Welcome!

The greater East Lansing community is a wonderful place to live, with friendly neighbors, beautiful tree-lined streets, and a variety of people of all ages and backgrounds living close together. This diversity adds to the richness of the community and these varied lifestyles can be challenging for newcomers to off campus living. This guidebook has been created to help you navigate community living smoothly. In the following pages, you’ll find out how to:

- Create positive relationships with all your neighbors
- Navigate ordinances and find information
- Host or attend a party while avoiding police attention and unwanted fines
- Remain connected to campus
- Engage in your new community

Michigan State University works very closely with the City of East Lansing and other local municipalities to promote strong relationships between all residents of their shared community, student and non-student alike.

Get to know your neighbors and respect and enjoy your new home!

Go green!
We All Live Here
$3
City of East Lansing
MICHIGAN
@crceastlansing
WHAT'S YOUR ZIP CODE?
WHAT’S YOUR ZIP CODE?

Chances are you are living in the 48823 zip code and have an East Lansing mailing address. There are two important things you need to know:

1. Make sure to update your local address in MSU’s STUINFO system. All MSU students are required to report any address changes while registered. Failure to do so is considered a falsification of university records. Change your address at the Registrar’s Office website: reg.msu.edu

2. While you may have an East Lansing mailing address, you may actually be residing in Bath Township or Meridian Township. You can determine this by looking at the map below. Your landlord or property manager can also inform you of this. If you are living in one of the townships, there may be additional ordinances and resources for you to be aware of.

Visit municipal websites for details. Bath Township: bathtownship.us
Meridian Township: meridian.mi.us
Be A ROCK STAR NEIGHBOR
GOOD NEIGHBORING

Whether you are living in a rental house or an apartment, it’s a good idea to get a sense of what your neighborhood is like. One of the easiest ways to do this is to meet your neighbors.

Introduce Yourself
This is the first step in building a good relationship. If your neighbor knows your name and a little bit about you, they’ll see you as the unique individual that you are and not as “just another one of those students.”

Keep Neighbors Informed
Give your neighbors a heads up before undertaking anything that might affect them, like getting a dog or hosting a big party.

Be Candid
If tension exists between you and your neighbors, approach them and discuss the issue as soon as possible. For the benefit of the relationship, try to work out a compromise to your dispute before escalating an issue or filing a complaint. Once the police have been called, relationships are hardly ever the same.

Be Aware of Differences
Age, faith, ethnicity, and family status are just some of the things that can affect how a person goes about their daily life and the hours they keep. Being aware of differences between you and your neighbors can help you better understand one another and improve your ability to build a positive relationship.

Ask How You Can Help
Neighborly gestures contribute to a positive and welcoming community for all.

Learn Community Expectations and Local Ordinances
Knowing local laws and community rules can make your experience as pleasant and trouble free as possible.

Participate!
Take part in neighborhood gatherings and offer a smile or friendly greeting when out and about. Get involved wherever you can.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Now that you’ve moved off campus, there’s a lot more to take care of, especially if you are living in a house. Talk to your landlord regularly about expectations and make sure you aren’t caught off guard. Many rental properties offer websites and have social media accounts enabled to communicate with tenants.

Renter’s Insurance
Few people imagine the worst-case scenario when renting. However, preparing for the possibility of problems such as water damage, fire and theft is a smart thing to do. Make sure to obtain renter’s insurance before you move in.

Trash & Bulk Items
In the City of East Lansing, trash is collected from single-family homes and rental houses. Place trash in the easy cart collection bins (rental properties provide them to tenants at no cost), or in yellow city trash bags and put them at the curb by 7:30 am on your collection day. Bins can be curbside from 8 pm the night before collection to 10 am the day after collection. When storing your easy cart, it is required to be concealed at least halfway to the

DID YOU KNOW?
It is illegal to discharge consumer fireworks except for one day before, the day of, and one day after a national holiday. Also, fireworks are not allowed between the hours of 1-8 a.m. on these days. Igniting fireworks at another time may result in a $500 fine.
DID YOU KNOW?

Bulk items that contain refrigerants (refrigerators, air conditioners, etc.), require a $40 hazardous bulk item sticker and separate pickup time.

Recycling
Keep your community green by recycling. East Lansing’s new cart system collects single-stream recycling on a bi-weekly schedule. The city also has drop-off recycling at the Public Works Building (1800 E. State Road), open 24/7 for all residents.

Snow & Ice
East Lansing is a pedestrian town, so keeping the sidewalks clear is very important. Check your lease to see if you are responsible for shoveling and snow removal in general. As a good rule of thumb, snow occurring before noon must be cleared by midnight of the same day. Snow falling after noon must be cleared by midnight of the following day. When in doubt, shovel for safety!

