

# How to Participate in Formal Recruitment for Sororities

## Description

Formal Recruitment for sororities at Virginia Tech is the process female students must participate in if they wish to be a part of Greek Life. Formal Recruitment consists of five rounds and Bid Day, stretching over a one week period. The first three rounds occur the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday before classes start for Spring semester, and the last two rounds and Bid Day occur the following Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (depending on the weather). Completing Formal Recruitment can be done in six easy steps: (1) Sign up online for Formal Recruitment, (2) Complete Open House Rounds 1 and 2, (3) Complete Philanthropy Round, (4) Complete Sisterhood Round, (5) Complete Preference Round, and finally, the most exciting step, (6) Receive Bid (if applicable).



At the beginning of each round PNM's, Potential New Members, arrive by bus to Oak Lane, Virginia Tech's Greek community, to receive their party list. The first two rounds of Formal Recruitment are Open House. During these rounds, PNM's have an opportunity to visit each house, talk to each sorority, and tell a little information about themselves. The third round is Philanthropy, on this day PNM's visit the houses on their party list and talk to the different sororities about their philanthropies. The topics of conversation include what philanthropy the sorority is involved in, and the events they hold to raise money for that philanthropy. The fourth round, which is held the following weekend, is Sisterhood. During this round PNM's once again only visit the houses on their party list, and learn about the different sororities' sisterhood events. The final round, which is also the most serious, is Preference. During the previous rounds, the mood is usually upbeat and informal, but during Preference round, everything changes. The PNM's only visit their remaining three sororities during this round. PNM's are included in each sororities' formal ceremonies, along with having an opportunity to ask any remaining questions they might have before their big decision later in the day. Preference round is the last time sororities have to impress PNM's and it is also the time when PNM's typically decide which sorority they want to join.

Each night after the rounds are over, except Open House Round 1, rankings take place. PNM's rank the different sororities based on who they did or did not prefer, and sororities rank based on if a PNM would make a good fit for the sorority or not. To put it simply, ranking is a mutual selection process. Depending on how the PNM and sororities rank will determine which houses the PNM visits the following round. The last day of Formal Recruitment is Bid Day, the day every PNM looks forward to. All of the PNM's hard work during the previous week pays off when they receive their bid. Participants of Formal Recruitment start out the day as a Potential New Member, and end the day as a New Member. Once PNM's receive their bid, they head to their new house in Oak Lane to spend the rest of the day celebrating with their new sisters.

Overall, participation in Formal Recruitment at Virginia Tech is crucial for female students looking to get involved in Greek life. Formal Recruitment may seem like a very long week for some, but all would agree it is worth it in the end. Completing each round of Formal Recruitment is very important for PNM's so they can learn what each sorority has to offer. Becoming a member of a sorority not only leads to lifelong friends, but also to great networking possibilities and philanthropic opportunities. However, it is important to note that participating in Formal Recruitment does not guarantee a bid to a sorority.

## Glossary

**Bid:** A formal invitation to join a Greek organization. A bid is typically an index sized piece of paper bearing the organizations crest, the participant's name, and signatures from the organization's president and recruitment chairperson.

**Bid Day:** The day female students participating in the recruitment process at Virginia Tech receive their formal invitations to join a Greek organization. Bid Day is also the final day of the recruitment process.

**Fish Bowl:** Bowl shaped field in the middle of Virginia Tech's Greek community. The Fish Bowl is used for many Greek organization's philanthropic events throughout the year.

**Formal Recruitment:** The process female students at Virginia Tech must complete during the Spring Semester if they wish to join a sorority. Formal Recruitment spans over two consecutive weekends and consists of five rounds allowing participants to learn about each sorority. Students participating in Formal Recruitment are guided throughout the entire process.

**Holding House:** The house participants are assigned to throughout the recruitment process. Participants start and end each day of the recruitment process at their specific holding house to receive instructions. Participants also return to their specific holding house to enjoy breaks and eat lunch (if applicable). Holding Houses are located in Virginia Tech's Greek community.

**Initiation:** The ceremony required to become a full member of a Greek organization. Initiation is typically a formal ceremony that includes a Greek organization's formal rituals and ideals. All information disclosed during initiation is to be kept a secret within the Greek organization.

**New Member:** Term used to define a member of the newest group of a Greek organization.

**Oak Lane:** Virginia Tech's Greek community located on campus just past the Duck Pond. Oak Lane is home to hundreds of Greek life students typically in their junior year. Although there is plenty of commuter parking, Oak Lane can easily be reached by the Hokie Express Blacksburg Transit bus.

