



Learn some tips on
finding great
housing in and
around Worcester!



CLARK UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING GUIDE

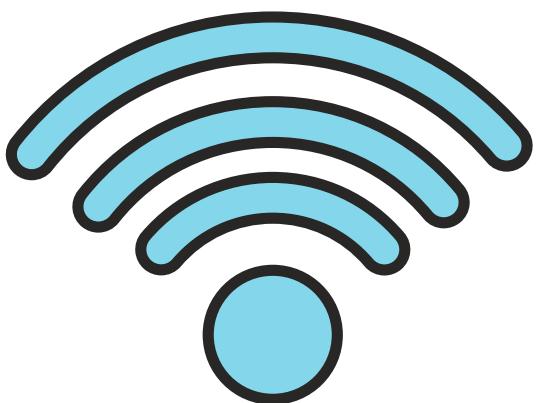
CONTACT US:
internationalcenter@clarku.edu

WHERE TO START:

The website, Jump Off Campus, (<https://www.jumpoffcampus.com/map?location=clark>) is a great place to start your housing search. It shows apartments available within walking distance of Clark university that are up for rent.

In addition, Clark has a graduate student housing exchange forum that you can find on your Housing Module on our Moodle Orientation page (<https://moodle.clarku.edu/mod/forum/view.php?id=427055>)

There, you can find apartments that other graduate students are hoping to fill. You may also want to check your program's Facebook page to find students looking for housemates or sublets.



Wi-Fi



Amenities

Some landlords include costs such as electricity, heating, water, and internet in monthly rent, but others charge for these costs separately based upon the tenant's usage. Make sure to ask about these costs, and how you are expected to pay for them before signing a lease. In addition, be sure to ask if there is an in-building laundry facility, and if the apartment is furnished or if you are expected to purchase your own furniture. More luxury apartments may even have a gym, pool, or other recreational areas for tenants to use. Don't be afraid to ask!

Signing a Lease

Apartments can have different lengths for the lease usually ranging from 6 months to a year. You can also sublet, or rent from the tenant on a lease on temporary basis, for a short period of time. Be sure to check with the landlord about the length of the lease, and the conditions for leaving a lease early. Many apartments will ask for a security deposit, first months rent, and/or last months rent in order to sign onto a lease. The security deposit cannot legally be more than one month's rent, and should be given back to the tenant at the end of the lease if the apartment is in good condition. A landlord will ask for a passport, visa, financial document, or proof of income in order to confirm your identity

Restrictions/Expectations

Ask about your landlord's policies on pets if you have animals, smoking, guests during the pandemic, or any other restrictions they may have. Note that prohibiting service animals or denying housing based upon your identity is illegal and can be reported (see following page). If you are sharing an apartment, ask if they expect you to find your own housemates or if they are filling the rooms themselves.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT NEIGHBORHOOD

Proximity to Campus

Many students decide to live in the Main South area of Worcester because it is closest to Clark's campus, while others choose to live farther from campus in order to be closer to downtown or off-campus employment. When deciding on an apartment, be sure to map out your commute to campus, and consider whether public transportation is an option for you. Also, check if Clark's Escort Services reaches your apartment's location!

Proximity to Grocery Stores and Shops

Make sure to check that there are grocery stores close by in order to buy food. Clark has a Big Y near its campus as well as several smaller shops and the Asian Supermarket, but you may prefer other stores (such as Trader Joes, Price Chopper, etc.) for your food needs.

Transportation access

Worcester has a robust bus system that connects different neighborhoods in the city. Students can purchase bus passes at any terminal and see schedules and maps here: <https://www.therta.com/schedules/> Check to see what bus stops are close to your apartment's address!



KNOW YOUR HOUSING RIGHTS!

Housing Discrimination

It is illegal to deny a potential renter an apartment based on their identity. These identities could include:

- Race
- Color
- National Origin
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Religion
- Marital Status
- Familial Status
- Age (except minors)
- Ancestry
- Disability
- Receipt of public assistance
- Receipt of a housing subsidy
- Veteran status



If you feel you are being denied housing based upon your identity, or that your landlord is forcing you to live in unreasonable conditions, you should contact Massachusetts Community Legal Aid at 508-752-3718 or www.communitylegal.org/ to make a claim.

Right to a Decent Place to Live

Landlords are required to provide their tenants a decent place to live. For example if there are problems with your apartment's water, electricity, heating, and/or a rodent/bug infestation, your landlord is required to take steps to address the issue within 14 days. If they don't, you can report them to the Massachusetts Board of Health, or take them to court.

ADVICE FOR FIRST-TIME RENTERS

Get started early:

When looking for housing, make sure to start your housing search early (at least 2 months before you plan on moving in). That way, you won't feel rushed to move into an apartment that doesn't fit your wants/needs.

Ask to speak with the previous tenants and see the apartment in-person

If possible, see if you can speak with the previous tenants to hear about their experience living in the apartment. Also ask if you can take an in-person tour of the apartment before signing your lease. That way you can see the condition, size, and layout of the apartment before moving in.

CAREFULLY READ YOUR LEASE!

The lease is a contract between you and your landlord that states your expectations of one another, and is legally binding. Make sure to carefully read the terms of your lease before signing it. It should include the name and contact information of the landlord, the address of the apartment you are renting, the amount of the security deposit, the total monthly rent, when it is due, and how and whom it needs to be paid; the dates you will rent the apartment, late payment fees, and early termination conditions. Knowing all of this information up front will prevent conflicts down the line.

Remember if you have any questions or need support you can always contact the International Center (internationalcenter@clarku.edu). Happy hunting!

