

HOPE COLLEGE

INCOMING STUDENT HOUSING GUIDE



WHERE CAN I LIVE?

Welcome! We are excited that you have chosen Hope College and will be joining our community. Hope housing is designed to grow with you as a student. Incoming and second-year students at Hope live in one of our [residence halls](#). This allows you to meet new people, understand what it's like to live in a community, and solidify a smaller group of people to ultimately transition into a cottage or apartment with during your third year and beyond.

Most of our housing is based on a double or triple room occupancy, so anticipate having a roommate. Additionally, we house students by floor or unit based on biological sex. (If you have specific needs for your housing, make sure you read the "Requesting a Housing Accommodation" section.)

In the third year and beyond, many students transition into a cottage or apartment. This allows students to move into an environment with their smaller community of friends and live more independently with the security of the college staff and facilities to support them. In cottages and apartments, students learn to clean and care for a home. Some students choose to make some or all of their meals. They experience living with a group of people with whom they are friends. This type of living helps them gain skills in supporting people, giving/receiving feedback, and working through frustrations and differences together.

WHAT IF I WANT TO LIVE IN A SPECIFIC HALL?

We understand that you may be excited about living in a specific hall, and we will give you an opportunity in the Housing Application to tell us what communities you are interested in. While we will take your requests into consideration, we cannot guarantee that specific requests will be granted.

Others may not know anything about specific communities, or may not have a preference. There is no need to fill out this section if this is the case for you.

Either way, we encourage you to receive your housing placement with an open mind, even if it is not where you pictured yourself living. All of our residence halls are great! You may have heard that some halls are "loud" or "social" or "chill", and while some halls have specific reputations, those reputations are typically incomplete or inaccurate.



APPLYING TO LIVE ON-CAMPUS

The Incoming Student Housing Application will be available in your Hope Housing Portal beginning April 13 for those students who have paid their deposit and received their Hope email. Applications are due by June 12. In the application, you will provide responses to a variety of questions regarding lifestyle and living preferences. Even if you have already identified a roommate, please answer all of the questions (see the following page, "How do I select a Roommate" for additional information on this process).

Note: You are able to revisit your application after it has been submitted to make changes to all items except the meal plan.

To access your Hope Housing Portal, you will need to click the link and log in using your Hope email credentials.

- Log into your [Hope Housing Portal](#), select HOPE-Student SSO Login, using your Hope Credentials (including @hope.edu)
- In the header at the top of your portal, select "Application."
- Select "Academic Year 2026-2027"

Here is more information about what you will be asked in the Housing Application:

- Page 1: You will be asked to read the [Residential Life Housing Policy](#). You will also be asked what type of application you would like to fill out (application to live on campus, application to commute, or application to live off-campus).
- Page 2: You will be asked to enter your contact number, as well as emergency contact information.
- Page 3: You will be able to preference up to 3 residence halls that you would most like to live in. While we take requests into consideration, we are not able to guarantee that specific requests will be granted. You also do not need to make any preferences.
- Page 4: You will be asked if you are interested in any of our Living Learning Communities, such as Day1 Peatlands or the Phelps Scholars Program. This is not a commitment to any of those programs, but is an expression of interest.
- Page 5: You will be asked if you are requesting any housing accommodations through [Disability and Accessibility Resources](#) (more information below regarding that process).
- Page 6: This page is where you will fill out roommate information. Fill out the "About Me" section with information about hobbies, interests, and what you are looking for in a roommate. Make sure that the "Display in Roommate Search Results" box stays checked. You will also be asked a series of questions related to living with a roommate. If you do not preference a roommate, these responses are used to help identify a roommate (or roommates, as we have several triple rooms).
- Page 7: If you know who you want to live with next year, you are able to select them on this page. This page is not required - if you do not select a roommate, our office will use the responses on the previous page to identify a roommate. **There are instructions on the application page as to how to search for/select your roommate in the application.** Note: You will only be able to find them in the search if they have started their housing application. Students can revisit their application to name a roommate up until the housing application closes on June 12.
- Page 8: You are able to select your meal plan. Students living in residence halls are required to have a minimum of a 10-meal plan with the college Dining Services per the Dining Services and Board Policy. Meal plan options can be found on the [Dining Services website](#).

