

AmericanSuccess

Honors



Community Colleges
of Spokane

International Student Pre-Arrival Guide





Welcome to Community Colleges of Spokane!

We are excited to welcome you to Spokane! 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 Colleges of Spokane!

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 and paying tuition



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



[Living in Spokane](#) — Get to know 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 Colleges of Spokane.

Student Support Team

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

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

Your **Student Support team** 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 Colleges of Spokane.

Global Education Office

The Global Education 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



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 Colleges of Spokane. 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 contact the Global Education Office: <http://www.ccs.spokane.edu/globaleducation>.

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 Student Support team via Skype or WeChat**
Your Admissions Officer will introduce you 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.
 - You will be required to attend TWO orientations: CCS International Student Orientation and the Honors/American Success Orientation. Your Admissions Officer will give you the dates of these two orientations. Please be aware of the dates and plan to attend.



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 Colleges of Spokane and your specific program (e.g. Honors, American Success, etc.)
- ☐ **SEVIS fee payment receipt**
- ☐ **Proof of Funding**
Financial statement to show the border officer at the US port of entry (e.g. airport).

Documents You Should Bring with You to the United States:

- ☐ **Official High School and/or College Transcript** from previous schools translated into English (mandatory for all High School Completion and Foundation Program students)
- ☐ **TOEFL, IELTS or Duolingo 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:

- **Homestay**—All students 17 years old or younger **must** select the Homestay option. If you are under 18 years old, you should choose CCS Homestay. If you are over 18 years old, you should choose the American Homestay Network. Your Admissions Officer will share information about both homestays with you.
- **Collegiate Housing International (CHI)**

Homestay

Estimated Costs	Students 17 or Younger by the program start date	Students 18 or Older by the program start date
	Full Homestay (including meals): \$850 per month Application Fee: \$300	Full Homestay (including meals): \$650 per month Shared Homestay (no meals included): \$400 per month Application Fee: \$200
Distance to Campus	Distance to campus will vary by host family. Travel time will be between 25- 35 minutes to and from campus.	
Fees	Airport Pickup Fee: \$150 Airport Drop Off Fee: \$150	
Housing Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students under 18 years old: Submit the <u>CCS housing application</u> to your Admissions Officer:• Students over 18 years old: Apply for American Homestay Network homestay <u>online</u>.	



Housing Options



Collegiate Housing International (CHI)

Estimated Costs (\$USD)	Single Room	Shared Room
	\$3,362 per quarter	\$2,535 per quarter
Fees	Security Deposit: \$250 One-time Cleaning Fee: \$250 Bedding/Linens: (Optional: \$100) Internet (one-time only): \$45 Estimated Utilities: \$75 per month	
Meal Plans	\$225 per week: The meal plan covers breakfast and dinner, Monday through Friday.	
Distance to Campus	10 minutes to the SFCC campus.	
Housing Instructions	Contact your admissions officer for the housing application. Submit housing application to rentals@spokanestudenthousing.com	



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: Spokane International Airport (GEG)

Students often ask if they should fly into Seattle because the airfare is cheaper; however you should know that Seattle is a 4-hour drive or a 7-hour train ride away from Spokane. It is best to fly into Spokane Airport.

Recommended Arrival Days/Times: International Orientation is on December 27, 2017. You must arrive prior to this date.

If You Are Staying at a Homestay

Your host family will pick you up from the airport and those accommodations will be made through the homestay application process.

If You Are Living at the CHI

You will be able to arrange pick-up services with CHI directly by contacting the property manager, Royce Nelson [via email](#).

Other Options: Taxis

Taxicabs are readily available at the Spokane International Airport. Taxis can be accessed in the Terminal—Curbside Taxi Service. Estimated Cost: \$30-\$50

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 will also take a placement test to determine which courses to be registered for.

Expectations for Taking the Test

You will take an assessment test to best determine your English levels and math levels. All students must take this test. The testing fee is \$30 and you will pay this fee at campus before your scheduled testing.

After You Take the Test

After you test, you will meet with an academic advisor to discuss your program of study and assist you with choosing your classes. Please note that international students arrive to campus very close to the class start date, so the first quarter class selection may be limited. This may only happen your first quarter due

Preparing for the Placement Test

We encourage you to take advantage of the **Prep Series** to help you achieve your highest score possible on college placement exams. The Prep Series is free and self-paced, so there's no risk and no pressure. You can take the Math Prep course or the English Prep course, or both. [Enroll in the courses here.](#)

We also recommend the following free test prep resources to assist you in preparing for the placement tests:

- [EdX TOEFL](#)
- [Mometrix Test Preparation](#)
- [College Board Accuplacer Preparation](#)
—Register and then select "TSI"

to the limited arrival time dictated by your F1 visa regulations. 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

Once you register for classes, you are required to pay your tuition and fees in full. You are required to register for 12 credits or more to remain in good standing with your F1 student visa. Most students will take 12 credits their first quarter. This is considered a 'full-time' schedule and you will learn more about the credit system when you arrive to campus.

