

☀️ **GROW's 2025 Purdue Survival Guide for Graduate Students** ☀️

Updated: August 20, 2025

Welcome to campus! All of us in ***Graduate Rights & Our Wellbeing (GROW)*** are glad you're here!

This is a guide that acts as a candid, unofficial supplement to your official orientation packet. It contains advice compiled by other grad students about life on campus and in the Greater Lafayette community.

Disclaimer: The data, opinions and/or other information presented in this packet do not reflect, represent or portray the opinions of Purdue University. Furthermore, the data, opinions and other information presented in this packet are not endorsed, sponsored and/or officially or unofficially authorized by Purdue University. While we may utilize information publicly available at the Purdue University website, this information is being presented along with our own individual interpretations and is not in any way affiliated with Purdue University. The data, opinions and other information presented is based on our own individual research, outside of our positions as students and employees of Purdue University, and is subject to our own interpretation and presentation.

NOTE: We initially compiled this packet in Fall 2019. However, we are continuously updating, and will be adding more information periodically in order to stay current for future incoming students. At last check (**Summer 2025**), all of the information is up to date and accurate to the best of our knowledge.

Do you have any tips, information, corrections, or advice to share with incoming grads? Be sure to let us know by sending us an email: gradrightswellbeing@gmail.com



This is meant to be an unofficial, crowdsourced supplement to Purdue's [Graduate Employment Manual](#). In here, you can find information on the following:

1. HOUSING

A. LANDLORD/TENANT DISPUTES

B. LIVING AROUND TOWN

Housing Figure 1: SOME PROS AND CONS OF LIVING IN LAFAYETTE VS WEST LAFAYETTE

Housing Figure 2: PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

C. FURTHER HOUSING RESOURCES

2. HEALTHCARE

A. KEY INSTITUTIONS

B. POLICIES

1. Insurance

C. IMPORTANT TERMS

D. HELPFUL LINKS

E. GETTING CARE

G. OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

1. Your rights!

2. Advice from experience

H. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

3. MENTAL HEALTH

A. PURDUE RESOURCES

B. GENERAL RESOURCES AND ADVICE

4. WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

A. MENTOR/MENTEE CONFLICTS

B. REPORTING TO THE OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

C. CONTRACT TYPES

Workplace Figure 1: Pay dates for 9-month contracts, 2025-2026.

D. GENERAL SUPPORT

E. OTHER CONCERNS

5. LIVELIHOOD

A. FOOD SECURITY

B. TRANSPORTATION

C. FINDING GOOD DEALS ON SUPPLIES

D. OTHER TIPS

6. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

7. GROW AND HOW WE CAN SUPPORT YOU

1. HOUSING

There are several things to consider when it comes to housing in the Greater Lafayette area, including distance from campus and cost of rent. This section is compiled based on the experiences of graduate students renting and living in the Greater Lafayette area. This is not legal advice; please consult a lawyer if you need legal assistance or recourse.

A. LANDLORD/TENANT DISPUTES

1. **You have the right to be notified in advance of entry by your landlord.** You can file a complaint if your landlord enters your apartment without prior notice or in other ways that break the terms of the lease.
2. **You are entitled to challenge if your security deposit is not returned.** You can seek legal help in getting your security deposit returned. Make sure you document everything at the time of move-in (photos, notes, etc.) and provide a copy of that to your landlord. Document everything at time of move-out as well.
3. Some places let you have pets and may charge a fee. This can depend on the type of pet (e.g., dog vs lizard). **If you use a trained [service animal or a documented support animal](#), this is a medical accommodation and can fall outside the purview of pet fees.**
4. Be wary of rental discrimination: **landlords cannot deny you rent on the basis of your identity** with a protected class (race, sex, religion, etc.).
5. **You are entitled to timely maintenance**, but Indiana is not a right-to-repair state (meaning, you cannot withhold rent until repairs are performed).
6. Subletting is an option; you can sign written agreements with relevant parties if you are only here for a short term (e.g., visiting scholar, summer research, etc.).
7. **You are entitled to emergency repairs (for example, if your apartment has no heating or A/C, no water, etc.) and to pest control, though some places may charge you for pest removal.** Be sure to check the terms of your lease. While Indiana Law does not allow a tenant to use their own maintenance person and charge that against rent, the local small claims court judge is more lenient on this topic: "If the landlord fails to make essential repairs within a reasonable time after notice, only then may the tenant have the repairs completed and deduct the cost of the repairs from rent BUT ONLY FOR ESSENTIAL REPAIRS THAT THE LANDLORD HAS AGREED TO MAKE, AND ONLY IF A PRIOR REQUEST HAS BEEN MADE." From the [Tippecanoe County Small Claims Manual](#)

B. LIVING AROUND TOWN

1. If you drive and plan on driving to and from campus, take note that you need to live outside a 1.5-mile radius in order to qualify for a Purdue parking pass. Consider renting outside this radius if this is your plan.
2. Parking pass options:
 - a. [Garage pass](#): You can park in designated parking garages on campus. As of summer 2025, offered through a lottery system; requests open in June-July and if you don't get a garage pass through the lottery, you have the option of purchasing a C or value pass instead. \$250 per calendar year. [Typically not available to first-year students because of timeline for requests]
 - b. [C pass](#): You have to park in lots that are relatively distant from most campus buildings, though [some on-campus free bus routes are available for transport from the parking lots to select campus locations](#). \$100 per calendar year. Requests open in June-July but stay open. First-year students may request these passes, subject to availability.
 - c. [Value pass](#): You have to park in one of two very far away lots that would almost certainly require transit via an on-campus free bus route to get to campus. \$75 per calendar year. Requests open in June-July but stay open. First-year students may request these passes, subject to availability.
3. In West Lafayette, only 3 unrelated individuals can rent the same unit at any given time. Keep this in mind as you consider your housing options.
4. It is often a good idea to keep good lines of communication with your roommates. Have written agreements, frequent meetings, clear division of chores, etc.
5. Get to know your neighbors. Friendly and supportive neighbors can be helpful when you need extra support through more difficult challenges in graduate school, or in life.

