

DURHAM REGION

College and University Housing Guide



INTERNATIONAL 



DURHAM
GREATER TORONTO AREA

Finding a place to live is a top priority when starting your academic journey in Canada. This guide includes resources to support you when you make housing arrangements in the Durham Region.



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You can choose to live on or off campus during your studies in Canada. It is recommended that you start your search early before you travel to Canada.

Types of Housing

**Living on campus –
One of the best ways to immerse
yourself in college/university life**

For Durham College (DC) students:

DC provides fully-furnished student residences that can contribute to a fulfilling college experience. DC residences are located on both the Oshawa and Whitby campuses, and are open to all students. Inside the residence, you will find a variety of amenities, including high-speed internet access. The Oshawa location also has a phone with free local calls in each suite.

DC residence also offers diverse All-You-Care-To-Eat Meal Plan options through Chartwells, the food service provider. Dining plans are designed to meet your needs for the semesters that you are in residence.

For Fall intake students applying for the academic year, you need to apply by June 1 to be guaranteed a spot in residence. For Winter or Spring/Summer intake students, applications are accepted at any time on a first-come, first-served basis. A non-refundable \$100 application fee applies.

Visit <https://durhamresidence.ca/> to apply or for more information.



It's a great opportunity to meet people, live in an academic community, while still having fun with friends. Residence is clean, friendly, welcoming and safe.

**Student,
Durham College Residence**



For Ontario Tech students:

Ontario Tech students can apply to the Durham College Student Residence as described above. The Durham College Oshawa campus and the Ontario Tech University north campus are located next door to one another. The DC Student Residence is a short walk to Ontario Tech buildings.

For Fall intake students applying for the academic year, you need to apply by June 1 to be guaranteed a spot in residence. For Winter or Spring/Summer intake students, applications are accepted at any time on a first-come, first-served basis. A non-refundable \$100 application fee applies.

Visit <https://durhamresidence.ca/> to apply or for more information.

For Trent students:

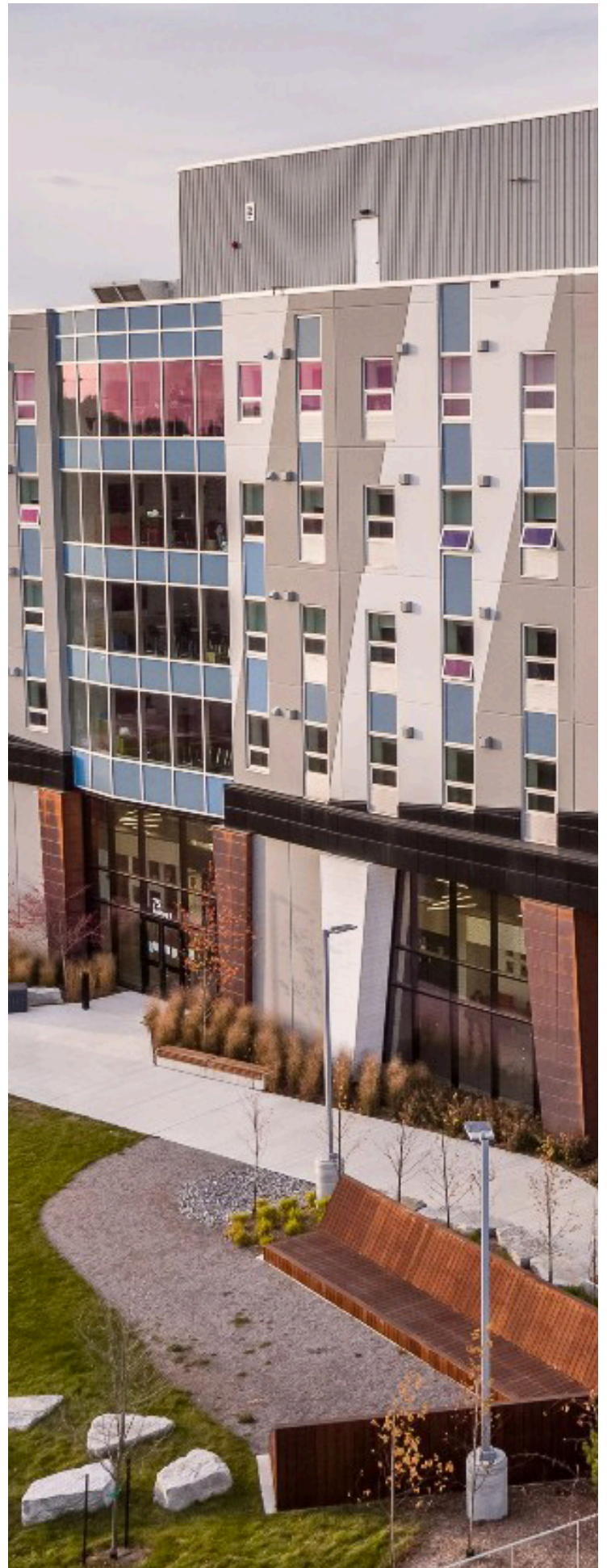
The Trent Durham Residence is the living option closest to your studies, and downtown Oshawa is just a few minutes' drive away. The building is home to academic support, extracurricular programming and a dining hall. Residence offers modern dorm-style rooms with common washrooms, gathering spaces and large kitchens on every floor. Included in the fees are laundry facilities, Wi-Fi, and parking. Shared accommodation is available for September intake students.

