



Student to Student Guide

Center for International Programs

Rutgers University – Camden

ABOUT THE GUIDE

Coping with a new culture is not always easy: it can be challenging and difficult. You will have to adapt to different foods, climates, attitudes, etc. Our advice is to be open-minded and free of prejudices. Be observant and aware; show openness and curiosity. Explore. Try new things. **GET INVOLVED!** The more you put in, the more you will learn; there is always something for everyone.

If you are having trouble in class, make an appointment to speak with your professor; in the US, it is common to meet with your professor—that's why they have office hours! If you need help choosing a class, speak with your academic advisor or program director. If you are not feeling well, physically or emotionally, you may speak with a counselor at the **Health Services Center**. If you have questions about your student visa, make an appointment with the Center for International Programs. Whatever the problem is, don't be shy —ask for help!

In offering help to new international students, we've put together this guide of the most FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions). We're students, providing advice to students! Hopefully, this will help you have the best experience possible! Welcome to Rutgers-Camden! Below, are the following topics that will be covered!

Housing

Eating On Campus

Shopping

Local Travelling Options

Communication

Banking

On-Campus Jobs

Best of Luck,

International Students Association & International Student Ambassadors!

HOUSING

1. How much is on-campus housing?

Housing costs between \$3,000 and \$4,500 per semester including utilities, cable and internet. There are two types of housing contracts—academic (nine months) and calendar (12 months). The undergraduate housing offers suites and apartments while the graduate housing offers single-bedroom shared apartments.

More information can be found on the **Rutgers-Camden Housing website**.
(<http://housing.camden.rutgers.edu>)

2. Where should I look for off-campus housing?

- The Victor: Luxury Waterfront Lofts - (856) 635-9076 / www.thevictorlofts.com
- The Camden Castle Apartments - (856) 379-3155
- Cooper Grant neighborhood
- Philadelphia (Center City area or University City)
- Towns along the Riverline or NJ Transit e.g. Burlington, Cinnaminson, Pennsauken
- Towns along the PATCO high speed line e.g. Collingswood, Haddonfield

The price varies depending on location. If you have roommates, this allows you to split the rent and significantly bring down the cost of living. Typically, the cost is \$400-600 (sharing) to \$800-1400 (non-sharing) per month, plus utilities.

**Please note that you will most likely have to buy your own furniture when living off-campus. The landlord will provide you with basic amenities e.g. refrigerator, gas/electric stove.*

3. What should I be aware of when looking for off-campus housing?

- Safe locality.
- Whether utilities (heat, water, internet, etc.) are included.
- Walking distance to public transportation, if you do not own a car.
- In most part, furniture is not included in the off-campus apartments.

4. How safe is living in Camden?

The university campus is the safest place in Camden and so are its surrounding neighborhoods (Rutgers-Camden is the safest of all three Rutgers campuses). The campus is patrolled 24 hours a day by the Rutgers University Police Department, Camden County Police, New Jersey State Police, and the Delaware River Port Authority.

5. Where can I go if I require more information about off-campus housing?

You could check the following websites:

Craigslist (<https://www.craigslist.org/about/sites>),
Apartment directory on the OIS website under Housing

You could also contact a current student for assistance through our [Facebook Page](#)

EATING AROUND CAMPUS

Meal plans can be purchased while signing up for your housing contract (for more information on meal plans please visit [the Rutgers University-Camden Housing website](http://housing.camden.rutgers.edu) - <http://housing.camden.rutgers.edu>).

You can also get snacks from Starbucks located in the Camden Campus Center and basic groceries from the on-campus Corner Store and the Bridge Café.

Here are some other places to get a bite to eat around campus:

- **Food truck:** One parked on 3rd, just outside the Campus Center – Chicken Gyro, Falafel, tuna sandwich, etc.
- **A Little Slice of New York:** 120 3rd Street - serves pizza, sandwiches, chicken fingers, salads, etc.
- **Friends Café:** 319 Friends, behind the Business and Science Building (BSB). Serves sandwiches and Asian cuisine.
- **7/11:** Below the 330 Cooper Graduate Housing.
- **Subway:** Below the 330 Cooper Graduate Housing - serves sandwiches and soups.
- **Market Street Deli & Pizzeria:** Market Street – Below Victor Lofts. Serves pizza and Italian food.
- **The Victor's Pub:** 1 Market Street – Next to Waterfront attractions.
- **Black Eyed Susan's Breakfast and Lunch:** Food truck on North 5th Street (behind Armitage Hall) – Sandwiches, Soups.
- **Salad Factory:** 313 Market St, Camden, NJ – Cheesesteaks Salads and Soups.
- **Fresh Fruit & Salad:** 114 N 3rd St, Camden, NJ – Caesar, tuna salads, locally grown fruits and vegetables.