Housing Figure 1: SOME PROS AND CONS OF LIVING IN LAFAYETTE VS WEST LAFAYETTE

This list is crowdsourced from GROW member experiences.

	Pro	Con
West Lafayette	Closer to campus	Limit on unrelated people living in one unit: 3 unrelated people OR a family plus 2

		unrelated people
	City of West Lafayette performs habitability inspections for rental properties	Less socioeconomic and ethnic diversity, especially off campus.
	Very good school district	Grocery stores are slightly more expensive, except Aldi (Sagamore Parkway)
	Better/ more extensive parks and trail system	Housing is typically more expensive as well
	More internet service providers choices	
Lafayette	Better "downtown"--walkable, with shops and things	Slightly worse road maintenance
	Closer to shared community gardens (where you can harvest produce for free); closer to food banks	You must register your dogs with the city--providing shot records and paying a small fee yearly
	No limit on unrelated roommates	Off-campus transit may be at risk of Purdue cutting funding (though this is also the case for areas of WL)
	Fewer undergrads	

Housing Figure 2: PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

See the scorecard below for some feedback on landlords around the area. This list is crowdsourced from GROW member experiences.

Landlord	Good	Okay	Bad
----------	------	------	-----

Burgett Rentals / J-Four Corporation	Small, family-owned landlord & property management group. As far as their houses go, they seem almost emotionally invested in them. They've been excellent on maintenance, not just repairs but also preventative maintenance. Rent is moderate-to-low in price and increases seem uncommon. They seem reasonable with security deposits.	Can't pay rent electronically - it has to be via physical check or money order. Sometimes has issues with giving reasonable notice, though almost exclusively limited to external work (e.g. fixing some siding). Listings are not always posted online - your best bet is to call.	
BK Management	Communication is relatively quick regarding questions.	Maintenance time varies from very quick to unresponsive. Seemingly very little monitoring, which has pros and cons.	Inconsistent rules on parking which may allow other BK tenants to use your lot, crowding you out of your own building. Greedy price hikes close to campus, surprise utility fees and junk costs that are hand-waived as allowed in the lease. May overlook your renewal and put your apartment up for touring unless you correct them.
BW Parks			Apparently very disrespectful, bad on maintenance, tries to take extra money out of deposits
Cole Rentals			Will charge you many fees for maintenance;

			may discriminate based on race; may retaliate against tenant complaints or bad reviews. Does not maintain properties.
Consolidated Property Management			Doesn't maintain properties; sometimes double-leases units; "loses" paperwork
Crandall Management			Bad after-hours contact; poor response to email; poor maintenance; poor appliances/plumbing
Crestview		Low-cost option; good for students who lack credit/ other documentation. Some units poorly maintained; frequently raise rent.	
Distinctive Rental Properties			Doesn't maintain units; enter units without prior notice. Speed of repair depends on whether the manager likes you. Retaliation against tenants for demanding repairs is common. Refuses to put things in writing; takes most of deposit; discriminates against service animals and

			ESAs.
Granite Management	For initially nice properties, may just leave you be.	Annual rent hikes. Pets allowed, but with pet rent, which is not disclosed, ~\$50 per month. Sufficiently responsive to maintenance emergencies when calling their line.	Property may not be cleaned on arrival. Exploitative fees for incomplete services. Many horror stories about poor maintenance and slumlord activity. More than will fit here.
Hislope Property Management	Prompt repairs; landlord does them all himself. Units are clean and well-maintained.		
Hunter Lafayette Properties	Depending on the property, repair speeds can vary. Costs are generally pretty low, and don't increase if you renew in time. Reviewed much better in their Lafayette complex than their WL complex. Great management, quick maintenance.	Decent proximity to downtown Lafayette.	Apartment quality varies *heavily* between properties. The River Walk complex in particular tends to have issues with maintenance, cleanliness, and liveability. Bad at disclosing fees, large application fees, major penalties for late payment.
Management Advantage			Tries to claim extra money out of security deposits
O'Neil (Now Sorola Properties)	Seems like they decently maintain and upkeep <i>some</i> properties; may make occasional mistakes with paperwork but are generally responsive. Salts and	Properties were recently (late 2024) acquired by Sorola Properties. Communication has worsened.	Major price hikes on rent, around \$200 across three years; properties may be way overpriced for what you get. Seemingly overworked

	shovels walkways, updates appliances.		lower-level managers.
SmartDigs	Generally well-maintained properties, prompt maintenance.		
Stonecrest	Cost and deposit are low.		Persistent cockroach problems. No online renter's portal, so rent must be paid with money orders.
Titan Management		Generally leaves you alone.	Doesn't clean units on move-in but will offer credits if you complain; takes most of security deposit no matter what; illegal charges.

C. FURTHER HOUSING RESOURCES

1. Purdue Student Legal Services: <https://www.purdue.edu/odos/sls/>
2. Indiana Legal Services: <https://www.indianalegalservices.org/>
3. Filing a housing discrimination complaint: <https://www.in.gov/icrc/2650.htm>
4. Housing for Hoosiers: <https://housing4hoosiers.org/>
5. Request Housing Inspection: <https://www.lafayette.in.gov/1919/Housing-Inspections>

2. HEALTHCARE

A. KEY INSTITUTIONS

1. [Purdue Counseling And Psychological Services](#) (CAPS), mental healthcare
2. [Purdue University Student Health Service](#) (PUSH), physical healthcare
3. [Purdue Córdoba Recreational Center](#) (CoRec), physical therapy, personal training, nutrition, & massage
4. [Positive Link HIV Services](#) (IU Health), free testing for HIV and HCV, options for treatment and prevention

B. POLICIES

Some key policies that all students should be aware of!

