

Undergraduates

Policies

Residents of Penn State University Park should read and familiarize themselves with the Policies for residence hall living. Questions should be directed to the Residence Life staff.

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Alcohol Policy

Because the vast majority of residence hall students are under 21 years old, it is important that all students understand the rules and policies of the University and Pennsylvania state law regarding alcoholic beverages and the way in which residence hall staff, coordinators, resident assistants (RAs), and community assistants (CAs) will enforce these rules and policies.

1. It is a violation of state law and University policy for a person under 21 years of age to attempt to purchase, consume, possess, or transport alcoholic beverages. It is unlawful to sell, furnish, and give alcoholic beverages or to permit alcoholic beverages to be sold, furnished, or given to any minor.
2. University policy does permit possession and use of alcoholic beverages by persons 21 years of age or older, but only in the individual residence hall rooms of students 21 years of age or older. Consumption or distribution of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in any location other than in the individual residence hall room of students 21 years of age or older. Students who are 21 years of age or older may transport alcoholic beverages to their rooms through common areas so long as the beverages are in their original, closed containers. It will be presumed that any container other than the original closed container connotes the individual has been or will be consuming the beverage in other than an individual residence hall room.
3. Kegs containing alcoholic beverages are not permitted in or around University residence halls and apartments. Any container for alcohol that requires a tap is prohibited.
4. In enforcing alcohol policies, residence hall staff is required to check students' ages. Students are obligated, when asked, to provide proof that they are of legal age to possess alcoholic beverages.
5. If a student under 21 years of age is found in possession of alcoholic beverages, the beverages will be taken from the student and the student will be referred to Residence Life, the Office of Judicial Affairs, and/or University Police.
6. Any student observed bringing alcohol into a residence hall will be confronted by a staff member to determine if the student is of legal age to possess alcohol.
 - a. If the student is 21 years of age or older, the student is reminded that distribution of alcoholic beverages to minors is a violation resulting in referral to Residence Life, the Office of Judicial Affairs, and/or University Police.
 - b. If the student is under 21 years of age, the alcoholic beverages will be taken, and the student will be referred to Residence Life, the Office of Judicial Affairs, and/or University Police.
7. If students under the age of 21 are in a room and open containers of alcohol are present in the room, the minors will be deemed to have been provided with—and in possession of—alcohol, and appropriate charges will be filed for everyone involved. This does not apply to a roommate situation where one student is under 21 and the other is 21 or older and the roommates are the only persons in the room.
8. Any party or gathering at which the rules and policies regarding alcoholic beverages have been violated will be terminated and those students in violation will be referred to Residence Life, the Office of Judicial Affairs, and/or University Police.

9. The collection of monies prior to or during any function in the residence halls where alcoholic beverages are served is not permitted.
10. Residents will be held responsible for activities that occur in their rooms, and will be referred to Residence Life, the Office of Judicial Affairs, and/or University Police, if guests are in violation of the alcohol policies.
11. It is the responsibility of students living in the residence halls to maintain the spirit and letter of the above policies. It is the responsibility of the residence hall staff to assist students in this regard and to deal with alleged violations when they occur.
12. It is the responsibility of University Police to enforce the criminal laws of Pennsylvania, as well as University rules and regulations. In the event of involvement of University Police, civil or criminal prosecution, as well as University disciplinary action, may result.
13. Failure to comply with the direction of or to present identification to University officials acting in the performance of their duties is a violation of the Code of Conduct.
14. Supplying false information, such as name, age, etc., to University officials who are acting in the performance of their duties is a violation of the Code of Conduct.

Violation of the above policies will result in referral to Residence Life, the Office of Judicial Affairs, and/or University Police.

