



DURHAM REGION

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY HOUSING GUIDE



INTERNATIONAL 



DURHAM
GREATER TORONTO AREA

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Finding a place to live is a top priority when starting your academic journey in Canada. This guide includes resources to support you when you make housing arrangements in the Durham Region.



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You can choose to live on or off campus during your studies in Canada. It is recommended that you start your search early before you travel to Canada.

TYPES OF HOUSING

LIVING ON CAMPUS:

One of the best ways to immerse yourself in college/university life



For Durham College (DC) students:

DC provides fully-furnished student residences that can contribute to a fulfilling college experience. DC residences are located on both the Oshawa and Whitby campuses, and are open to all students. Inside the residence, you will find a variety of amenities, including high-speed internet access, lounges and game rooms, and communal kitchen spaces.

DC residence also offers diverse All-You-Care-To-Eat Meal Plan options through DC Eats, the food service provider. Dining plans are designed to meet your needs for the semesters that you are in residence.

For first-year Fall intake students applying for the academic year, you need to apply by June 1* to be guaranteed a spot in residence. For Winter or Spring/Summer intake students, applications are accepted at any time on a first-come, first-served basis.

A non-refundable \$100 application fee applies.

Visit <https://durhamresidence.ca/> to apply or for more information.

*Annual guarantee deadline subject to change. Please see the residence website above.



It's a great opportunity to meet people, live in an academic community, while still having fun with friends. Residence is clean, friendly, welcoming and safe.

Student,
Durham College Residence



For Ontario Tech students:

Ontario Tech students can apply to the Durham College Student Residence as described above. The Durham College Oshawa campus and the Ontario Tech University north campus are located next door to one another. The DC Student Residence is a short walk to Ontario Tech buildings. For first-year Fall intake students applying for the academic year, you need to apply by June 1* to be guaranteed a spot in residence. For Winter or Spring/Summer intake students, applications are accepted at any time on a first-come, first-served basis. A non-refundable \$100 application fee applies.

Visit <https://durhamresidence.ca/> to apply or for more information.

*Annual guarantee deadline subject to change. Please see the Residence website above.

For Trent students:

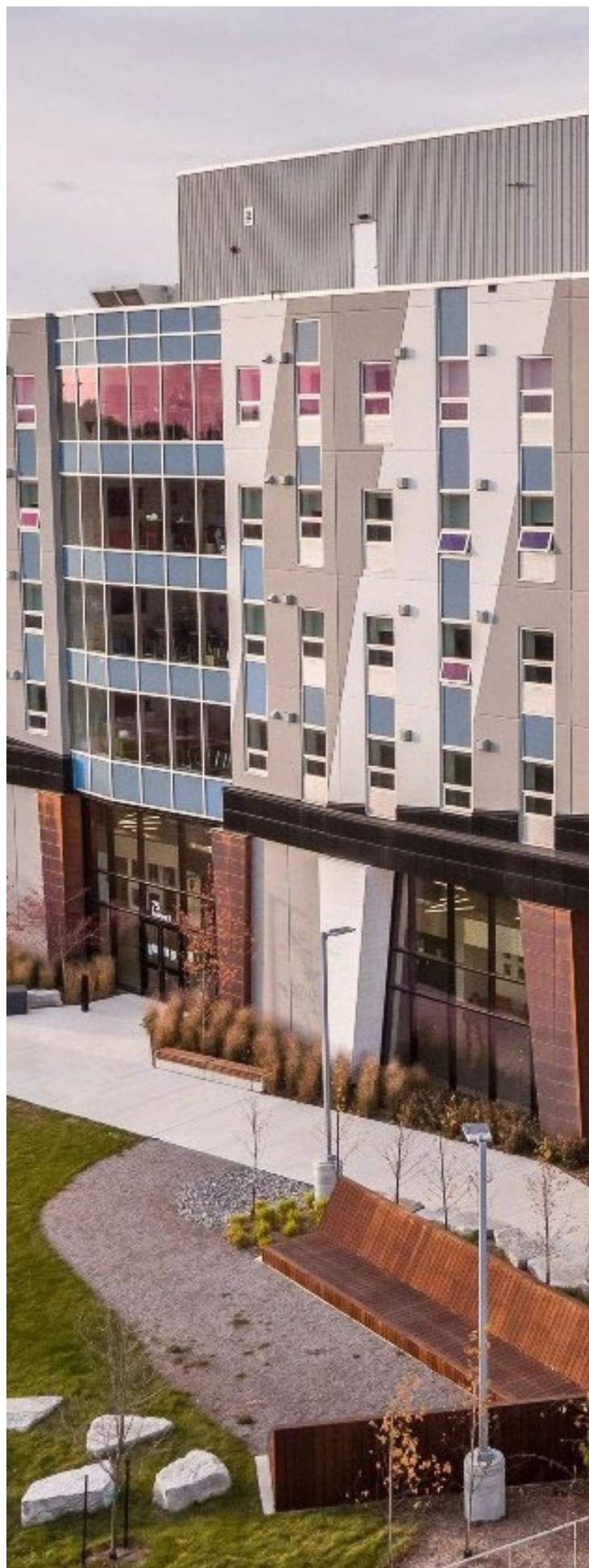
Trent Durham GTA Residence is the living option closest to your studies, and downtown Oshawa is just a few minutes' drive away. The building is home to academic support, extracurricular programming and a dining hall. Residence offers modern dorm-style rooms with common washrooms, gathering spaces and large kitchens on every floor. Included in the fees are laundry facilities, Wi-Fi, and parking. Shared accommodation is available for September intake students.

