

Parent & Family Newsletter



Homecoming 2026: Redbirds Reunite

Homecoming 2026 takes place October 19-25. With a [full schedule of activities](#), there are many ways to get involved throughout the week, including the Homecoming Parade, Town and Gown 5K, tailgating, and Redbird Football vs. Indiana State on Saturday, October 24. Redbirds Reunite at Homecoming 2026!

Residence Hall Guest Guidelines

As your Redbird prepares for Homecoming, University Housing Services (UHS) wants to remind families of the guest guidelines, especially for minors visiting campus. All guests must be registered at the front desk upon arrival, present a valid government-issued [photo ID](#), and be escorted by their student host at all times. Residents must also have roommate consent before hosting a guest. Students can save time by pre-registering their guests through the [Housing and Dining Portal](#) before they arrive. While pre-registration is optional, all guests must register and check in at the front desk, with the resident host present. Guest registration is required 24/7.

During normal operations, guests under the age of 13 are not permitted in residence halls unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, and guests ages 13-17 are permitted with parent/guardian permission. However, during special weekends like Homecoming, younger guests are welcome to join in the fun. The [Minor Guest Registration Form](#) is always required for anyone under 18 and must be submitted in advance through the [Housing and Dining Portal](#) once a resident initiates the request.

If you plan to allow your minor to be a registered guest during Homecoming, now is the time to prepare. Review the registration requirements outlined above and communicate with your student to ensure the Minor Guest Registration Form is completed in advance.

These policies help ensure that our residence halls remain safe, respectful, and welcoming for all students and their guests. For questions, please contact University Housing Services at (309) 438-8611 or Housing@IllinoisState.edu.

2026 Fall Break Dates

Fall break for students begins at noon on Saturday, November 21. Classes resume Monday, November 30. University offices will be closed Wednesday, November 25, through Friday, November 27.

Residence Hall Closures for Fall Break

Watterson Towers, Haynie Hall, and Wright Hall will close at 2 p.m. on Saturday, November 21. All students in these halls must vacate their rooms by this time. Students may leave their personal belongings in the room; however, they must take whatever they need for the week while on break, as no student will be allowed back into these halls for any reason. These residence halls will reopen at 2 p.m. on Sunday, November 29. Hewett, Manchester, and Wilkins halls remain open during fall break, along with Cardinal Court and the Fell Avenue and School Street apartments. For more information, visit the [University Housing website](#).

Winter/Spring 2027 Registration

Registration for winter/spring 2027 classes begins Monday, October 12. Students can view their assigned registration date and time in the Student Center through [My.IllinoisState.edu](#). Registration dates and times are based on the number of credit hours earned, not including in-progress units.

Encourage your student to meet with their academic advisor before their registration date to discuss course selection for the spring semester. For more information, visit the [Office of the University Registrar](#).

Winter 2026 Commencement Ceremonies

Students who have applied to graduate in December 2026 and wish to participate in their winter commencement ceremony must [register through the commencement registration portal](#) (no fee required) and [purchase a cap and gown](#) by Friday, October 30. Students who do not place their cap and gown order by October 30 will not be able to order Illinois State University regalia for the ceremony. Please allow approximately five to six weeks for shipping.

Winter 2026 commencement will take place on Saturday, December 12, at CEFCU Arena. There is no limit on guest attendance, and tickets are not issued. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Each ceremony will last approximately two hours.

Saturday, December 12, 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

For more information, visit the [commencement website](#).

Family Weekend 2026 Photos

Thank you to everyone who stopped by the Parent and Family Services Tent during Family Weekend 2026. Photos taken at the tent are available for free download in the [Family Weekend photo gallery](#).

Information about next year's festivities will be posted on the [Family Weekend website](#).

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