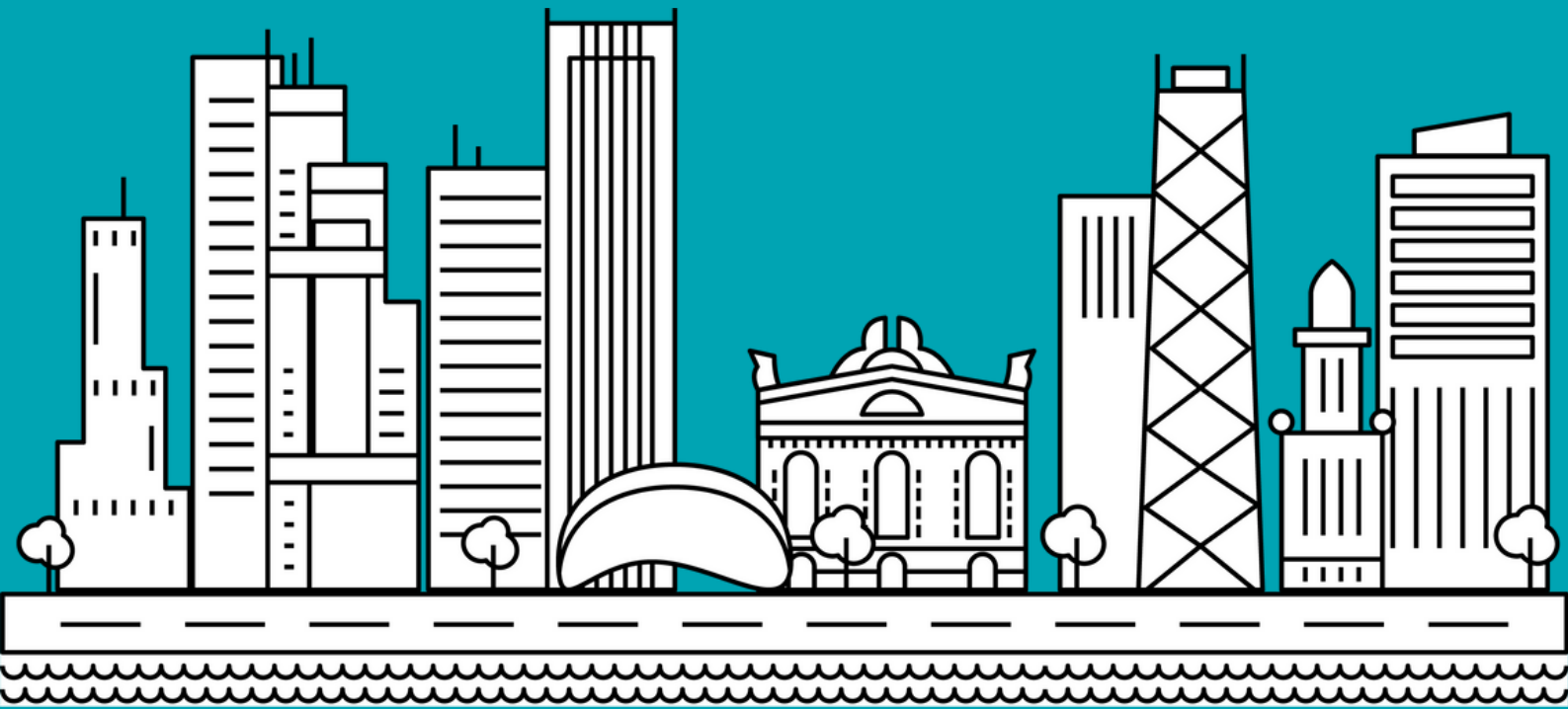




CITY YEAR CHICAGO HOUSING MANUAL



CONGRATS ON YOUR DECISION TO SERVE WITH CITY YEAR, AND WELCOME TO CHICAGO!

We are very excited to have you join our team and to share our city with you.

