

Securing Your Spot

Steps to Enrollment



DCPS
PERSISTS

Topics We Will Cover

- **How to Enroll:** Understand the process to accept your admission offer and pay your enrollment deposit to secure your spot.
- **College Living:** Weigh the pros and cons of on-campus, off-campus, and at-home living options, and select a meal plan that fits your needs.
- **Accepting Your Financial Aid Offer:** Consider your financial costs and responsibilities, and understand the next steps after accepting your aid.
- **Summer Bridge Programs:** Learn what these programs offer and how to access them to prepare for your college experience.



How to Enroll

Accepting your Admission Offer & Paying Your Enrollment Deposit

Admission Decision: **Waitlisted**

- You're **neither accepted nor rejected**, instead, you've been put on a waitlist
- If spots become available, the college **may** offer you admission
- A waitlist is **not an actual list** with a specific order.
- Being selected from a waitlist to be admitted **depends on many factors**.
- Read the letter carefully for instructions on how to **indicate continued interest**



Note:

- There's no guarantee that you will be selected from a waitlist, so it's recommended to **enroll in your second choice as a back-up**.
- However, if you enroll and later decide to unenroll, additional fees may apply, and **you may not receive a refund for your enrollment deposit**.

Accepting Your Admission Offer



**Compare
Your Offers**



**Choose Your
College**



**Access Your
Student Portal**
(Check your Acceptance
letter and/or your email)



**Accept
Your Offer**



**Decline
Other Offers**



Do not accept an offer until you've compared your financial aid award letters!

Enrollment Deposit

- A **non-refundable** payment to your college to guarantee your spot in their incoming class.
- Typically, between \$100 - \$500
- Deadlines **usually start as early as May 1st**
- Community colleges or 2-year colleges, typically **do not** have enrollment deposits



What if I can't afford my Enrollment Deposit?

Contact the college, explain your situation, and ask what your options are. . .

- See if the college accepts a **NACAC Enrollment Deposit Fee Waiver** - [Download](#)
- Ask if the deposit can be **reduced**
- Ask if the deposit can be **applied to your Fall bill**, instead
- Ask if you can be put on a **payment plan**
- Ask for an **extension of the deadline**

Enrollment Deadline – May 1st

Students have until May 1st to choose a college and submit the enrollment deposit.



Secure your spot before freshman class fills up.



Get priority for housing and orientation dates.



Reduce stress and focus on graduation.



Avoid technical issues or delays that could cause missed deadlines.



Compare financial aid offers, campus culture, and academic programs to make the best choice.



After May 1st, nothing is a guarantee, including your acceptance and financial aid.

Student Account/Email

Check your acceptance letter or personal email for instructions on setting up and remember your login information.

- Check your college email regularly – It's how the school contacts you!
 - Connect personal and school emails – But be cautious!
 - Don't let your inbox overflow! – Make sure you manage your email to avoid missing critical info
- Student portals offer easy access to:
 - Class schedules & grades
 - Financial aid information
 - Important campus announcements & deadlines
- Some colleges have separate admissions, academic, residence life, and financial aid portals

Housing Application & Orientation Fees

These fees may be included in the enrollment deposit or separate; check your email, portal, and college website!

Housing Application Fees

- Required to apply for on-campus housing
- Must be paid before housing assignment is processed
- Typically ranges from \$25 - \$100
- Early application can improve chances of preferred housing

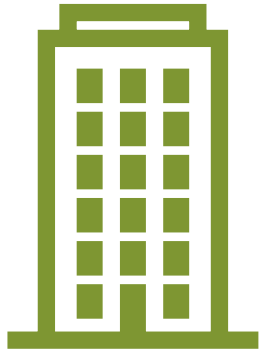
Orientation Fees

- Required for most incoming students
- Covers cost of orientation programs, materials, and student support
- Typically ranges from \$100 - \$500
- May include guest fees for parents/guardians

College Living

Housing & Meal Plans

Choosing Housing



On-Campus



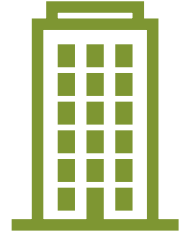
Off-Campus



Staying at Home

Staying On-Campus

"The Traditional Experience"



PROS

- Closer proximity to classes and campus facilities
- Better access to campus resources
- More opportunities for social interaction and community building
- On-campus security
- Different living options between dorms, apartments, shared or private spaces

CONS

- Limited privacy and personal space
- On-campus housing costs may be higher
- Campus rules and regulations may restrict personal freedoms and lifestyle choices

Types of College Housing - Traditional

- Shared rooms with communal or hall bathrooms
- Common in first-year housing
- Pros: Social environment, most affordable, convenient location, shared facilities
- Cons: Less privacy, shared facilities



Types of College Housing – Suite Style

- Private or shared bedrooms with a shared bathroom/living space
- Pros: More privacy, fewer people sharing a bathroom, more potential for in-home friends
- Cons: May be more expensive, less social interaction, more responsibilities



Types of College Housing – Apartment

- Full apartments with kitchen and living area
- Pros: More independence, more privacy, can cook own meals, more space
- Cons: Higher cost, may require signing a lease, more responsibilities, typically not available for first-year students



Staying on Campus

1

Review Housing Options:

- Compare traditional dorms, suites, apartment-style living
- Consider costs, amenities, locations, and styles to find the best fit for you

2

Choose your Roommate:

- If you prefer a specific roommate, check your college's process.
- Alternatively, you may be assigned a roommate randomly or based on compatibility.

3

Submit Housing Application by the Deadline:

- Check your student portal or your college's housing portal
- Apply early!