It is very important that this application be filled out by the incoming student themselves (not a parent/guardian/friend)! It is also important to be honest and candid when answering the questions—whether you are messy or clean, a late-riser or early-to-bed person, and more—it is important you let us know so we can match you with a roommate who will best compliment your habits and lifestyle preferences. It is also important to recognize that all roommates have differences. Part of the learning that happens in college is being exposed to different people, identities, interests, backgrounds, and beliefs.

WHAT ARE THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION?

Cleanliness

You will be asked how clean you keep your room and how important a clean room is to you. Again, this is an area to be honest, NOT ambitious. If you are typically messy, don't think that is going to change when you come to college. When asked how important keeping your room neat and clean is to you, the options are:

- **Not important** - a messy room will not bother you. You tend to clean up laundry piles and dirty dishes when you have time, but it's not a priority. You likely don't take out the trash often. You likely won't notice right away that your room has become cluttered.
- **Somewhat important** - in general, you prefer a neat and tidy room, but sometimes you may not get around to cleaning up right away. While it's not your preference to have a pile of dirty clothes or dishes waiting to be cleaned, it won't bother you if it isn't taken care of that day. You are fine living with someone who has the same attitude around cleanliness.
- **Very important** - you like to have everything in its place, clothes put away, and trash thrown out each day. Messes, dirty dishes, laundry piles, or clutter may bother you if not taken care of each day.

Sleeping

If you are a recent High School graduate, you may be used to a fairly structured sleep schedule due to school starting at the same time each day. As an incoming college student, your sleep schedule will likely shift depending on your class schedule. When answering the questions about your sleep habits, think about what time you hope to wake up and go to bed. Are you naturally a morning person, or would you prefer to sleep in as long as possible?

Smoking and Alcohol Use

While smoking and alcohol are prohibited on campus, we know that some students still choose to smoke or drink off campus. When answering the smoking questions, please consider all means of smoking such as cigars, vaping, etc.. Also consider if you are opposed to living with someone who smokes or drinks.



HOW DO I SELECT A ROOMMATE? WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A ROOMMATE?

Some students will request to live with someone they already know, and others may use ZeeMee or social media to connect with a roommate. However, many of our incoming students do not select a roommate. We will use your responses in the Housing Application to match you with a compatible roommate. Remember, "compatible" roommates are not going to be exactly the same as you, and all successful roommate relationships take work and communication.

If you wish to select a specific roommate, you will be able to do so in your Housing Application. The application will have specific instructions that walk you through how to make this selection.

WHAT SHOULD I TALK TO MY ROOMMATE ABOUT?

When you are sent your housing placement, you will also learn the name of your roommate(s), along with their email address. We encourage you to reach out and begin getting to know each other (but don't take it personally if you don't hear back—they may have a busy summer, and you'll have plenty of time to get to know each other during the semester!). Students tell us that it is most successful to talk via phone, Facetime, or in person, instead of just texting and email.

For many students, this is the first time they've shared a living space! Setting clear expectations gives everyone a common ground of understanding. You will be asked to complete a Roommate Agreement in the first few weeks of the semester, where you talk through expectations. It is very important to take this seriously and to be honest with your roommate in this process.

During the first few weeks of the semester, take time to get to know each other. Grab dinner or study together. Be open, honest, and patient, and learn how to communicate best with one another. Remember, relationships take time. They might not become your best friend and that's okay! What we want are two people who can coexist in a shared space.

Here are a few things to discuss with your roommate:

- What are your interests/hobbies?
- What kind of shows, movies or games do you like?
- What kind of roommates do you want to be (acquaintances, close friends, respectful to each other but don't need to be friends, etc.)?
- What items do you plan on bringing (rugs, etc.)? Do you want to share items?
- When are you moving in? If one person is moving in earlier than the other, what should they do in setting up the room space (wait to arrange the room when both are there, separate it in half, arrange the room how you both would like, etc.)?

HOW DO I REQUEST PARENT- COMMUTER OR OFF-CAMPUS STATUS?