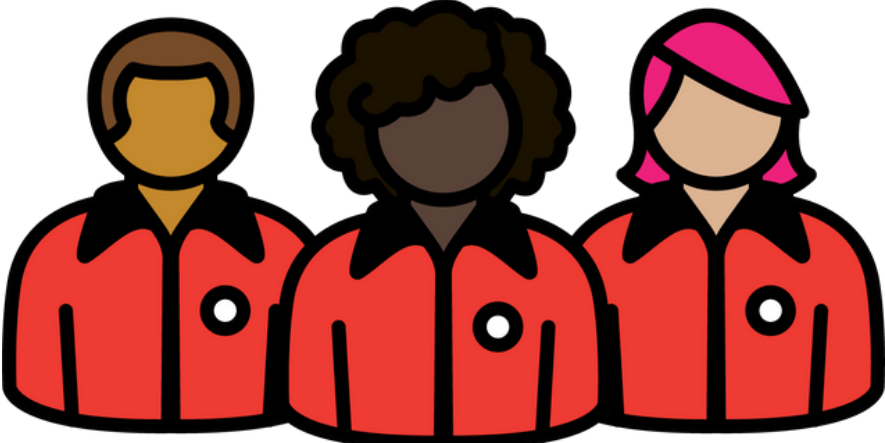
Whether you are moving to Chicago from across the country or are already here, this housing manual is a resource to answer your logistical questions and provide information about Chicago’s many neighborhoods.

WHILE FINDING HOUSING AND ROOMING ARE ULTIMATELY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, WE WANT TO PROVIDE YOU WITH SOME RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUR SEARCH.

Take a look at the following information, and reach out to us with any questions!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STEP 1: PREPARE YOUR BUDGET	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· A breakdown of ACM living situations and rent from last year	PAGE 3
STEP 2: RESEARCH CHICAGO'S DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Map of Chicago neighborhoods and City Year schools· Descriptions of popular Chicago neighborhoods	PAGES 4-5 PAGES 6 - 10
STEP 3: CONNECT WITH FUTURE ROOMMATES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Link to slack group· Advice from past City Year corps members	PAGE 11
STEP 4: LOCATE HOUSING (& RESOURCES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Tips and tricks for finding Housing· City Year Chicago Housing Partnerships	PAGES 12-14



STEP 1: PREPARE YOUR BUDGET



Living on a stipend means budgeting out your spending. Before looking for housing, it is important to know what you can afford in rent. Often, corps members live with roommates which can drastically lower the amount paid in monthly rent.

Most apartments will require first month's rent and a security deposit on move in - so start saving at least \$1000+ now to be safe!

To give you an idea of what you should plan on spending, review the info below we gathered from last year's corps:



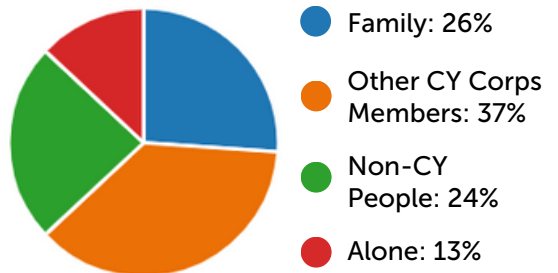
MOST PEOPLE WHO LIVE WITH ROOMMATES PAID AROUND \$600-\$900 A MONTH FOR RENT (PLUS < \$100 IN UTILITIES)

People that lived alone all paid over \$900/month - and some even \$1500/month in just rent alone!

MOST CORPS MEMBERS LIVED IN A 2-3 BEDROOM APARTMENT WITH 1-2 ROOMMATES

Others lived at home with family, and a few lived with 3-4 roommates!

Who do CY Corps Members live with?



THE CHEAPEST MOST COMMON NEIGHBORHOODS THAT CORPS MEMBERS LIVED IN WERE HUMBOLDT PARK, LITTLE VILLAGE, BRIDGEPORT, SOUTH COMMONS, AVONDALE, AND ENGLEWOOD.

