

TIPS FOR CAMPUS VISITS



<https://nccsd.ici.umn.edu/>

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Know Before You Go

Before you make any final decisions, compare financial aid packages, and try to visit campuses to see if they are a good fit. Check their websites to know what they offer. Some campuses also have “virtual” tours if you can’t afford to visit.

When you get there, here are some places to visit if you have a disability. If you can’t visit, consider calling these places with questions.

- **Disability Resource Center or DRC** (sometimes called “Access Services”). Contact them before you go since they’re busy offices. See the list of questions on the back of this handout to use when meeting with them.
- **Health services**, if you may need medical care.
- **Counseling services**, to see what they offer if you are stressed, need counseling or support, or want a referral to psychiatrists or psychologists off campus.
- **A computer lab and WiFi around campus**—can you get online easily?
- **The student center** because this is where you will spend a lot of free time, and it usually is a good indicator of campus climate. Do you feel at home here? Is the food good? Which student activities are happening?
- **The library** is where you will do research and spend a lot of time studying. Does it seem to be accessible? Are there private rooms available? Do the librarians seem friendly? Ask about orientations for new students, too.
- **Recreation services/athletics**, to see if there are wheelchair-accessible and other facilities for staying fit.
- **The dorms** (if you will live on campus—which is highly recommended) - try the food, see the rooms, check out the bathrooms, find out if you can keep a fridge, or other disability-related equipment. Talk to the DRC if you will definitely need a single or if you plan to have a service animal or personal care attendant living with you.
- **Sexual assault services** or the campus security office, to find out about campus safety, regardless of your gender—and whether campus police have training in dealing with people of different races and disabilities.
- **Career services**, to find out what they can offer you and if they have experience working with disabled students.
- **The bulletin boards around campus** to see what’s happening socially on campus and in the community, and whether fliers have a statement about offering accommodations to people with disabilities.



Alternative Campus Visits

- Look for online video tours of campus from their sites or YouTube
- Ask the Admissions office if you can talk with undergraduates in majors that interest you.
- Talk with the different offices by phone, Facetime, etc.

Resources for Your College Search

CEDAR database of college Disability Resource Centers across the country: <https://cedardatabase.org>

College Navigator from the Department of Education: <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

NCCSD’s **Paying for College** page: <https://nccsd.ici.umn.edu/clearinghouse/financial-aid/paying-for-college>

Questions to Ask on Campus

Here are a few questions for you to ask as you visit various places on campus. To think of other questions you might want to ask, sit down and imagine your perfect campus. What questions would help you find this place? Also brainstorm with trusted people in your life who know you well. What do they want you to ask?

For Admissions/Campus Visits Office:

Is this campus welcoming for students who have disabilities?

Are there student organizations or cultural centers on campus for students with disabilities?

Are there very many disabled professors on campus?

For DRC:

Is this campus welcoming for students who have disabilities?

What percentage of students have disabilities?

How much experience does the DRC staff and the campus faculty and staff have with students who have my type of disability?

If I need tutoring, can disability services help me get access to the tutoring centers on campus?

Do computers in the computer labs have the access features, equipment or software I need?

If I need a therapist, equipment repair, medical care, a personal care attendant, etc. can the DRC assist?

Can I register early for classes due to my disability?

How would you help me communicate with professors about my disability, or assist if problems come up?

Accessibility for Your Visit

Check with the Campus Visits or Admissions office to make sure their tours are accessible. They're responsible for access. Ask about:

- Wheelchair accessible parking, routes, ramps buildings and bathrooms
- Accessible printed materials
- Sign Language interpreters
- Captioned videos or films that they might show
- Allergy-free, low-sugar and other options for meals if included
- Scent-free environments
- A contact person for access questions



What does Disability Resources need?

Disability Resources officials will not look for you—they will expect you to go to them and register for services. They'll want to know about you, including interests, hobbies, and career plans, and they'll ask how your disability will affect your life in college, in classes, dorms, and activities.

They will ask if you have any "disability documentation" like a doctor's report, a copy of your special education IEP or 504 Plan, a psychologist's report, or other test results. Get new reports or documentation while you're in high school because it'll be paid by the school district or covered under your parents' insurance.



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