

The Complete College Send-Off Checklist

Everything beyond the dorm shopping list —

The health forms, legal paperwork, and real conversations that protects your student

Legal Forms — Sign These Before They Leave

Once your child turns 18, you lose automatic legal access to their medical and academic information — even if you're still paying every bill. These forms take an afternoon; without them, a routine emergency can turn into a legal roadblock.

☐ **HIPAA authorization/release form.** Without it, doctors and hospitals legally cannot share your child's medical info with you, even in an emergency. Get one for the campus health center and the nearest hospital. No notary needed.

Get it: eforms.com/release/medical-hipaa or hipaajournal.com/hipaa-release-form

☐ **Medical power of attorney (healthcare proxy).** Lets you make medical decisions if your child is incapacitated and can't decide for themselves. Many states combine this with the HIPAA release into one form.

Get it: eforms.com/power-of-attorney/medical (state-specific templates)

☐ **FERPA waiver.** Without it, the school can't legally discuss grades, disciplinary records, or enrollment status with you. There's no universal form — each school issues its own through the registrar or student portal.

Get it: Search “[your college name] + FERPA release form,” or start at collegiateparent.com/important-forms

☐ **Durable power of attorney.** Covers financial and administrative matters — leases, bank accounts, insurance paperwork — if your child is unavailable or unable to handle it.

Get it: eforms.com/power-of-attorney/durable

☐ **Check state-specific requirements.** Rules vary by state — a quick call to an estate attorney or your state bar's website confirms your documents are valid where your child will actually live.

Get it: [Find an attorney: americanbar.org lawyer referral directory](https://americanbar.org/lawyer-referral-directory)

Health Prep — Handle It While You're Still in the Room

Once they're on campus, healthcare becomes their responsibility. Lock in the basics now.

☐ **Full physical and dental checkup.** Especially important without an established local doctor — ask about telehealth options too.

☐ **Prescription refills.** Enough supply to bridge the gap until they establish care near campus — and they should know how to manage refills themselves.

☐ **Vaccinations confirmed.** Many colleges require meningococcal (MenACWY, sometimes MenB) for students in dorms — often a hard requirement for move-in.

☐ **Mental health resources identified.** Look up the campus counseling center together; talk honestly about stress, homesickness, and asking for help.

☐ **Health insurance reviewed.** Confirm coverage in the school's state; check the student health plan if not. Make sure your child knows how to actually use their insurance card.

☐ **Basic health toolkit packed.** Thermometer, first aid basics, labeled meds, and a saved list of allergies, prescriptions, and doctors' contacts.

Emotional & Relationship Prep — Don't Skip This

This is the part you'll remember most in five years.

- ☐ **Have the real conversations weeks before, not the final days.** Emotions run high right before drop-off — a car ride a few weeks out works better than the last week.
- ☐ **Agree on a communication plan together.** Ask what feels right to your student instead of assuming — weekly call, daily text, Sunday dinner by video.
- ☐ **Ask a few real questions.** Try “what are you most nervous about?” or “what do you want to make sure doesn't change between us?” instead of “are you excited?”
- ☐ **Make one more memory before the goodbye memory.** A final trip, a tradition, a standing dinner — something to look forward to beyond the send-off itself.
- ☐ **Write something down.** A letter in the suitcase, a note in a drawer — something they find later, not just at drop-off.

Academic & Administrative

- ☐ Confirm class registration, orientation dates, and required placement tests.
- ☐ Set up student portal, campus email, and LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.).
- ☐ Look into tutoring and advising resources before they're needed.
- ☐ Check the financial aid refund and billing timeline.

Financial & Legal Logistics

- ☐ Set up a way to transfer money fast — joint account, Venmo/Zelle, or shared budgeting app.
- ☐ Add them to a card for emergencies and agree on a real semester budget.
- ☐ Check auto insurance and parking permits if bringing a car.
- ☐ Confirm renter's/property insurance for dorm electronics.
- ☐ Update their mailing address for anything tied to their name.

Practical Life Skills (Yes, Really)

- ☐ Do a full trial run of laundry, start to finish.
- ☐ Cook a few simple, dorm-realistic meals together.
- ☐ Practice a real monthly budget and what happens if they go over.
- ☐ Walk through a roommate conflict, missed deadline, or lockout scenario.
- ☐ Save a “who to call for what” list — RA, security, health center, financial aid.

Tech & Safety

- ☐ Back up phone and laptop data before the move.
- ☐ Share locations if both are comfortable — safety net, not surveillance.
- ☐ Download the campus safety app and save security's number.
- ☐ Confirm phone plan coverage at the new location.

If You Only Have an Hour

Prioritize these five: HIPAA release signed, FERPA waiver submitted, one real conversation had, insurance card understood, and a way to send money fast. Everything else can be handled with a phone call after move-in — these five are much harder to fix after the fact.

*Print this, tape it to the fridge, and check things off as you go. It's a lot less glamorous than the Target run — but it's the part that actually protects your kid.
— Created by GalPal.net*