During orientation, you will learn how to access CTCLink and CANVAS. These are student portals where you access your class schedule, class assignments, and other details about your student 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**.

601 W Riverside Ave
Spokane, WA 99201 US
(509) 353-1445

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 Student Support team 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

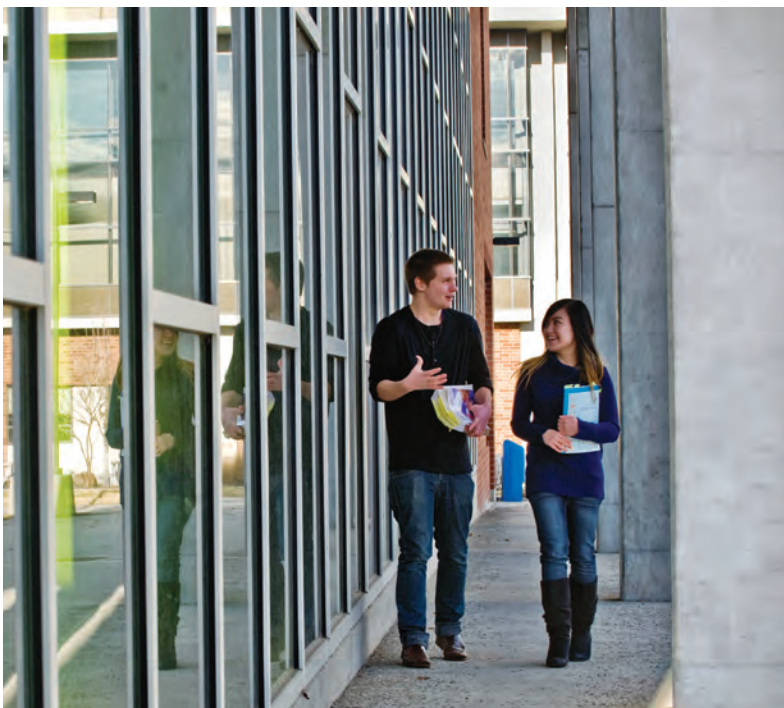
You will need to pay for your tuition and fees within 24 hours of registering for classes. The Global Education office will take you to the cashier's office to pay for your tuition during orientation.

How to Pay for Tuition: [Click here](#) to see all of the ways you can pay for your tuition.

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.

The Global Education Office will help you enroll in your health insurance plan.



Living in Spokane



We are excited to welcome you to your new town and provide you with all of the resources and tips you need to make Spokane your home away from home. Spokane is a suburban area, much different than a large city, yet still offers a good public transportation system. Some Lyft/Uber/ride share options are available for getting around town.

