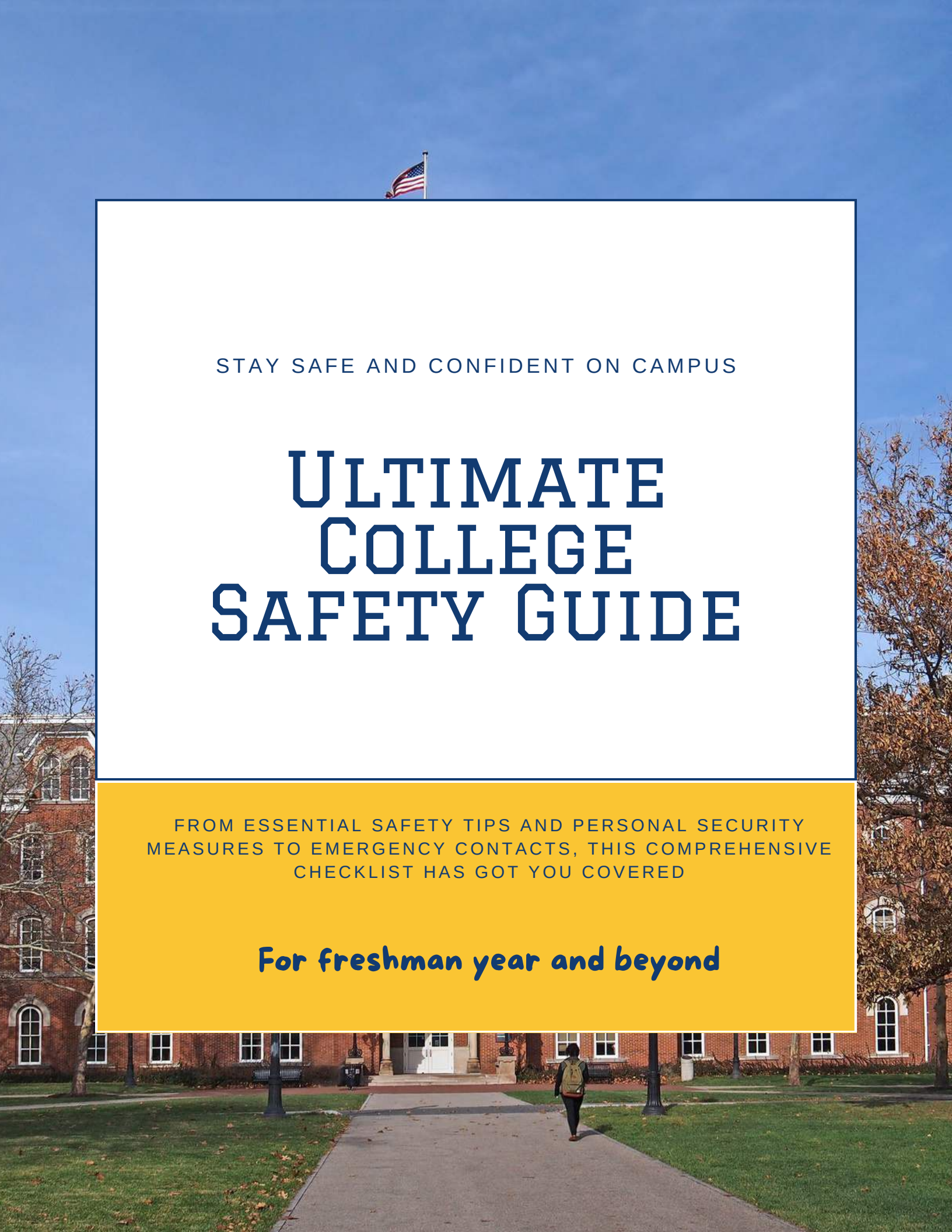


STAY SAFE AND CONFIDENT ON CAMPUS

Ultimate College Safety Guide

FROM ESSENTIAL SAFETY TIPS AND PERSONAL SECURITY MEASURES TO EMERGENCY CONTACTS, THIS COMPREHENSIVE CHECKLIST HAS GOT YOU COVERED