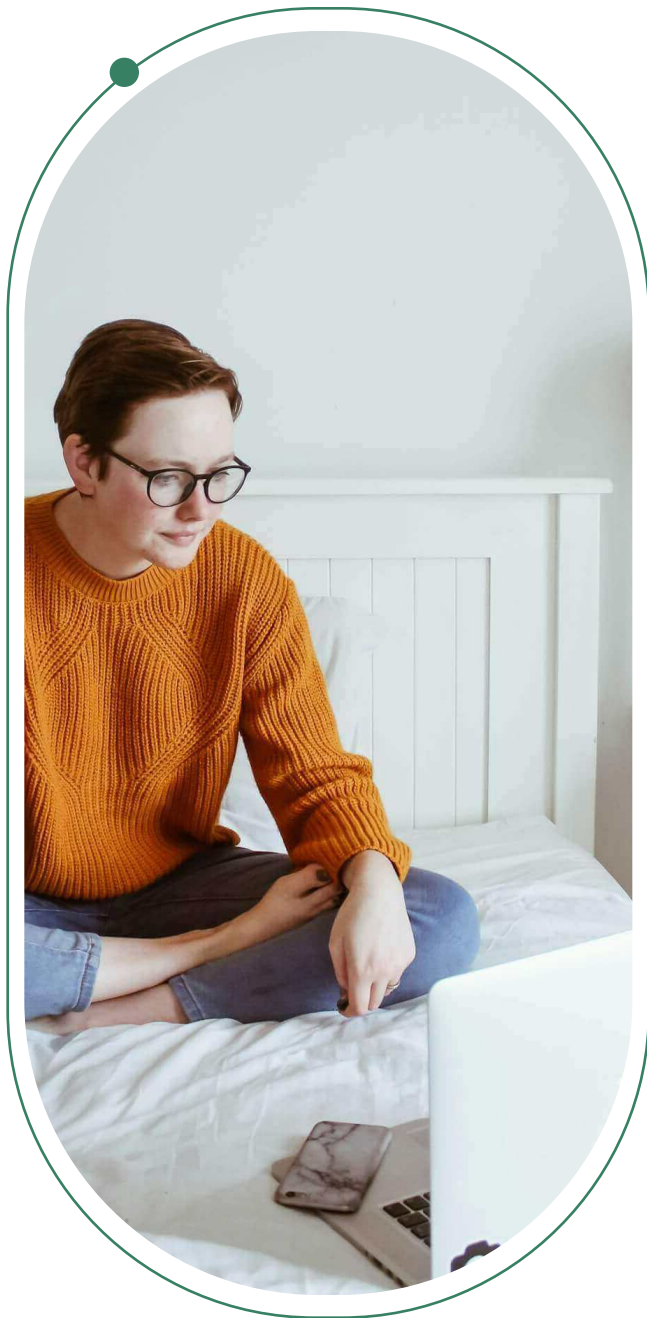
Visit <https://www.trentu.ca/housing/durham-residence> to apply or for more information.



