

Parent & Family Newsletter



Finals Week

Final exams are scheduled from Saturday, December 6, through Friday, December 12. Students can access their final exam schedule via My.IllinoisState.edu.

Your student has several resources available to help them prepare for final exams. [The Julia N. Visor Academic Center](#) is offering [Finals Blitz](#) tutoring with sessions running through the days leading up to Finals Week. All ISU students are welcome, and no sign-up is required.

Additional information, including a final exam schedule, can be found on the [Office of the University Registrar's website](#).

Helping Your Student Cope with Stress

The end of the semester and final exams can be very stressful for students, and it is easy to feel overwhelmed. Encourage your student to care of themselves while finishing the semester strong.

- Remind your student to practice basic self-care by getting eight hours of sleep each night, eating three meals a day, and taking breaks when needed. [Health Promotion and Wellness](#) offers tips and programs to students for maintaining healthy living.
- Physical activity can also help relieve stress. Campus Recreation offers a variety of classes and programs. Additional information and hours can be found on the [Campus Recreation website](#).
- Students can find a number of mental health resources to assist with emotional well-being, including

support services and clinical services at [Redbird Well](#).

- Health Promotion and Wellness and Milner Library encourages students to take a work or study break and get [Pawsitively Stress Free](#) on December 8 and 9. Students can pet certified therapy dogs and enjoy other stress-relieving activities on the Third Floor of Milner Library from 1 to 3 p.m.

Commencement

[Commencement ceremonies](#) for December graduates will be held on Saturday, December 13 at CEFCU Arena.

- 9 a.m. — College of Arts and Sciences, College of Education, Mennonite College of Nursing, and Interdisciplinary Studies
- 1 p.m. — College of Applied Science and Technology, College of Business, and Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts

Additional ceremony information, links to the live stream, and the digital program book can be found on the [Commencement website](#) or on the Illinois State University mobile app. Download the app from your device's app store or visit IllinoisState.edu/app.

Fall 2025 Grades

Final grades will be available at 2 p.m. on Thursday, December 18, under the academics tab on My.IllinoisState.edu.

Residence Hall Closing Preparations For Winter Break

All residence halls, except Manchester/Hewett Halls, Wilkins Hall, Fell/School Street Apartments, and Cardinal Court, will close for winter break on Saturday, December 13, at 2 p.m. Students may leave their personal belongings in the rooms; however, they must take whatever they need for the entire break, as no student will be allowed back into the halls for any reason during break periods.

Any student switching rooms or not returning to their room for the spring semester is expected to move out completely. Residence halls will reopen on Friday, January 9, at 8 a.m.

Students are expected to do the following to prepare their room when leaving for break:

- Close and lock room windows.
- Open draperies or shades and ensure there is a clear path between the door and window.
- Dispose of all perishable food in their refrigerator (if applicable), and any empty bottles or cans.
- Move personal belongings on the floor to the bed or desk. This will prevent items from being damaged in the event there are any leaks or plumbing problems over break. The University assumes no responsibility for personal property.

Take out all trash.

- Unplug electrical appliances, clean and dry refrigerators, and clean up any water left behind from that process. Computers should be unplugged in case of power surges. Take any temperature-controlled medicines home.
- Set room temperature to 65 degrees and set blowers on low
- Turn off all lights.
- Lock room door.
- Move furniture and belongings eight inches away from the wall on all sides to allow space for pest control spraying.

Students will be notified of these procedures in their closing meetings with the resident assistant. They should follow their specific closing checklist form posted in the halls, social media, and online. Please review other important hall closing information on the [University Housing website](#).

University Housing Services: Building Access & Safety

Your student's safety, and the well-being of everyone in our residential communities, remains a top priority. A few simple habits can make a meaningful difference in maintaining a secure environment. Please encourage your student to keep these reminders in mind:

- Always carry their Redbird ID and room key whenever they leave their space.
- Between midnight and 6 a.m., returning without their Redbird ID and room key will result in a Limited Access Violation.
- Violations progress over time: the first results in a warning email, the second brings another warning, and the third and beyond lead to a conduct case.
- After a student's third tag key checkout, charges apply as lost keys necessitate a complete core replacement for safety reasons.

It is also important for students to lock their doors, even for quick trips, to help protect themselves and the broader hall community. If your student has questions or needs help, they should reach out to their RA or front desk staff.

Off-Campus Meal Plans

Meal plans are available for students living off-campus. These block-style plans provide the flexibility for students to enjoy meals at campus dining centers throughout the semester. Off-campus meal plans also include flex dollars for [retail dining](#)! Whether your student prefers to dine frequently or just a few times a week, there are options for everyone. Learn more about off-campus meal plans on the [Illinois State Dining website](#)!

[Meal plan registration in the Housing & Dining Portal](#) is open until January 23.

Off-Campus Winter Break Safety Tips

Off-campus student housing can be the target of burglaries during winter break. Students are encouraged to follow these safety tips to avoid loss or damage of property when they are away from their residence.

- Lock all doors and windows before leaving.
- Encourage your student not to park their car the night before they leave.
- Keep valuables like computers, electronic devices, or jewelry out of plain view.
- When leaving for extended breaks, students should take all valuable items with them.
- Keep a master list and/or photos of larger, valuable items, including the make, model, and serial numbers.
- Unplug the television, computer, toaster oven, and other appliances to protect them from power surges.
- For those living in a *house* off campus, students can request that the Normal Police Department stop by and check on their residence by calling their non-emergency number at (309) 888-5030.

Visit the [Off-Campus Services website](#) for additional information.

Reggie's Holiday Pick

[Reggie's Holiday Pick](#), now in its fifth year, invites Redbirds to dream in style and comfort while giving with purpose to bring comfort, joy, and lasting impact. This year's exclusive collection features two of Reggie's favorites:

- **Soft Reggie pajama pants**—cozy drawstring lounge pants perfect for chilly nights, available with a \$50 donation. Sizes range from XS to XXXL.
- **ReggieMallow plushie**—a huggable Reggie Redbird stuffed toy for Redbirds of all ages, available with a \$40 donation.

Also available are limited quantities of previous Reggie's Holiday Pick items, like the Reggie pickleball set, Reggie Lego-like set, and other throwback gifts.

A portion of your donations to Reggie's Holiday Pick supports the Red and White Scholarship Fund, which provides emergency financial assistance to Illinois State students facing unexpected challenges. Last year, over \$100,000 was given in emergency aid to Redbirds in need—thanks to alumni and donors who care.

Quantities and sizes are limited. Place orders by December 13 to guarantee delivery by December 24. Gift tags are also included, and items can be shipped directly to your favorite Redbirds with a personalized message.

Winter Break University Closure

University offices will close on Tuesday, December 23 at 4:30 p.m. and reopen on Monday, January 5 at 8 a.m. Classes begin on Monday, January 12. Additional key dates can be found on the [Illinois State University Academic Calendar](#).

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