Canvassing

1. Canvassing shall be defined as any effort to influence student opinions, gain support, or promote a particular cause or interest, specifically excluding any solicitation or fundraising as defined by current University policy. Surveys are not considered to be canvassing for purposes of this policy.
2. Students, student organizations, residence hall house governments, area governments, and outside interests are eligible to canvass in the residence halls.
3. Canvassing may occur door-to-door in individual residence hall buildings, unless restricted by a majority vote of the residents of that building, at the beginning of each academic year.
4. Canvassing is permitted in all residence hall main lobbies.
5. Canvassing may occur in the commons buildings. Students or student organizations who wish to canvass in a commons building must request permission to do so in the area Residence Life Office. Canvassing in dining hall rooms is prohibited.
6. Canvassing shall be restricted to the hours of 11:00 a.m. through 11:00 p.m.
7. Any canvasser must register with the assistant director of Residence Life, or the assistant director's designate, no less than 24 hours prior to the canvass and clearly understand all provisions of canvassing regulations before canvassing may begin.
8. When contacting residents in their rooms, canvassers must knock before entering, identify themselves, announce their specific purpose, enter an individual room only by the expressed consent of the resident, and leave immediately if the resident so requests. A canvasser who is not a resident of the building in which door-to-door canvassing is taking place must be escorted by a resident of the building at all times.

Canvassers must abide by all University rules and regulations. All violators will be subject to referral to Residence Life or the Office of Judicial Affairs and/or civil or criminal prosecution.

Decorations and Displays

Student Room Door Decorating and Display Policy

Students may decorate the surface of their room door facing the corridor, provided that it is done according to the guidelines that follow. Adhering to these guidelines will protect doors from unusually harsh wear, eliminate potential fire hazards, and ensure free movement/access in the corridor. No decorations may be placed on the exterior of the building.

1. Decorations may be placed on the upper section of room doors above the lock

mechanism. If the door has louvers, no materials may be placed on the louvers.

2. Decorations may not project more than one-half inch from the surface of the door. Greeting cards are to be fastened shut.
3. No decals or stickers are permitted.
4. Bunting and streamers are permitted to celebrate special occasions, but must be removed within 24 hours.
5. All memo boards, pictures, signs, and posters must be unframed.
6. Only masking tape or "sticky tack" may be used.
7. Nonflammable materials should be used whenever possible.
8. All door decorations must be removed prior to the student being checked out of the room. Damages to the doors as well as any extra cleaning required will be the responsibility of the residents and may result in a charge to the student account. Housing staff will determine the nature and extent of all damages. Any materials found to be offensive or outside the boundaries of reasonable community expectations will be referred to the area Residence Life staff.

Questions related to the above policy should be referred to the area Housing and Residence Life staff.

Student Room and Lounge Window Decorating and Display Policy

Students may decorate the window(s) in their individual residence hall room as well as the window(s) in their hall lounge provided that it is done according to the guidelines that follow. Adhering to these guidelines will prevent windows from being damaged and eliminate potential safety hazards.

1. Decorations may only be on the inside window surfaces.
2. Decorations must be removable (not permanent). Only water-based poster paint may be used for painted decorations.
3. For emergency reasons, such as in the case of a fire, one-half of the total window space must be transparent.
4. Decorations that present health hazards due to weight, possibility of breakage, degree of cleanliness, etc., must be modified and/or removed if deemed necessary by the Housing and Residence Life staff in consultation with Environmental Health and Safety staff.
5. All decorations must be temporarily removed at the request of the Housing staff for regularly scheduled window cleaning purposes.
6. All room window decorations must be removed prior to the resident being checked out of the room.

Damages to the windows and drapes and/or blinds—as well as any extra cleaning required—will be the responsibility of the residents and may result in a charge to the student account. Housing staff will determine the nature and extent of all damages. Any materials found to be offensive or outside the boundaries of reasonable community expectations will be referred to the area Residence Life staff.

Questions related to the above policy should be referred to the area Housing and Residence Life staff.

Protocol for Dealing with Alleged Offensive Decorations

If any Housing and Residence Life staff member becomes aware of a decoration on a room door or window that may be offensive or outside the boundaries of reasonable community expectations, a professional staff member will meet with the resident(s) of the room where the decoration is located. The staff member will explain the concern, discuss the impact that such a decoration may have on the community, and request that the resident remove it. The staff member will be careful to explain that the resident does not have to abide by this request. However, if the student does not accede to the request, the staff member may choose to refer the situation to a special meeting of the Area Community Council.

The special meeting will consist of five voting members:

- a representative of the Residence Life staff
- a representative of the Housing staff
- two representatives of the area government
- a representative of the Association of Residence Hall Students (ARHS)

The assistant director of Residence Life in the area will convene and chair the committee, which will consist of the five members mentioned above. The resident(s) of the room and any student(s) who complained about the decoration may also choose to attend. The council will decide by a majority vote whether the decoration can be posted or must be removed. The council's decision is final.