My favourite part about living in residence is the close-knit community and meeting all these friends in my first year. I now have long lasting friendships and I've already made so many memories living here.

**Student,
Trent Durham Residence**





Types of Housing

Living off campus –

More independence, more freedom, more responsibilities

About off-campus housing

If you opt to live off campus, you will find many options in the Durham Region. These include, but are not limited to, traditional apartments, private and shared rental housing, student housing buildings and homestay. In the cases where short-term accommodations are needed, the options can include Airbnb and hotels.

- Traditional apartments – a private residence in a building that’s divided into several separate dwellings (e.g. kitchen, living room, bedroom, bathroom).
- Private and shared rental housing – renters living in the same property (e.g. apartment, house, townhouse) with private spaces (e.g. bedroom) and also shared spaces (e.g. kitchen, bathroom).
- Student housing buildings – residences run by private companies, available only to students and located near campus.
- Homestay – living in homes with families with the options ranging from just a room to full room and board with three meals per day.

Visit Canada Homestay Network at

<https://canadahomestaynetwork.ca/>.

Finding Off-campus Housing-

A How-to Guide in 3 steps!*



STEP 1- PLAN YOUR BUDGET

Wi-Fi Options for internet plans

- Paid plans (from providers such as Bell, Rogers, TekSavvy, Comwave and Virgin Plus)
- Low-cost Internet

Rental fee

What is important to keep in mind?

- Affordability
- Payment dates
- Payment format

Utilities

Which are usually included as part of rent payments?

- Elexicon Energy/OPUC
- Enbridge Gas
- MyDurhamWater

Groceries

What is the price of a basic healthy diet?

- The Price of Eating Well in Durham Region
- Food support programs
(Community food programs such as food banks and soup kitchens are for those who are experiencing food insecurity or are in a financial crisis only.)



STEP 2- SEARCH FOR HOUSING

You may start with the common platforms for housing search. Please read the “Red flags to be wary of in housing” on Page 13 of this guide prior to browsing these platforms.

- places4students.com
- rentseeker.ca
- gottarent.com
- [Facebook Marketplace](https://www.facebook.com/marketplace)
- [realtor.ca](https://www.realtor.ca)

You should consider finding a suitable place close to campus and easily accessible by regular and frequent Durham Region Transit (DRT) based on your budget. (Unlimited travel on DRT services is available through the U-Pass program. See Page 12 for more information.)



Download an [Ontario standard lease](#) to get an idea of what a lease in this province should look like.

Understand the end-of-lease or termination-of-lease clauses.

Understand the rights and responsibilities for landlords and tenants.

- [Residential Tenancy Act](#) –

Understanding the ins and outs of renting, including the landlord rights/responsibilities and the tenant rights/responsibilities.

- [Navigate Tribunals Ontario](#) –

An online tool that provides simple, accurate, and plain language information about your legal rights and responsibilities.

Purchase annual tenant’s insurance.

- What are common types of tenant insurance? Liability Coverage and Content Insurance.
- Is it required to have tenant insurance? Review your lease agreement and see what it says.
- Why is having tenant insurance important? Learn more about tenant insurance and how it can protect you [HERE](#).
- Where can I get tenant insurance? Contact your local bank or insurance provider.

* We neither regulate nor inspect off-campus housing. We do not have a relationship with any of the common search platforms. Students are advised to meet with the owner and visit the unit to inspect the premises before signing a lease.



STEP 3- REVIEW YOUR LEASE AGREEMENT

Keep records of all your documents, transactions and deposits.

Discuss the clauses that you do not understand with your landlord for clarity **before** you sign a lease.