Lawn Care
Contribute to the ambiance of the East Lansing community by keeping your lawn neat and trimmed. Ask your landlord who is responsible for yard maintenance. Grass and weeds can be no higher than 6 inches. Please keep trees and shrubs trimmed back, so sidewalks and street corners are not physically or visually obstructed. If your yard is growing out of control, you may receive a violation notice and a ticket.

Over-occupancy
Any property that you rent in the City of East Lansing must be licensed and will be issued a licensed occupancy. Ask your property owner where the license is posted onsite and confirm the maximum occupancy posted on the license.

Occupancy levels are set according to local zoning laws and are not necessarily determined by the number of apparent bedrooms. Also keep in mind that if a basement or attic has a single means of exit, it cannot be utilized as a sleeping room.

Furniture & Pools
The City of East Lansing restricts all non-outdoor furniture in open spaces, including any open porch, balcony, patio or lawn. This includes furniture and lawn games that are visible to neighbors. Additionally, pools, hot tubs, or spas are not allowed to be placed in front or side yards. If you are found in violation, you will receive a warning giving you two to three days to remove the furniture. If it is not removed, a ticket can be issued with a maximum fine of $1000.

PARKING
Parking in East Lansing neighborhoods is very limited. Keep the following in mind when parking your car:

It is illegal to park on a lawn, block a driveway, park over a sidewalk, park backward on a city street, or park on a city street between 2 am and 6 am. You may be ticketed and towed at your expense if you park in public areas during restricted hours or on private property without permission.
WHERE'S THE PARTY?
PARTY GUIDELINES

Alcohol

In Michigan it is illegal to possess, consume, purchase, or have alcohol in your system if you are under 21 years of age. Minors in possession of alcohol can be issued a misdemeanor citation or even arrested.

East Lansing has a strict open container law, which applies to everyone, even for people 21 and older. Walking around with open alcohol on sidewalks or other public spaces can result in a ticket or even an arrest.

It is also illegal to sell alcohol without a license. Providing a common source of alcohol or selling cups at a party are examples of selling alcohol without a license.

In 2012, the Michigan Liquor Control Code was amended to allow for medical amnesty for individuals who were not 21 years of age, but needed medical assistance. A full breakdown of medical amnesty is available: http://www.olin.msu.edu/pdfs/MedicalAmnestyQA.pdf

Having a Party?

Hosting a party is a big responsibility. Behaviors that draw attention to your party include excessive noise, drinking, and littering.

Beyond creating tension with your neighbors, parties can often result in a police response and an issuing of citations to residents of the property.

If you are hosting a party, you are responsible for the behavior of your guests, even if you do not know them. This is especially true if there is alcohol at the party. The most common party-related offenses include:

- Providing alcohol to a minor
- Noise violations
- Minors in possession of alcohol
- Selling alcohol without a license (which includes selling cups)
- Littering
- Disorderly conduct
- Urinating in public
- Operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated

Key Party Tips

Notify your neighbors of your party plans. Exchange phone numbers and have neighbors contact you or your roommates if they have problems with your party. Remember, your neighbors do not have to tolerate loud noise just because you informed them in advance.

Designate a person to control music volume, access to the party and outside disturbances. Encourage that person to stay sober so they can effectively monitor the party and talk to police or neighbors who call or come over.

Control access and limit the size of your party. Keep out “randoms” who are only there to drink and cause problems. You are responsible for your guests, whether you know them or not! Call the police for assistance in removing unwanted persons from your property.

Get a safe ride home by calling a taxi service approved through the Greater Lansing Taxi Authority. Keep taxi information or apps ready on your cell phone.

Be cooperative with police, neighbors and others who may come by to discuss problems your party is causing. This may circumvent multiple citations.

Clean up party trash in your yard, your neighbor’s yard and on streets and sidewalks nearby. Parking and Code Enforcement (PACE) Officers can issue litter fines and tickets can range between $50 to $400.

Check for cigarette butts. Look in and around trashcans and upholstered furniture for smoldering cigarette butts, a very common cause of fatal fires.

