

**Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the SMCC Public Safety Student Live-In Program**  
*If your question isn't answered here, please e-mail it to Steve Willis [swillis@smccme.edu](mailto:swillis@smccme.edu)*

***Where do I find the live-in application?***

The application is posted on the portal: [https://my.smccme.edu/ics/Academic\\_Departments/Fire\\_Science/](https://my.smccme.edu/ics/Academic_Departments/Fire_Science/) Applications are due by April 30<sup>th</sup> for fall placement. Students can apply anytime and be placed during the school year as vacancies occur.

***Do I have to wait until I'm accepted by SMCC to apply for the live-in program?***

No. As long as you have applied to SMCC for acceptance in a Public Safety discipline (Criminal Justice, Fire Science or Paramedicine), you can apply for a live-in slot. To be placed, you have to be selected by a participating fire-EMS department, be accepted by SMCC, and register for a full time student load (at least 12 credits per semester).

***How many live-in students in the program?***

We have room for up to 80 students in 17 Southern Maine communities (27 fire-EMS stations). Generally, we expect 40+ applicants each year to fill 30+ open slots. We won't know exact #s of open slots until mid-April.

***What are the station accommodations like?***

Students live for free at their fire station. Accommodations vary station to station, but every FD provides bedroom (some shared, some private), bathroom, kitchen and study facilities, including internet access. Students cook their own meals and are responsible for their laundry. Some stations have washers/dryers on site.

***Will I need to provide my own transportation?***

Yes. While a minimum of 2 students are assigned to each live-in station and carpooling is encouraged, all students are required to have a valid driver's license and a dependable vehicle. SMCC provides schedule flexibility so students can usually schedule their classes so they can attend college 3-4 days per week.

***How will live-in service affect my academic success?***

A recent 5-year study by SMCC found that live-in service increases Fire Science student success by 4.1 times over non-live-in students. SMCC and live-in FDs provide a very structured program with academics as the top priority. There is a lot of support provided both at the school and fire stations. Students' FD responsibilities are adjusted based on their load and grades. Students who struggle academically are set up with weekly reporting requirements for instructors to keep FD supervisors informed of student progress. FDs invest a tremendous amount of time and money in their live-in students, and students must maintain at least a "C" average to stay in the live-in program, so academics is everybody's top priority.

***Can I play sports as well as being a live-in student?***

Yes. Every year we have live-in students who play intercollegiate sports @ SMCC. Student-athletes who also serve as live-in students need to be serious about their commitments, well-organized and manage their time effectively – all things that future employers love to see on your resume!

***Will I get paid for my fire-EMS work?***

Yes. All live-in students become "paid on call" members of their live-in FD, so they are paid for most responses (and covered by worker's comp. insurance during all FD duties). Some FDs pay students to attend training. FD pay usually provides enough money for the student's vehicle expenses and textbooks. Many 2nd year live-in students qualify for per diem ("*paid for the day*") assignments in their FDs. Most live-in students' FD pay makes working outside of the FD unnecessary.

***How long has SMCC's live-in program been around?***

2013 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> year of SMCC's program, which started with 6 students, 2 each in South Portland, Scarborough and Gorham Fire Departments. The program has grown steadily thru the years in both communities and students. More than 500 live-in students have graduated from SMCC, and are working in career positions across the USA. Many are still members of Southern Maine fire-EMS departments. More than a dozen former live-in students are now fire officers (including a chief), coordinators and mentors in live-in departments.