If the council decides that a decoration must be removed, the resident has 24 hours to do so, after receiving written notification of the council's decision. The written notification will come from the assistant director of Residence Life. Any student who does not comply will be deemed to have violated an administrative directive.

Protocol for Dealing with Personally Threatening/Denigrating Decorations

If a decoration is found on a resident's door or window that is threatening to a particular student, or denigrating to a particular student based on age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, gender, sexual orientation, or veteran status, a Residence Life staff member will inform the resident that the decoration must be removed. Additionally, the resident may be referred for a Community Standards violation depending on the nature of the decoration. If the resident does not comply with the directions of the Residence Life staff member, the resident will be deemed to have violated an administrative directive.

Guests

Guests of Residents in Residence Halls

1. The residence halls are intended for use by residents of the building and their guests. A guest is defined as a person visiting a resident of the residence hall at the resident's invitation. Delivery persons are not considered to be guests for purposes of this policy.
2. In order to ease the congestion of the move-in period and to allow roommates the opportunity to discuss what to do about overnight guests in the room, no overnight guests will be allowed in the residence halls until the first day of classes with the permission of the roommate.
3. The following stipulations relate to all guests:
 - a. It is the responsibility of host students to ensure that their guests are aware of University and residence hall policies. Guests are held responsible for their own actions and for knowledge of University regulations. However, hosts may be held accountable for damages committed by their guests, unless the guest can be identified and is a University student.
 - b. Residents are permitted to have guests in their rooms only if there is no objection from their roommate(s).
 - c. Neither room keys nor door access cards will be provided for guests. Residents are not to give their keys or Penn State id+ Cards to guests in order for them to gain entrance to the room or the building.
 - d. Students may have an overnight guest in their room for a maximum of three consecutive nights. The University reserves the right to revoke this privilege. Guests may not move from one host's room to another in order to extend their stay in the residence halls.
 - e. Only residents and their invited guests are permitted in the living areas of the building, i.e., locations other than the lobby, which includes individual rooms and floor lounges. Individuals found in the building who are not residents or guests of residents are considered to be trespassing.
 - f. Guests are to use the appropriate restroom/shower facilities, i.e., male and female restrooms.
 - g. All guests must be escorted by a resident of the building at all times. A staff member may confront individuals if they are not recognized as a resident of that building and/or a resident of the building is not escorting them.
4. Residents of each building will vote on the hours when guests of the opposite gender may visit, according to the following stipulations:
 - a. Hours when guests of the opposite gender may visit shall be adopted by a simple majority vote of all residents of each residence hall.
 - b. A standard voting form will be utilized. Residence Life will develop the form in consultation with ARHS. The vote will be taken by secret ballot at the beginning of each academic year. Until the results are tabulated, the hours from the previous spring semester will be in effect. (A separate vote will be taken for summer session. Until results are tabulated, the hours from the previous spring semester will be in effect.) It is the responsibility of the house officers and area government to post the results of the vote.
 - c. The Office of Residence Life retains the right to review, modify, and for cause, suspend the hours voted upon by each building at any time.
5. Students charged with violations of any of the above regulations will be subject to University disciplinary action. An unescorted guest who is a student of the

University shall be subject to University discipline.

6. If a cot and/or linens are needed, students should make arrangements at the area commons desk. Charges for these services should be paid in advance; the deadline for reservations is 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Quiet Policy

One of the goals of Housing, Food Services, and Residence Life is to provide an atmosphere within the residence halls that is conducive to study and rest. In order to meet this goal, it is necessary that all students understand that the right of students to study and sleep takes precedence over the right of students to make noise. Quiet hours and courtesy hours have been established and posted in every residence hall.

They are as follows:

Courtesy Hours

24 hours

At all times, a student's right to study and sleep will be respected. Residents and their guests will lower their voices or the volume of their equipment (music, TV, computer, musical instruments, etc.) if asked to do so at any time.

Residence Halls

8:00 p.m.–8:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday

2:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday

Atherton and Simmons Halls

8:00 p.m.–10:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday

Midnight–10:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday

It is expected that a proper study atmosphere will be maintained during these hours. Residents are also reminded that these hours may be extended if additional study conditions are required.

