

PCH FAQ 2015-2016

1. What is the difference between the Private and Public Housing options?

- **RESIDENCE LIFE.** At the University, there are two kinds of housing located all throughout campus, that are both approved for freshman as part of the freshman campus live in requirement. There is University Housing, which includes the University owned traditional residence halls, and there is Private Certified Housing (PCH). PCH units are privately owned and operated, and are certified by the University for freshman as well as upperclassmen. In order to maintain certification with the University, PCH facilities must meet certain requirements including offering dining plans, as well as residence life staff and community programming. Many fraternity and sorority houses are also certified, but housing is usually tied to membership, and most incoming freshman are not yet members.
- **AMENITIES.** Private Certified Housing units have a large variety of amenities and floorplans to choose from. Some facilities are suite-style with kitchens and living rooms, while others are smaller cooperative houses. Most of them have private bathrooms, with a suite of 4-6 people sharing one smaller bathroom unit (one shower, one toilet, approx. 2 sinks), rather than a community style bathroom found in traditional residence halls.
- **DINING.** In most all PCH facilities, residents have a dining hall located in their facility and have flexible meal plans to choose from. Some facilities even allow for a multi-site dining plan with other PCH facilities. This is comparable to University Housing, where Residents have flexibility, in that they can eat at any of the 7 University Dining Hall locations.

2. Is Private Certified Housing better than University Housing?

- There isn't necessarily one that is better, it more about what is the best fit for you and your personal preferences. For example, it may be important to one person to have a private bathroom, while others may not have a preference at all. Others may want access to a kitchenette, though some people may not have any interest in cooking. Additionally, some residents like having access to a dining hall within their residence hall, while others prefer to be able to eat at other locations, even if they don't have a dining hall in their facility. Regardless, we are confident that University offers something for everybody, whether in University owned or Private Certified facilities.

3. Can I live in a fraternity or a sorority as an incoming freshman?

- Yes, but most Greek houses have a membership requirement to live in their house. Sometimes incoming freshman male students are able to move right into their chapter's house starting in the fall, but that's not incredibly common. Additionally, please note that [not all Greek houses are certified to house freshman.](#)

- If a student joins a fraternity or sorority and wants to move into their chapter's house, they are allowed to do so as a freshman, but there are certain guidelines they must follow. *They cannot switch from one non-Greek Private Certified Housing unit to a Greek unit without incurring some form of financial penalty.*

4. What happens if I get to campus and don't like where I'm living?

- The University has a [Reciprocal Program](#) which allows new students to make one switch during the academic year between University Housing and Private Certified Housing. As long as you make the change by the proper dates for the given semester, you will not incur a financial penalty when making a move.
- You **CANNOT** make a move between two PCH units with the Reciprocal. You will most likely be liable for the terms of both leases if you do.

5. I'm a new student and I don't know where I want to live yet, but I want to make sure I get housing. What do I do?

- If you are a new freshman, you are guaranteed housing in University Housing. If you're undecided between a certain Private Certified unit and the University Residence Halls, we encourage you to visit the facilities in person and take a [tour](#), or take a tour online, so you can get a feel for the community and living environment. If you decide on one, and then change your mind, you are able to use the [Reciprocal](#) to cancel one contract with no penalty if you do so by the proper dates. You are not be able to use the Reciprocal program with two PCH contracts, **please only contract with one PCH.**

6. Are Private Certified Housing units on campus?

- Yes, they [are all on the UIUC campus](#), all are on or near bus routes, and all are within walking distance to the main quad.

7. What do I do if I'm bringing my car? Can I get parking there?

- Please contact the Private Certified Housing unit you will be living with to inquire about parking. They all have their own policies and rates. If they are unable to offer you parking, you can also contact Campus Parking at 217-333-3530 as well as the City of Urbana or the City of Champaign for further options.

8. If I live in Private Certified Housing, can I eat with my friends in the University Residence Halls?

- Yes, you can put Extra Credits on your I-Card and either eat at the a la carte locations or go to the University Dining facilities and eat breakfast, lunch or dinner. This can be done easily with a credit card at www.housing.illinois.edu if you click on the "Buy Extra Credits" link.

9. Can my friends from University Housing eat with me?

- Please speak with the people from your respective PCH unit to see about having friends in, most all of the facilities offer walk-in dining options for guests of residents.

10. Can I get a single in Private Certified Housing?

- Private Certified Housing units offer a variety of floorplans, including a number of single room options. Use our [Feature Comparison](#) to learn more about which facilities offer single rooms and other floor plans.

11. Can I have a contract with Private Certified Housing AND University Housing?

- We prefer that students contract with only one facility at a time, so as not to take space from other residents. If you do find yourself with dual contracts, please use the [Reciprocal](#) to cancel one of your contracts as soon as possible, as this cancellation must occur by the proper date to avoid penalties.
- If you have not cancelled one of the contracts before the academic year starts, you will be required to pay for at least part of both contracts.

12. Is Private Certified Housing more expensive?

- Most of the [rates](#) are comparable to University Housing, some are lower, and some are higher. It depends on the floorplan, amenities, and meal plans.