SHOPPING

Prices in American stores and supermarkets are fixed and non-negotiable.

During Orientation (late August), OIS offers a shuttle to new and current students to shop for food, hygiene products, household supplies, clothing, etc. Places include: Wegman's Supermarket, Target Supercenter and Sunseng Asian Market.

The Office of Housing & Residence Life (OHRL) provides a free shopping shuttle to all Rutgers-Camden students. It comes biweekly on Saturday during the Fall and Spring semesters and runs from 12PM - 4PM. During the summer semester, the shuttle comes once every two weeks. The shuttle runs in a loop and returns to campus every hour. Stops on the shuttle include:

- Shoprite (Nearby stores: Ross, Burlington Coat Factory, Walmart, etc.)
- Wegmans (Nearby stores: Cheesecake Factory, Home Depot, Best Buy, Dicks Sporting Goods, Wine and Beer, etc.)

- Lowe's Theatre (Nearby stores: Target, Cherry Hill Mall, Olive Gardens, Walmart, etc.)
- Cherry Hill Mall
- Sun Seng Asian Market (Asian restaurants near the supermarket)

Grocery Shopping Options:

In Camden

- Rutgers-Camden Convenience Corner Store and Lounge
- Market Gourmet
- 7/Eleven (Below 330 Cooper)
- CVS Pharmacy (next to the Walter Rand Transportation Center)
- Rite-Aid (next to the Walter Rand Transportation Center)

Outside Camden

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|-----------|---------------|------------------------------------------|
| ○ Walmart | ○ Shop Rite | ○ Reading Terminal Market - Philadelphia |
| ○ Target | ○ Wegmans | ○ China Town - Philadelphia |
| ○ Aldi | ○ Subzi Mandi | ○ Desi Bazaar - Lindenwold |

Malls

- Cherry Hill Mall
- Moorestown Mall
- The Gallery – Philadelphia (the closest mall to the Rutgers-Camden campus)

Buying Textbooks

The University bookstore sells new and used books. Textbooks can be a bit pricy, so the bookstore also allows students to rent textbooks for cheap. Alternatively, you can get very cheap books from chegg.com, amazon.com, allbookstores.com, half.com, and bn.com. You could also look for students who have taken the class and may be able to lend or sell their books.

LOCAL TRAVELLING OPTIONS

Riverline: Runs from Trenton Transit Center (Connections are available to Newark and New York) to Camden (Rutgers University is the 3rd last stop on the route). A ticket from Trenton to Camden is \$1.50 (Single trip). The Riverline is very convenient for those who wish to live between Trenton and Camden. Train schedules and route information is available at on the [NJ Transit website](#).

PATCO High Speedline: This train runs between Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) and Lindenwold (New Jersey) and is most convenient for students living in Center City, Philadelphia or areas near Lindenwold. It's also the quickest way to visit Philadelphia - it's just a five-minute ride from City Hall, Camden to 8th and Market Street in Philadelphia. The cost varies between stations, but the cost from City Hall, Camden to all station in Philadelphia is \$3.00 (Round trip). Train schedule and information is available at <http://www.ridepatco.org/>

NJ Transit: This is the local bus and train transportation. Students who do not have access to the Riverline or PATCO may use the bus service provided by NJ Transit. The main bus stop is at

the Walter Rand Transportation Center. NJ Transit trains are available from Lindenwold to Atlantic City, which is \$5.00 (Single Trip).

The university provides round the clock escort service for students who would like a security guard to walk with them to the PATCO station or Walter Rand Transportation Center.

See the **Traveling Information on the OIS website** for more local transportation information. (http://ois.camden.rutgers.edu/travel_local.)