Finding Off-campus Housing-

A checklist for viewing a rental unit

- Are the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors working? _____
- Do doors and windows operate and lock adequately? _____
- Is the heating and cooling system working properly? _____
- Is there enough lighting? _____
- Is the water pressure adequate? Is there a good supply of hot water? _____
- Is there any furniture included (e.g. bed frame)? _____
- Are there any appliances included (e.g. microwave)? _____
- Are there any laundry facilities on site or in a nearby location? _____
- Is there evidence of insects or other pests (e.g. ants, cockroaches)? _____
- Is it reasonably clean? _____
- Could there be much noise? Consider the proximity to the street, pubs, restaurants, parks, etc. _____
- How many people are or will be living in the rental? _____
- Is it close to campus and easily accessible by regular and frequent DRT? Is parking available? If yes, how much? _____
- Are there grocery stores, pharmacies and other amenities nearby? _____
- Do you feel comfortable living in the neighbourhood? _____

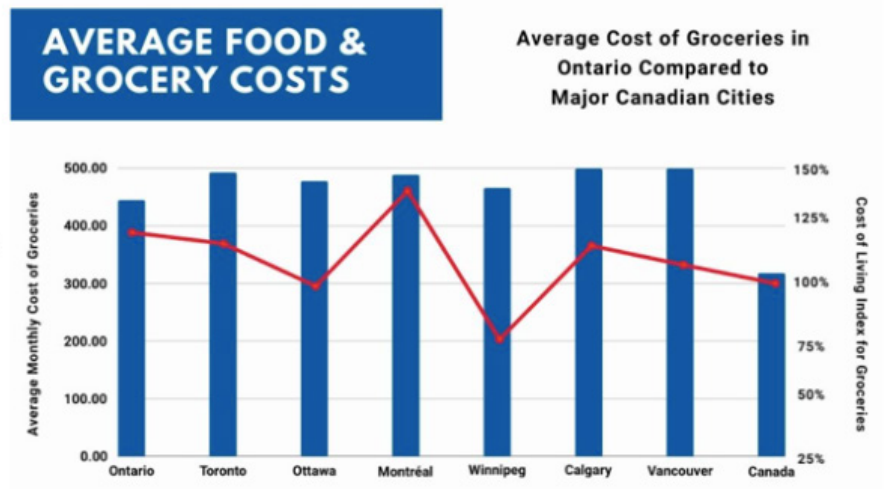
Students are encouraged to take photos of the unit and any existing damage upon move-in. If the rental unit has damage, make note of it and ask if the landlord will be making repairs. If the landlord agrees to the repairs, ensure this information is written in the lease.

Housing Toolkit

In addition to the above How-to Guide and the Rental Checklist, this Housing Toolkit includes self-guided learning tools that cover the additional steps/considerations to finding a safe and affordable rental.

