

American^{flame}Success
Honors

Community
College
of Philadelphia

International Student Pre-Arrival Guide





Welcome to Community College of Philadelphia!

We are excited to welcome you to Philadelphia! Moving to a new country is both exciting and daunting! This guide is here to support you as you make your transition to living in the United States and start your learning journey at the Community College of Philadelphia!

Please carefully review this Pre-Arrival Guide. The guide consists of the following sections:



[Your Support Team](#) — Your key points of contact and support network



[Visa Interview Process](#) — Applying for your F-1 student visa



[Pre-Arrival Checklist](#) — What you need to do before arriving in the US



[Travel Document Checklist](#) — What documents to bring when entering the US



[Housing and Airport Transportation](#) — Housing and travel options



[Placement Test Preparation](#) — Learn about the placement tests you will be required to take when you arrive on campus, how to prepare for them, and understanding how the test results impact your academic coursework



[Registering for Classes](#) — How to register for your classes



[Money & Banking](#) — Setting up a bank account in the US



[Health Insurance](#) — Health insurance options in the US



[Living in Philadelphia](#) — Learn about your new community, including information about grocery stores, tourist attractions, and more!

Your Support Team



Your support team is a group of people devoted to your success at Community College of Philadelphia.

Support Coach

Your Admissions Officer will introduce you to your **Support Coach** by email and will ask that you both have an introductory meeting via Skype prior to your arrival on campus.

Your **Support Coach** will help you achieve your academic and transfer goals, and will provide support on any specific questions and concerns you may have.

Your **Support Coach** will also help you prepare for the placement tests you will have to pass in order to start earning college credits for your classes at Community College of Philadelphia.

International Office

The international office on campus provides full support for all international students.

The office can assist you with the following:

- Tuition payments
- Immigration questions
- Your community college online account
- International travel assistance
- Mental health concerns

Peer Mentor

All international students will be paired with another current student in the program who has been enrolled for at least one term.



Visa Interview Process



In order to study in the United States, all non-US citizens will need to apply for an F-1 student visa at a US embassy or consulate abroad. The F-1 visa will allow you to enter the United States and begin your studies at Community College of Philadelphia. After you receive your Form I-20 from your school, make sure you do the following:

☐ **Pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee**

☐ **Schedule a visa appointment** at the closest US Embassy or Consulate

☐ **Schedule a video call** with your Admissions Officer prior to the visa appointment to prepare you for the visa interview

☐ **Before the visa appointment**

Follow the instructions on the embassy's website to schedule and get ready for your visa appointment. **Make sure you bring all of the documents the embassy or consulate requires.**

! **Important Note:** Not all visas are granted to students that apply for one. It is important for you to understand why a visa might be denied. Read the possible reasons.










? If you have any questions, please e-mail the International Student Office at aakari@ccp.edu - Anesah Akari - International Student Services Coordinator.

Pre-Arrival Checklist



9 Things You Must Do Before Arriving in the United States

Use this checklist to track what you need to submit and pack before your departure.

- ☐  **Apply for your F-1 Visa at a US embassy or consulate**
- ☐  **Meet with your Support Coach via Skype or WeChat**
Your Admissions Officer will introduce you to your Support Coach by email.
- ☐  **Select your housing option**
- ☐  **Book your flight and send your flight details to your Admissions Officer**
Remember you must arrive in the United States prior to the start date on your Form I-20.
- ☐  **Select your airport transportation**
- ☐  **Prepare your travel documents**
- ☐  **Purchase your health insurance**
- ☐  **Prepare for your placement tests**
This will help ensure you can start earning college credits towards graduation at the Community College.
- ☐  **Register for orientation**
Your Admissions Officer will send you this invitation via email.



Travel Checklist



Please use this checklist to ensure you have all of the documents you need for your studies in the United States.

Documents You **Will Need** to Show the Border Officer:

- ☐ **Form I-20**
- ☐ **Passport with Your Approved F-1 Student Visa Stamp**
- ☐ **Letter of Admission**
from Community College of Philadelphia and your specific program (e.g. University Transfer, etc.)
- ☐ **SEVIS fee payment receipt**
- ☐ **Proof of Funding**
*Financial statement to show the border officer at the US port of entry (e.g. airport)
Students should be prepared to show \$27,800 which is the estimated annual cost of attending the Honors University Transfer program at Community College of Philadelphia.*

Documents You Should Bring with You to the United States:

- ☐ **High School and/or College Transcript** from previous schools translated into English
- ☐ **TOEFL or IELTS scores**
- ☐ **US Cash for Arrival** (recommended amount of **\$350**)
- ☐ **Traveler's Checks and/or Credit Card (Visa or MasterCard)**
Learn about [setting up a US bank account](#).
- ☐ **Photocopy of your passport and Form I-20**
- ☐ **Copy of your immunization records** (TB, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, and Hepatitis B). Speak to your Admissions Officer for details.
- ☐ **Proof of international driver's license**
- ☐ **English translations** of marriage and birth certificates of any dependents.
- ☐ **Any medications** you are taking in their original package with the prescription translated into English
- ☐ **Marriage license** (if applicable)

Housing Options



We are excited to have you join our program! Your next step is to secure your housing accommodations prior to arrival.

