HOUSING

While the UVM doesn’t provide on-campus housing for medical students, there are helpful resources available to assist you with your housing search. Please visit UVM’s On and Off-Campus Housing sites (http://offcampushousing.uvm.edu/) or (redstonecampusapartments.com) and take a look at the helpful links and information below.

Prioritizing Your Housing Needs

Before you begin looking for a place to live, set priorities. Since this is going to be your home during a stressful time in your life; know yourself and know what you need to thrive.

Some Thoughts:

- Pay attention to your budget. Yes, the $1,500 loft overlooking the lake is beautiful, but can you really afford it now that you will be a full-time student?
- Do you have a cat or dog? If so, be aware that with housing often in short supply in Burlington, many landlords will refuse to allow pets, while others will require an extra security deposit.
- Do you require a view of the lake for your mental health?
- Is being geographically close to other students critical to your social life? Do you want to live near other families?
- Do you want a room or an apartment? Are you willing to live with roommates, or do you prefer to live alone? Do you want to live with non-medical school people? This should help narrow your apartment search. If you are willing to live with roommates, think about whether your different lifestyles will conflict. Sure, the 4 bedroom house-share situation with 3 undergrads might be a good deal financially, but your schedule will be vastly different from theirs, and your academic schedules will not match (so you may need to find someone willing to sublet their rooms after April or May)
- Is it necessary to be within walking distance to school? To town? To the library? If so, get a map of the Burlington area and circle a radius within which you are willing to walk.
- Keep in mind that when you live further away from campus, what you save in rent you may lose in commuting expenses. Your preferred walking distance may change in mid-winter. Check a map, because an apartment in Winooski may be closer to school than one in Burlington.
- Try to get a place with off-street parking (there are frequent winter snow parking bans in Burlington, Winooski, and many other cities and towns).
- Knowing what you want first may prevent you from looking at places that are unsuitable.

Finding Housing

- Check the bulletin boards in the Given Building and in the Waterman Building for available places and roommates.
- Tell people you meet that you are looking for a place to live; they may have some good leads for you.
- Search through Classified Ads:
The Burlington Free Press provides a comprehensive source for learning rental rates in and out of the city. You can check out their classified advertisements online (visit www.burlingtonfreepress.com, and click on Classifieds in the header).

Seven Days is a local newspaper with another comprehensive classifieds list. You can check out Seven Days online at www.sevendaysvt.com, and click on the CLASSIFIEDS link. Paper copies of Seven Days come out each Wednesday (it’s FREE). Many businesses in and around Burlington (particularly eateries, coffee houses and supermarkets) have copies available.

Craig’s List is another useful resource for housing listings.

Visit www.burlingtonapartments.com for listings in the Burlington area.

Realtors may be able to help you find specifically what you want, although this service isn’t as common in Burlington as in other cities. Here are a few of the local realtors in the Greater Burlington Area:

- Hickok and Boardman
- Lang Associates Realtors
- RE/MAX North Professionals

Before You Rent

When inquiring about a rental, ask for specifics about services provided, such as heat, hot water, appliances, laundry facilities, parking space, and responsibility for repairs. Electric heat will cost you a fortune in Burlington’s cold winter season; look for gas heat, or heat included with the rent. Look for such items as storm windows, heavy curtains, fireplace, and maybe a wood stove. Budget payment plans for utilities are available. Be sure you ask about heating costs, if they are not included in the rent and then add 10-20% to that estimate. For information on what the previous tenant has paid for electricity, call the local power company. This is an unbiased way to get a fair estimate.

Electricity and Gas Providers in the Burlington Area:

- Burlington Electric: (802) 865-7300 or (802) 658-0300 (when you call, ask about “off-peak” electricity)
- Green Mountain Power: (888) 835-4672
- Vermont Gas: (802) 863-4511

Be sure to ask your prospective landlord for the names of the utility providers for the property you are considering renting.

Renter Know-How

As with any apartment, it is always important to get a copy of the rental agreement, signed by both you and the landlord. In addition to a month’s rent payment up front, most landlords will require a security deposit. Be sure to get a receipt for any cash paid. It is also advisable to thoroughly inspect the apartment with your landlord before you move in and document any pre-existing damages. If you foresee any problems, taking dated photographs of any damage is also a good idea.

Although seeing a place first is always a good idea before renting it, sometimes it’s simply not possible because of distance, money, and/or time. If you find yourself needing to make housing arrangements from out-of-town, we have a few suggestions.
• An apartment complex (such as Woolen Mill, Little Eagle Bay, Stonehedge, Centennial Court, Apartments and Family Housing, etc.) is also unlikely to falsify the conditions of the apartment. These places also tend to have stricter check-in and checkout policies and overall better quality control.