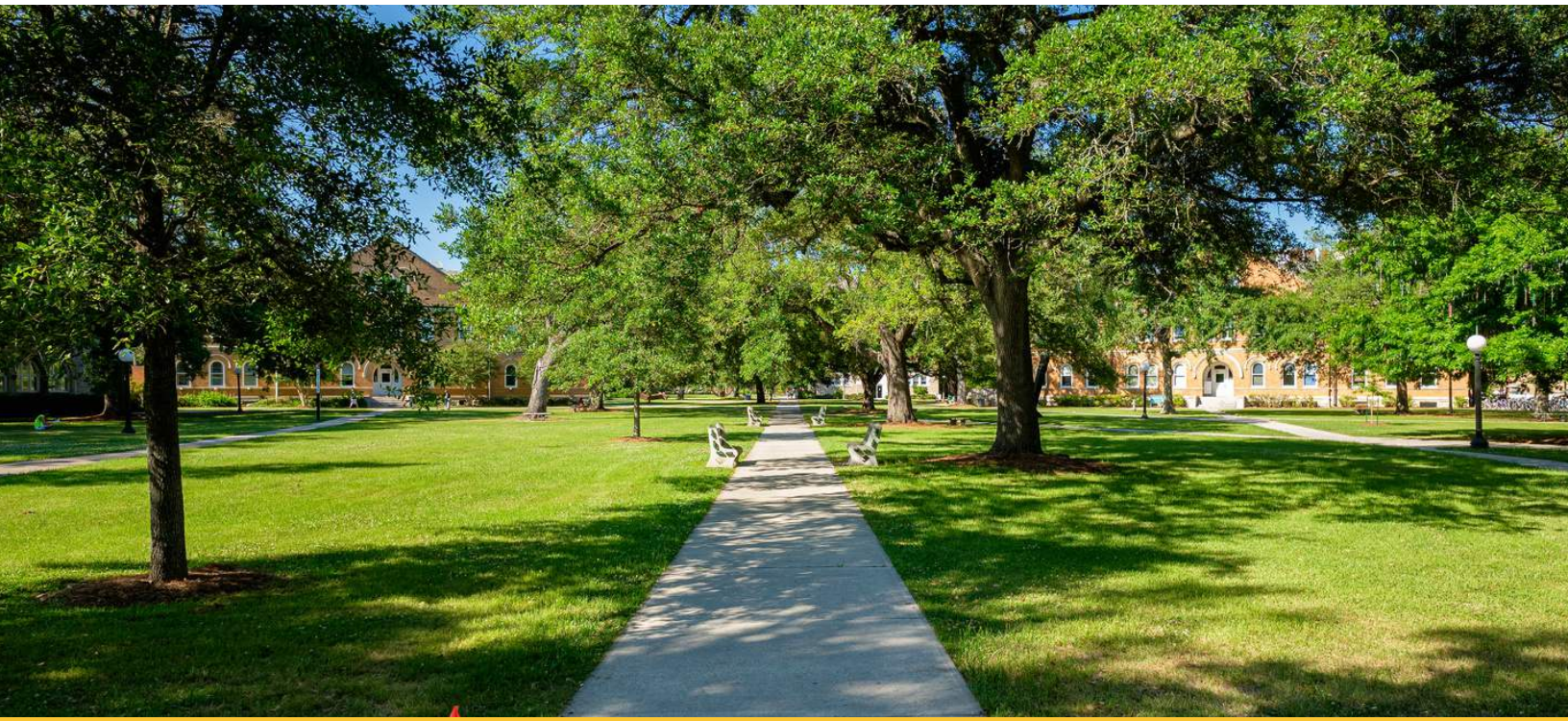
For freshman year and beyond

Welcome to EmpowerU's Ultimate College Safety Checklist!