Choose a Housing Provider

The two housing providers that you can select from are:

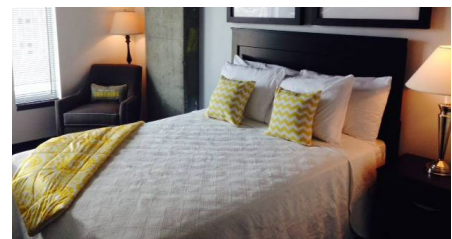
- The Edge
- International House Philadelphia

Most of the international students in our program that attend Community College of Philadelphia live at **The Edge** because of its international student community and proximity to campus.

The Edge

Estimated Cost per Month (\$USD)	Double	Single
	\$545 (includes utilities)	\$909 (includes utilities)

Fees (\$USD)	\$850 Security Deposit \$55 Set-up Fee
Cooking Facility	Yes
Distance to Campus	Address: 1601 N 15th St, Philadelphia, PA 19121 Public Transportation: 13 minutes Driving to Campus: 10 minutes
Housing Instructions	Submit Your Housing Request Here: https://www.mystudentvillage.com/us/the-edge/ The housing application may ask you questions about Community College of Philadelphia and your program of study. Please reference the information below when completing your form: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address: Community College Of Philadelphia, 1700 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130• Program of Study: Associate's Degree Move-In Dates & Times: Check with your International Admissions Officer



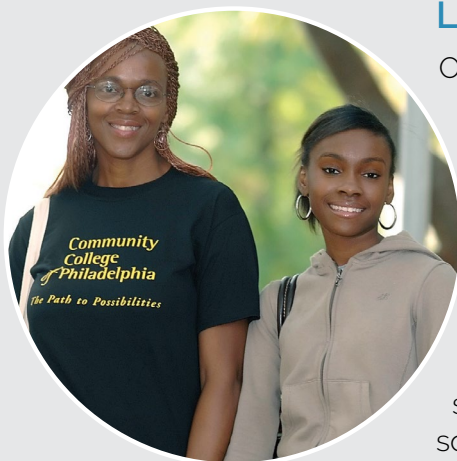
Payments and deposits will vary based on which of the above options you pursue. You will not be required to submit any payment information until your booking is confirmed.

Housing Options



International House Philadelphia

Estimated Cost per Month (\$USD)	\$795 - \$1,290 Learn about housing rates: http://ihousephilly.org/student-housing/housing-rates
Fees (\$USD)	\$350 deposit - You can pay the deposit using a credit card (MasterCard or Visa)
Cooking Facility	yes
Distance to Campus	Address: 3701 Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104 Public Transportation: 30 minutes Driving to Campus: 15 minutes
Housing Instructions	Submit housing request here: http://ihousephilly.org/student-housing The housing application may ask you questions about the Community College of Philadelphia and your program of study. Please reference the information below when completing your form: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address: Community College Of Philadelphia, 1700 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130• Program of Study: Associate's Degree



Living with Roommates

One of the richest and most unique characteristics of the United States is the vast array of religious, cultural, and racial diversity amongst its people. This is the case in all aspects of American life, including on college campuses. As a college student in the United States, it is very common to share an apartment or dorm room with students from different backgrounds that you might only get to meet on move-in day. Learning and living with people from a different religious, cultural and/or racial background is seen in the United States as an opportunity to learn about someone else's culture and grow as an inclusive leader.

Airport Pick Up Services





Recommended Airport: Philadelphia International Airport (PHL)

Website: <https://www.phl.org/>

When to Arrive: Please arrive in the United States before your orientation date. If you will be visiting the Community College of Philadelphia's campus, please come during a week day and during business hours.

GO Airport Shuttle

We recommend that you take advantage of *GO Shuttle*, a nationally recognized transportation service. Please complete both Step 1 and Step 2 to use *GO Shuttle*.