In these specific neighborhoods Corps Members paid \$400-800/month. The next most popular neighborhoods were Hyde Park, Logan Square, Lincoln Park, Lakeview East where Corps Members paid over \$800 or \$900+/month even with roommates. Lincoln Park, Lakeview East are also farther from any of our schools.

MOST CORPS MEMBERS SAID THEY SPENT ABOUT \$100-\$300 EXTRA PER MONTH ON OTHER ACTIVITIES

including: going out, dinner with friends, ordering in food, movies, events, extracurriculars, etc.



STEP 2: RESEARCH CHICAGO'S DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS



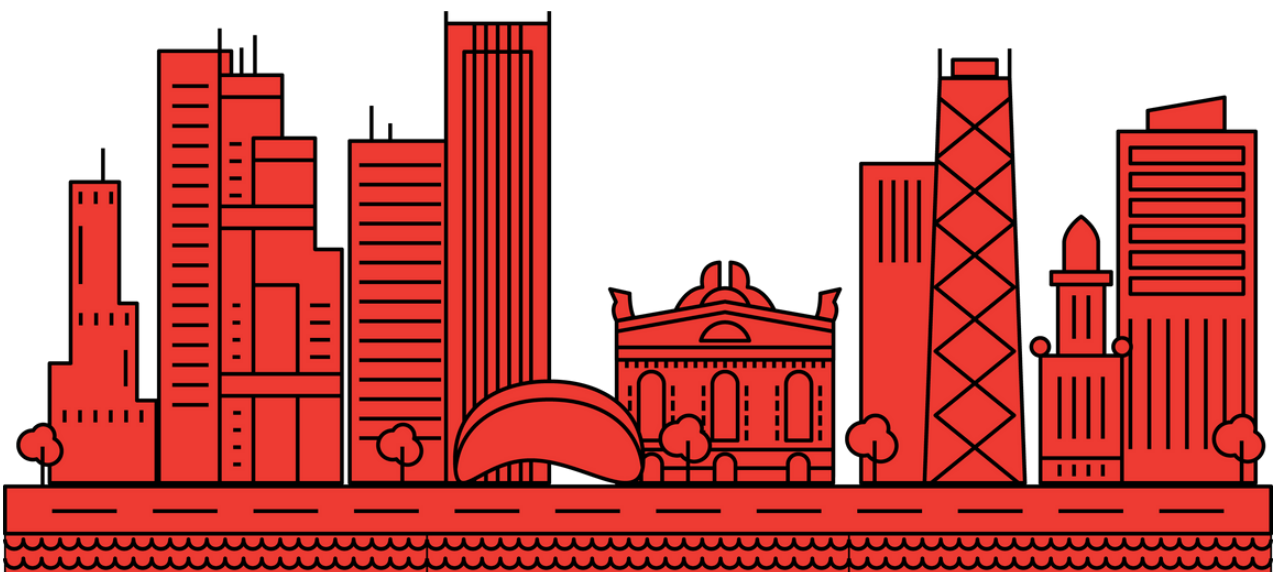
One of the most commonly asked questions from confirmed Corps Members (ACMs) is:

*"I want to live near my school,
when will we know school placement?"*

City Year Chicago (CYCHI) serves over 30 Chicago Public Schools. During your in-person registration day this summer you will take a survey which asks for your address, your preference on younger or older students, your experience with tutoring, your level of comfortability in higher or lower Math levels, any other languages you speak, and your demographic information (age, race, etc). We then use this information with our algorithm that pairs you with the best school that fits your wants and expertise. We ask for your address so that we can take into consideration your commute to school when doing placement, but diversity and expertise are also big factors that play into school placement.

CHICAGO HAS OVER 77 NEIGHBORHOODS

Since you will not know which school you will serve before you arrive, it is recommended to check out the multiple neighborhoods that make up Chicago and pick one that feels right for you.