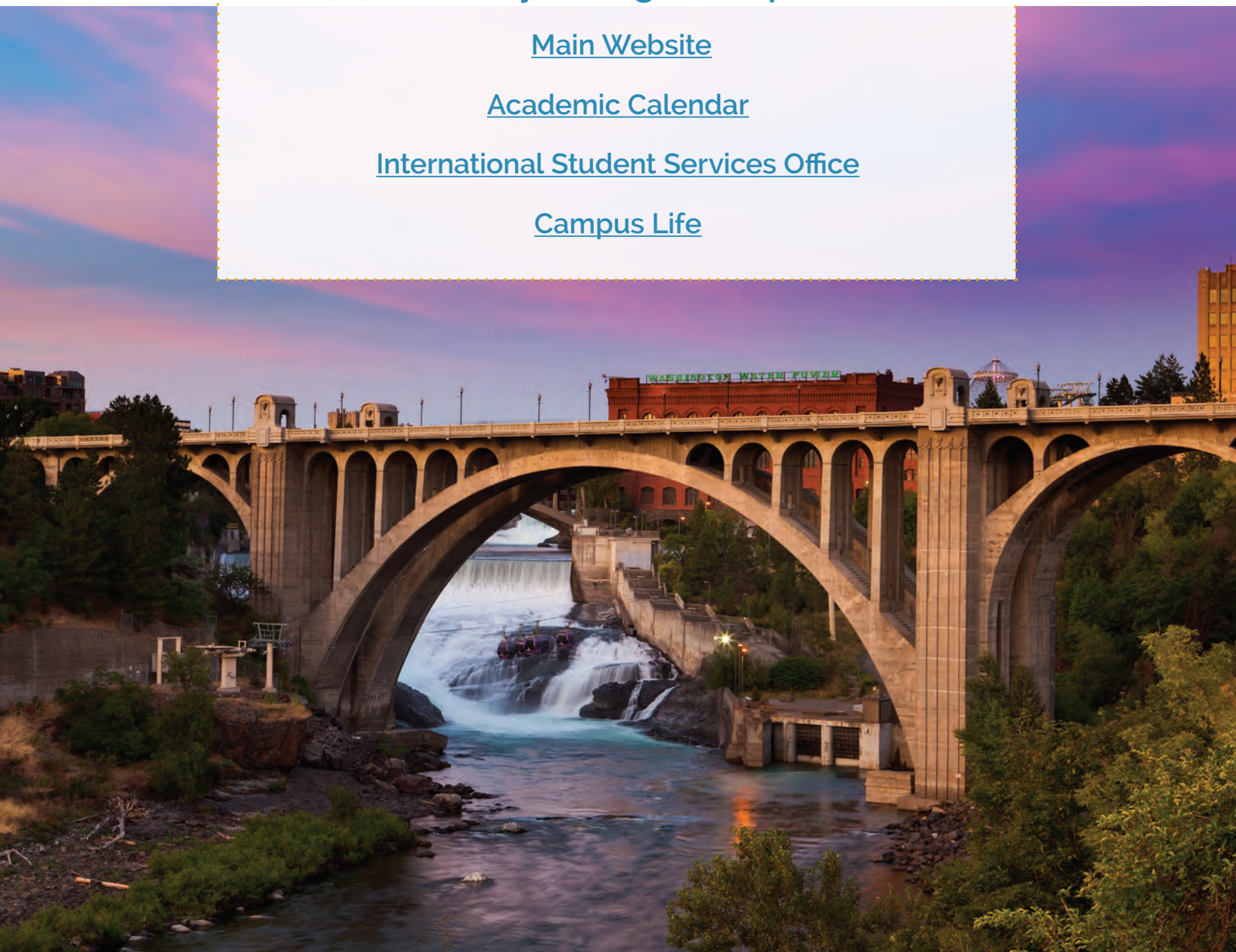
Community Colleges of Spokane

[Main Website](#)

[Academic Calendar](#)

[International Student Services Office](#)

[Campus Life](#)



Living in Spokane



Life at Community Colleges of Spokane

Founded in 1963, the Community Colleges of Spokane is a dynamic community college district serving some 38,600 students a year, spread across a 16,300-square-mile service district in eastern Washington. To develop human potential through quality, relevant and affordable learning opportunities that result in improved social and economic well-being for our students and our state. Community Colleges of Spokane transforms lives and uplifts humanity, inspiring students to lead communities, build the nation and enrich the world.

As a mid-sized, suburban town with a bustling downtown, Spokane has so much to offer not far from campus. Whitewater rafting, snowboarding and skiing, biking the historic Centennial Trail, hiking through five nature preserves or camping at one of the area's 76 lakes are just a few options. Discover the city's great shopping and a fun nightlife filled with great restaurants, live music, theatre and art.

Mission

To develop human potential through quality, relevant and affordable learning opportunities that result in improved social and economic well-being for our students and our state.

Vision

Community Colleges of Spokane transforms lives and uplifts humanity, inspiring students to lead communities, build the nation and enrich the world.

Values

- Excellence
- Access
- Achievement
- Stewardship
- Respect

Student Clubs & Organizations

In addition to the Honors co-curricular and professional development activities, Community Colleges of Spokane offers more than 40 student groups to choose. Whether you're interested in the International Club, Gamers Guild, the National Society of Leadership & Success or Outdoor Sports Club, you'll find lots of ways to have fun and socialize with new friends.

Year Established

1963

Students

Approximately 25,000



Living in Spokane



Climate and Local Weather

The climate in Spokane is dry and warm in summer and cold and wet in winter. Typical year-round weather and temperatures (in Celsius) are:

Fall: 9° C

Winter: -1° C

Spring: 13° C

Summer: 21° C

What to Wear

Students and faculty dress casually at Spokane Falls Community College. A typical and acceptable winter outfit might be jeans, boots and a sweater; in the summer when the weather is warm, many students wear shorts and sandals to class. A fleece jacket for fall and spring is a good item to have over the course of the year.