Because Hope is a residential college and we value the learning, relationships, and community students gain while living on-campus the college has a [Residential Life Housing Policy](#) that guides the requests for parent-commuter or off-campus status. Within the policy, there are certain conditions where an exemption may be considered. Those conditions are:

Conditions to apply for Parent Commuter Status

- The student is commuting from their parent/legal guardian's primary residence which must be within 35 driving miles of campus
 - *Primary residence is defined as the one place where an owner of the property has their true, fixed and permanent home. A family-owned apartment or house that is not the parent/legal guardian's primary residence, or the residence of other relatives or friends, does not qualify.*

Conditions to apply for Off-Campus Status

- The student is in their fourth year (*calculated based on years of attendance, regardless of academic standing based on credits*)
- The student is 23 years old at the start of the academic year (*August 31, 2026*)
- The student is married with proof of marriage (*requires verification of a marriage license*)
- The custodial parent of a minor child (*requires verification of the child's birth certificate*)

Approval for off-campus or parent commuter status is for the requested academic year only. Students must reapply each year.

The college reserves the right to deny off-campus or parent commuter applications submitted by students who do not meet the criteria listed above or have been subject to college disciplinary action. In addition, the college is not obligated to grant off-campus status to students who have entered into rental agreements before proper approval has been given. Students are strongly advised not to sign a lease before receiving off-campus status.

Choosing to live off campus or commute from home can change your financial aid package. You are asked to contact the Financial Aid Office at 616.395.7765 or finaid@hope.edu to verify any potential impact to your financial aid package before applying.

Students who do not directly meet the criteria listed above may apply only in rare cases where there is an exceptional individual circumstance.

In those circumstances, the student will be asked to meet with a member of the Off-Campus Housing Committee and/or provide additional documentation explaining their situation. Requests will be reviewed and decided upon by the Off-Campus Housing Committee, but approval is uncommon for students who do not meet the standard eligibility requirements. Decisions of the Off-Campus Housing Committee are final.

Those who are found to falsify information to meet criteria will be taken through the conduct process for being in violation of the Residential Living Policy and Dishonesty Policy.

WHAT IF I NEED TO REQUEST A HOUSING ACCOMMODATION?

Some students need specific types of housing or specific amenities in their housing because of a personal condition. If you have a condition that substantially limits major life activity, you may be eligible for specific housing accommodations. To inquire and/or request housing accommodations, you must contact [Disability and Accessibility Resources \(DAR\)](#).

DAR works with you to understand your needs, compile any necessary documentation, and make accommodation determinations. These determinations are given to Housing, and we identify housing that meets the accommodations.

To ensure that approved accommodations can be fulfilled, the accommodation process needs to be completed by June 1. Accommodations that are approved after that deadline are met as space becomes available.

Students who identify as transgender and have questions or concerns about their housing options should contact Associate Dean for Residential Life and Education Kristyn Bochniak at bochniak@hope.edu. If you are concerned about the housing structure and do not have a condition that limits major life activities, please contact housing@hope.edu.

WHERE DO I GO IF I HAVE QUESTIONS OR NEED HELP?

If you have questions about your housing over the summer, email housing@hope.edu.

When you move in, each student will also have a Resident Assistant (RA) on their floor. RAs are student staff members who live in the residence halls and oversee approximately 30 residents. Your RA will be your primary point person within Hope College housing. They have been trained on conflict resolution, mediation, listening skills, community developing, and policy enforcement. They are also very knowledgeable about resources within the college and Holland community. If you have questions or need help with anything, your RA is a great place to start. They are a valuable resource to students in the transition to a new environment, and will help create opportunities for students to meet each other and make new friends.

Additionally, each hall has either a Residential Life Coordinator (RLC) or a Resident Director (RD). RLCs are full-time, masters-level, professional staff members. They oversee the larger residence halls. Resident Directors are part-time, bachelor's-level, professional staff members. They oversee the smaller residence halls. Both RLCs and RDs live in the halls and supervise the Resident Assistants and the community as a whole. Your RLC or RD will be an active part of your community. While you won't see them as often as your RA, you will know how to connect with them. They are also a fantastic resource if you need anything as you are adjusting to life on campus.

Lastly, Campus Safety is a great resource if you need anything. Like your RA, RD, and RLC, even if they aren't able to directly help with a situation, they can point you in the right direction. We recommend that all students put the Campus Safety number in their phones (616-395-7770).

WHAT IF MY ROOMMATE AND I HAVE CONFLICT?