• There is much variety, from treasure to mess! Unless a medical school student is personally recommending it, be wary about renting anything sight-unseen. Many of us have similar stories about places, such as a “beautiful third-floor 2BR apartment with hardwood floors for $750/month” that turned out to be a run-down attic with peeled-back carpet and ceilings so low that it was impossible to install a stand-up shower!

Renter’s Insurance

Although most landlords carry insurance, it will not cover your personal belongings. To cover theft, fire, and water damage, renter’s insurance is relatively cheap and a good investment. It may be difficult to obtain renter’s insurance if you are living with a group of people. Insurance companies such as Geico, Allstate and State Farm are just a few of the many renter’s insurance providers. You may also find that you can receive a discount by going through your car insurance provider.

Renter’s Rights

Breaking A Lease  If you find the need to break your lease before the term is up, be aware that you may be held accountable for the remainder of the rent. However, the landlord is required to re-rent the apartment as soon as possible. When a new renter is found, your obligations have ended.

It is a good idea to be aware of the laws and renter’s rights. You can access a handbook of Renter’s Rights, also known as: Renting in Vermont, a Handbook for Tenants and Landlords.

For information on these topics, call:

   VT State Housing Authority
   P.O. Box 397
   Montpelier, VT 05601-0397
   Phone: (802) 828-3295

   Vermont Tenants, Inc.
   294 North Winooski Avenue
   Burlington, VT 05401
   Phone: (802) 864-0099

Prices

Housing in the Burlington area is not cheap, especially for single students living alone in apartments, for married students with children, or for individuals with pets. In fact, if you are planning to bring a dog or cat with you, start your housing search early! Although Vermonters tend to love animals, it may take more work to find a place that will accept you with your pet(s). Housing is more expensive the closer you
get to campus. The following monthly rents are averages of what places charge in the area, from the dilapidated studio or efficiency, to a classy multi-bedroom Victorian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Rent Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>$400-$700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room for Rent</td>
<td>$300-$600 (may or may not include a share of utilities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Bedroom</td>
<td>$600-$1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bedroom</td>
<td>$850-$1400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 Bedroom</td>
<td>$1200-$4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condo</td>
<td>$1300-$2500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Life at Apartments and Family Housing

Fort Ethan Allen housing for student families (Apartments and Family Housing) is heaven on earth for those of you who are hitched/parent-like, etc. This little silver lining at the end of your housing woes is found one exit up from the Burlington exits off I-89 between Winooski and Essex Junction. Most of the residents are married and many have children. However, single graduate students can also be found in AFH’s population. It is estimated that approximately 25% of the community is made up of medical students. One pet is allowed at AFH.

These apartments are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and usually become available between May and September. The housing office will try to offer an apartment four weeks before it is available. Rents and security deposits are lower than average. AFH has the advantage of being on the bus line to downtown Burlington and UVM. Buses run from 6 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., generally twice hourly, and the trip to/from campus takes 15 minutes; no service on Sunday; free with I.D. Bus schedules are available at [http://cctaride.org/bus-information/routes-schedules.html](http://cctaride.org/bus-information/routes-schedules.html).

Here are the costs for housing through AFH:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Apartments</th>
<th>Ethan Allen Apartments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Bedroom Garden</td>
<td>2 Bedroom Flat, heat included $1,050 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bedroom Garden</td>
<td>2 Bedroom Townhouse $1,020 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bedroom Townhouse</td>
<td>3 Bedroom Townhouse $1,085 - $1300 per month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any questions about this housing, or wish to receive an application and brochure, please contact:

Apartments and Family Housing
36 Catamount Lane
Colchester, Vermont 05446
Phone: (802) 654-1735 Fax: (802) 654-1737

Applications for housing can also be found online at: [http://www.uvm.edu/~rlweb/graduate_students/](http://www.uvm.edu/~rlweb/graduate_students/)
Purchasing a Condominium or House

Another option for finding housing is buying. A few students (and/or their families) have opted to purchase condominiums or houses in the Burlington area. There are more than 200 condominium complexes (large and small) in Chittenden County. Popular complexes among students are Grandview, Horizon Heights, Tree Top and Twin Oaks. These condominiums start at around $125,000. When purchasing property, include association fees, heating costs, condition of the unit, repairs, taxes, closing costs, location, reliability of the association, and the possibility of a roommate. Heating costs of previous occupants can be obtained by calling the power company — because units vary even within the same complex you must be able to tell them a specific unit. Also, if you are from out of state and are planning on buying in this area, you should take into consideration the resale potential of the home, unless you are planning on staying after your education. Speak to other students who have bought here with respect to how easy/difficult it will be to eventually sell your Vermont real estate. It is advantageous to ask around about housing. Check the newspapers and have a reliable Realtor working for you. As with any investment, shop wisely and get opinions from different sources.

Call the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) at (800) 339-5866 for information about first-time buyer/student, finance and mortgage rates. From outside the Burlington Area, visit the National Association of Realtors. You can search for local realtor, and there are plenty of home listings available, as well.