Visit <https://www.trentu.ca/housing/durham-residence> to apply or for more information.



My favorite part about living in residence is the close-knit community and meeting all these friends in my first year. I now have long lasting friendships and I've already made so many memories living here.

Student, Trent Durham Residence



LIVING OFF CAMPUS:

More independence, more freedom,
more responsibilities

About off-campus housing

If you opt to live off campus, you will find many options in the Durham Region. These include, but are not limited to, traditional apartments and private buildings. In the cases where short-term accommodations are needed, the options can include Airbnb and hotels.

- **Traditional apartments** – a private residence in a building that's divided into several separate dwellings (e.g., kitchen, living room, bedroom, bathroom).
- **Private and shared rental housing** – renters living in the same property (e.g., apartment, house, townhouse) with private spaces (e.g., bedroom) and also shared spaces (e.g., kitchen, bathroom).
- **Student housing buildings** - residences run by private companies, available only to students and located near campus.
- **Homestay** – living in homes with families with the options ranging from just a room to full room and board with three meals per day.

For more information visit:

<https://canadahomestaynetwork.ca/>

TYPES OF HOUSING

FINDING OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING



STEP 1 PLAN YOUR BUDGET

A HOW-TO GUIDE IN 3 STEPS!



Wi-Fi

Options for internet plans

- Paid plans (from providers such as [Bell](#), [Rogers](#), [TekSavvy](#), [Comwave](#) and [Virgin Plus](#))
- [Low-cost Internet](#)



Rental fee

Keep in mind

- Affordability
- Payment dates
- Payment format



Utilities

Rent payments may or may not include utilities.
These payments usually involve

- [Elexicon Energy](#)
- [OPUC](#)
- [Enbridge Gas](#)
- [MyDurhamWater](#)



Groceries

What is the price of a basic healthy diet?

- [Food support programs](#)
(Community food programs such as food banks and soup kitchens are for those who are experiencing food insecurity or are in a financial crisis only.)



STEP 2

SEARCH FOR HOUSING

You may start with some common platforms for your housing search. Please read the “Red flags to be wary of in housing” on Page 13 of this guide prior to browsing these platforms.

- places4students.com
- rentseeker.ca
- gottarent.com
- [Facebook Marketplace](https://www.facebook.com/marketplace)
- [realtor.ca](https://www.realtor.ca)

When choosing a place to live, consider budget, distance from campus, and access to regular and frequent transit stops. (Unlimited travel on DRT services is available through the U-Pass program. See Page 12 for more information.)



