



## An Information Guide for Students Requesting Priority Consideration 2019-2020

### DEFINITION

**Priority Consideration** is defined as priority admittance to a specific type of housing in residence and/or priority admittance to housing outside of current admissions practices or eligibility criteria, based on restrictions or limitations resulting from disability, chronic health conditions or other considerations.

Priority Consideration may also be defined as the need for an exception to current practices and/or policies, based on restrictions or limitations resulting from disability, chronic health conditions or other considerations.

### INTRODUCTION

Students may request Priority Consideration to residence or Family Housing based on restrictions or limitations resulting from a disability or chronic health condition affecting them or a live-in dependent (in the case of Family Housing). Residence Services provides accessibility features in a number of residence types (single and double rooms, Cluster Housing, residence apartments and Family Housing units), and we are committed to working with eligible students to determine suitable accommodation. Student residences, however, are considered temporary and/or transitional living spaces and acceptance in priority housing for one term does not guarantee acceptance in future terms. The Priority Consideration Team conducts assessments for every application received.

Residence is identified as a high density living environment and it may be difficult to control this environment to the extent that is required to support some students' needs. Students who submit a Priority Consideration request must understand and acknowledge their responsibility to be self-sufficient, including being able to effectively coordinate their own personal needs while in residence, including using campus services. The team cannot approve student requests for Priority Consideration which are made simply on the basis of seeking a supportive living environment for their mental and/or physical wellbeing.

Students may request priority consideration for the following:

- Dietary (anaphylaxis/severe food allergies/other)
- Medical (chronic health)
- Disability (mobility/hearing/vision/other)
- Religious (observances/practices) or
- Other (specified by student)

Students who request Priority Consideration for mobility or agility disabilities, are welcome to request and/or accept an assignment in a room or unit located above the ground floor. Nevertheless, please note that elevators do break down occasionally, and may be out of order for an extended period. Inconveniences may occur for those who are unable to navigate stairs. The University will take action to repair any malfunctioning equipment promptly; however, it is not responsible for service disruptions which limit access to or egress from your room or unit.

The university may give students priority admittance to specific housing based on religious or spiritual observances or practices, if they are admitted through regular admissions eligibility.

#### **PRIORITY CONSIDERATION APPLICATION CRITERIA**

Applicants and/or current residents may apply for Priority Consideration under one of the following six conditions:

1. The student meets the criteria for the University's first-year guarantee and wants to request access to a specific type of housing (i.e. wheelchair accessible or apartment-style) based on restrictions or limitations resulting from a disability or chronic health condition.
2. The student does not meet the criteria for the University's first-year guarantee and requests Priority Consideration for a space in residence or Family Housing and/or to obtain a specific type of housing, based on restrictions or limitations resulting from a disability or chronic health condition.
3. The student is requesting an emotional support animal (NOTE: this does not include Certified Guide or Service Dogs) in residence/Family Housing. If the student has a Certified Guide or Service Dog, please notify Residence Services so proper housing accommodations can be provided.
4. The student would like to bring or is requesting specialized equipment/furniture.
5. The student is requesting an exception be made to current practices and/or policies as a result of restrictions or limitations resulting from a disability, chronic health condition or other considerations.
6. The student plans to and/or is required to study at a reduced course load due to restrictions or limitations resulting from a disability or chronic health condition, and therefore does not meet current residence eligibility criteria.

## PRIORITY CONSIDERATION ELIGIBILITY

1. Students must submit their Priority Consideration Request Form (PCR) by applicable **deadlines:**

### DEADLINES:

**June 15<sup>th</sup> 2019 to be considered for September 2019**

**November 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 to be considered for January 2020**

**March 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 to be considered for Summer 2020**

**Note: These deadlines do not apply to students living or applying to live in Family Housing or current residents in single student housing. Students in these categories should contact [prar@uvic.ca](mailto:prar@uvic.ca) for submission dates.**

2. Students and/or live-in dependants of Family Housing residents/applicants must have an appropriately documented disability-related or chronic health condition that *cannot* be met in off-campus housing.
3. Applications must clearly describe the student's daily functional requirements in relation to the disability or health condition.
4. Section D of the application must be completed by a registered Physician, Nurse Practitioner or Psychologist or another qualified professional with credentials appropriate to assess the applicant's accommodation needs. Documentation must include specific functional limitations associated with the student's disability or health condition. A **clear and logical link** must be identified between the condition and request for priority consideration. Students are not required to disclose their diagnosis, but may do so if they wish.
5. The student must be capable of adhering to the Residence Contract and Community Standards in residence or to the Family Housing Agreement in Family Housing.
6. Students who have previously lived in residence at the University of Victoria must be in good standing, both financially and in regard to community standards, for their application to be considered.