Starting college is an exciting adventure, filled with new experiences and opportunities. But with all the excitement, it's important to stay mindful of your safety. At EmpowerU, we're dedicated to helping you navigate this new chapter with confidence and security. Our Ultimate College Safety checklist is designed to provide you with actionable steps you can start using immediately to ensure your safety both on and off campus.

Try them out and see what works best for you. There's no one size fits all in personal safety. EmpowerU provides you with safety options and YOU decide what and when to use them.

Let's embark on this journey together and make your college experience not only memorable but also safe and empowering.



Here are some safety measures to help you on your journey to campus and beyond

1. Personal Safety Measures

- **Know your exits:** Familiarize yourself with all the exits in spaces you frequent. Think of buildings and outdoor areas you frequent. What is the fastest way you could leave that space?
- **Buddy system:** There is strength in numbers. Walking with another person can dissuade an attacker but you should both remain aware of your surroundings. If possible, walk within shouting distance of other people when alone at night.
- **Emergency contacts:** Save campus security and local emergency numbers in your phone.
- **Pepper Spray:** I do not advocate relying on commercial safety objects but if it gives you peace of mind to carry one, know if it is legal to carry, know how to use it and practice. Good alternatives are a flashlight and/or a personal safety alarm. Flashlights can act as a light, a signaling device, a distraction by shining it in a person's eyes or to add heft to a strike. An alarm acts as a distraction and signaling to device.
- **Self-defense knowledge:** Add at end, In person learning of physical techniques is best but a good alternative is to take an online course and practice with a friend.
- **Personal locator apps:** Use apps that allow trusted friends and family to track your location in real-time.

2. DORM ROOM SECURITY

- **Lock Doors and Windows:** Always lock your doors and windows, even when you're inside. It’s common to keep dorm room doors open to be social but, when you are alone or ready to go to sleep, it’s time to lock up just like at home. This one tip has saved many students from a potential assault or misunderstanding of entering the wrong room!

- **Roommate Agreement:** Discuss and agree on safety measures with your roommate. Create rules for having visitors in your room and sharing of each other’s things. Having agreements in place before a situation arises goes a long way to living together peacefully.

- **Personal Safe:** Use a personal safe for valuables like your passport, cash, and electronics. Store it in a place out of sight that only you know about it. If you have to share the location with a friend, change it afterwards.

- **Visitor Policy**: Enjoy being social but be mindful of who and when you let someone in your personal space. If you feel uncomfortable, have them leave. If they resist, double down and make them leave. A person with good intentions will respect your wishes.

- **Door Stop Alarm:** Consider using a door stop alarm for added security when you’re inside, , these have stopped many unwanted late night visitors.

3. CAMPUS SAFETY TIPS

- **Campus Map:** Know the layout of your campus, including safe routes and emergency stations, dedicated safe routes.

- **Safety Apps:** Does your campus have a safety app? Check it out!

- **Campus Security Services:** Try your campus safety escort service or late night shuttle. They are there for you!

- **Well-Lit Paths:** Stick to well-lit and populated paths, especially at night.

- C**ommunity People** are more likely to help someone they know so get to know the people you see regularly around campus. A simple hello everyday opens the door to a safe space you may need later.

4. ONLINE SAFETY

- **Privacy Settings:** Adjust privacy settings on social media to limit who can see your information. VPN, a virtual private network. There are many companies out there but, for 2024, Proton VPN received high marks for college students in terms of price and ease of use.

- **Strong Passwords:** Use strong, unique passwords for all accounts and change them regularly.

- **Avoid Public Wi-Fi:** Be cautious when using public Wi-Fi networks; consider a VPN.

- **Beware of Scams:** Be aware of phishing scams and never share personal information online. If a text or email looks suspicious it probably is! Report it to your campus IT department.