Download an Ontario standard lease to get an idea of what a lease in this province should look like. Understand the end-of-lease or termination-of-lease clauses. Understand the rights and responsibilities for landlords and tenants.

Residential Tenancies Act – Understanding the ins and outs of renting, including the landlord rights/responsibilities and the tenant rights/responsibilities.

Navigate Tribunals Ontario – An online tool that provides simple, accurate, and plain language information about your legal rights and responsibilities.



Purchase annual tenant's insurance and the common types are: liability coverage and content insurance.

Is tenant insurance mandatory?
Based on your lease agreement, you may or may not be required to have tenant insurance. Always check the lease agreement for the tenant insurance requirements.

Why is having tenant insurance important?
Learn more about tenant insurance and how it can protect you by visiting the web page:
<https://www.durham.ca/en/living-here/tenant-insurance.aspx>

Where can I get tenant insurance?
Contact your local bank or insurance provider to get a free online quote.



Before you sign the lease, you should:
Discuss the clauses that you do not understand with your landlord for clarity.
Keep records of all your documents, transactions and deposits.

FINDING OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

A CHECKLIST FOR VIEWING A RENTAL UNIT

- ☐ Are the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors working?
- ☐ Do doors and windows operate and lock adequately?
- ☐ Is the heating and cooling system working properly?
- ☐ Is there enough lighting? Is the water pressure adequate?
- ☐ Is there a good supply of hot water?
- ☐ Is there any furniture included (e.g., bed frame)?
- ☐ Are there any appliances included (e.g., microwave)?
- ☐ Are there any laundry facilities on site or in a nearby location?
- ☐ Is there evidence of insects or other pests (e.g., ants, cockroaches)?
- ☐ Could there be much noise? Consider the proximity to the street, pubs, restaurants, parks, etc.
- ☐ Is it reasonably clean?
- ☐ How many people are or will be living in the rental?
- ☐ Is it close to campus and easily accessible by regular and frequent DRT?
- ☐ Is parking available? If yes, how much?
- ☐ Are there grocery stores, pharmacies and other amenities nearby?
- ☐ Do you feel comfortable living in the neighborhood?



Students are encouraged to take photos of the unit and any existing damage upon move-in. If the rental unit has damage, make note of it and ask if the landlord will be making repairs. If the landlord agrees to the repairs, ensure this information is written in the lease.

Make agreements with your landlord in writing rather than over the phone or in person. If you start a discussion over the phone or in person, confirm your requests in a follow up email.

HOUSING TOOLKIT

In addition to the How-to Guide and the Rental Checklist, this Housing Toolkit includes self-guided learning tools that cover the additional steps/considerations to finding a safe and affordable rental.

Cost of living	One person	Family of 4
Total with rent	\$2146	\$4716
Without rent	\$822	\$2572
Rent & Utilities	\$1324	\$2144
Food	\$558	\$1457
Transport	\$141	\$361
Monthly salary after tax	\$3222	
Population	14.2M	

(Source: Cost of Living in Ontario, 2026)

Understanding the cost of living

- Cost of food
- Cost of renting a home
- Utilities and additional costs

AS OF MARCH 2026 , THE
AVERAGE RENT IN DURHAM
IS:

1-bedroom apartment:
\$1719.00/month

2-bedroom apartment:
\$2048.00/month

(Source: Rentals.ca April 2026 Rent Report)

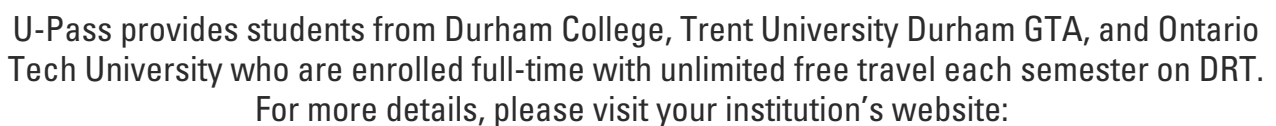


The infographic is shaped like a house. The roof is a green triangle with the title 'BEING SAFE AT HOME' in white. The main body of the house is divided into seven rectangular sections, each with a different background color and a white border. These sections contain seven safety tips. The colors of the sections are: orange, gold, light green, purple, dark purple, light green, and red.