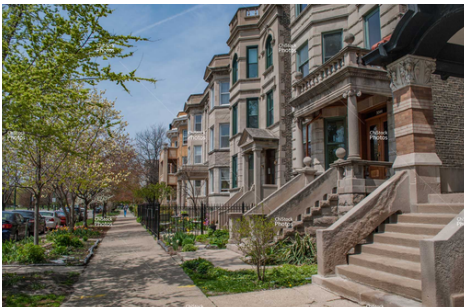


STEP 2: RESEARCH CHICAGO'S DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS (WEST SIDE)

City Year typically has 40% of school partnerships from the West side, we recommend that you live near a Blue Line or Green Line Station or near bus lines if you are looking to live on the West Side.

NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: LOGAN SQUARE

In Logan Square, the strong neighborly connection is evident all around, from active preservation groups to community gardens and a locally-run farmers market. "Local" being the key word when describing many aspects of the scene: ingredients are sourced locally at their buzz-worthy restaurants. At the heart of this community is the actual "square" in Logan Square. It comes together at the intersection of Kedzie and Logan Boulevard, where a circle interchange meets with Milwaukee Avenue. The boulevards themselves are widened thoroughfares that are set apart by grassy, landscaped medians and tall, stately trees that border both its sides.



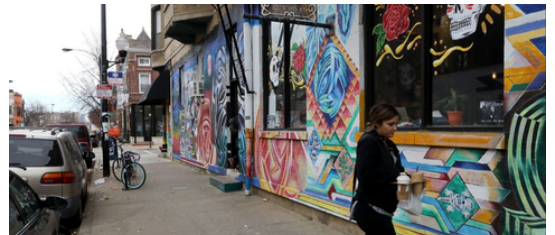
NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: HUMBOLDT PARK

Affixed with two enormous, metal Puerto Rican flags that measure almost 60 feet in height, Humboldt Park is rooted in a proud Latinx tradition. With streets that are decorated in vibrant murals and air that smells of carne guisada, Humboldt Park is a Caribbean escape shrouded in urban charm. One-quarter of Humboldt Park's residents are of Puerto Rican descent and the area's cultural epicenter, known as the Paseo Boricua, bursts with national pride and Spanish Colonial architecture. On one stretch of Division Street, you will find authentic Latin cuisine, specialty shopping and the Institute of Puerto Rican Arts & Culture, an invaluable ethnic tribute to the area's deeply-rooted heritage. Humboldt Park's Puertorican People's Parade draws more than one-million people every year.



NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: PILSEN

Culture thrives in Pilsen and invites you to explore the treasures that wait around every corner. Here bold murals have blossomed in the most unexpected places — on the fronts of homes, along railway overpasses, and wrapped around train platforms. The artful vibe continues within storefront galleries and studios, as well as in the colorful collections of the National Museum of Mexican Art, a highly-regarded cultural institution. For over 150 years, Pilsen has been a port of entry for immigrants. Early on it was waves of Eastern Europeans, which later shifted and became predominantly Latino. Now blended in the close knit Mexican-American community is creative types and students. Thanks to this diversity, you'll find offbeat vintage shops, independent coffee houses and quaint cafes alongside bodegas, panaderias and restaurants serving authentic Mexican cuisine. But whether you're on 18th Street or Oakley Avenue, it's the strong cultural heritage and rich working class legacy that are the backbone of Chicago's Lower West Side neighborhoods.



NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: AVONDALE



The Northwest Side neighborhood of Avondale is rich in working class traditions and low-key charm. Its industrial character continues to evolve as longtime residents welcome the influx of artists, young professionals and new families drawn to the area's affordable homes, easy access to downtown and multicultural heritage. Traditionally it is the heart of Chicago's Polish community. St. Hyacinth Basilica, one of three historic basilicas in the city, anchors what is known as the "Polish Village". Along this commercial corridor on Milwaukee Avenue, you'll find Kurowski's Sausage Shop - which is celebrated for having the best meats and rye bread this side of Warsaw - as well as local favorites like Endy's Deli, Red Apple and Staropolska. Today a sizable Hispanic population makes up the largest ethnic contingent within Avondale, though a look at the medley of restaurants speaks to the diversity of this enclave. Worldly eats span from Russian to Romanian to Ecuadorian to Japanese.

STEP 2: RESEARCH CHICAGO'S DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS (SOUTH SIDE)

City Year typically has 50% of school partnerships from the South side, we recommend that you live near a Red Line or Green Line Station or near bus lines if you are looking to live on the South Side.

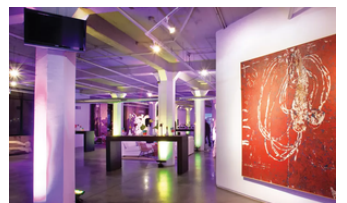
NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: HYDE PARK



In 1893 Hyde Park hosted the Chicago's World Fair which, among other things, introduced the United States to electricity and the Ferris wheel. The event was so grand that it required more than 600 acres of space, the construction of 200 buildings and welcomed close to 30 million people. More than 120 years later, the area is still a profound hinge point of historical and social importance in Chicago. Bookended by two of the city's most significant cultural institutions, The University of Chicago to the west and The Museum of Science and Industry to the east, Hyde Park is an incredibly popular South Side neighborhood for locals and visitors. The Museum of Science and Industry is the largest science museum in the Western Hemisphere and boasts more than 2,000 exhibits. The University of Chicago is a Victorian Gothic-clad, Nobel Prize factory with one of the country's most scenic campuses to boot. Not far from the fabled school, you will find the home of President Barack Obama. The neighborhood's cultural contributions don't end there, either. The DuSable Museum of African American History is the largest institution of its kind in the United States.

NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: BRIDGEPORT

Bridgeport is a working-class neighborhood on Chicago's near South Side and, as the birthplace and home to five Chicago mayors, a reputed hotbed for city politics. In addition to its homegrown civic leaders, the neighborhood also claims the Chicago White Sox, one of Major League Baseball's oldest franchises. As part of an artistic movement on Chicago's South Side, Bridgeport has become a hinge point for revitalizing the area's connection to arts and culture. The Zhou B Art Center displays amazing pieces of contemporary art, while the Bridgeport Art Center and Co-Prosperity Sphere are prevailing staples in the community. Along South Halsted's ethnic business corridor you will find Schaller's Pump, Chicago's longest-operating tavern. This neighborhood staple has been serving for more than 135 years. Nana, one of the most notable farm-to-table organic restaurants in Chicago, is one of the corridor's more recent gifts to the city.



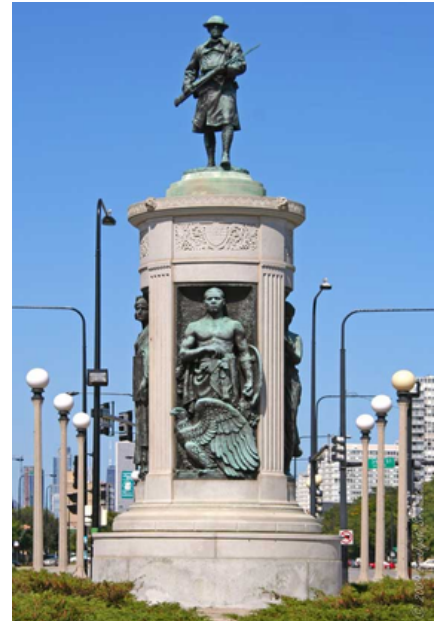
NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: CHINATOWN