Understanding the cost of living

- Cost of food
- Cost of renting a home
- Utilities and additional costs



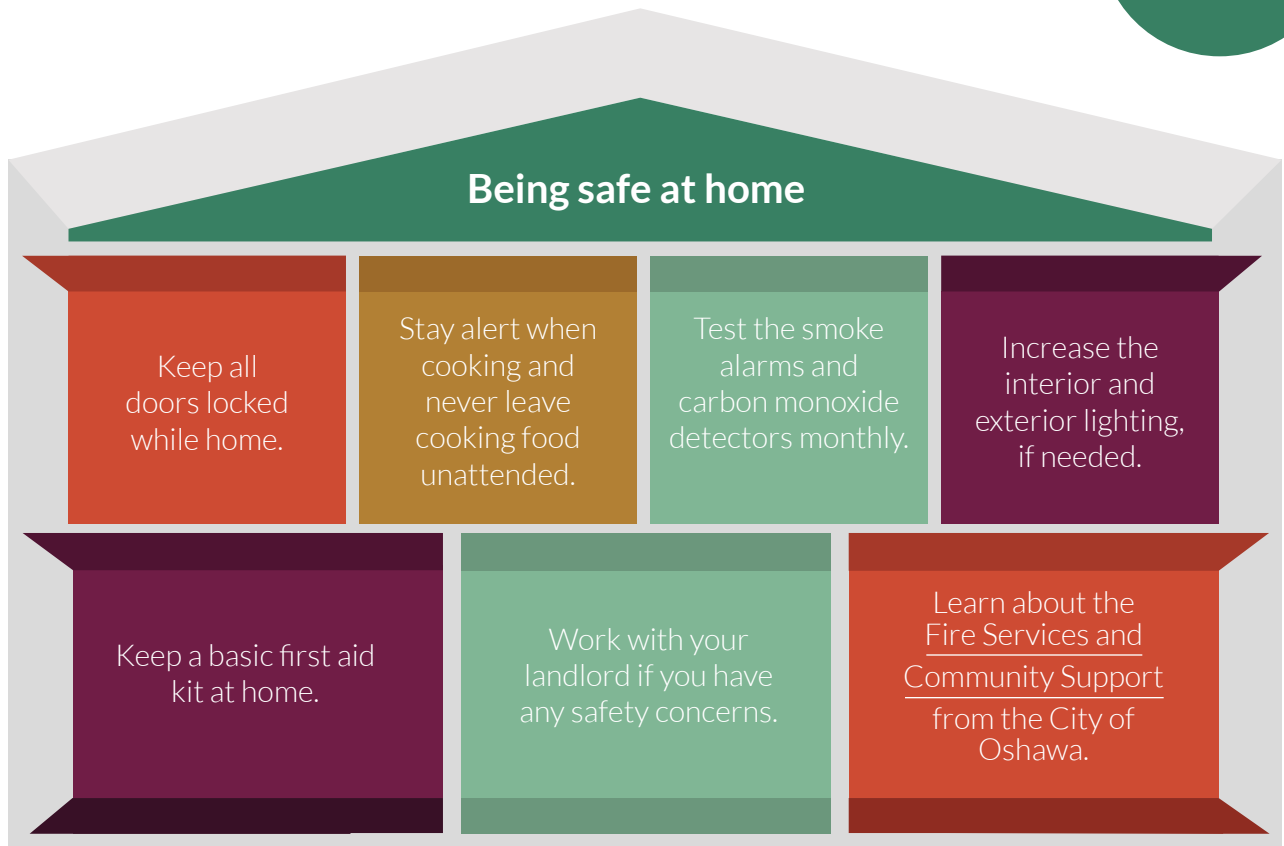
(Source: [Navigating the Ontario Cost of Living in 2024: Essential Insights and Tips](#))

**As of March 2024,
the average rent in
Durham is:**

1-bedroom apartment:
\$1803.00/month

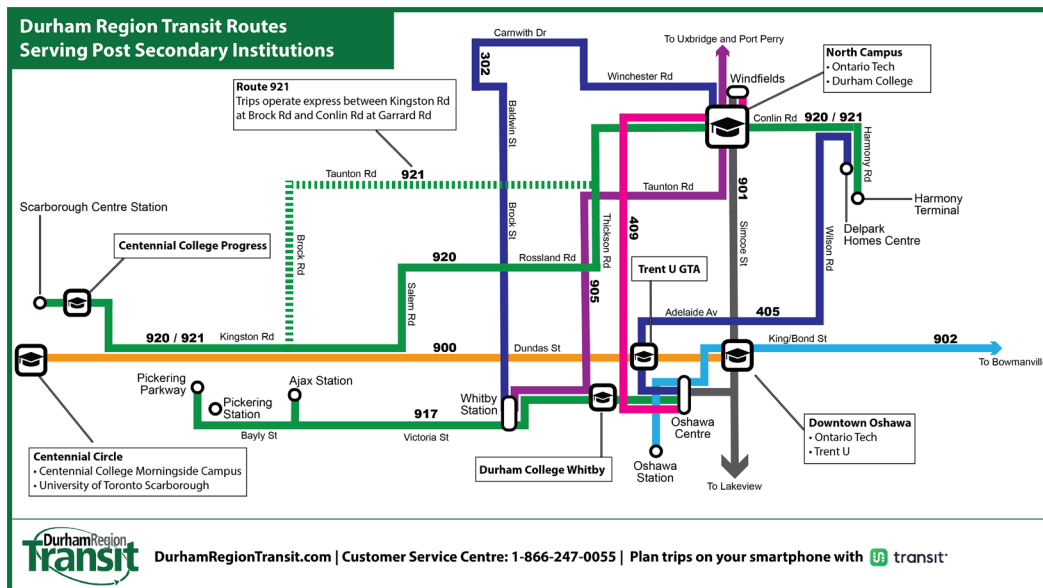
2-bedroom apartment:
\$2114.00/month

(Source: [Rentals.ca March 2024 Rent Report](#))



Getting from home to school

Durham Region Transit (DRT) routes | [DRT schedules](#) | [How to ride with DRT](#)



U-Pass provides students from Durham College, Trent University Durham GTA, and Ontario Tech University who are enrolled full-time with unlimited free travel each semester on DRT.