BEING SAFE AT HOME

- Keep all doors locked while home.
- Stay alert when cooking and never leave cooking food unattended.
- Test the smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors monthly.
- Increase the interior and exterior lighting, if needed.
- Keep a basic first aid kit at home.
- Work with your landlord if you have any safety concerns.
- Learn about the [Fire Services and Community Support](#) from the City of Oshawa.

[Durham Region Transit \(DRT\) routes](#) | [DRT schedules](#) | [How to ride with DRT](#)



- 12

Red flags to be wary of in housing

Phantom listings – An ad for a place that does not exist or is not for rent. **Hijacked ads** – A scammer posing as a landlord posts an ad for a real place. **Bait and switch** – The landlord shows you one place, but tries to get you to sign a lease agreement for another. **Identity theft** – Some rental scammers want your personal information such as your travel document, social insurance number and bank details. You are not required to provide this information.

Other indicators that might be associated with a rental scam:

- The landlord is hard to contact.
- The landlord is asking questions that are not allowed or relevant.
(Examples: Are you married? Where does your money come from?)
- You are asked to pay before you view the place.
- You are asked to pay an illegal deposit fee such as a full year's worth of rent.
(Remember that you are usually expected to pay only the first and last month's rent in advance.)
- You are asked to pay by gift card, or bitcoin, or other hard-to-trace equivalents.

Handling roommate conflicts

When living with roommates, it's important to:

- **Set boundaries** (e.g., determine how you will share the responsibility of cleaning the place).
- **Work through problems constructively** (e.g., develop a solution together through respectful communication.)
- **Seek help when needed** (e.g., check your school's website or contact a school representative for resources and support).

(Source: [How to Deal with Roommate Problems](#), [Mental Health America](#))

LEGAL RESOURCES

For DC students, you may:

Book an appointment with Campus Conflict Resolution Services at CCRS@durhamcollege.ca. This is a service provided through the Conflict Resolution and Mediation Graduate Certificate program.

(Please note that students still studying in legal programs are not qualified to provide legal advice and anyone with a legal matter should seek the services of a qualified individual.)

Contact Durham College Student Association (DCSA) for the free legal services available to you.

For Ontario Tech students, you may:

Contact the Ontario Tech Student Union (OTSU) which provides free legal services to students. It also provides a document with frequently asked questions about housing and a Guide to Sub tenancy and Assignment.

Complete a form requesting legal assistance at <https://www.otsu.ca/services/legal-support>

There are legal services available in the community to individuals who qualify. These services are available through community legal clinics and Legal Aid Ontario. For more information on services and qualification criteria, please visit:

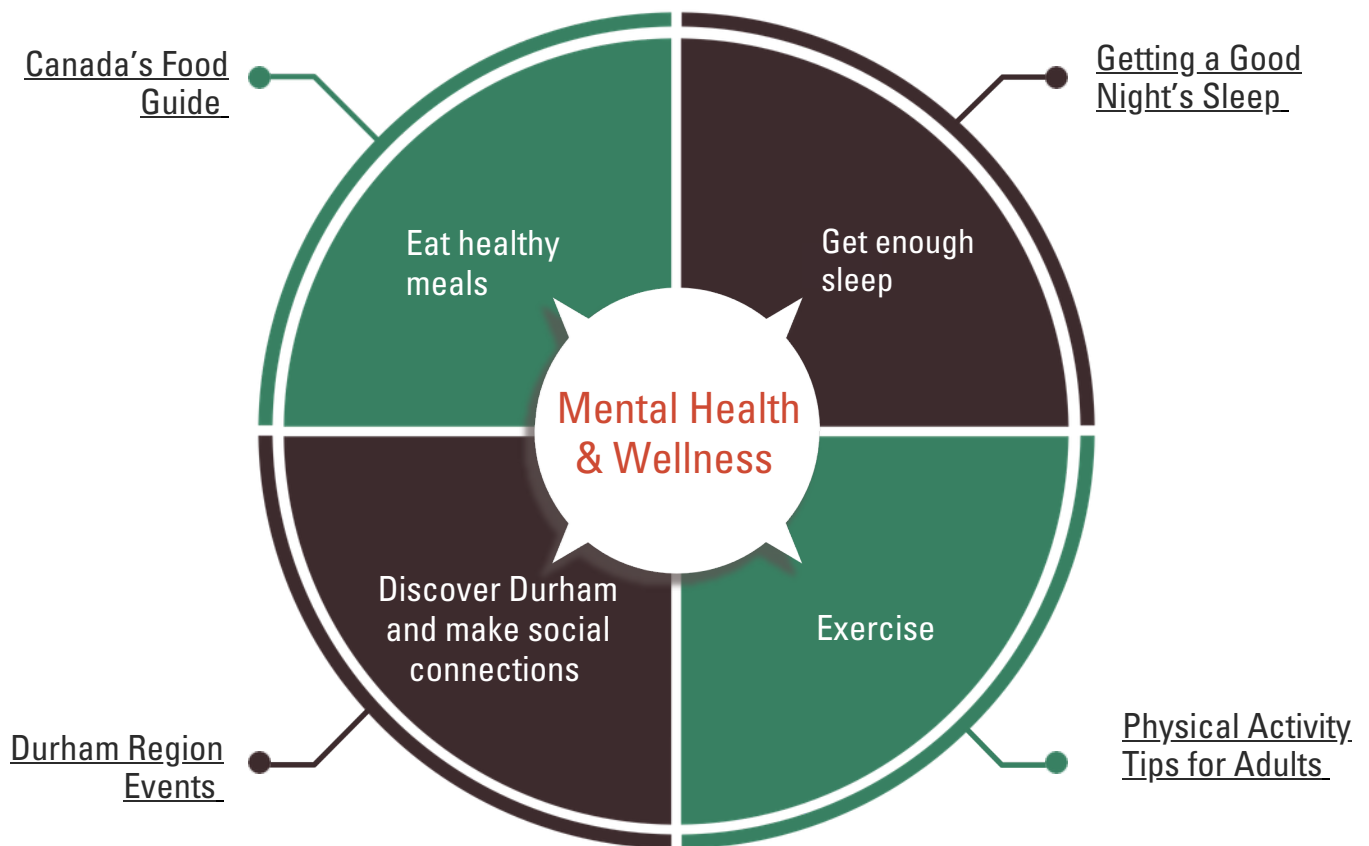
The Durham Community Legal Clinic_
<http://www.durhamcommunitylegalclinic.ca/>

Legal Aid Ontario
www.legalaid.on.ca/en/

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The search for a home away from home can be stressful. We are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students throughout this process.

Please take a look below for tips on how you can effectively manage challenges and change.



Now that you have found your new home in the Durham Region, don't forget to get involved! Here are some additional ways to get involved and become a part of your new community:

Arts and Culture | Cycling and Walking | Sports and Recreation | Parks, Trails and Conservation Areas | Local Food and Farmers' Markets

CONTACT US



For DC students

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at <https://durhamcollege.ca/info-for/international/contact-us>. In preparation for your life in Canada, additional resources are available:

- Arrive in Canada series
- [NEW International Students Guide](#)
- Home@DC pre-arrival emails
- [Home@DC International Student Orientation](#)



For Ontario Tech students

If you have questions or concerns, please contact us at <https://international.ontariotechu.ca/contact/index.php>. In preparation for your life in Canada, additional resources are available:

- Arriving in Canada information
- Living in Canada information
- International Student Orientation information

For Trent students

If you have any questions or need assistance finding off-campus housing, please contact us at: offcampushousing@trentu.ca.

For more information, please visit Trent's [off-campus housing website](#).

In preparation for your life in Canada, additional resources are available:

- [Trent International](#)
- [New Trent Durham GTA International Students](#)
- [International Students Living in Canada](#)

