



**Welcome to Hamilton:
A Guidebook for
International Members**

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Dear International Members,

Moving into a new city can take up a lot of time and effort, especially if you are not familiarized with your new surroundings yet. Below, we have compiled a list of websites that will assist you with your move and settling into Hamilton. But before that let's have an overview about who we are and how important is to get involved in your local union "CUPE 3906".

YOUR UNION - CUPE 3906

For almost 35 years, CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees) local 3906 has consistently improved the working conditions of its members, all of whom are academic workers at McMaster University.

CUPE Local 3906 traces its history to 1979, when graduate assistants at McMaster University first unionized.

In 1980, the Graduate Assistants' Association (GAA) and its six local unions rebranded themselves as the Canadian Union of Educational Workers (CUEW). The union at McMaster then became known as CUEW Local 6. Over the next fourteen years, CUEW organized workers at six additional universities.

In 1994, a merger occurred between CUEW and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the largest union in the country. The local union at McMaster was once again rebranded, this time as CUPE Local 3906.

In 2007, the union organized yet another group of workers, McMaster's post-doctoral fellows, bringing another 150 members into the union.

At the present time, CUPE 3906 represents almost 3000 workers at McMaster, making it the largest union on campus. We currently represent three units:

- Unit 1: Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Research Assistants (RAs)
- Unit 2: Sessional Faculty and Hourly Rated Sessional Music Faculty
- Unit 3: Post-doctoral Fellows

CUPE 3906 provides its members with representation and benefits.

Our representation of members across campus comes by way of member-driven committees, stewards in every department, a 13-person executive committee, and our local staff.

Stay tuned with CUPE 3906: <http://cupe3906.org/>

Collective agreements:

Unit 1: <http://cupe3906.org/tas-unit-1/collective-agreement/>

Unit 2: <http://cupe3906.org/sessionals-unit-2/collective-agreement-unit-2/>

Unit 3: <http://cupe3906.org/postdocs-unit-3/collective-agreement-unit-3-2/>

Benefits and Forms: <http://cupe3906.org/tas-unit-1/unit-1-benefits/>

<http://cupe3906.org/sessionals-unit-2/>

<http://cupe3906.org/postdocs-unit-3/unit-3-benefits/>

Join the committee(s): <http://cupe3906.org/about-us/committees-working-groups/>

Contact us: <http://cupe3906.org/contact-us/>

HOW TO SET UP AN INTERNET CONNECTION ON CAMPUS

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/network/wireless/>

SURROUNDINGS

Here is a map of the **Neighborhoods in Hamilton**:

<http://map.hamilton.ca/Static/PDFs/General%20Interest%20maps/Overall%20City/NeighborhoodBoundaries%20-%20ALL%20Named.pdf>

McMaster's main campus is located in Westdale that is adjacent to the neighborhoods Dundurn, Cootes Paradise and Strathcona. Because of the proximity to the University, Westdale is a popular neighborhood for students to reside.

Durand is another popular residential neighborhood that tone of the first neighborhoods in Hamilton, along with Beasley, Corktown and Central. Durand is also very close to the new McMaster Downtown Health Campus on Bay and Main Street.

Here is an article by a local Hamiltonian on the diversity of the city's neighborhoods and what to find in each one:

<http://www.hamiltonmagazine.com/sitepages/?aid=4528&cn=FEATURES&an=Good%27%20Hoods>

Notice that some of Hamilton's neighborhoods - especially in the downtown - are changing fast in demographics and also housing stock and rent.

ACCOMODATION & FURNITURE

Once you have decided where you want to live you may need to find where to look to find an apartment/house. There are several websites that offer **apartment free search options**:

Accommodation:

<https://macoffcampus.mcmaster.ca/classifieds/>

<http://www.kijiji.ca/b-real-estate/hamilton/c34180014>

<http://www.efforttrust.ca/>

<http://www.greenwin.ca/apartments-for-rent/cities/hamilton>

http://www.cityhousinghamilton.com/page1.aspx?page=Applying_for_Student_Housing&tab=3&menu=117

<http://www.viewit.ca/city/hamilton.aspx>

During summer months, students often sublet their rooms for a reduced price. This might be a good option if you want to explore the city first before settling in the long term. There is a group on Facebook, 'McMaster Student Housing' where people post sublets/apartments on a daily basis. The group is closed and you need to have a McMaster email account in order to become a member.