**Open House Rounds 1 and 2:** The first two rounds of the recruitment process at Virginia Tech. Participants visit six different Greek organizations during round 1, and the six remaining Greek organizations during round 2. Open House Rounds 1 and 2 conversations typically include participants telling the organizations some personal background information (college major, academic year, hometown, etc.).

**Party List:** The list of Greek organizations participants will be visiting during each round of the recruitment process. Party lists are distributed to each participant at the beginning of each new round. It's possible participants may not have a full party list, meaning participants do not visit the maximum number of organizations scheduled for that round. If a participant is not visiting a Greek organization during a party, their party list will show "break" instead of an organization's name.

**Philanthropy Round:** The third round of the recruitment process at Virginia Tech. Participants visit up to nine different Greek organizations during this round. Philanthropy Round conversations include what each Greek organization's philanthropies are, and how they raise money for that philanthropy. Greek organizations typically show a video during this round to show participants their different fundraising events, along with going into more detail about their philanthropic cause. Philanthropy Round is the longest round of the recruitment process; therefore, lunch is provided for each participant.

**Pledge Class:** Term used to describe the group of members in a Greek organization who participated in formal recruitment the same year. A typical name for a pledge class is the semester the members participated in formal recruitment plus the year they participated in formal recruitment ex. Spring '12.

**PNM:** Potential New Member. Female students participating in Formal Recruitment at Virginia Tech.

**Preference Round:** The fifth and final round of the recruitment process at Virginia Tech. Participants of formal recruitment visit up to three different Greek organizations during this round. Preference Round conversation topics include any last minute questions participants of formal recruitment might have, as well as Greek organization members share why they joined their particular organization. This is the first time participants are included in a Greek organization's formal ceremony; therefore, Preference Round is the most serious round of the formal recruitment process.

**Sisterhood Round:** The fourth round of the recruitment process at Virginia Tech. Participants of formal recruitment visit up to six different Greek organizations during this round. Topics of conversation include the Greek organization's sisterhood events, and any personal stories Greek organization members might have. Greek organizations typically show a video during this round to show participants pictures from previous sisterhood events.

**Sorority:** A group of undergraduate female students in a social organization. Members of the same sorority are often referred to as "sisters", and share the same goals and ideals. A sorority is much more than just social events. Sororities strive to raise money for their specific philanthropy and create strong sisterhood bonds. Although members of sororities are only considered active during their undergraduate years, they still remain a part of the sorority for the rest of their life.

**Ranking:** A mutual selection process. After each round, except Open House Round 1, each participating female student will rank the different sororities they visited that day based on who they did or did not prefer. The sororities rank each participating female student that visited their house during each particular round. Depending on how the participating female students and sororities rank will determine which houses the participants visit the following round.

**Rho Gamma:** Recruitment Guide. A Rho Gamma (RG) is an already initiated sorority member guiding female students throughout the Formal Recruitment process. Months before Formal Recruitment starts, and during the process itself, Rho Gammas keep their Greek affiliation a secret to avoid swaying participating students deciding their rankings.

## Step-by-Step Instructions

**1) Sign up online for Formal Recruitment:** This is the most crucial step of the entire process. Without signing up online you will not be allowed to participate in any aspect of Formal Recruitment, and subsequently, not be allowed to join a sorority. For deadlines and information about the registration process, please visit [www.vtpanhellenic.org](http://www.vtpanhellenic.org). Signing up for Formal Recruitment can be done in a few quick steps, all of which take place in HokieSPA:

- Log into your HokieSPA account
- Click on the “Student Organizations Menu” link
- Choose the “Fraternity and Sorority Life” link
- Select the “PHC” option
- Complete the “Grade Release” and “Our Commitment to a Hazing-Free Fraternity and Sorority Life Experience” forms
- Click on the “My Campus Director” link

### Student Organizations Menu

- Fraternity and Sorority Life**
- If you are a current member, you may complete various re
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Source: March 22, 2014 Screenshot taken from the Student Organization's Menu under HokieSPA at [www.hokiespa.vt.edu](http://www.hokiespa.vt.edu)

When you have completely finished the sign-up process, you will have received TWO different confirmation emails. The cost to sign up for Formal Recruitment can vary, but it is typically around \$80.

**SIDE NOTE:** Steps 2-5 can be completed using the same process. Each day you will arrive in Oak Lane by buses provided by Virginia Tech at the time designated by your Rho Gamma. Once in Oak Lane you will head straight for your holding house to receive your party list. A few minutes before the first party is set to begin, your Rho Gammas will release you from your holding house so you can head to the first house on your party list. If you have a “break” instead of a sororities’ name for a party, head back to your holding house; otherwise, head to whichever sororities’ house is listed to complete the next party. After the final party, go to your holding house (if not already there) to complete rankings with your Rho Gamma. At the end of each round your Rho Gammas will release you from your holding house to get back on the buses and head back to campus.