- **Two-Factor Authentication:** Enable two-factor authentication on all important accounts.

- **Beware of Scams:** If a text or email looks suspicious it probably is! Report it to your campus IT department

5. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- **Mental Health Resources:** Know where to find mental health resources and support services on campus. Their job is to support you so take advantage of these services and know your rights to confidentiality.

- **Healthy Habits:** Maintain a balanced diet, regular exercise, and sufficient sleep. Discover the offerings on your campus for whole foods and movement classes and try something new! Most campuses include these options in your meal plan and tuition costs. For sleep, install blackout shades in your dorm room.

- **Stay Hydrated:** Always carry a water bottle and stay hydrated. Fun fact; a water bottle can act as an effective self-defense tool either as a striking device or a distraction. Think of throwing a beverage in an attacker's face!

- **Stress Management:** Practice stress management techniques like meditation, deep breathing, or yoga, that you can practice anywhere, in class, your room or on public transportation!

- **Mindfulness Apps:** Use mindfulness and meditation apps to manage stress and stay focused. Many smart phones add them to your device for free!

6. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- **Emergency Plan:** Have an emergency plan and discuss it with friends and family. And share it with friends and family or something to the effect of keeping it on your device easily accessible. Who is the first person you would call?

- **First Aid Kit:** Keep a basic first aid kit in your dorm room or backpack.

- **Emergency kit.** Should include first aid kit, small flashlight and batteries, dust masks, plastic bags and duct tape, water and food like protein bars or trailmix OR keep it simple with a first aid kit including antibacterial wipes, hand sanitizer, adhesive bandages, non stick gauze, triple antibiotic ointment and ibuprofen or acetaminophen.

- **Fire Safety:** Know the fire safety procedures and locations of fire extinguishers in your dorm.

- **Active Shooter Awareness:** Familiarize yourself with campus procedures for active shooter situations.

- **Emergency Cash:** Keep a small amount of cash in different places for emergencies.

7. TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

- **Safe Rides:** Use campus shuttles or safe ride programs when available.
- **Car Safety:** Always lock your car doors and keep valuables out of sight. Park in a well lit place and close to your destination. If possible, back into your parking space for quicker access and exit.
- **Public Transportation:** Be aware of your surroundings and keep your belongings secure on public transit. Get to know which routes are reliable. Be aware of your surroundings…..If someone makes you uncomfortable, move away from them and closer to the exit. You are not being rude, just safe. Attackers rely on you being too polite or nervous to take action to protect yourself.
- **Bike Safety:** Use a sturdy lock and always secure your bike in designated areas. Use well lit bike paths and wear a helmet.
- **Ride-Share Safety:** Verify the license plate and driver details before getting into a ride-share vehicle. If the driver makes you uncomfortable, have them pull over in a well lit public area with people nearby and get out. Many a student has done this AND reported the driver to the ride share company.

8. SOCIAL SITUATIONS

- **Party Safety:** Never leave your drink unattended and don’t accept drinks from strangers. When in doubt, leave it.
- **Trusted Contacts:** Share your location with trusted friends or family members.
- **Check in with friends.** Get in the habit of checking in with your friends in a social situation. Ask if they are okay or having fun. If you arrived with friends, do not leave without checking in with them first.
- **Safe Words:** Establish a code word with friends to signal if you’re in an uncomfortable situation. Fun fact; some bars have safe words for patrons too!
- **Know Your Limits:** Be aware of your alcohol tolerance and never feel pressured to drink more than you're comfortable with.
- **Exit Plan:** Always have a plan for how you’ll get home safely before you go out.

9. LOCAL RESOURCES

- **Local Law Enforcement:** Know the contact information and location of the nearest police station.
- **Community Centers:** Familiarize yourself with nearby community centers or safe spaces.
- **Support Groups:** Join or identify local support groups for students.
- **Local Safety Hotlines:** Save important local hotlines, such as domestic violence or mental health support.