COMMUNICATION

Internet access: RUWireless (the Rutgers wireless internet) is available all over the campus. You can access it from your laptop, phone, tablet, etc. The Computer Lab and Office of Information and Technology (OIT) Help Desk are located in the library. The computer lab has over 200 computers and provides access to scanners and printers.

Cell Phones: You can buy prepaid connection at any phone service provider stores. We recommend you get a handset from home: most of the phones available in the US are with contracts (generally 2 years) and you are not allowed to switch phones during that time. Some of the good and popular service providers are AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Sprint, Boost Mobile, MetroPCS, and Virgin Mobile. *If you have any relatives or friends in the US, you may be able to opt into a family plan, which is much cheaper.*

Calling Home: Use a calling card to make international calls is one of the ways to contact back home. These can be bought from CVS and the Bookstore but online cards are even more convenient. Google Talk, Viber, Facetime and Skype are also reasonable and convenient options. Consult a current international student about the cheapest rates for the country you intend to call.

Sending Mail: If you need to send domestic or international mail, the United States' Post Office is located at 401 Market Street.

BANKING

One of the first things you should do after arriving in the US is open an account at a reputable bank. Investigate various banks before choosing which one you wish to use, as all banks have different charges and fees for services, such as ATM access, checking, overdraft protection. You should read the small print carefully before signing up with any bank. To open an account, you must present two forms of identification, e.g. your passport and RUID.

*Most international students open their accounts with **Bank of America** because they do not require Social security card, provide efficient online banking, and have wide network of ATM machines. Other banks to consider are **PNC Bank, TD Bank, and Wells Fargo.***

Checking Account: Opening a checking account will assure safe and quick deposit of foreign checks and free you from carrying large amounts of cash. A checking account will also provide you with an accurate monthly record of your finances, a debit card, and a checkbook.

Checks can be used to pay monthly bills e.g. rent, telephone, electricity, etc. You can also write a check for some purchases as long as you can provide two types of identification. The checks you write are returned to you after being cashed and cleared by the bank to serve as proof of payment.

You must keep an accurate record of your spending to make sure you have enough money in your account for each check you write. There are serious penalties for writing checks without sufficient funds in your checking account – you will incur various fees, may suffer serious financial consequences, and will be vulnerable to legal action.

Savings Account: If you have money that you don't plan on using immediately, you can open a savings or investment account. This account may pay you interest based on how much you deposit. You will receive a monthly statement showing your balance; be sure to keep these statements as the interest earned on savings accounts may be taxable.

Credit Cards: Credit cards are very popular in the US, but can be difficult for international students without established credit to obtain.

Major credit cards in the US are **Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover**, but businesses do not always accept all cards. Store brand credit cards are usually easier to obtain and can be used to establish credit e.g. **Target's RED card, Amazon credit card, etc.** Be cautious when using credit cards as a means of postponing payment for purchases: almost all credit cards charge interest (12%-29% per year).

If your credit card is lost or stolen, file a report with the police and notify the company that issued the card immediately.

ON-CAMPUS JOBS

1. Am I eligible for work-study positions?

No. Work-study positions are federally funded and only US citizens and permanent residents are eligible.

2. What are the primary requirements for getting a job on campus?

To obtain on-campus employment, you'll need a résumé, good communication skills, good work ethic, and reputable recommendations.

3. How many hours am I allowed to work on campus?

You can work up to 20 hours/week. During summer and winter breaks you are allowed to work up to 40 hours/week.

4. How will I get paid?

In most cases you are paid bi-weekly. Please note that you will start getting paid once you get your SSN. You will receive a paper check, bi-weekly, unless you chose to have the funds deposited directly into your bank account.

5. Is there a limit on the number of jobs I am allowed to do?

No, however, please keep in mind that you are a student first. Though you are able to work up to 20 hours per week during the school year, your on-campus work shouldn't affect your academics. One or two jobs are allowed as long as you do not exceed the weekly limit.

6. What else should I know about the on-campus employment process?

Check out the OIS website for more detailed information about on campus employment.

*For more information on CPT/OPT, please contact an advisor in the Center for International Programs.

Center for International Programs

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ois.camden.rutgers.edu