

Is it time to sign the lease?

- Signing the contract/lease will most likely need to be done in person.
- Before signing a contract/lease, make sure to **agree to all of the terms**. Once a lease or contract is signed, you cannot cancel the contract, including changing from a 12-month lease to a shorter one.

Obtaining the keys to your apartment

- Your specific arrival date and time in Harrisonburg may impact your plan to directly move into your new home. For example, many offices close at 5pm. Therefore, you may need to stay in a hotel until you can get your keys.

Payments for your apartment

- Ask about the method of payment for your first payment. Will you need to pay with a certified check, your new debit card from your US bank account, or via Zelle or Venmo account...?

- ❑ In addition to the deposit and the agreed upon rent cost, **additional fees** (like an internet activation fee) may apply.

What about the utilities?

Depending on where you live, the cost of utilities (*electricity, water, etc.*) may or may not be included.

- ❑ If you will need to pay separately for utilities, use the → [UDAP Program](#) to simplify this process. The online UDAP Form will ask for your **US Driver's License Number**. If you do not have one:
 - ❑ Create a *fake number* that starts with a letter of your choice followed by 8 numbers of your choice. Example: A12345678
 - ❑ For the *Driver's License Expiration Date*, enter the Program End Date on your I-20.
 - ❑ For the *Driver's License State*, enter VA.

Complete and submit the contract. Use your **5-digit contract number** to connect your utilities without a deposit.

Remember to refer yourself to the → [New International Graduate Student](#) webpage for additional information