Should you ever have problems with your landlord, you can contact the Landlord and Tenant Board for advice. Notice that they will only be able to assist, if you actually have a lease with your landlord directly (so it excludes any sublet agreements). Link:

http://www.ltb.gov.on.ca/en/About_Us/STEL02_111279.html

Furniture:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/McMasterFree.ForSale/>

<http://www.kijiji.ca/b-furniture/hamilton/c235180014>

http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_CA/locator/burlington.html

<https://www.jysk.ca/>

http://www.thebrick.com/?gclid=CjwKEAjuW9BRDcrd30kovf8GkSjAB3hTxFEbQBAuhgLMsUIWr70DzXhZLxH0M7OQ92hB16tmVGwRoCZHLw_wcB

<https://www.lowes.ca/>

Buy & Sell (Good for furniture and many other stuff)

<http://www.kijiji.ca/h-hamilton/80014>

<http://hamilton.craigslist.ca/>

You also can check the Facebook pages below:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/McMasterFree.ForSale/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/m.i.x.studentmarketplace/>

SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER (SIN CARD)

You can get your SIN at Municipal Service Centers:

<https://iss.mcmaster.ca/international-student-handbook/social-insurance.html>

<http://www.hamilton.ca/CityServices/MunicipalServiceCentres.htm>

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/cgi-bin/sc-dsp.cgi?rc=3343>

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/cgi-bin/sc-dsp.cgi?rc=3343s3&ln=eng>

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/cgi-bin/sc-dsp.cgi?rc=3510&ln=eng>

GETTING YOUR ONTARIO HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN (OHIP CARD)

(Postdocs-only since international graduate students are covered through University Health Insurance (UHIP) Plan)

You can obtain your OHIP Card issued at Service Ontario.

There are two offices in Hamilton and one in Dundas:

<https://www.google.ca/maps/search/service+ontario+hamilton/@43.2608104,-79.9354332,10z/data=!3m1!4b1>

Notice: If you are a temporarily resident in Canada, the only location you can get your OHIP Card issued and extended is the one on King Street in downtown.

GETTING AROUND (GREAT TORONTO AND HAMILTON AREA-GTHA)

Here is the website for **Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) or Public transportation in Hamilton:**

<https://www.hamilton.ca/CityServices/Transit/HSRSystemMap.htm>

At the bus stop, you can either call HSR number (905-527-4441) and type-in the bus stop number (listen to the automated message for schedule details) or check the bus schedules online on google map.

Access using computer:

<http://www.busweb.hamilton.ca:8008/hiwire?.a=iScheduleLookup&.s=5c7c5cf9>

Apps for smart phones: [Transit](#), [Google maps](#), and [similar](#) on Play Store or Apple Store.

A regular fare for using the bus costs \$3.00 if you pay chash (or 2.30 if you buy paper ticket or pay via [PRESTO](#) card) as of September 1st, 2016. You can also buy a monthly pass for \$101.20 (as of September 2016).

Here is a link with the fares and other options:

<https://www.hamilton.ca/hsr-bus-schedules-fares/fares/cash-tickets-and-passes>

In order to use the buses in Hamilton, it is best to buy a PRESTO Card. Each ride costs \$2.30 and is valid for 2 hours. You can purchase the PRESTO CARD for a one-time fee of \$20 at the Hamilton Go Centre, Fortino's or at McMaster University's Compass Information Centre in the student center (<https://www.msumcmaster.ca/services-directory/4-compass-information-centre>). You can also use PRESTO to travel to Toronto and other cities.

Here is a link about PRESTO:

http://transit.toronto.on.ca/archives/weblog/2012/06/08-mcmaster_u.shtml

Notice: If you buy the PRESTO Card at the Fortino's in Westdale the \$20 Fee is waived.

GO BUS/TRAIN (GOING OUTSIDE OF HAMILTON)

You can find the service map here

<http://www.gotransit.com/timetables/en/schedules/maps.aspx>

You can use the PRESTO card for cheaper travel via "Go Transit". You can add money to your card here

<https://www.prestocard.ca/en-US/Pages/ContentPages/Home.aspx>

<http://www.gotransit.com/publicroot/en/default.aspx>

For checking the schedule, you can use the smartphone app "**go mobile**"

Useful "Go Bus" lines:

- 16 Express Go bus to Toronto Union Station
- 47 [from McMaster Go station] and 47]- Go bus to Mississauga and York University at North of Toronto, and
- 15 [from McMaster Go station] or 18 (Go Station Downtown), Go bus to Aldershot Go station to connect with Go train towards Toronto.

