**Tips for Off-Campus Housing**

Looking for off-campus housing can be stressful as an International Student or Scholar. This guide is designed to help with your off-campus housing research.

### Research about the area
- Locate your department on campus. Ideally you will want a place that's closer to your department, considering MSU's expansive landscape.
- See where all your activities of interest are in the city.

### Consider your requirements
- Consider whether you want a roommate, plan to rent an entire apartment/studio, or lease by the bedroom without needing to find a roommate.
- Furnished/Partially Furnished/Unfurnished depending on your needs
- In-unit laundry/shared building laundry/ off-site laundry options (You may need coins for off-site laundry.)
- 9 or 12 month lease – Consider the duration of your stay
- Other amenities – Some apartments provide free coffee, gym, pool and more.
- Parking spot if you have a car
- Anything else? (e.g., see the section on transportation)

### Budget expected expenses
- If utilities are not included in the rent, calculate the utilities into your total expenses.
- Review renter's insurance options
- Consider the cost of moving in (moving trucks, furniture, appliances, security deposit).
- Plan for transportation costs if you have a car or take the bus.
- Food costs – Compare grocery expenses to the cost of an off-campus dining plan through REHS. Perhaps combining your off-campus housing with a dining plan would be cheaper.

### Transportation
- Check the CATA bus service to your area, and see the number of buses you would change for your daily commute.
- Ubers and Lyfts can be difficult to find in East Lansing and may have a long wait time.
- See where all your activities of interest are located in the city.
- Contact MSU Bikes for renting/buying a bicycle for your commute.

### Get your lease reviewed
- Contact Student Legal Services on campus and book an appointment to get your lease reviewed for free before signing.

### Sign your lease!
- Make sure that everything is clearly written.
- Do not rely on anything that is verbally communicated and not on the lease.
- Ask for clarification if anything is confusing.
- Finally, move in to your new home!

### Helpful Resources
- **Student Legal Services** - https://studentlegalservices.com/index.html
- **CATA Bus** - https://www.cata.org/routes-schedules
- **MSU Bikes** - https://msu-bike-service-center.shpilightspeed.com
- **MSU Surplus Store** - https://msusurplusstore.com
- **Off-Campus Housing** - https://offcampushousing.msu.edu
- **MSU FoodBank** - https://foodbank.msu.edu
- **Eat At State** - https://eatatstate.msu.edu
- **City of East Lansing** - https://www.cityofeastlansing.com/
- **MSU Department of Student Life** - https://studentlife.msu.edu/housing/index.html
- **MSU Student Parent Resource Center** - https://studentparents.msu.edu/housing/
- **MSU College Life East Lansing - Housing** - http://www.collegelifeel.msu.edu/housing-resources
- **International Student Lending Center (CVIP):** - https://cvip.isp.msu.edu/programs/international-student-lending-center/