Estimated Cost (\$USD)	\$47 - \$110 Prices are estimates and will increase with tax
Instructions for filling out the Go Shuttle Request Form (link below)	
Step 1	<p>Choose the "GO Shuttle" service you want (either the "Go! Shared Service" or the "Town Car for up to 1 passengers")</p> <div> <div>  <p>GO! Shared Service Passengers: 3 Bags: 2</p> <p>Price for all passengers Includes all taxes and fees</p> <p>*\$47.00</p> <p>Select</p> </div> <div> <p>→</p> <p>This option will be shared by you and other students headed in your same direction with different stops. This option usually takes a bit longer to your arrival destination.</p> </div> </div> <div> <div>  <p>Town Car for up to 1 passengers Passengers: 1 Bags: 2</p> <p>Price for all passengers Includes all taxes and fees</p> <p>*\$110.00</p> <p>Select</p> </div> <div> <p>→</p> <p>This exclusive option will take you directly to campus in a private car, and you will be welcomed at the airport by a driver holding a sign with your name</p> </div> </div>
Step 2	<p><u>Click Here</u> to Submit Service Selection and Payment Info to your Admissions Officer</p> <p>We will make arrangements with "GO Shuttle" on your behalf once you send the information requested below to your Admissions Officer.</p> <p>Provide this information to your Admissions Officer in one of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scanned copy of hand-written completed application • Typed directly in the body of the email • Dictated via phone call

Taxi

Taxicabs are readily available and provide service to the Philadelphia metro and surrounding areas.

Estimated Cost (\$USD)	\$30 - \$50 (cost may be higher if you are being dropped off at The Edge)
Instructions	Taxis can be accessed at Zone 5 on the Commercial Transportation Roadway. All taxis accept credit cards. For a list of taxicab companies, click here .

Placement Tests & Registering for Classes



Before you can take classes that will count as college credits towards your degree requirements, you will need to demonstrate your math knowledge and english reading and writing abilities by passing placement tests.

Students taking only English as a Second Language (ESL) courses do not need to take the placement tests until they begin taking credit-bearing classes toward their degree.

The test you will take is called ACCUPLACER. Typically, students take 2 to 2.5 hours to complete their ACCUPLACER test. Please be sure to educate yourself about how the ACCUPLACER is used by Community College of Philadelphia to assess college readiness in incoming students:

Exceptions for Taking the Test

If you meet any of the following requirements, you may be excused from taking the placement tests.

Minimum Scores

Review the minimum scores you need to receive in order to enroll in courses that will count toward your college degree.

Signing up for the Placement Tests

You will take the placement tests on campus through the community college testing center. You can schedule your placement test through your MyCCP account or you can drop in on Tuesdays or Thursday between 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Room BG-14 in the Bonnell Building on the main campus. Your Success Coach is happy to provide you with more information during your first advising meeting on campus.

After You Take the Test

After you take the tests, you should get your results within two business days. Depending on your scores, you may be required to take developmental coursework before starting your program. If you are worried about taking the placement tests, please contact your Admission Officer so you can be enrolled in the Prep Series.

Registering for Classes

You will register for courses after arriving at Community College of Philadelphia. You will need to meet with a counselor at The Counseling Center in the Bonnell Building. Your counselor will walk you through the steps for applying for courses through your MYCCP account.



Money & Banking



Money

When traveling to the US, it's important for you to carry some cash with you so you have enough money to support yourself upon arrival. We recommend carrying **\$350** in cash. **In the future, do not carry large sums of cash with you.** This is very unsafe and you risk losing the money.

Banking

We recommend that students open a bank account with **Bank of America**.

Bank of America Financial Center
1600 JFK Blvd
Philadelphia, PA 19103 US
(215) 561-5014

Instructions for Opening an Account:

You will need to visit the Bank of America office in-person to open an account and you will need to show two forms of identification.

Please bring with you:

- Passport
- School ID or student travel visa (F-1 visa)

If you are under 18 years old:

Students under 18 years old are able to open up a bank account with Bank of America. However, you will only be able to use the "Savings" account which limits your ability to take out money and use a debit card for purchases.

However, you can open a full checkings and savings account with Bank of America if an adult (anyone 18 years or older) is willing to be a co-owner of your account.

Be Aware of Scams

In recent years, the number of scams targeting international students has increased. Hopefully this doesn't happen to you, but if it does, we want you to be prepared.

If you ever get a call or an email from someone saying they are from the US government or if someone is asking you for money, you should do the following:

- Contact your Success Coach immediately.
- Do not provide any financial information to the person contacting you.
- Report the call or email to the campus police office.