For more details, please visit your institution's website:

- [U-PASS | Durham College](#)
- [U-PASS | Ontario Tech](#)
- [U-PASS | Trent Durham](#)

Red flags to be wary of in housing

Phantom listings – An ad for a place that does not exist or is not for rent.

Hijacked ads – A scammer posing as a landlord posts an ad for a real place.

Bait and switch – The landlord shows you one place, but tries to get you to sign a lease agreement for another.

Identity theft – Some rental scammers want your personal information such as your travel document, social insurance number and bank details. You are not required to provide this information.

Other indicators that might be associated with a rental scam:

- The landlord is hard to contact.
- The landlord is asking questions that are not allowed or relevant.
(Examples: Are you married? Where does your money come from?)
- You are asked to pay before you view the place.
- You are asked to pay an illegal deposit fee such as a full year's worth of rent.
(Remember that you are usually expected to pay only the first and last month's rent in advance.)
- You are asked to pay by gift card or bitcoin or other hard-to-trace equivalents.

Handling roommate conflicts

When living with roommates, it's important to:

- Set boundaries (e.g. determine how you will share the responsibility of cleaning the place).
- Work through problems constructively (e.g. develop a solution together through respectful communication).
- Seek help when needed (e.g. check your school's website or contact a school representative for resources and support).

(Source: [How to Deal with Roommate Problems](#), Mental Health America)

Legal resources

For DC students, you may:

Book an appointment with Campus Conflict Resolution Services at CCRS@durhamcollege.ca. This is a service provided through the Conflict Resolution and Mediation Graduate Certificate program. (Please note that students still studying in legal programs are not qualified to provide legal advice and anyone with a legal matter should seek the services of a qualified individual.)

Contact the Durham College Student Association (DCSA) for the free legal services available to you.

For Ontario Tech students, you may:

Contact the Ontario Tech Student Union (OTSU) which provides free legal services to students. It also provides a document with frequently asked questions about housing and a Guide to Subtenancy and Assignment.

Complete a form requesting legal assistance at <https://contact.student-care.ca/en/contact/145>.

