These pamphlets are offered by the Center for Campus Life for the commuter and off campus student population at RIT. The mission of the commuter organization is to advocate on behalf of these students and their needs to the larger RIT community. These publications are part of a series aimed at educating and informing commuter students about resources available to them, as well as tips for living safely off campus.

For further topical information and to retrieve other pamphlets please visit TheLink@RIT, or email commuters@rit.edu

**TIPS FOR SKILLED MONEY MANAGEMENT**

- Leave debit and credit cards home and carry a few dollars with you.
- Know the difference between wants and needs and avoid the temptation from distractions like online shopping.
- If you have a credit card, choose one with a low annual fee, low interest rate and long grace period.
- Use a credit card only for convenience, not credit and pay your bill in full each month.
- Avoid extra fees from ATM withdrawals.
- Set aside money for unexpected expenses.

**PAYING RENT**

When shopping for an apartment, be sure to ask what utilities are included. The more that is included, the more expensive the rent will be, but you also won’t have to worry about additional bills. It is generally the closer to campus the apartment is, the more expensive the rent.

- The larger the unit, the more expensive the rent.
- Furnished apartments are more expensive than unfurnished units. The more utilities included, the higher the rent.

**SPLITTING BILLS**

When you move into an apartment you will have many separate bills. Each bill will be in just one person’s name. If you have roommates, split the bills among everyone. The key is not just one person is responsible for all the bills. Communicate with your roommates about when bills are due and what is owed.

**CLEANING SUPPLIES**

When you move off campus, you are responsible for keeping the area clean. Be sure to have the appropriate cleaning supplies and equipment such as a vacuum cleaner or mop. You may also want small rugs to protect the floor from snow and salt in the winter.

**FOOD & GROCERIES**

It is important to budget enough money to maintain a healthy diet. Save money by buying in bulk and by using coupons. Store brands are usually a better bargain than national brands with the same quality. Another way is to purchase a small monthly plan to eat some meals on campus.

**TRANSPORTATION**

You may drive more when you live off campus. Consider whether you need to pay for parking if no space is included with your apartment or if off-street parking is available.

**CREDIT CARDS**

Resist the urge to use credit cards to pay for living expenses. They usually have high interest rates that will have you paying for your purchase well into the future.

**PELLS**

An advantage to off-campus living is that your apartment may allow you to have a pet. Although this may seem fun, you should consider the costs and responsibilities. Food and veterinarian bills are a few costly things to think about.

**HOW TO MANAGE YOUR BUDGET**

Pay your rent on time whenever possible. Setting a personal budget will help you track your money and with spending decisions. It is also good to know how much you can afford on rent when you know your income and expenses.

Whether you are thinking about moving off campus or have already made that decision, this information is designed to help you plan and manage the associated costs.