Chinatown: With more than 65,000 Chinese residents, Chicago's Chinatown is one of the largest neighborhoods of its kind in the United States. Located on the city's near South Side, the vibrant and energetic culture is reflected in the area's many specialty shops, authentic cultural cuisine and signature landmarks, like Ping Tom Memorial Park and a Buddhist Temple. Just north of the Wentworth Avenue District is Chinatown Square, the largest Chinese mall in the Midwest. Besides hosting award-winning restaurants, like Phoenix or Lao Sze Chuan, you will find an incredible collection of public art that includes zodiac-inspired animal sculptures and twin pagodas. The area's signature piece, an enormous tile mosaic created by celebrated artists Yan Dong and Zhou Ping, represents the accomplishments of Chinese people in America. Rather poetically, the mural embodies the neighborhood as a significant gift to Chicago.



NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: BRONZEVILLE

Between 1910 and 1920, a tremendous number of African American workers journeyed to Bronzeville to escape oppression in the southern United States. As one of the most significant landmarks of the "Great Migration," this South Side neighborhood is shrouded in a glowing, African American cultural allure. Bronzeville's 20th century resurgence, which rivaled the Harlem Renaissance, is responsible for tremendous cultural and social advances. Pulitzer Prize recipient Gwendolyn Brooks, civil rights activist Ida B. Wells, and legendary musician Louis Armstrong were profoundly responsible for the area's development and subsequent cultural crusade, which included advances in civil rights, jazz, blues and gospel music as well. As part of a community-driven revitalization, Bronzeville seamlessly bridges its historical significance and flourishing modern renaissance. Amongst newly opened coffee shops and restaurants, you will find spectacular displays of Victorian Era architecture. These mansions, which were primarily built in the late 19th century, represent the area's extraordinary display of Gothic, Romanesque and Queen Ann-style design. Commissioned to help rejuvenate the area, Bronzeville contains some of the most celebrated works within the City of Chicago's Public Art Collection including a sculpture-adorned stretch of MLK Drive that features Alison Saar's "Monument to the Great Northern Migration," The Bronzeville Walk of Fame, and The Victory Monument.



NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: ENGLEWOOD

The Englewood community was largely defined by the Englewood Shopping Center at 63rd & Halsted, a large pedestrian mall. The shopping center opened in the Fall of 2016. The shopping center is part of a larger 13-acre development located at a four-way intersection near Kennedy King Community College. The City, social services, and mall management worked with community leaders and groups to integrate the mall with the community. The goal was to make the mall a vital part of the community, and a central part of everyday life. It was the site of numerous community events, parades, outdoor concerts, live radio broadcasts and the like. The Center subsequently lost its major anchor tenants, including Sears Roebuck, and became a collection of smaller merchants.

Recent movements to beautify and revitalize Englewood have resulted in new community centers, non profits, large chains like Whole Foods and Starbucks, and other shops moving back into the neighborhood.

Englewood is also home to one of our housing partners. See more on partnership page.



NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHTS: SOUTH SHORE



Head to Rainbow Beach Park to get a sense of what South Shore has to offer. The gorgeous park features two parks, a community garden, and jaw-dropping views of Chicago. The beach itself is one of Chicago's largest, and is a popular spot for swimming and sunbathing in the summer. Just north of Rainbow Beach Park, the South Shore Cultural Center is one of the neighborhood's crown jewels. Housed in a former country club, the center is nestled on manicured, picnic-worthy grounds that include a nature sanctuary, a butterfly garden, and a nine-hole golf course. Inside, you'll find a rich array of cultural programming, a restaurant run by the in-house culinary institute, and a theatre that hosts a variety of community groups like the Court Theatre and South Shore Opera. The center was also the site of Barack and Michelle Obama's wedding reception. Get a glimpse of the area's unique architecture in Jackson Park Highlands. This residential pocket features a hodgepodge of architectural styles and towering mansions.