If concerns come up, please talk to your roommate first. This is a great opportunity to learn life skills about negotiating differences. The next step is to talk to your Resident Assistant (RA), who is trained to mediate roommate conversations. If you would like more help, each residence hall has a Resident Director (professional staff member), who can help you navigate concerns. Room changes are permitted only after all other options have been considered and if there are alternate options available.

For more suggestions, please refer to the [Guide to Living with a Roommate](#).

WHAT AMENITIES ARE IN THE RESIDENCE HALLS?

The majority of our halls have community bathrooms, which include toilets, showers, and sinks. The bathrooms are cleaned daily by our custodial staff. Cook Hall has suite-style bathrooms, where the residents of 2 rooms share an interconnected bathroom, which they are responsible for cleaning (**note: Cook Hall is predominately upperclassmen**).

Every residence hall has a self-serve laundry room, which is available 24/7. The use of the machines is included at no extra cost.

Additionally, each residence hall is equipped with a kitchen for student use, including a microwave, oven, and community refrigerator.

Our residence halls are not air-conditioned (with the exception of Cook Hall). There are a few weeks at the beginning of the semester where it may be a little warm, so we encourage you to pack a fan! Unfortunately, window air conditioners or floor air coolers are not permitted because of the power needs.

Students can connect to wireless internet in every residential unit and bedroom. Additional information about the internet can be found through [CIT](#).

Every residential hall has a lounge equipped with a large-screen TV. Cable is not provided in student rooms, but our wireless internet system supports online TV and movie streaming. Many students access TV through independent subscriptions to online sources (Hulu, Netflix, etc.). The lounges are a great place for students to gather!

WHAT COMES IN MY ROOM? CAN I DECORATE?

Rooms typically have extra-long twin beds, dressers, desks, and desk chairs. In some halls, the beds will come with lofting equipment. In other halls, the beds are only able to be bunked. To learn more about the specific furniture in your hall, check out your hall's page on the [website](#). (Note that students may not build lofts in their rooms).

We want you to make yourself at home in your room, and you can definitely do a lot of decorating. However, there are some stipulations:

- Rooms must be in the same condition upon departure as they were upon arrival.
- Pictures, posters, and other materials must be hung with blue painter's tape only. Nails, tacks, screws, glue, plastic hooks, removable wallpaper, and other adhesives may not be used.
- Students may not make any alterations (including painting) to the room.
- All College-provided furniture needs to stay in your room all year, even if the desk chair isn't your preferred style.



WHEN DO I FIND OUT WHERE I'M LIVING?

If you submit your housing application by the application deadline (June 12), you will learn your housing placement by July 7.

If you do not meet the application deadline, you will find out once you have been placed into housing.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING WITH ME?

Check out this [Packing List](#) to see what we would recommend.

We ask that you leave your toasters, space heaters, candles, air conditioners, and microwaves at home. Each residence hall is equipped with a kitchen, including a microwave, for your convenience. Fun fact: Waterbeds are also prohibited on campus, so leave your waterbed at home!

As a Hope student, you are expected to know and abide by the college policies. We encourage you to read the [Student Handbook](#) prior to arriving on campus.

HOW DO I SELECT A DINING PLAN?

Since you will no longer be a few steps away from the refrigerator and midnight snacks, it is the time to also think about what kind of meal plan works best for you! You are able to select your dining plan at the end of your Housing Application.

You can choose an Hope+ Meal Plan so that you can eat what you need as many times as you like in the dining halls. This plan also includes a daily snack and popcorn/candy and beverages at concessions. Or maybe you'll be interested in a 10 or 15-meals-per week plan? All of our dining plans come with Dining Dollars that can be used at venues across campus. If you have allergies or special dietary needs, please visit the [Dining Services website](#) and fill out the Allergen Awareness form so they can think with you about your options.

You will select your meal plan when completing your housing application. If you wish to change your meal plan after submitting your housing application, you will be able to do this within your [Hope Housing Portal](#) under Forms. Meal plan change instructions will be provided on the Forms page.

Per the [Dining Services and Board Policy](#), students living in residence halls are required to have a minimum of a 10-meal plan. Students are allowed to change their meal plan through the first week of either the fall or spring semester.