Tuition & Health Insurance



Paying for Tuition

You will need to pay for your tuition within 24 hours of registering for classes. You should only pay for one semester at a time. If you are on a payment plan, you will be asked to pay your tuition over the semester in installments and there is a \$35 fee to do this.

There are three ways you can pay your tuition:

1. You can pay using [Flywire.com](https://flywire.com)

Be careful not to overpay. Flywire will charge a refund fee of \$35.

2. You can pay via MYCCP using a US credit card
3. You can pay by check, money order, or cash at the Bursar's Office at Community College of Philadelphia

[Click here](#) for more information about payment options.



Health Insurance

You will need to enroll in a health insurance plan when studying in the United States. [Watch this video](#) to learn about US Health Insurance.

Your Health Insurance Options:

- [ISO Insurance](#)
- [HTH Students](#)



Living in Philadelphia



We are excited to welcome you to your new city and provide you with all of the resources and tips you need to make Philadelphia your home away from home.

Community College of Philadelphia

[Main Website](#)

[Academic Calendar](#)

[International Student Services Office](#)

[Campus Life](#)



Living in Philadelphia



Climate and Local Weather

The weather in Philadelphia is changeable and unpredictable. Philadelphia has four distinct seasons which vary greatly, so it is important to prepare!

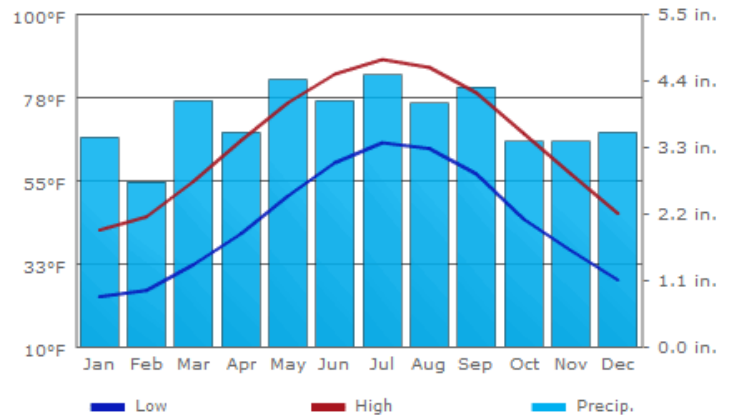
College Closing Policy

In certain circumstances, Community College of Philadelphia may close due to bad weather. This typically occurs during the winter months when it snows. Community College of Philadelphia's emergency notification system, "Send Word Now", will notify all students if classes are cancelled.

What to Wear

Community College of Philadelphia students and faculty dress casually. A typical and acceptable winter outfit might be a sweater, jeans, boots and a winter or heavy jacket. In the summer when the weather is warm, many students wear light clothing (i.e. dress or shirt) to class. Here are some items that are good to have over the course of the year:

- Rain jacket and/or umbrella
- Heavy winter jacket
- Both warm and cool weather clothing



Source: U.S. Climate Data

The average weather and temperatures are:

Fall/Autumn: cool temperatures.

Winter: cold/frigid temperatures.

Spring: mild temperatures.

Summer: warm/hot temperatures.

What to Pack

- ☒ Warm weather/cool weather clothing
- ☒ Photos/Special items to remind you of "home"
- ☒ Bedding: If you are living at the Edge apartments, your room will not have bedding. You can purchase bedding for \$150 upon arrival.



Living in Philadelphia



Settling into Your New City

- [Campus Map](#)
- [Main Campus with directions & transportation](#)

Public Transportation

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (**SEPTA**) runs the subway and bus system in Philadelphia. Download the SEPTA "[Transit Tracker](#)" app which will help you find transportation in real time.

Subway

Getting to Campus:

Take the **Broad Street Line** and exit at **Spring Garden**. The college is located at 1700 Spring Garden and 17th Street.

Learn more about the [subway system](#).

Buses

Getting to Campus:

The following bus routes will run through campus.

- Bus route **2**: Nicetown to South Philadelphia
- Bus route **33**: Tioga to Penn's Landing
- Bus route **43**: Parkside to Northern Liberties and Kensington

View the [complete bus schedule](#).



Other Transportation Options

Taxi

[Freedom Taxi](#)

Uber

[Download the app on your phone.](#)

Lyft

[Download the app on your phone.](#)

Amtrak (Train)

Accessible via the [30th Street Train Station](#)

Bicycling

Philadelphia is a very bike friendly city with bike lanes specifically for cyclists. [Click here](#) for a list of Bike Share Locations in Philadelphia.