4

Pay your Housing Deposit:

- Like the enrollment deposit, some colleges may waive the housing deposit, but it is not likely

Roommates

Choosing Your Own Roommate

Pros:

- Can pick someone with similar habits and lifestyle
- May reduce conflicts, if you already know the person
- More control over your living situation

Cons:

- Friends don't always make great roommates
- If issues arise, it can strain friendships
- Potential to limit opportunities to meet new people

Random Roommate Assignment

Pros:

- Opportunity to meet someone new
- College often matches based on habits and preferences
- Can push you out of your comfort zone and improve social skills

Cons:

- May have differences in lifestyle and habits
- Harder to predict compatibility
- May take time to adjust to each other

Staying Off-Campus

"The Independent Experience"



PROS

- Increased independence
- Potentially lower costs
- More flexibility in choosing roommates and living arrangements
- Opportunities to develop real-world skills like budgeting and grocery shopping.

CONS

- Higher commuting time and transportation costs
- Limited access to on-campus resources and facilities
- More responsibility for tasks like maintenance, cleaning, and utilities
- Requires more effort and intentional planning to socialize and meet people
- Lack of structured support systems like resident advisors or on-site security

Staying At Home

"The Grounded Experience"



PROS

- Lower costs when it comes to housing and other living expenses
- A comfortable and familiar environment
- Support and guidance of your family
- Offers stability which can provide a solid foundation for your academics
- Consistent connection to your local community and its resources

CONS

- Less independence
- May miss out on some traditional college experiences, like late-night events and spontaneous gatherings.
- Might require extra effort to be involved in campus activities and make social connections.
- Commuting can add time and cost to your daily routine.
- Need to balance academics with family responsibilities.

Questions to Consider when Choosing Housing

1. How much can you and your family afford?
2. How close do you want to be to campus?
3. What type of living experience do you want, and what social opportunities are you looking for?
4. How important is family support and involvement?
5. How will each option impact your overall college experience?

Choosing a Meal Plan



Variety of options: Meal plans vary in frequency and dining locations. Choose a plan that suits your eating habits.



Compare costs: Consider your lifestyle and your budget. Compare plans to the cost of groceries or eating out.

Note: Some colleges require freshmen to have the most expensive meal plan.



May be required for on-campus housing: When choosing your plan, consider your schedule and dietary needs/preferences.



Convenient for off-campus living: Meal plans give you access to on-campus dining, saving you time and effort on busy days or between classes.

Accepting Financial Aid

Free Money, Earned Money, Borrowed Money

Accept Financial Aid in This Order

Free money (scholarships, grants)



Earned money (work-study)



Borrowed money (student loans)

Steps to Accepting Financial Aid

Access and Review

- Log into your **student financial aid portal** to view your financial aid award.
- Understand the types of aid offered and the terms/requirements.

Consider Your Costs

- Look at how the aid you accept will cover your college expenses.
- Consider what gaps will still need to be covered.

Accept or Decline Aid

- Accept all the free money and determine if earned money is right for you.
- Determine how much you actually need for loans; adjust the amount offered if necessary,
- Decline aid you do not want or need.

Contact Financial Aid Office

- Reach out for assistance if you have questions or need guidance.

After Accepting Your Aid



Know the amount and due date of your first bill



Setup a payment plan if needed



Ensure your financial aid is disbursed to the Bursar's Cashier's office



If you are taking out federal loans, complete the Master Promissory Note & Loan Entrance Counseling



Set up a budget, bank account, and plan for managing your expenses while in college

Summer Bridge Programs

Setting yourself up for a successful first year!

What are Summer Bridge Programs?

Programs offered on college campuses the summer before college to help incoming students transition from high school.

- Can include academic courses, workshops, and orientation activities.
- Provides a head start on coursework and study habits.
- Offers opportunities to meet peers and build relationships.
- Connects students with faculty, mentors, and resources.

What are Summer Bridge Programs?

- **Different Types of Programs:** Some programs focus on specific subjects while others cover a variety of subjects and skills to help prepare you for college.
- **Application Process:** Varies by program; some are invitation-only, while others require you to apply.
- **Costs:** Some are free, and for those that aren't, colleges may offer scholarships or financial aid to help with costs.

Popular Summer Bridge Programs

College	Program	College	Program
American University	Summer Transition Enrichment Program (STEP)	North Carolina Central	Aspiring Eagles
Bowie State	Bulldog Scholars Academy	Norfolk	Students Preparing for Academic Rigor in College (SPARC)
Catholic University	Take Flight Pre-Orientation	Penn State	Engineering Summer Bridge Program
Delaware State	Delaware State University Summer Academy	Trinity	Bridge to College Success (in partnership with DCPS/OSSE)
George Mason	STEM Bridge Experience	UMBC	Dawg Days: Jumpstart Summer Bridge
Georgetown	Community Scholars Program (CSP)	UMES	Step Beyond Summer Bridge
Hampton	Pre-College/Summer Bridge Program	University of Pennsylvania	Pre-First Year Program
Lincoln	LU-Rise Program	University of Virginia	UVA Engineering Summer Bridge
Morgan State	CASA Academy	Virginia Commonwealth	TRIO Summer Bridge Program

Recap / Next Steps



Access your college student portal with your college student ID



After choosing a college, accept the offer and decline other offers



Pay your enrollment deposit or contact your college to see what your options are if you can't afford it



If living on campus, submit a housing application and deposit



Consider your lifestyle and costs when choosing a meal plan, even if you are going to live off-campus or at home



Only accept the financial aid you need and complete necessary next steps like loan counseling and setting up a payment plan, if needed



Research your intended college's Summer Bridge Program and apply, if needed



Check your email!