Settling into Your New City

- [Campus Map](#)
- [City of Spokane Map](#)

Public Transportation

Local Ground Transportation

- [Spokane Transit \(city bus\)](#): free for CCS students during the quarter
- [Spokane Cab](#)
- [Amtrak](#)
- [Greyhound Bus](#)
- [Spokane River Centennial Trail-Bicycling and Walking](#)

Travel & Rental Car Agents

- [CarRentals.com](#)
- [Enterprise Rent-a-Car](#)
- [Budget Car Rentals](#)

What to Pack

- ✓ Clothes for 4 very distinct weather seasons (pants, shorts, t-shirts, sweaters, heavy winter coat, rain jacket, fleece jacket, sandals, sneakers)
- ✓ Waterproof shoes, usually boots (for rain and snow)
- ✓ If you bring a laptop, make sure to backup your files online or on an external drive before leaving home.
- ✓ Small picture or memento from home to decorate your bedroom

Other Transportation Options

Uber

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

Lyft

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

Living in Spokane



Grocery Stores & Supermarkets

- [Safeway Grocery Store](#)
- [Rosauers Supermarkets](#)
- [Yoke's Fresh Markets](#)
- [Winco Foods](#)
- Ethnic Grocery Stores
 - [Asian World Food Market](#)
 - [Oriental Market](#)
 - [International Foods Market](#)



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

Restaurants

[Vina Asian Restaurant](#)
[Queen of Sheba](#)
[Italia Trattoria](#)
[INDABA Coffee](#)
[Taste of India](#)
[Sushi.com](#)

Cell Phone Providers

[Cricket Wireless](#)
[Boost Mobile](#)
[T-Mobile](#)

Mailing and Shipping Options

[US Post Office](#)
[FedEx](#)
[UPS](#)

Doctor's Clinics

[SFCC Student Health Center](#)
[CCS Student Health Center](#)

Hospitals

[Providence Holy Family Hospital](#)
[Sacred Heart Medical Center](#)

Emergencies:

[911 Emergency](#)
[Poison Control Center](#)
[SFCC Campus Security](#)

SAFE RIDE Taxi Service 509-535-2535
Safe Ride Taxi Service is for students in an UNSAFE situation. Call Spokane Cab for a ride to a safe place. This for an EMERGENCY USE only. Not for normal transportation needs or travel.

Living in Spokane



Building a Social Network

It's not too early to start thinking about ways you will get involved in at Community Colleges of Spokane. Check out the sites below to learn more! AH Activities: Honors students enjoy many community-building events on and off-campus in Spokane. Events include Honors Orientation, Dream Big Dinner, Induction, Leadership Seminar, Transfer Seminar, Transfer Fairs, Outdoor Movie Nights, Coeur d'Alene hiking trips, and more!

[SFCC Clubs](#)

[SFCC Community Events](#)

[Spokane International Film Festival](#)

[Spokane Festivals and Community Events](#)

[Spokane Volunteer Opportunities](#)

[Spokane 7: Community Events](#)



Local Media & News

[The Spokesman Review](#)

[The Inlander](#)

[KREM 2 News](#)

[KHQ-Q6 Local News](#)

[KXLY Local News](#)

[Local Radio Stations Guide](#)

[Spokane Public Radio](#)

Places of Worship

[Spokane Worship](#)

Local Government

[Spokane City Hall](#)



Local Attractions

[Riverfront Park](#)

[Riverpark Square Mall](#)

[Bing Crosby Theater](#)

[Avista Stadium](#)

Recreation & Leisure

[Spokane Parks and Recreation](#)

[Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena](#)

[Manito Park and Botanical Gardens](#)

[Mount Spokane State Park](#)

[Spokane Falls Fitness Center](#)

Regional/Local Culture and Local Law

Spokane's motto is "Near Nature, Near Perfect" and it is so true! You are very close to rivers, lakes, mountains, biking and walking trails, and much more. Many Spokane citizens enjoy getting outside when the weather is nice.

The legal age for consuming alcohol in the U.S. is 21 years old. Additionally, even though the state of Washington has recently legalized the purchase and use of marijuana for adults 21 years of age and older, marijuana use and possession is still federally illegal in the United States. Drug and alcohol use on the campus of Spokane Falls Community College is prohibited.










FINAL REMINDER

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 Student Support team via Skype or WeChat**
Your Admissions Officer will introduce you 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.
 - You will be required to attend TWO orientations: CCS International Student Orientation and the Honors/American Success Orientation. Your Admissions Officer will give you the dates of these two orientations. Please be aware of the dates and plan to attend.

Safe Travels!