Walking

[Here](#) is a list of walking paths, parks, and hiking.



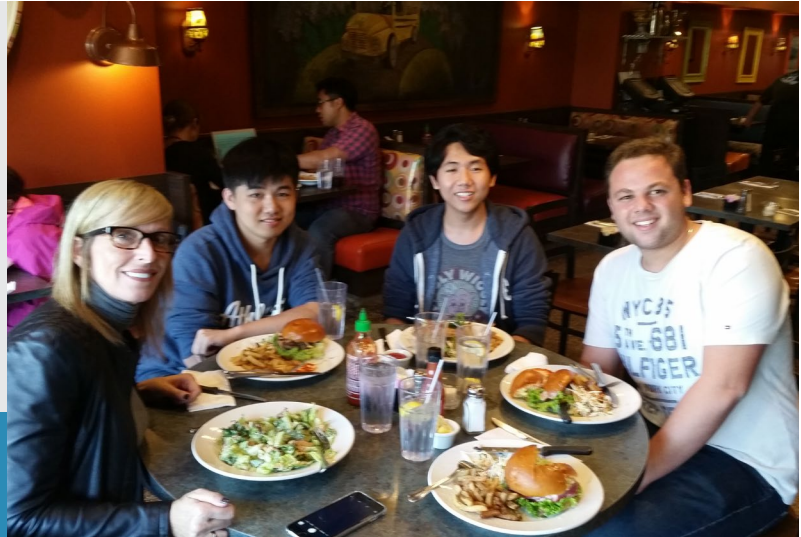
Living in Philadelphia



Grocery Stores, Food Markets, & Restaurants

- [Whole Foods Market](#)
- [Reading Terminal Market](#)
- [Asian Food Markets](#)
- Best [local restaurants](#) in Philadelphia
- Best local restaurants for [International food](#)

Also see [Best Practices for Tipping](#) in different situations.



Parking

Street Parking: Street parking is managed by the Philadelphia Parking Authority. Be sure to put money in the parking meter to avoid receiving a ticket!

Parking in the Main Garage: Daily parking is available on the Main Campus in the Main Garage which is located beside the Winnet Student Life Building. The Main Garage has entry/exit ramps on both 17th and 18th Streets.

The Main Garage is closed during College observed holidays and breaks.

For more information, [click here](#).

Internet and Email

Free Wifi

The "CCP WLAN" wifi network is available to you on campus.

MYCCP Email

Community College of Philadelphia will issue you an email account as part of MyCCP. Official College communications are sent via email, and you do not want to miss reading any important College information. Communication sent by email is considered to be valid and official, and you will be held accountable for any information, deadline, or requirements contained within the email. Please make it a priority to check your College issued email regularly.

Contact 4ITSupport@ccp.edu or, if on campus, call extension 6000 (if you're off campus call (215) 496-6000) with questions or problems with your College email account.

Living in Philadelphia



Other Helpful Resources

Mailing and Shipping from within the US

[US Post Office](#)

Local Media and News

[Local Newspaper](#)

[Local Sports Teams](#)

Neighborhoods in Philadelphia

[Guide to Philadelphia's neighborhoods](#)

[Interactive map of Philadelphia](#)

The best [mobile phone apps](#) for living in Philadelphia

Recreation and Leisure

[Fairmount Park](#)

[Philadelphia Zoo](#)

[Local Sports Teams/Clubs to Join](#)

[Arts and Museums](#)

Hotel and Lodging

[Priceline](#)

[Trip Advisor](#)

How to get a Social Security Number

[Social Security Number Rules](#)

How to get a Driver's License

[Department of Motor Vehicles](#)

[Required Documents needed](#)

Places of Worship

[Places of Worship Guide](#)

Medical Care, Doctors, Hospitals, and Pharmacies

[Thomas Jefferson Hospital](#)

[University of Pennsylvania Medicine](#)

Emergencies

Call: 911 and Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222












FINAL REMINDER

Pre-Arrival Checklist



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- ☐  **Meet with your Support Coach via Skype**
Your Admissions Officer will introduce you to your Support Coach by email.
- ☐  **Select your housing option**
- ☐  **Book your flight and send flight details to your Admissions Officer**
Remember you must arrive in the US **prior to the start date** on your Form I-20.
- ☐  **Select your airport transportation**
- ☐  **Prepare your travel documents**
- ☐  **Purchase your health insurance**
- ☐  **Prepare for your placement tests**
This will help ensure you can start earning college credits towards graduation at the Community College.
- ☒  **Register for orientation**
Your Admissions Officer will send you this invitation via email.

Safe Travels!