On Campus Parking

If you wish to drive to school, you'll need a parking pass from Parking and Transit Services. Most of the lots on the main campus are usually full with a long waiting list. Passes for zones M, N, O, and P are available and are the cheaper. There is a shuttle bus between these parking lots & campus (about a 10 to 15 minute walk from campus).

Bicycles

MACycle on campus often have cheap bikes for sale and they have an auction at the beginning of the year. You can also fix up your bike there.

Hamilton has a bike share program “SoBi” and there are many locations where you can pick up/drop off the bikes. Link to get informed and become a member:

<https://hamilton.socialbicycles.com/>

Also, you can get cheap bikes through Police of Hamilton auction site

<https://www.policeauctionscanada.com/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/CategoryDisplay?cgrfnbr=35363&cgmenbr=73603364&MoreSubs=Y>

How to Get to the Pearson International Airport:

- **Go bus 40** from Hamilton GO station and on the way GO Bus stops to Richmond Hill Centre (stops at Pearson Airport).
Cost: approx \$9 one way
Time of travel: approx 1hr
- **Union Pearson Express** from Toronto Union Station to the airport:
<http://www.upexpress.com/en/information/information.aspx#route>
- Carpool: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/743014865720556/>
- Other options are also available by combining 47 GO Bus to Mississauga and local bus (MiWay) 7 to the airport.

Driver’s License (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/driving-and-roads>)

As an international resident you can drive in Ontario on an international driving license for a limited period of time. You will have to get a Ontario license to continue driving. Many countries have an agreement with Canada and as such can exchange their license with the proper documentation.

Useful links for obtaining a driver’s license

<http://www.drivetest.ca/licences/drivers-licences-cars.html>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/exchange-out-province-drivers-licence>

- Driver’s Handbook
<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/publications/handbooks.shtml>

TAXI Services in Hamilton

- Blue Line Taxi (905) 525-0000 <http://www.525blue.com/>
- Hamilton Cab (905) 777-7777 <http://www.hamiltoncab.com/>
- Ancaster Taxi Inc (905) 648-8294

Car Rental

- Discount Car Rental
<http://www.discountcar.com/locations.cfm?locations=Hamilton>

- Enterprise
https://www.enterprise.ca/en/home.html?cm_mmc=Google--Brand--E_G_CA_SE_Geo_B_EXM_NTL_EN_CA--enterprise_hamilton&s_kwcid=AL!4824!3!121195296668!e!!g!!enterprise%20hamilton&ef_id=VPYI4QAABHmpf90:20160818133951:s
- Budget
<http://www.budget.ca/en/>
- Avis
<http://www.avis.ca/car-rental/avisHome/home.ac>
- Carpool
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/743014865720556/>
- Community car share
<http://communitycarshare.ca/>

Transportation for Longer Trips

- Megabus Canada <https://ca.megabus.com/landingcanada.aspx?return=/default.aspx>
- Greyhound Canada <https://www.greyhound.ca/>
- Coach Canada <http://www.coachcanada.com/coachcanada/language.asp>
- VIA Rail <http://www.viarail.ca/>
- Shuttle bus from Sheraton Hamilton to Buffalo airport - useful if you find a cheaper flight out of Buffalo!
- Cheap flight sites: kayak, flighthub, cheapoair, onetravel, skyscanner, yyzdeals, momondo.ca, budgetair.com, bookingbuddy.com, Google flights, etc.
- **Niagara Falls trip**
<http://yourcasinovacations.com/daily-casino-tours/hamilton>
Mega bus Canada (above link)
<https://ca.megabus.com/landingcanada.aspx?return=/default.aspx>
Greyhound Canada (above link)

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

Finding child care in Hamilton

<https://www.hamilton.ca/HealthandSocialServices/SocialServices/ChildCareAndParenting/FindingChildCare.htm>

McMaster has a gym that includes swimming pool, Yoga/Meditation room, Squash rooms, etc. Here is a link to the Recreation Centre: <http://rec.mcmaster.ca/> (App for the smart phones "MAC Rec" is also available).

There are also plenty of other **gyms in Hamilton**, e.g.