Registering your Party with ELPD

If you live in the City of East Lansing itself, you can register your party with the police department by calling 517-319-6897. When you register your party, you will provide the name of a contact person that the police can talk to should they need to respond to the event. While registering your party does not grant you immunity, it does demonstrate a willingness on your part to solve problems in advance. If things get out of control, call 517-351-4220 for help.
Violations, from Noise to Nuisance Gatherings

Any time a noise or party-related ticket is issued to a resident in the City of East Lansing, a letter is sent to the owner of the property in order to keep them in the loop. If a property receives multiple misdemeanor or civil infraction tickets, a hearing may take place to determine what conditions will be placed on the rental license. Some large parties get incredibly out of hand. These nuisance gatherings can result in an enhanced penalty for the host(s). If more than 50 people are present and two of the following factors are present, it is considered a misdemeanor offense with a steep penalty:

- Common source of alcohol
- Disc jockey, live band or other entertainment
- A charge to enter the residence to consume alcohol or purchase a cup
- Amplified sound emanating from speakers directed outward or placed outside the building
- Outdoor drinking games with alcohol involved

Riot Legislation and Fire Ordinance

Michigan passed an anti rioting law in 2000. If you are convicted of engaging in riotous behavior – which includes observing – the minimum penalty is automatic suspension for at least 12 months from all universities supported by the state. If a party or gathering gets out of hand, it’s best to go home.

In East Lansing it is illegal to stand within 300 feet of a structure fire, vehicle fire or unlawful fire unless you are attempting to contain the fire or put it out. For the full ordinance language, visit http://www.cityofeastlansing.com/390/Need-to-Know-Ordinances
STAYING SAFE

The greater East Lansing area is home to tens of thousands of people. It’s a great community with lots to do socially. Safety and well-being are important concerns of all campus community stakeholders.

Personal Safety

You can do your part to stay safe, with minimal effort:

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Lock doors and windows when headed out. Be certain to lock the door to your dwelling before heading to sleep. While this is a very safe community, turning the lock can stop crimes of opportunity.
- When traveling at night or to and from parties, stick with friends or let someone know where you are headed.
- Travel in well-lit areas whenever possible.
- Consider adding exterior lighting such as motion lights and have interior lights on a timer when you leave town.
- Register your bicycle with police. This helps with recovery in case of theft.
- Lock your car doors and do not leave valuable items visible.
- Sign up for local emergency alerts at local.nixle.com
- If you are curious about crime rates in your neighborhood, visit cityofeastlansing.com/358/ Crime-Mapping
- Check your gut. If something doesn’t feel right, remove yourself from the situation.
- Do not hesitate to call for help. Apart from 911, you can contact the following non-emergency police numbers:
  East Lansing Police Department 517-351-4220
  Meridian Township Police Department 517-332-6526
  Bath Township Police Department 517-641-6271

Sexual Assault & Relationship Violence

Any community member has access to MSU’s Sexual Assault Hotline at 517-372-6666. This line is free and confidential and available 24/7. It is a direct link to support, medical advocacy and information. You may also visit endrape.msu.edu

MSU SAFE PLACE and EVE (End Violent Encounters, Inc.) are key local resources for relationship violence. For free confidential information or shelter, immediate support, and advocacy call 517-372-5571. You may also visit safeplace.msu.edu or www.eveinc.org

Fire Safety

Smoke Detectors save lives. You must have a working smoke detector in every sleeping room, outside every sleeping room, and on every level of your residence. Disabling or tampering with your detector or alarm system is a crime. Test detectors monthly and change batteries twice a year. Detectors more than 10 years old are no longer acceptable.

Overloaded Outlets are a major cause of fires. Never use extension cords in place of permanent wiring. Use a power strip directly plugged into the wall. Do not use multiple plug adapters or “gang plugs.” Do not remove the ground prong of the plug or use an adapter to plug a three-pronged plug into a two-pronged receptacle. Doing so is both a fire and electrocution hazard.

Cigarettes are the leading cause of fatal fires. Never discard smoking material into a trash can. Instead, use a solid, non-combustible ashtray or run materials under water to make certain they are extinguished. Do not discard butts into wood chips or mulch – both are highly combustible.

Candles and Incense Burners must be used with care. You are responsible for all fires that you light. Blow out/extinguish these products whenever you leave a room, even if it’s just for a few moments.

Fire alarms give you an early warning to leave. Exit the building immediately. Waiting, even for mere seconds, can mean the difference between escaping and being trapped by smoke and fire. Do NOT assume it’s “just a false alarm.”

Careless cooking is the leading cause of fires in the greater East Lansing area and nation-wide. The easiest way to prevent kitchen fires is to stay in the kitchen while cooking. This is critical if you are using grease for frying. Keep a lid available for all of the pans on the stove. Do NOT use water on a grease fire – it can make the fire worse. Put a lid on your pan or use a fire extinguisher. Do NOT attempt to pick up the pan, as it can result in severe burns and make the fire worse.
TICKETS & LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Despite your best intentions, you may find yourself with a parking ticket or needing legal representation. If you receive a ticket from the East Lansing Police Department or the MSU Police, you will need to pay or answer to the ticket at the 54-B District Court (101 Linden St. in East Lansing). If another police department issued your ticket, be sure to look at your ticket to see which court will handle fines and appearances.

