

## HELPFUL TIPS FOR INCOMING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### ACCOMMODATIONS

As soon as you get your Visa, you should try to sort out accommodation/housing. Here are some tips that could be helpful:

- Check this website for a list of apartments and their prices :  
<https://www.apartments.com/starkville-ms/student-housing/?bb=x3kyutt9wI72ly45C&so=2>
- Here are some nice and affordable apartments near campus :  
Haven 12  
The Social Block  
The Grove Apartments  
21 Apartments  
The Retreat  
Lakeside Student Living Apartment (Beautiful apartment but not close to campus and the school shuttle does not stop here)
- You should have the option of choosing from a one, two or four-bedroom apartment but the best option is usually the four-bedroom due to its relative cheapness.
- To sign the lease, you will need to either pay a specific amount as deposit or use another individual who earns more than twice your rent in a month as guarantor. In rare cases, some apartments such as Lakeside Student Living will accept your graduate assistantship offer letter as proof of funds.
- Pay careful attention to the lease contract **before** signing. If possible, do not sign the lease until after arrival in the U.S.
- Plan to pay your rent for two months upfront in case you do not get paid before the second month rent is due. Payments are usually on the first to third day of every month.

### TRANSPORTATION

- The school shuttle is very efficient and runs through most of the important places.
- Download the **Double map** app on play/apple store as soon as you get to Starkville to track the shuttle movement.
- Before choosing an apartment, confirm they have the school shuttle bus stop. Some apartments have their own shuttle service but it is highly recommended that you choose the previous option for ease of movement.

### PAPERWORK/SSN

- Your first point of contact is the International Students Office. Go to this office and bring all of your important documents with you.
- You will need to visit other offices on campus to get any holds on your account lifted. Other international students can give you advice about this.
- Check with the department for documentation and necessary paperwork.
- After all holds have been lifted from your account, proceed to get your student ID card. The ID card office is at the same building with the International Students Office.
- To get your **SSN**, you need to get a permanent address (your apartment here in Starkville). Go to the **SSN** office in town (the school shuttle should run through here).
- Before going to the **SSN** office, you have to do the following:

Update address on your mystate portal.

Visit the SSN website to print out the application form.

Print out your i94 form.

- The following documents will be requested at the office:  
i94 form  
i20  
Offer letter  
International passport
- If you do not process your **SSN** in time, your stipend will be delayed.

#### **OTHER STUFF YOU MIGHT NEED**

- Sim Card – It is highly important you consult your roommates **before** choosing a mobile provider because some mobile networks are not available in all locations in the city. Networks such as Mint Wireless and Cricket Wireless are cheap and affordable but have limited service depending on your location.
- You also need to open a bank account as soon as possible for obvious reasons. You will need your address and U.S phone number to do this.
- Credit card (not compulsory but recommended for credit building).