STEP 3: CONNECT WITH FUTURE ROOMMATES

Many ACMs choose to live with other City Year ACMs. Some have roommates not connected to City Year, some live with family, and some live alone. There are many different options - but living with roommates will drastically decrease your monthly rent and help with other bills and utilities.



Check out these FAQs from our past CMs about housing and rooming in Chicago:

WHERE DO MOST CORPS MEMBERS LIVE?

- A large majority of our Corps Members live in neighborhoods on the South and West Sides and have a 10-30 minute commute to their schools.
 - Corps Members who lived in the North or East (Lakeview, Rogers Park, Lincoln Park) listed a 1- 1.5 hr commute because there are limited schools in that area.

HOW DO MOST CORPS MEMBERS COMMUTE TO SERVICE?

- Most corps members take the 'L' (Chicago's Train System) or the bus to service.
 - The CTA Bus Tracker is a great way to view the Bus Map as you are exploring apartments, and also view bus times during a commute.
 - About 25% of the corps drive to school and/or carpool.
- The most common L routes that corps members take to service were the Blue, Green and Pink lines.
 - The CTA Train Tracker Map is an interactive way to explore where the trains stop

WHAT HOUSING ADVICE DID CMS GIVE TO FUTURE CORPS MEMBERS?

- Live near public transportation to plan for a potential school placement that is not in your neighborhood. L Train lines can serve as the best access to the whole city.
 - Also, look at the map of previous school partnerships for reference.
- Stay within the recommended budget for housing.
- Find an apartment with other corps members or friends. It will make paying rent and utilities much cheaper. If you end of living on your own ,whether, it be by choice or failed roommate plan, you will be ok. You just have to trust in yourself and create a tight and effective budget that works for your lifestyle.
- Start reaching out to potential roommates early and often
- Try to video chat (or meet up) with potential roommates in person before committing.
- Ask people to be open and honest on where they are in the process (if they're talking to other people etc.), and also be open and honest with them.
- Ask questions about the apartment (included amenities/ utilities, laundry, parking, etc.)
- Be very active and slightly tenacious in the search for housing. It's a very competitive market, so you won't always be able to tour an apartment before applying to it. Try to be one of the first/the first application for an apartment. If you do not live in Chicago, many landlords offer virtual tours if you ask for one.
- Use Facebook marketplace to look to find cheap furniture.
- Look into housing resources and partner organizations on City Year's housing page
- Start early! If you wait until the last minute to sign a lease you'll be stuck in an apartment that isn't as nice or what you wanted or where you wanted.
- Reach out to a lot of places because you don't know what will be available.

STEP 4: LOCATE HOUSING –TIPS AND TRICKS

QUESTIONS TO ASK LANDLORDS AS YOU VIEW APTS:

UTILITIES

- Is heat included in the rent?
 - Pro-Tip: Ask to see the heating bill from the previous tenants to help estimate how much heat will be in the winter!
- Which utilities are included in the rent?
- Are there personal laundry units in the apartment? Is there a laundry room in the building? If not, where is the closest Laundromat?
- Is there air conditioning?
- What is the garbage removal policy?

TRANSPORTATION / PARKING

- Where is the closest CTA train or CTA bus stop
- Is parking available? If so, do I have to pay for a parking spot? If there is street parking? is it metered? do you need a permit? how easy is it to locate a space?

GENERAL

- How much is the security deposit? What is required to fully receive the deposit back?
- Is it possible to receive photos of the apartment? or tour the apartment? virtual tour?
- Are cosigners required to sign the lease? Who can be a cosigner?
- Are pets allowed? Are there additional fees or security deposits necessary for pets?
- If something breaks, what is the maintenance policy?

OTHER TIPS AND RESOURCES:

- It's best to start contacting landlords 30-60 days before you plan to arrive in Chicago
- As you talk to different rental companies, make sure to record the name of the person with whom you speak.
- Some rental companies may ask for employment verification or be hesitant to let you sign a lease before you arrive. If such complications arise, you can obtain an employment verification letter from CYCHI (ask your Service Year Adviser).