1. Insurance

- A. There are differences in how benefits are given out to non-staff, graduate staff, and external fellowship students. While the plans do not vary based on your international/domestic status, the enrollment process is different. Enrollment deadlines vary a little each year but are generally late August for students beginning in the fall, and late January for students starting in the spring. The differences between “graduate staff” and “student” insurance are detailed [here](#).
- B. [.5 FTE “graduate staff”](#): This option is for graduate students enrolled for at least 20 hours per week. Monthly payments are due at the start of the month no matter when you enroll. [This is the link for enrolling](#).
- C. [Less than .5 FTE “domestic student”](#): This is the same option that undergraduates get. Instead of payments being due monthly, your premium will be paid by year or semester, meaning it will be one large lump. Since this can be hundreds to a thousand dollars, this is an important cost to anticipate. [This is the link for enrolling](#).
- D. [External fellowships like NSF](#): You usually have two choices. You can either pay the whole amount for the year (August-July) or do it by semester. You do not have the ability to pay monthly when you are considered a “True Fellow” and not under a TA/RA assignment. [More information on insurance while on fellowship can be found here](#).
- E. [Non grant/Personal Funding](#): If you need insurance but are not able to get it through Purdue, or if you need care that is not covered by the plans Purdue offers, you can get health insurance elsewhere. The Affordable Care Act subsidizes health plans for low-income households. You can check on Healthcare.gov and calling their number will connect you with an agent who can help you figure out if you qualify. There is an open enrollment period November-January, but you can enroll any time if you have a qualifying life event such as moving, losing healthcare coverage, or changing jobs.

- F. International Students: Purchasing the mandatory health insurance is a condition of enrollment for international students at Purdue University, although there is a [waiver if you can prove you are insured by a non-Purdue plan](#). This requirement is in effect for the duration of your studies at Purdue. Failure to purchase insurance will result in a hold on your academic record, advisor notification of non-compliance, and a late fee. There are other insurance options that may be cheaper for graduate students that have a family, but being insured is mandatory.
- G. If you have dependents: If you have dependents, it is cheaper to enroll in the “domestic student” option than the “graduate staff” option and the benefits are the same. However, be aware that the domestic student insurance is paid in a lump sum at the start of the semester rather than monthly.
- H. Undergraduates: You may have interactions with undergraduates and need to point them in the direction of care. Purdue’s student insurance is an option. If the student is under 26 and has a parent with insurance, they can enroll in their parent’s plan. If the student is over 26, or is under 26 but is not claimed as a dependent on anyone’s taxes, they can enroll in a plan through the [healthcare marketplace](#). Even for students without insurance, [appointments for illness or injury are free for students at PUSH](#).
- I. Dental/vision: Graduate staff dental (or any other voluntary benefits) must be separately enrolled via BenefitFocus. Vision coverage is included in medical insurance for graduate staff. For those who enroll in graduate *student* (not staff) insurance, whether domestic or international, dental is included along with the medical insurance.
 - a. NOTE: The graduate staff medical plan does not cover hearing exams at all. If you consent to a hearing exam from a medical provider, know that you will be responsible for 100% of the cost.

C. IMPORTANT TERMS

Found at <https://myahpcare.com/wp-content/uploads/Insurance-101-1.pdf>

1. Network: The facilities, providers and suppliers who have signed a contract with your health plan to provide health care services to its members. Also referred to as participating or in-network providers.
2. Copay: a fixed charge you pay every time you take a service, assuming you haven’t yet met your out of pocket maximum. Does not count toward your deductible. Amount varies based on service.
3. Deductible: Total amount you have to pay in a plan year (\$200 in-network or \$400 out-of-network) before the health insurance company will start sharing the cost with you.

4. Coinsurance: The amount you pay for covered health care after you meet your deductible.
5. Out-of-pocket (OOP) maximum: The most you'll ever pay in a plan year for eligible expenses. Your deductible, coinsurance and copays all count toward your out-of-pocket maximum.

D. HELPFUL LINKS

1. More details on terminology / definitions here:
<https://www.notion.so/Health-Insurance-Glossary-c2fdf48ddaeb4e569f1578d778af0860#89b454cbce024ebaadcf650572f0b385>
2. More information about plan coverages (i.e., co-pays, deductibles etc.):
<https://www.purdue.edu/hr/Benefits/gradstaff/benefits-enrollment/>
3. Find in-network providers for Purdue insurance here:
<https://connect.werally.com/medicalProvider/root>
4. Find other quick reference links for Purdue insurance here:
<https://purduega.myahpcare.com/quicklist?i=155376>
5. Medication classified as preventative care (such as most types of birth control) is 100% covered by UHP. More information is here:
https://myahpcare.com/wp-content/uploads/BC_Flyer.pdf
6. Information on Purdue's vision care is here:
<https://www.purdue.edu/hr/Benefits/gradstaff/gradVision.php>

E. GETTING CARE

1. If the services you need are available at the Purdue University Student Health services center, check with them. However, sometimes they do not have appointments available, don't specialize in what you need, or for whatever reason you need to see a provider off-campus. To make sure your visit will be covered, check if the provider is in-network.
2. Finding in-network care: To find a provider who is in-network, go to your insurance's website. For medical insurance (anything except vision and dental) go to <https://myaccount.uhcsr.com/> (note that this is a different website from United Healthcare's main site). For dental, go to <https://www.memberportal.com/mp/delta/> and for vision, <https://www.vsp.com/>. You may need to create an account on the website before being able to log in. On almost any insurance website, once you log in you will be able to navigate to a "find care" page which lists providers in your area that accept your insurance. You will then need to call that provider to make an appointment.
3. On the insurance website, there will also be a "member ID card". It is good to have this either saved to your phone or printed so that you can show it at the desk when you check in to see a provider. They will often want to scan it or for you to email the pdf to

them. Make sure you know how to access your ID card before arriving at an appointment. Note that the different types of insurance (medical, dental and vision) have different ID cards. For PUSH, all you need is your student ID.