**2) Complete Open House Rounds 1 and 2:** Open House Rounds 1 and 2 occur the first weekend of recruitment, more specifically, the Friday and Saturday before classes start for Spring Semester. During each round you will visit six different sororities, totally six different parties lasting thirty minutes each. Open House Round 1 is the only day you will not complete rankings after the round is over as you have not visited each sorority yet (you will still head back to your holding house after the final party has ended though). After you have completed your last party of Open House Round 2, rank your top nine sororities with your first ranked sorority being your favorite. Sorority members typically keep the conversations going during this round, but speak to the members about where you’re from, how your winter break went, your major, and academic year and topics of that nature. Dress casual for these rounds, and don’t overthink an outfit. You will be standing a lot for these rounds so wear comfortable shoes. Examples of acceptable Open House Rounds 1 and 2 outfits are shown to the right:

Source for Images: March 21, 2014, VT Panhellenic’s page on [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)



**3) Complete Philanthropy Round:** Philanthropy Round occurs the first weekend of recruitment, more specifically, the Sunday before classes start for Spring Semester. During this round you will visit up to nine different sororities, totally up to nine different parties lasting thirty minutes each. Sorority members will explain to you what their philanthropy is, and how they raise money for their specific cause. You will be directed by sorority members to watch a video demonstrating their fundraising events along with any facts about their philanthropy during each party. Philanthropy Round is a very long day (usually about 10 hours) therefore head to your holding house during the time stated on your party list for lunch (lunch is provided for you). After you have completed your last party for Philanthropy Round, rank your top six sororities with your first ranked sorority being your favorite. Make sure your attire is appropriate for this round. The attire is casual, although a little more formal than the Open House Rounds. Examples of typical outfits worn during Philanthropy Round are shown below:

**TIP:** Try and make a point to ask questions during this round, it will show sorority members you're truly interested in their philanthropy.



Source for Images: March 21, 2014, VT Panhellenic's page on [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)

**4) Complete Sisterhood Round:** Sisterhood Round occurs the second weekend of recruitment, more specifically, the Friday after the first week of classes of Spring Semester. During this round you will visit up to six different sororities, totally up to six different parties lasting forty-five minutes each. Talk to the sorority members about how they embrace sisterhood and what type of events they hold. Much like Philanthropy Round, you will watch a video about the sorority's sisterhood events and activities when directed during each party. After you have completed your last party for Sisterhood Round, rank your top three sororities with your first ranked sorority being your favorite. Appropriate attire is also required for this round. The attire during this round is more formal than the Open House or Philanthropy rounds. A good question to ask yourself while getting ready for Sisterhood Round would be, "could I wear this outfit to church?" Examples of appropriate outfits worn for Sisterhood Round are shown to the right:

Source for Images: March 22, 2014, VT Panhellenic's page on [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)



**5) Complete Preference Round:** Preference Round occurs the second weekend of recruitment, more specifically, the Saturday after the first week of classes of Spring Semester. During this round you will visit up to three different sororities, totally up to three different parties lasting an hour each. Good questions to ask the sorority members would be, why they chose their particular sorority, and how it has impacted their time at Virginia Tech. Preference Round is a very unique round so take it seriously. This will be the first time you are included in a sorority's formal ceremony. After you have completed your last party for Preference Round, rank the three sororities you just visited with your first ranked sorority being your favorite. It is not recommended, but if you wish, you may only rank one sorority. It is highly suggested you rank all of your remaining sororities even if they are not your top choice though. Like always, appropriate attire is required for this round. Preference Round is the most formal round of all of recruitment. No need to dig out old prom dresses, but instead think more along the lines of a classy cocktail dress. Examples of appropriate outfits worn during Preference Round are shown below:

**TIP:** It is okay to cry during the formal ceremonies! They can be very emotional.



Source for Images: March 22, 2014, VT Panhellenic's page on [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)

**6) Receive Bid (if applicable):** Congratulations, you have made it to Bid Day! You will receive your bid on the final day of recruitment, the Sunday after the first week of classes of Spring Semester. Just like the previous rounds of recruitment, arrive by bus to Oak Lane and head to your holding house. Once you have arrived at your holding house your Rho Gammas will hand you your bid, and you must then choose to accept or deny it. If you accept your bid, your Rho Gammas will assist you in filling out the necessary forms on HokieSPA. After you have finished the technical aspect of receiving your bid, enjoy the rest of Bid Day and run to your new home in Oak Lane! Spend the day celebrating with your new sisters and getting to know the girls in your pledge class.