Corps Members in the past have found success using the following sites/apps:

- Apartments.com
- Zillow Rentals
- Apartment People
- Rent.com
- Craigslist
- Chicago Apartment Finders
- Padmapper
- Hotpads
- various facebook apartment groups (search Chicago apartments)
- CYCHICAGO housing partners (next page)

STEP 4: LOCATE HOUSING (& RESOURCES)

CHECK OUT TWO OF OUR HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS BELOW:

NeighborScapes is a non-profit organization with a mission to strengthen the physical and social fabric of neighborhoods, and to create a covenant of care, enrichment and development for young people. In return for doing community service in the neighborhood and participating in monthly check-ins and house meetings, neighborscapes housing fellows receive the following benefits:

- Single room or multiple room apartments with other fellows on the south side of Chicago near many of our schools
- Rent anywhere from \$325-425 per month!
 - (not including internet and electric)
- Leadership development and peer- to – peer learning
- Laundry included in building
- the ability to sign 6 month - 1 year leases

**NeighborScapes staff are experienced in helping young parents and recent high school grads with finding other resources, so if you are a parent or a recent high school grad - this may be a great option!

Learn more about NeighborScapes and how to apply here:

<https://cychicago.com/neighborscapes>

5413 S Wabash is an apartment building located in the Woodlawn/Hide Park neighborhood. For being a City Year members, tenants receive the following benefits:

- 2-3 bedroom apts ranging between \$2250-3000
- fully furnished!
- all utilities and internet included!
- back patio & back lot space
- free street parking out front
- near public transit (Red & Green line)
- in proximity to at least 3-5+ City Year schools (within 15-30 mins via public transit)
- in building washer / dryer

Learn more about how to apply here:

<https://cychicago.com/5413-s-wabash>



SEE OUR OTHER PARTNERS & RESOURCES
AT [HTTPS://CYCHICAGO.COM/HOUSING](https://cychicago.com/housing)

STEP 4: LOCATE HOUSING (& RESOURCES)

OTHER RESOURCES:

RELOCATION BENEFIT:

If you are relocating 50 miles or more to live in Chicago for City Year service, you are eligible for a \$500 (pre-tax) relocation benefit to support the expenses involved in moving a long distance. You'll be able to apply for this benefit closer to July during registration. This amount will be distributed in your first or second paycheck.

DISCOUNTED INTERNET FOR CORPS MEMBERS:

Internet Essentials is a national program through Xfinity that gives low income members (who are eligible for SNAP and other government programs) internet for \$20 or less! This means all ACMs are eligible for this benefit!

Go to <https://www.internetessentials.com/> to learn more.

AFFORDABLE FURNITURE SUGGESTIONS:

When buying furniture, some affordable options are:

- Habitat for Humanity ReStore: Items at the ReStore are often 50 to 70 percent below retail prices, and proceeds go to Habitat for Humanity to build homes and strengthen the community.
- Goodwill: Profits from Goodwill's affordable furniture fund their training, employment and supportive services for people who seek greater independence.
- Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace: There are a lot of groups where people are trying to get rid of furniture or selling for relatively cheap

APPLY FOR SNAP BENEFITS:

As a City Year AmeriCorps member you are eligible for Food Stamps, also known as SNAP benefits, which helps reduce costs of living while on a stipend. With this benefit you can get up to \$200/month on a food card that you can use at any grocery store and even some restaurants. The SNAP benefit also allows you to get into almost all Chicago museums for free such as the Shed Aquarium, the Field Museum, and the Museum of Science and Industry - not to mention you will be eligible for other benefits like the internet discounts above. Learn more about this benefit here:

<https://cychicago.com/apply-for-snap-benefits>

As always, reach out to Ines if you have any questions or concerns about the information in this packet, while it is ultimately your responsibility to find housing, we are here to support you and help connect you to resources!

-Ines Brookens