YMCA: <http://www.ymcahbb.ca/>

YWCA Hamilton (**check for the gender allowance**) <http://ywcahamilton.org/>

World Gym <http://www.worldgym.com/>

Newspapers

Hamilton's **local newspapers** is the Hamilton Spectator. You can find complementary paper copies throughout the campus or online: <http://www.thespec.com/hamilton/>

A good site to look at in order to know about the current happenings, events and developments in Hamilton is Raise the Hammer: <https://raisethehammer.org/>

McMaster publishing: <https://www.thesil.ca/>

Shopping

Groceries: Nations (Jackson Square in downtown), Metro,

Fortinos (store closer to campus on 1579 Main St. West offers for McMaster Students 10% off on Tuesdays), No Frills,

Food Basics (store in Westdale on 845 King St W offers for McMaster Students 10% off on Tuesdays).

Clothing, and similar in Hamilton:

Lime Ridge mall <http://www.limeridge.ca/en/Pages/default.aspx>

East Gate mall <http://www.eastgatesquare.ca/>

Jackson Square in downtown

Meadowlands Power Centre

Useful smart phone apps for shopping and budgeting:

Reebee and Flipp

Cell phone/Home phone, Internet and Cable TV providers in Hamilton

Bell (**All**)

<http://www.bell.ca>

Rogers (**All**)

https://www.rogers.com/web/Rogers.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=INTER_LANDING

Koodo (**Cell Phone**)

<http://koodomobile.com/en/on/index.shtml>

Wind Mobile (**Cell Phone**)

<http://www.windmobile.ca/>

Fido (**Cell Phone**)

<https://www.fido.ca/>

Cogeco (**Home phone, Internet and Cable TV**)

<http://www.cogeco.ca/>

CIK Telecom (**Home phone, Internet, Cable TV**)

<http://www.ciktel.com/ecm/Eng/index.asp>

Teksavvy (**Internet, Home phone**)

<http://teksavvy.com/>

Banks

(Make an appointment in order to open a student account; passport, study permit and offer letter are required for international students)

CIBC, TD Bank, RBC, Scotiabank, BMO, Tangerine

ATMs on campus

- CIBC & RBC in the basement of the student centre, down the steps beside union market
- JHE Lobby (Extra Fee)
- McMaster Institute of Health Sciences (IAHS) Building Lobby (Extra Fee)
- CIBC in McMaster Health Sciences Building Ground Floor across from Williams Café
- ETB Ground Floor

What to do in Hamilton

<http://www.tourismhamilton.com/what-to-do>

Hamilton Festivals:

-Artcrawl (every 2nd Friday of the month on James Street); Victoria Day Celebrations: Fireworks at Dundas driving park (MAY); Farm Crawl (MAY & JULY); Buskerfest (JUNE); Canada Day Celebrations (JULY); Hamilton Fringe Festival (JULY); Gore Park Midsummer's dream color festival (AUGUST); Dundas Cactus Fest (AUGUST); Hamilton Air Show (AUGUST); Festival of Friends (AUGUST); Supercrawl (SEPTEMBER); Locke Street Festival (SEPTEMBER); and Steel City Jazz Festival (OCTOBER)

- Cultural Activities
<https://iss.mcmaster.ca/international-student-handbook/life-in-hamilton/cultural-activities.html>
- Outdoor Activities
<https://iss.mcmaster.ca/international-student-handbook/life-in-hamilton/outdoor-activities.html>

One more link:

<https://www.msumcmaster.ca/services-directory/4-compass-information-centre>

Do fun stuff on a student budget by looking at deal sites:groupon, livingsocial, redflag

TAXES

You must file your taxes by the end of April (deadline) each year. You need the following Information in order to file the taxes. You will need:

1. Your T2202A, T4, T4a slips from Mosaic (and any other income sources).
2. Rent Receipts.
3. Pay slips.
4. T5 forms if you have any investments.
5. Any additional transit receipts, medical receipts or other claimable amounts.
 - You can file your taxes using UFILE, or
 - You can pay somebody to do it for you e.g. HR Block

* CUPE 3906 also organizes Tax Information Workshop during winter semester. Detailed information about time and location of these workshops will be will be released by CUPE 3906 in February/March.

~ THE END ☺

We hope these information and links will help you to settle in Hamilton. Should you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to let us know.

Truly Yours
CUPE 3906

Contact:

international@cupe3906.org

Facebook page (CUPE International members):

chiefsteward_postdocs@cupe3906.org

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/198339776874776/>

staff@cupe3906.org