4. For VSP (vision insurance) the member ID is your ten-digit Purdue University ID number. Do not add the trailing eleventh number; this is a card version number.
5. Be aware that sometimes a facility will be in-network, but a specific provider won't be. You have to either ask your insurance provider or the hospital billing office whether a provider is in-network, since the provider themselves probably won't know. Calling the billing office is the fastest option. Often, when dealing with health insurance, you will have to deal with being transferred to multiple people and explaining the situation repeatedly. If you struggle with this, ask a friend to sit with you while you make the calls to provide moral support.
6. When you need a drug, you may be prescribed a brand name (e.g. "Zoloft") but the generic, non-trademarked version (e.g. "sertraline") will be chemically identical but much cheaper. Unless your doctor specifies that you need to use the branded medication, the generic will work the same.
7. GoodRx is often helpful. You can type in the name of a drug you have been prescribed and it will find what pharmacies sell it for cheapest and will offer coupons. These coupons only work if you are NOT using your insurance to pay for the medication. However, depending on the coupon and what your insurance covers, sometimes it is cheaper to use the coupon than to use your insurance.
8. There is an optometrist on campus <https://eteyecare.com/location/purdue/>
9. You can get a vision exam anywhere and then take the prescription information to buy glasses elsewhere.

G. OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

1. Your rights!

- a. Ambulance services on campus are free.
- b. You have the right to have a personal representative (family member or friend) with you during your care.
- c. If you feel like your health needs are not being addressed, always ask to see another person. You also have the right to ask that all refusals by the doctor for treatments/tests you are requesting to be documented in your medical record. This helps when advocating for specific procedures that your doctor may say are not necessary but you believe you need.
- d. Not all services offered in PUSH are free of cost. Some procedures like ON-CAMPUS x-rays are associated with a deductible. So, always ask about

the cost of the procedure and whether it counts towards your deductible or not.

- e. You can and should ask for an estimate before big procedures. For people with insurance, it will be called an advanced explanation of benefits. Not only will this help you prepare for what cost to expect, but it will help your case if you have to contest the bill if it ends up costing more than anticipated.

2. Advice from experience

- a. The [Tippecanoe Health Department](#) has a walk-in clinic in Lafayette that offers low-cost testing and treatment (\$10 for students w/ student ID) on Wednesdays from 9am-6 pm. Free, confidential HIV testing is also offered at the LGBTQ center on campus on the fourth Wednesday of every month.
- b. There is a critical difference between the PUSH, an urgent care center, and the emergency room (ER). Purdue encourages us to go to the nearest emergency room irrespective of whether it is in-network or out-of-network. However, your insurance may not consider your emergency an emergency by their standards, so try your best to go to an in-network emergency room if you are unsure, so at least your out of pocket expenses will be applied to your \$200 in-network deductible (not the \$400 out of network deductible). Be aware this amount might have changed/adjusted according to your specific plan (i.e. grad staff or grad student). Always check your plan coverage.
- c. Emergency rooms are required to treat you even if you can't pay, so in a life-or-death situation, go to the emergency room and figure out bills later.
- d. At least one contributor to this document has taken an Uber to the emergency room because it was cheaper. Get an ambulance if you need it, but if reluctance to call an ambulance is what is preventing you from going to the ER, call an Uber.
- e. Always catch your medical bills before they go for collections and make sure that your insurance has been run correctly. If you're not sure, ask! You may save money.
- f. If you are having difficulty getting an appointment with a provider off campus and if you ask the people at PUSH nicely, they may go through the scheduling process for you. Make sure to come prepared with dates/times/PUID that will work for you and what provider/service you need to schedule. Make sure to tell them you have tried but are experiencing resistance or difficulty.

- g. In general, when possible (i.e., not for emergency care, not for specialist care), going to PUSH is preferable to going to local hospitals who are much more likely to bill graduate staff insurance incorrectly.
- h. Franciscan is a Catholic hospital and a member of our group has found that they are hostile towards trans identities and may ask invasive questions to patients who are on hormone therapy.
- i. A GROW member has also found that Franciscan primary care doctors can not prescribe birth control and must instead refer patients to the gynecology department for this purpose. Thus, it may be easier to obtain birth control prescriptions from PUSH.
- j. Physical Therapy is available with an appointment both by referral from a medical provider and, without a referral, via Direct Access at the CoRec. They also have nutritionists that you can meet with.
- k. Some hospitals have forgiveness programs. If paying your bill is a hardship, the hospital should have an ombuds service. There are also state-level services that provide patient advocacy. You can also set up payment plans rather than pay a bill all at once.
- l. Indiana University Health has a huge variety of specialists, and most (but not all!) of them are in-network for the insurance Purdue currently provides.
- m. Do not trust the scheduling desk to know who is in-network, and if they are wrong, you are still on the hook for the bill. Once the scheduling desk tells you what provider you will be meeting, call your insurance to make sure that provider is covered. This is frustrating and it is okay to feel frustrated.

H. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

1. All leave must be requested using the SuccessFactors system. Not all professors use this system so please confirm with your supervisor. If you have heard incidents about there being issues with other students taking leave in the past, please insist on using this system, so there is record of your leave and you are protected by the rights and terms that come along with that.
2. Fiscal Year Graduate Staff are entitled to 22 vacation days (176 hours) per fiscal year (July to the following June). This comes to 2 days of vacation per month except September and March where you can take 1 day.
3. Academic Year Graduate Staff are assigned paid vacation status when classes aren't in session during the academic year (including University holidays) except 7 (calendar) day period prior to the 1st day of class and the final date for submitting grade reports.

4. Sick leave for self: 10 working days within a 12 month period. “[illness](#)” includes illness, injury, and pregnancy .
5. Leave for family illness: Three working days per fiscal year. Immediate family only (e.g., spouse, parents, children).

3. MENTAL HEALTH

Below is some information compiled based on our experiences. If you require medical assistance or mental health services, please seek a professional.

A. PURDUE RESOURCES

1. **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).** CAPS allows 12 individual sessions per academic year (including summer). Group sessions also exist; there are graduate student-exclusive and mixed level (undergraduate and graduate) groups.
2. CAPS also offers psychological education workshops. These are once-a-week sessions that usually run for 4 weeks.
3. Do not be discouraged if you are initially turned away or placed on a waitlist at CAPS; you can ask to be connected to other options. Generally, you will be given a referral to a mental healthcare provider in the community.
4. You can also access therapy sessions with student psychologists that are under training for their clinic hours. These are offered through the psychology department.
5. **Other resources**, such as the WellTrack app and CoRec Mindfulness series, are provided via Purdue. These are essentially self-guided tools that help you track your moods, sleep, nutrition, etc.
6. You can refill medication prescriptions at **PUSH pharmacy**, in the Pharmacy building. If you have an existing prescription, a PUSH nurse practitioner can usually sign for refills. Also, Purdue’s in-house pharmacy is significantly discounted (so we would recommend it!)

B. GENERAL RESOURCES AND ADVICE

1. Develop a coping plan – come up with a strategy to access the services you need. For example, complete intake appointments early and find a counselor that works for you. Have a plan in place to help access the resources you need when stressors are exacerbated. Have a plan in place regarding who you will contact in a mental health emergency and what your course of action is.
2. If you want to (or are asked to) look for **mental health care in the community**, we recommend starting out by checking with Modern Mental Health: <https://www.modernmentalhealth.org/>. They provide individual and group therapy, as

well as diagnostic testing for ADHD, autism, mood disorders, and learning disorders. In recent years, they have had a waiting list that is shorter than most other clinics in the area. We know from experience that they take grad insurance (though remember that you will still be responsible for a 10% copay after meeting your deductible), and will work on a sliding scale payment system if you have a different independent insurance plan.

3. If you are looking for **psychiatric care**, there is a chronic shortage of psychiatrists in town. Here's an abridged list: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/psychiatrists?search=47906>. There are other clinics (such as Sycamore Springs), but they generally have long waiting lists and/or overburdened providers. Some members have had success with Meridian Health Services. Another option: look for providers in Indianapolis, or for Indiana-based providers who can do telehealth appointments.
4. Most therapists and clinics in town accept grad insurance, but be sure to check first.
5. Many places have waitlists, meaning if providers do not currently have availability, you will be notified when they do. It is helpful to get on waitlists for multiple clinics.
6. Some therapists offer sliding scale fees. This means that your cost per visit is based on your income. Usually you have to send in some proof of income, but costs can be as low as 10% of the regular cost. This is a great option for people without insurance or if your therapist does not accept your insurance. **If you cannot afford the full fee, ask if your therapist offers sliding scale fees.**

4. WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

The information here is compiled from our experiences. Please seek the appropriate resources, including legal help if appropriate, for specific help on your circumstances.

A. MENTOR/MENTEE CONFLICTS

1. [The Office of Graduate Assistance \(OGA\)](#) houses the Ombuds office and Conflict Resolution.
 - a. While neither resource can carry out any form of sanctions or implement policy, they are often resources for advice or guidance in different situations.
 - b. In our experiences, the Ombuds office is better suited for minor communication issues.
 - c. For larger things, such as difficulties working with your advisor, the Conflict Resolution arm of OGA is more effective (keeping in mind that the focus of all of OGACR is on the student, and not on the faculty member) or the Office of Civil Rights.

2. Consider relying on the hierarchy of your department and college. If this avenue is available to you, first try resolving with the advisor if possible; then committee members if applicable or appropriate; then department head; then associate dean of college, and so on.
3. It is important to remember that faculty members and employees in supervisory or management roles (like the department head) are mandatory reporters under Title IX. Hence, they are mandated to report incidents of sex-based harassment or discrimination to the Office of Civil Rights. You can also rely on your department's graduate student organization for additional support.
4. In some cases, you may need to seek legal help, the Office of Institutional Equity (who handles Title IX and other harassment/discrimination issues) or the Research Integrity officer based on your need.