10. GOING BEYOND THE BASICS

Discover what is offered on campus or bring EmpowerU to your community!

- **Situational Awareness Training:** Attend workshops or seminars that teach advanced situational awareness techniques.
- **Self-Defense Workshops:** Participate in self-defense classes that offer practical and hands-on training.
- **Peer Support Networks:** Build or join peer support networks for shared safety strategies and mutual aid.
- **Personalized Safety Plans:** Develop personalized safety plans with the help of security experts or campus safety officers.

Essential Safety Tips checklist

Feeling prepared and confident on campus starts with the right knowledge and tools. Download our Ultimate College Safety Checklist today and take the first step toward a safer, more empowered college experience.

Sign up for our **3-Day Situational Awareness Challenge** to dive deeper into practical safety strategies and join a community committed to your well-being. Let's make this journey together!

Sign up

PERSONAL SAFETY MEASURES

- Be present. Always be attuned to your surroundings and the people in it.
- Be mindful. Let someone know where you are going.
- Be intuitive. If something feels off, it is. Listen to yourself and have an immediate exit plan.
- Know the locations of emergency call boxes on campus
- Keep your phone charged and carry a portable charger
- Use well lit and populated routes when walking at night
- If you wear headphones, turn the volume down or off in isolated areas
- If you carry a personal safety alarm, have it readily accessible
- Attend self-defense classes or workshops

ONLINE SECURITY

- Use strong, unique passwords for different accounts.
- Enable two-factor authentication on important accounts.
- Be cautious about sharing personal information online.
- Regularly update your privacy settings on social media.
- Avoid using public Wi-Fi for sensitive transactions.
- If a message or email looks suspicious send it to your campus IT department

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Familiarize yourself with campus safety protocols.
- Know the locations of the nearest exits and emergency shelters.
- Participate in campus safety drills.
- Keep an emergency kit in your dorm room (water, snacks, flashlight, first aid supplies).
- Save local emergency numbers in your phone.

For more tips, resources, and support, join our EmpowerU community and sign up for our upcoming **3-Day Situational Awareness Challenge**. Together, we can make your college experience both safe and empowering.

Sign up

LOCAL RESOURCES

FILL IN YOUR IMPORTANT LOCAL SERVICES AND EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Campus Security:
Phone: _____
Address: _____

Local Police Department:
Phone: _____
Address: _____

Local Fire Department:
Phone: _____
Address: _____

Campus Health Center:
Phone: _____
Address: _____

Nearest Hospital:
Phone: _____
Address: _____

Local Mental Health Services:
Phone: _____
Address: _____

Campus Counseling Services:
Phone: _____
Address: _____

Local Taxi/Ride Share Service:
Phone: _____
Address: _____

Emergency Contact 1:
Name: _____
Phone: _____
Relationship: _____

Emergency Contact 2:
Name: _____
Phone: _____
Relationship: _____

LINKS AND RESOURCES:

Personal Safety Measures

- Personal Safety Alarm or Whistle: Birdie Personal Safety Alarm
- Portable Charger: Anker PowerCore 10000 Portable Charger
- Self-Defense Classes or Workshops: Check local community centers or Krav Maga Worldwide
- Safety Apps: bSafe, Noonlight

Online Security

- Password Manager: LastPass, 1Password
- Two-Factor Authentication App: Authy, Google Authenticator
- Privacy Settings Guide for Social Media: Facebook Privacy Settings, Instagram Privacy Settings

Emergency Preparedness

- Emergency Kit: Ready America Emergency Kit
- First Aid Supplies: First Aid Only All-Purpose First Aid Kit

Fill In Your Important Local Services and Emergency Numbers

- Emergency Kit: Ready America Emergency Kit
- First Aid Supplies: First Aid Only All-Purpose First Aid Kit

Additional Resources

- Campus Safety Apps: SafeZone, LiveSafe
- Ride Share Services: Uber, Lyft