Civil Infraction
Respond within 4-10 days. Pay the ticket; admit responsibility with a written explanation. If you deny responsibility, you’ll be scheduled for an informal hearing.

Misdemeanor
Appear in court to be arraigned within 4-10 days. You’ll plead guilty or non guilty in front of a judge. If you plead not guilty, you’ll be scheduled for a pre-trial to discuss your case.

Parking tickets
Parking tickets must be paid within 14 days. Accumulation of three or more outstanding parking violations or two or more handicap parking violations may result in a suspension of the registered owner’s driver’s license. For further details visit cityofeastlansing.com/734/Ticket-Options

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

Just because you do not live in a residence hall it doesn’t mean you have lost your connection to campus. Apart from attending classes, seeing advisors and pursuing your academic goals, it’s important to get the full collegiate experience by engaging with campus opportunities.

Activities and Organizations
MSU has more than 660 registered student organizations, from sports clubs to political and social groups, from Greek letter organizations to service and volunteer clubs, from cultural and racial/ethnic groups to public relations and media organizations. Find more info at studentlife.msu.edu

Governance
MSU is home to a number of governing bodies, from the Associated Students of MSU (asmsu.msu.edu) to The Council of Graduate Students (cogs.msu.edu). MSU’s colleges also have their own governing systems.

Health Services
Olin Health Center and The MSU Counseling Center provide comprehensive care for all MSU students, no matter where you live. Utilize these core resources whenever you need to. More information is available at olin.msu.edu and counseling.msu.edu

North Neighborhood Engagement Center
If you lived on MSU’s campus at some point in your academic career, you might have utilized the resources of the neighborhood engagement centers (study lounges, tutoring, fitness, etc.). Those engagement centers are still open to you. The North Neighborhood is the official engagement center for the off campus population, but you are welcome to use the services of any of the five centers: neighborhoods.msu.edu
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

You are part of a vibrant community and you have a lot to contribute to it. Here are some easy ways to connect.

Voting
Students are encouraged to vote while living in the local community. It is easy to register and as elections arrive there are ample options on and off campus to get educated about candidates, policies and issues. Depending on your exact new mailing address, you will vote in East Lansing, Meridian Township or Bath Township. Each of those locales has a clerk who handles elections. Ready to get started? Check out one of these sites: cityofeastlansing.com/192/Election-Info youvotecentral.msu.edu Michigan.gov/vote

Community Relations Coalition
Student-residents comprise a large chunk of the area’s population and can be a very positive force in the community. Established in the fall of 1999, the CRC was created to help build lasting relationships and connections between students, permanent residents, MSU and the City of East Lansing. Along with a Board of Directors, the CRC is comprised of paid student interns who live in core neighborhoods close to campus and work as strategic resource people. For additional information or to apply to be an intern visit wealllivehere.org

Service Learning
MSU is home to the Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement. If you want to contribute to your new community and prepare for lifelong civic and social responsibility, visit servicelearning.msu.edu
IMPORTANT CONTACTS

54-B District Court - Traffic Division  (517) 351-4568
54-B District Court - Criminal Division  (517) 336-8630
54-B District Court - Parking Division  (517) 351-7022
ASMSU Legal Services  (517) 353-3716
MSU Rental Housing Clinic  (517) 336-8088
East Lansing Fire Department (Non-emergency)  (517) 332-1956
East Lansing police (Non-emergency)  (517) 351-4220
Parking & Code Enforcement (PACE)  (517) 351-4220
Department of Public Works (DPW)  (517) 337-9459
Rental Issues / Property Maintenance  (517) 319-6801
Meridian Township
      Police Department (Non-emergency)  (517) 332-6526
      Fire Department (Non-emergency)  (517) 272-6026
      Clerk  (517) 853-4324
Bath Township
      Police Department (Non-emergency)  (517) 641-6271
      Fire Department (Non-emergency)  (517) 641-7811
      Clerk  (517) 641-6728

Big house, condo, a room, studio, a couch, basement, town home, an apartment,

Connect with student, faculty and staff tenants via www.offcampushousing.msu.edu

Off-Campus Partners is Michigan State University’s only sanctioned website to connect Spartans with local housing options.
MSU’s COMMUNITY LIAISON provides information and resources for students during their college experience in East Lansing. For assistance or to learn more, visit collegelifeEL.msu.edu or call (517) 432-7527.