B. REPORTING TO THE OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

1. NOTE: Although these services and links are functional at the time of writing, compliance with executive orders in the future may put them at risk.
2. While the [Purdue Title IX site](#) primarily focuses on sexual misconduct, harassment, and discrimination, in our experience mandatory reporters and the Office of Civil Rights have been receptive to other cases of (non-sexual and non-sex based) discrimination and harassment, including issues pertaining to toxic work environments. [More information on anti-harassment contacts can be found here.](#)
3. You have the option of filing an **informal or formal complaint**. In an informal complaint, the Office of Civil Rights will try to mediate a resolution. If both parties cannot arrive at a mutually satisfying resolution, they can then choose to file a formal complaint. Alternatively, you can file a formal complaint directly. The entire process of filing complaints is online.
4. You have the option of going in for a consultation with an Office of Civil Rights official prior to filing a complaint. This consultation is not an obligation to file a complaint. Our experiences suggest that while the Office of Civil Rights staff are supportive once the complaint has been filed, they will try to dissuade you from filing a complaint if you go in for a consultation.
5. Once you file the complaint, the respondent (the person who has committed the act of discrimination/harassment) will be notified. Legally, the respondent cannot get in touch with you after this moment. If they do, it will be considered as an act of retaliation.
6. The entire Office of Civil Rights process is extremely individualized. You can only file a complaint on the website as an individual. There is no option for group complaints, i.e. one complaint written by a group of individuals. Even if the respondent (the person who has committed the act of discrimination/harassment) is the same and a group of students file a report at the same time, each individual will be interviewed separately

and determinations made separately. However, the investigator (an externally appointed lawyer) is the same for all cases and usually cognizant of systemic patterns of discrimination/harassment.

7. You can take a support person with you for every meeting with an Office of Civil Rights official and an investigator.
8. At every step, you will have to provide evidence and witnesses. So, it is always advisable to start documenting your conversations through email if you feel like you are in a negative work environment.
9. Sometimes the investigation and report writing takes longer than the time estimated by Office of Civil Rights. We advise relying heavily on your support network during this period. Also, you can always reach out to the supportive faculty members in your department and request for reduction in course load/extensions on deadlines.

C. CONTRACT TYPES

This is a new section and is by no means comprehensive. Please feel free to suggest additions!

1. Graduate employees at Purdue are typically offered 9-month (Academic Year) or 12-month (Fiscal Year) contracts with biweekly pay periods. Those on 9-month contracts often have to seek separate summer employment through the department or otherwise and have a couple of “half” pay periods in their schedule. Below is a pay schedule for 9-month contracts for 2025-2026.
 - a. Those on 9-month contracts may still purchase yearlong benefits such as medical insurance in the same way as those on 12-month contracts.
 - b. Keep in mind that the first payment is not until **September 3rd**, although your first work day was August 11th.
 - c. The 2025-2026 pay schedule for fiscal year employees can be viewed here: <https://www.purdue.edu/hr/paytimepractices/paycontractdates/fycontractbi.php>

Workplace Figure 1: [Pay dates for 9-month contracts, 2025-2026.](#)

Pay Period	Period Start and End Date	Pay Date	% For the Pay Period	# Days Paid
18	8/11/2025- 8/24/2025	Wednesday, September 03, 2025	50%	5
19	8/25/2025- 9/7/2025	Wednesday, September 17, 2025	100%	10
20	9/8/2025- 9/21/2025	Wednesday, October 01, 2025	100%	10
21	9/22/2025- 10/5/2025	Wednesday, October 15, 2025	100%	10
22	10/6/2025- 10/19/2025	Wednesday, October 29, 2025	100%	10
23	10/20/2025- 11/2/2025	Wednesday, November 12, 2025	100%	10
24	11/3/2025- 11/16/2025	Wednesday, November 26, 2025	100%	10
25	11/17/2025- 11/30/2025	Wednesday, December 10, 2025	100%	10
26	12/1/2025- 12/14/2025	Wednesday, December 24, 2025	100%	10
1	12/15/2025- 12/28/2025	Wednesday, January 07, 2026	100%	10
2	12/29/2025- 1/11/2026	Wednesday, January 21, 2026	50%	5
3	1/12/2026- 1/25/2026	Wednesday, February 04, 2026	100%	10
4	1/26/2026- 2/8/2026	Wednesday, February 18, 2026	100%	10
5	2/9/2026- 2/22/2026	Wednesday, March 04, 2026	100%	10
6	2/23/2026- 3/8/2026	Wednesday, March 18, 2026	100%	10
7	3/9/2026- 3/22/2026	Wednesday, April 01, 2026	100%	10
8	3/23/2026- 4/5/2026	Wednesday, April 15, 2026	100%	10
9	4/6/2026- 4/19/2026	Wednesday, April 29, 2026	100%	10
10	4/20/2026- 5/3/2026	Wednesday, May 13, 2026	100%	10
11	5/4/2026- 5/17/2026	Wednesday, May 27, 2026	100%	10

F
A
L
L

S
P
R
I
N
G

D. GENERAL SUPPORT

1. Build a support network. This can include your advisor, your committee members, other faculty, post-docs, labmates and other grad students, supervisors, program directors, etc. Make sure you continue to build this network.
2. Document everything. Keep copies of emails, and consider forwarding your emails to an external address. Keep detailed notes of meetings, from research to lab meetings to committee meetings. Date your notes as well.
3. The cultural centers ([Native American Educational and Cultural Center](#); [Asian and Asian American Resource and Cultural Center](#); [Black Cultural Center](#); [Latino Cultural Center](#); [LGBTQ Center](#)) can offer support, resources, and community. The [International Student Services](#) can offer support as well, albeit in a limited capacity since they do not have an in-house immigration lawyer.
 - a. Note that, as of time of writing, Purdue's cultural centers are operational, but are at risk of closing due to state legislation and compliance with executive orders.
4. Your department business office is often the go-to resource for questions regarding funding, reimbursement, or pay. In some cases, you may need to rely on the payroll office specifically.
5. Check your pay stubs on SuccessFactors: go to one.purdue.edu, then Employee Launchpad, Pay Statements.
6. The Registrar and Bursar are resources that can assist with registration and fees respectively.

