

2023/24 Off Campus Living & Financial Aid

When students move off campus, both charges and financial aid eligibility will be impacted. The information that follows pertains to the 2023/24 academic year and can be used as a general guideline only. Specific questions should be directed to the student's assigned financial aid counselor.

How Aid Levels Are Calculated

At Union, financial aid eligibility is calculated by subtracting the family contribution, as determined by aid application materials, from Union's total cost of attendance. The remaining amount is what we award in a financial aid package comprised of scholarship/grant, student loans and work study.

Impact on Financial Aid Eligibility

The 2023/24 on-campus cost of attendance is \$84,870. This includes the billable charges of \$82,845 (the comprehensive fee) and an estimate of \$2,025 for books and personal expenses.

The 2023/24 off-campus cost of attendance is \$83,370. This includes the billable charges of \$68,637 (comprehensive fee with room and board credits deducted), an estimated book and personal expense allowance of \$2,025, and a living allowance of \$12,708. Because the cost of attendance decreases for students living off campus by \$1,500, the total aid/scholarship eligibility decreases by the same amount. **Exception:** Students receiving only a Presidential Scholarship, the Making U Possible Grant, or a Yellow Ribbon Scholarship will receive their entire award.

Impact on Charges

Students living off campus are charged the regular comprehensive fee; however, their student account will then be credited with a housing rebate and an off campus board/meal plan rebate. The housing rebate for 2023/24 is \$8,124 and the board/meal plan rebate is \$6,084. Both rebates reduce the total comprehensive fee from \$82,845 to \$68,637.

The difference in billable charges (comprehensive fee only) between students living off-campus and students living on-campus is \$14,208. Taking into account that living off-campus will reduce grant eligibility by \$1,500, the net difference is \$12,708. This means, generally speaking, unless a student living off-campus can do so for less than approximately \$1059 per month ($\$12,708 \div 12$ months), it is not financially advantageous to move off-campus.

[**Note:** Students do not have to opt out of the meal plan, but can choose from one of the on-campus dining plans or select the specialized off-campus meal plan (the 20 Block Plan).

Students keeping the traditional meal plan will not see the board rebate on their account. Students who opt-in to the 20 Block Plan will see the board/meal plan rebate, but they will also see a \$250/per term charge for that specialized plan. Please refer to the [Union College Hospitality website](#) for information on this specialized meal plan.]

When considering a move off-campus, keep in mind the following:

- Though financial aid eligibility is impacted by living off-campus, what really drives student aid eligibility is the family contribution as discussed above under the heading “How Aid is Awarded”. This means that if income/asset levels will increase when you are planning to live off-campus, or if your sibling will no longer be enrolled as an undergraduate, then you will see a decrease in eligibility regardless of where you live. In such cases, it is best to meet with your assigned financial aid counselor.
- Landlords will generally require you to pay rent for 12-months even though you may not be living in the apartment year-round.
- Unless all utilities are included, you need to investigate the additional cost of those expenses (heat, hot water, electricity, cable, wi-fi, etc.) Also, students opting out of meal plans should include food expenses when budgeting.
- If you will be participating in a term abroad while living off-campus, you will be charged the full on-campus charges for the term away.

Financial aid may be used to assist with off-campus living expenses only when the awarded aid exceeds charges. In such circumstances, keep in mind the following:

- Students should make sure that they are starting the upcoming academic year with a zero balance. Any balance carried forward from a prior year will affect a potential refund.
- Any other miscellaneous charges to your tuition account (bookstore purchases, meal plan additions, health service fees, etc.) will impact any potential refund.
- Financial aid disburses to all student accounts at the start of each term provided all financial aid components are finalized. For Parent PLUS Loans, Private Alternative Loans and Union Loans, all paperwork must be completed electronically over the summer. For federal Direct Loans, students need to “accept” loans on Self-Service and first-time borrowers need to make sure the Master Promissory Note and Entrance Counseling are completed prior to the start of term.
- If there is a credit balance on a student’s account, they will be contacted by the Bursar’s Office regarding the refund.
- If the student’s parent has taken a Parent PLUS loan that generates the credit balance, the parent will be notified of the credit balance by the Bursar’s Office.
- Refund checks can take several weeks to process, so students need to budget accordingly.