## PRIORITY CONSIDERATION DECISION PROCESS

- Priority Consideration Requests will be reviewed by a Priority Consideration Team made up of representatives from professional staff in the University's Health Services, Counseling Services, Centre for Accessible Learning, Office of Student Life, Food Services and Residence Services Departments, as applicable.
- Approval decisions will be made based upon:
  - 1) Functional restrictions or limitations and;
  - 2) Availability of appropriate housing and campus resources, including space and services. (As per above, the student must understand and acknowledge their responsibility to be self-sufficient, including being able to effectively coordinate their own personal needs while in residence, including using campus services.)

- The presence of a disability or chronic health condition alone will not qualify a student for Priority Consideration.
- Students whose Priority Consideration Request is not successful will still be considered under the standard residence application process; provided that they meet all eligibility requirements.
- Decisions on acceptance of a Priority Consideration Request will be communicated in writing to applicants as quickly as possible after the Priority Consideration Team has received and reviewed the Priority Consideration Request.
- All late applications, if approved, will be placed on a waitlist to be prioritized after move-in day. (See page 3 for application deadlines.)

### INFORMATION FOR RETURNING APPLICANTS

- Students who submit supporting professional documentation with one application will not be required to resubmit documentation in future years' applications, unless there are changes to the student's request and/or the documentation, and/or the Priority Consideration Team requires updated documentation.
- The University of Victoria conducts assessments of all Priority Consideration requests for every application received, in order to determine length of stay and support students' transition to living off campus. Therefore, returning applicants must submit the Priority Consideration Request form with every application to residence/Family Housing. As noted above, student residences are considered temporary and/or transitional living spaces and acceptance in priority housing for one term does not guarantee acceptance in future terms.

### PRIORITY CONSIDERATION APPEALS PROCESS

Appeals to the Priority Consideration Team may only be made on the following grounds:

- 1) Relevant information that is sufficient to alter the Priority Consideration Team's decision emerges that was unavailable at the time of the decision; or
- 2) The Priority Consideration Team did not adhere to the procedures outlined in this document.

*Please Note: An applicant **may not** appeal a decision based solely on disagreement with the decision made.*

- Appeal requests submitted on grounds of 1) new, relevant information, must be submitted to the Priority Consideration Team within five (5) business days from the date of the Priority Consideration Team's response letter denying the applicant's Priority Consideration Request. Appeals will be re-evaluated by the Priority Consideration Team based on the applicant's written appeal submission and supporting documentation. An in-person hearing will normally not be provided.

- Appeal requests submitted on the grounds of 2) must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director of Student Services (or designate) within five (5) business days from the date of the Priority Consideration Team’s response letter denying the applicant’s Priority Consideration Request. Please include a clear statement of: (i) how the Priority Consideration Team failed to adhere to the procedures outlined in this document and (ii) the remedy or relief sought in the appeal. If the Executive Director of Student Services or designate determines that a procedural error occurred, the matter will be referred back to the Priority Consideration Team for re-evaluation.

## PRIVACY

- The University of Victoria collects, uses, discloses and retains personal information only in compliance with the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The University of Victoria collects the personal information on the Priority Consideration request form pursuant [to section 26\(a\) and \(c\) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#). The information provided in this form will be used for placement purposes or for the health and safety of the student or the community. For a detailed listing of the types of Personal Information the University collects and the purposes for such collection see [Schedule A, Procedures for the Management of Personal Information](#). Should you have any questions concerning your personal information, please contact the University’s Secretary’s office at [foipp@uvic.ca](mailto:foipp@uvic.ca) or 250-472-4914.
- All documentation is kept confidential but the information may (for placement purposes or for the health and safety of the student or the community) be shared with the Centre for Accessible Learning, University Health Services, Counselling Services, Food Services, Campus Security, Office of Student Life, or other professionals, as appropriate.

## HOW TO APPLY FOR PRIORITY CONSIDERATION

- 1) Complete the standard online Residence Application available through our [Residence Portal](#).
- 2) In the section called “Students with specialized housing requirements”, answer “Yes” to the question “Would you like to apply for Priority Consideration.” In the next section, called “Priority Consideration Application Criteria”, answer “Yes, I will submit the PCR form and medical documentation as per deadline” to the question “Please confirm that you would like to submit a Priority Consideration Request.”
- 3) Submit the Priority Consideration Request (PCR) form and submit with Section D of the PCR form by the applicable deadlines.
  - a. Link: [Priority Consideration Request Form](#).
  - b. Link URL: <http://www.uvic.ca/residence/assets/docs/Priority-Consideration-Request-Form.pdf>

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- 1) All communication and documents must be received by fax or email:

**Email: [prar@uvic.ca](mailto:prar@uvic.ca)**

**Fax: 250-472-4086**