E. OTHER CONCERNS

1. If you are in a teaching role or are otherwise interacting with undergraduates, you can refer them to the Dean of Students if they need assistance. Also, if a student makes you uncomfortable or seems to be in crisis (harassing, stalking, making threatening statements, making concerning statements of potential self harm or feeling overwhelmed, etc.), you can report them via the [Student of Concern form and/or the Dean of Students](#). Seek the appropriate authorities or resources if your safety is at risk, and seek legal counsel if needed.
2. You can ask for a desk, and if your department provides it, a computer. ITaP and ECN issue computers to students and are often paid for by individual departments or labs.
3. You can report maintenance concerns to your [building deputy](#), such as leaky pipes, lightbulbs that need changing, etc.
4. The Disabilities Resource Center is a resource that can also assist you in access. The counselors there are very helpful and can assist you in figuring out specific disability accommodations that will help you succeed. Note: these accommodations can often apply to both your coursework and your work responsibilities (though work responsibilities [may have to go through HR](#)) --so make sure to ask about that!

5. LIVELIHOOD

A. FOOD SECURITY

1. The nearest grocery stores to campus are Target and Indian & International Grocery. They are both within walking distance, but this Target costs more than off-campus options. Most grocery stores are further than a mile from campus, but some are along bus routes: Pay Less, Fresh Thyme, and Walmart are all on the 22 route (you can also access Walmart from the 21 and 23 routes). If you're willing to walk a few blocks, you can also access Aldi from the 22 route. Better World Market, a grocery specializing in East Asian ingredients, is on the 21 route. Purdue also has an on-campus butcher shop, [Boiler Butcher Block](#), that sells meats relatively cheaply. If you live in Lafayette, some options are taking the 11 to Pay Less/Target/Sam's Club or taking the 12 to Target/Sam's Club/Walmart/Meijer.
2. Purdue has an on-campus food pantry ([ACE Food Pantry](#)) that can be accessed by all students, including graduate students. ACE Food Pantry is open on Tuesdays and Sundays only. All you need to access food is your Purdue ID.
3. List of local free food resources: <https://www.food-finders.org/find-help/> ([Food Finders Food Bank Fresh Market](#) also has various assistance programs)
4. You can also [check if your household qualifies for SNAP or TANF](#) benefits and [apply](#) (you are more likely to qualify if you have dependents as well).

5. Lafayette also has several “sharing gardens” where you may pick produce for free: <https://growlocallafayette.org/gardenlocations-2/>
6. Resources for those who follow religious diets:
 - a. Kosher: [Purdue Hillel](#) has the only Kosher facility on campus (though kosher meals are available on [shabbat/holidays only](#)) and can advise students on other Kosher options in the area
 - b. Halal: <https://purduemsa.com/halal-food-options>

B. TRANSPORTATION

1. The Greater Lafayette area (West Lafayette and Lafayette) is most easily accessible by car.
2. [Bus routes do exist](#), but are often limited and frequently changing in route and schedule and/or delayed. The [MyCityBus app](#) as well as Google Maps have been most reliable on accurate bus routes.
3. **As of Summer 2025, Purdue is no longer paying for off-campus CityBus transit for Purdue students, faculty, and staff.** More information about your options for bus transit is below:
 - a. [CityBus semester passes for Purdue riders are discounted to \\$49 if you use your @purdue.edu with the EZFare app.](#) You can find the full instructions on CityBus’s website on the news page in the August 12th post.
 - b. Regular fares are \$1 and a 1-day pass is \$2. Note however that CityBus has announced [changes in the fare structure](#) that will double or approximately double most fares starting in January 2026.
 - c. [For Summer 2025](#), there was an \$84 summer pass available. It is unclear whether this price will increase in the future.
 - d. CityBus’s Route 41 “The Connector” is free for all, and connects Lafayette and West Lafayette, though The Connector used to cover more ground as Route 23.
 - e. Route numbers are changing and some information may refer to old route numbers. For updated routes and their previous numbers, click [here](#).
 - f. CityBus no longer runs on Sundays.
 - g. [This is a developing situation.](#) Though CityBus fares will be rising in January, they may rise or change again; the cost of the semester and summer passes as well as the Purdue subsidy is also subject to change in future semesters. At the same time, GROW and others continue to advocate for the university to reverse this decision and again subsidize off-campus transit for Purdue riders. If you want to help push to maintain free transit for students, [consider signing this petition](#) and attending GROW meetings where we discuss this actively developing situation.
4. On-campus transit will now be provided by SP+ Transportation rather than CityBus. They recently announced [three on-campus free bus routes](#) that will begin operation on August 14. Purdue and SP+ have also said an app needed to access these buses will be

announced soon. [SP+ will also provide on-demand rides](#) at designated locations from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. Monday through Friday, or 4 to 9 p.m. on Sundays. These can be scheduled right away or up to 30 days in advance; check Purdue's sites for valid locations.

5. Traveling by bicycle is also a great option! The [Purdue Surplus Store](#) and [Virtuous Cycles](#) sell used bikes, you may also be able to find some on Craigslist or Buy/Sell/Trade groups on Facebook. There are several bike repair stations on campus where you can use tools to fix minor problems with your bike. The [Purdue Cycling Club](#) offers some [bike repair sessions and help](#) as well. West Lafayette (where Purdue is) has much more developed bike infrastructure than Lafayette (the East side of the river). West Lafayette has protected bike lanes on many of the main roads around campus, but once you cross the bridge, bike lanes are mere painted lines. There are abundant paved and dirt/offroad bike trails in and around the area, in various states of repair. Always wear a helmet and ride your bike [like you're invisible](#)!
6. Purdue University also offers the [Campus Connect Shuttle](#) service between West Lafayette and Indianapolis that is free to all Purdue faculty, staff, and students. The bus picks up and drops off in West Lafayette in front of the Purdue Memorial Union (PMU) as well as the Northwest side of the France A. Córdova Recreational Sports Center (CREC). The pick-up and drop-off location for Indianapolis is along W. Vermont Street, near the intersection with N. Blackford Street. Seats can be reserved through the R2U Connect app for Android and Apple; however, be sure to sign up using your Purdue email address for the free rides.
7. Shuttles to and from the Indianapolis Airport and to Chicago O'Hare Airport can be arranged though [Lafayette Limo](#), [Reindeer Shuttle](#), and [GO Express Shuttle](#).
8. Lafayette has its own train stop where [Amtrak](#) trains stop through. Additionally, [Greyhound](#) and [Flixbus](#) pick up near the Lafayette bus depot.