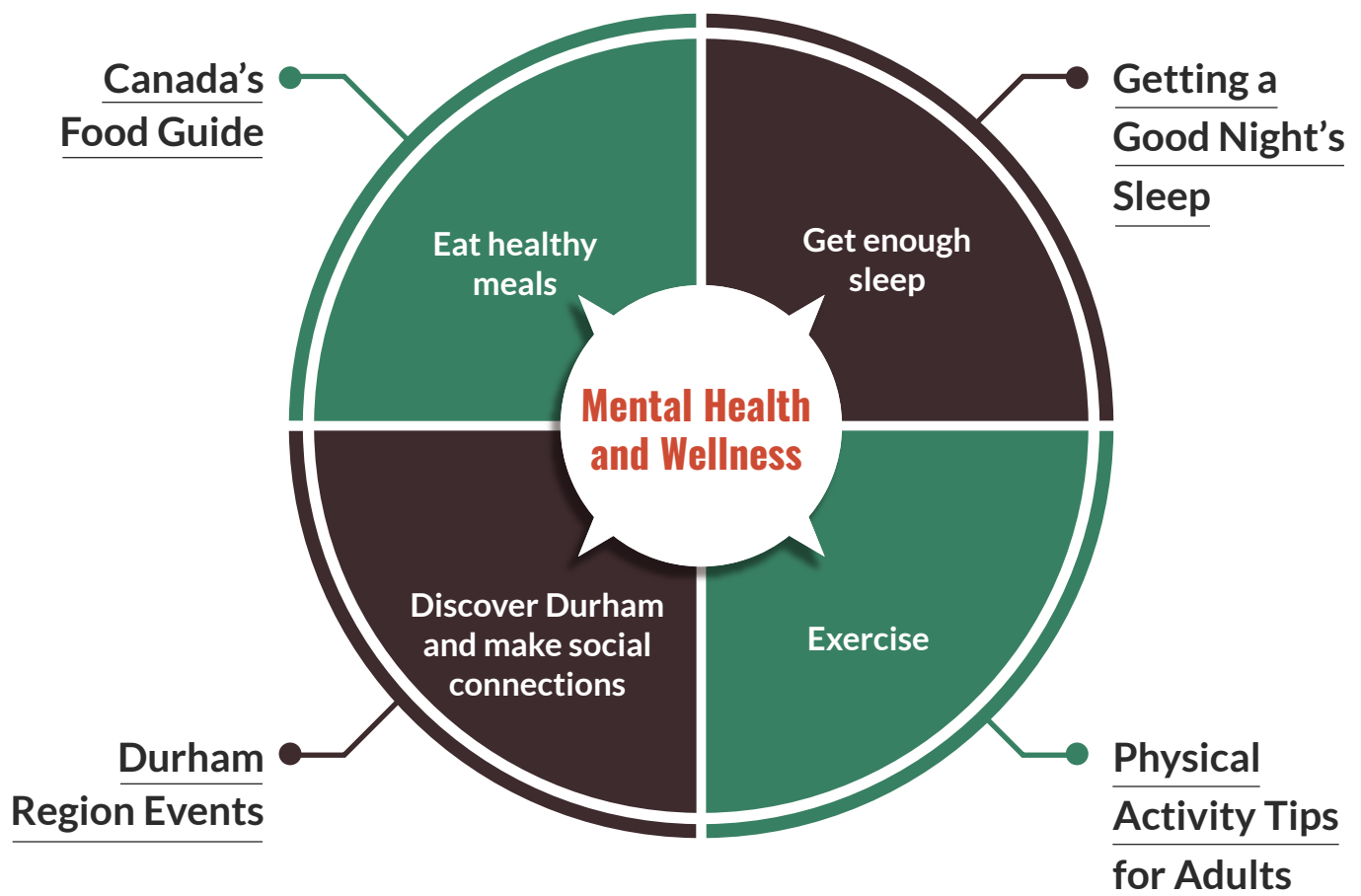
There are legal services available in the community to individuals who qualify. These services are available through community legal clinics and Legal Aid Ontario. For more information on services and qualification criteria, please visit:

The Durham Community Legal Clinic <http://www.durhamcommunitylegalclinic.ca/>

Legal Aid Ontario www.legalaid.on.ca/en/

Mental Health And Wellness

The search for a home away from home can be stressful. We are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students throughout this process. Please take a look below for tips on how you can effectively manage challenges and change.



Now that you have found your new home in the Durham Region, don't forget to get involved! Here are some additional ways to get involved and become a part of your new community:

[Arts and Culture](#) | [Cycling and Walking](#) | [Sports and Recreation](#)
[Parks, Trails and Conservation Areas](#) | [Local Food and Farmers' Markets](#)

Contact Us



For DC students

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at <https://durhamcollege.ca/info-for/international/contact-us>.

In preparation for your life in Canada, additional resources are available:

- [Arrive in Canada workshops](#)
- [NEW International Students Guide](#)
- Home@DC pre-arrival emails
- Home@DC International Student Orientation



For Ontario Tech students

If you have questions or concerns, please contact us at <https://international.ontariotechu.ca/contact/index.php>.

In preparation for your life in Canada, additional resources are available:

- [Arriving in Canada information](#)
- [Living in Canada information](#)
- [International Student Orientation information](#)



For Trent students

If you have any questions or need assistance finding off-campus housing, please contact us at: offcampushousing@trentu.ca.

For more information, please visit [Trent's off-campus housing website](#). In preparation for your life in Canada, additional resources are available:

- [Trent International](#)
- [New Trent Durham GTA International Students](#)
- [International Students Living in Canada](#)