C. FINDING GOOD DEALS ON SUPPLIES

1. The [Purdue Surplus Store](#) can be a good resource for cheap furniture, electronics, office supplies (including computer monitors, keyboards, and mice), bikes, and miscellaneous materials.
2. Purdue and West Lafayette/Lafayette Buy/Sell/Trade groups on Facebook and Tippecanoe County Craigslist are good online resources for inexpensive furnishings and equipment.
3. There is also a Goodwill thrift shop in West Lafayette, and another in Lafayette. Millie's Thrift Stores (3 locations in the Greater Lafayette area) are often cheaper than Goodwill and have very good rewards programs, but will likely have smaller selections. The largest Millie's location is on Plaza Lane.

D. OTHER TIPS

1. The **water** in the Greater Lafayette area is hard in quality (more minerals such as calcium than most), which can cause itchy skin and damage to your hair. If you are sensitive to hard water, you may consider a water softener. The water hardness can also create buildup on surfaces, faucets, etc. Many students use water filters for drinking water. There are cheap filters that you can attach directly to your shower or tap.
2. You are entitled to take **vacation or leave**. Purdue offers vacation, unpaid personal leave, bereavement leave, family leave, medical leave, and military leave. You can request this leave via SuccessFactors.
3. [Purdue Graduate Student Government](#) (PGSG) offers a variety of grants that graduate students should take advantage of, including:
 - a. Transitional housing grants: Funding for students experiencing financial hardship as a result of an unplanned gap in their access to housing
 - b. Travel grants: To help pay for travel to professional events like conferences
 - c. Professional grants: To help pay for activities related to professional development
 - d. Accessibility grants: To help offset costs associated with accessibility needs either independently or in conjunction with other PGSG grants
 - e. Small research grants: To help pay for research that would otherwise require self-funding
4. You can access **computers** via ITaP computer labs, ECN computer labs (in engineering), AgIT computer labs (in agriculture) and via department resources. You can ask your department or advisor for a Purdue-issued computer if you do not currently have one. This is subject to department resources being available for such a request.
5. If you are confused or want help doing your **taxes** (there's no shame, it can be complicated!), [United Way of Greater Lafayette](#) and [Lafayette Urban Ministries](#) offer free tax preparation programs for low-income people; many grad students are eligible. International students are also eligible and may find these resources helpful. They will help you figure out how to file your taxes, what deductions you can claim, etc.

6. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If you need immigration or visa help, please consider consulting an attorney. Below is information that is based on student experiences and is not a substitute for sound legal advice.

1. [This webpage](#) contains resources in multiple languages about your rights across several domains.
2. Building a sense of **community** is important. Consider your neighborhood, student organizations, and other resources mentioned above to help with developing a sense of community.

3. Keep your visa and I-20 expiration dates in mind. The I-20 usually expires earlier than the visa.
4. If a Principal Investigator or advisor is threatening your visa status, consider complaining with the department or with the Office of Grad Assistance and Conflict Resolution if you feel safe to do so. [You can also submit a report through Purdue's anonymous whistleblower hotline.](#) Consider relying on existing support networks in your department, college, and elsewhere to help you develop an appropriate solution. Consider legal advice as needed.
5. Your immigration status does not mean that you cannot raise complaints in other circumstances, such as landlord disputes! Your rights are protected under the law, too!
6. If you need to speak with an immigration lawyer about a specific legal issue that ISS cannot address, there are several options. PGSG has sometimes hosted free consultations with an immigration lawyer, so make sure to check if they are continuing this practice. You can also hire a lawyer independently. Here are some other programs that can help you either find a lawyer, or get your questions answered:
<https://www.lumserve.org/programs/assistance-programs/immigration-clinic/>
<https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/>
7. Health insurance is offered to international students via Purdue. If you have your own health insurance from your home country or from somewhere other than Purdue, be wary of in-network and out-of-network providers--some places may not accept your specific health insurance plan. Many healthcare providers in the greater Lafayette area are limited in the types of healthcare plans they accept.
8. There are international student fees that total [\\$200 per semester](#) (for 8+ credit hours); these go to certain services that Purdue provides, such as English language testing.
9. There are several organizations inside Purdue for specific countries/regions/faiths. Check in boilerlink.purdue.edu for a comprehensive list of organizations.

7. GROW AND HOW WE CAN SUPPORT YOU

You might be asking, *what is GROW (Graduate Rights & Our Wellbeing)?* We are a grad student advocacy organization run by and for Purdue graduate students/workers. We exist to support and defend the rights of graduate workers, including rights to living wages, housing, healthcare, transportation to and from our workplaces, freedom from discrimination, etc. We believe the best way to protect grad students' rights is to unionize, so that is our ultimate goal! We compiled this packet because we know that graduate students' lives—especially as first-years—can be hectic and difficult, and resources can be hard to come by.

If you want to meet fellow grad students and join us in advocating for grad students at Purdue, please consider coming to our first meeting of the 2025-2026 school year, which will be announced near the start of the semester. [Join our mailing list](#) to stay in the loop!

Any questions about this guide, or have suggestions? Send us an email!

gradrightswellbeing@gmail.com

[Want to learn more about GROW?](#)

Don't forget to follow us on social media:

@purduegrads on Instagram and Twitter