Residence Life may extend hours in consultation with area student government and ARHS, or by a floor, building, or area vote.

There will be 24-hour quiet hours during exam time, beginning at 8:00 a.m. the day before finals and continuing until the halls close at the end of the semester (except in Atherton and Simmons Halls, where 24-hour quiet hours begin at 8:00 p.m. on the Friday preceding the first day of finals).

It is also expected that:

1. Electronic sound equipment (radios, TVs, stereos, electronic games, computers, etc.), musical instruments, and room activities will not be heard outside the room. Such equipment should never be played so loudly so as to disturb other residents. Stereo owners are urged to use headphones to ensure that the noise does not carry beyond the room.
2. At no time will amplified sound be directed out of windows by placing speakers in windows.
3. It is important that residents take the initiative to discuss the noise with the offender. If a resident is bothered by someone else's noise, the resident should ask them to quiet down. The resident has every right to expect them to do so. Likewise, any resident who is requested to quiet down should do so—thus showing respect for a fellow student. RAs/CAs will continue to deal with excessive noise. However, they cannot always be aware of every problem.
4. All students and guests will lower their voices when talking in corridors, bathrooms, study lounges, etc., in order to help maintain a quiet living environment for all residents.
5. All students will refrain from participating in any sports-like activity within or immediately adjacent to the residence halls. The University has designated playing areas for these activities. Information can be obtained at the area Residence Life Office.
6. Residents who persist in creating excessive noise will be subject to disciplinary action through Residence Life and/or the Office of Judicial Affairs.

RAs/CAs cannot be aware of every problem; a resident may want to contact them for assistance if he/she has addressed a noise issue with a fellow resident and that resident does not respond favorably.

Sanctions may include loss of the Housing Contract and/or separation from the University.

Safety

Items and Activities - Acceptable and Prohibited Usage

1. Candles, incense, and other flame-emitting articles are prohibited in residence halls. Only potpourri burners with an enclosed heating element and automatic shut-off are permitted.
2. The following electrical appliances are authorized for use in student rooms if an Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., label (UL label) is on the appliance: TVs, answering machines, stereo component systems, coffee makers (with enclosed heating element and automatic shut-off), clocks, fans, sun lamps (with enclosed lamp and automatic shut-off), hair dryers, hair setters, curling irons (with automatic shut-off), potpourri burners (with enclosed heating element and automatic shut-off), University-owned refrigerator / microwaves, corn poppers (with enclosed heating element and automatic shut-off), and personal computers.

The only cooking permitted in residence halls is that which can be done using the University-owned refrigerator/microwave provided in each room. The following appliances are also prohibited: hot plates, toasters, Torchiere-style (floor-standing) halogen lamps and lights, immersion heaters, heating coils, ovens, grills (indoor and outdoor), personal microwave ovens, and personal refrigerators. Irons may be stored in student rooms but are to be used only in designated ironing areas. If the use of multiple outlets is needed, a grounded 15 amp surge-protected plug-in strip with built-in circuit breaker should be used. Students may not install air conditioners. Air conditioners are permitted for approved medical needs only.

If unapproved appliances are observed in a room, the student will be asked to remove them from the building. In case of noncompliance, the University reserves the right to have the items removed. The items will be returned to the student for removal from the hall upon request to Housing management.

3. The use of or installation of wood, paneling, and/or tiles is prohibited unless approved by the University. Students should check with the Housing manager.
4. Only bunk beds and loft beds specifically approved by the University may be used within resident rooms, and only the use of approved beds is permitted. All beds must be freestanding on the floor, supported by legs attached to a bed frame. Mattresses are to be used on bed frames provided and not on the floor. Students should contact the area Housing Office or visit www.hfs.psu.edu/loftspecs/ for a copy of the approved bunk bed and loft bed plans.
5. The following items or activities are prohibited in and around University-operated housing units:
 - a. Alcoholic beverages, except as permitted by the Code of Conduct.
 - b. Pet animals, birds, and reptiles. (One small tank of tropical fish or goldfish is permitted.)
 - c. Radio and television masts and aerials; non-portable televisions and satellite dishes.
 - d. Radio-transmitting equipment, unless it is part of an official University program; i.e., for a Special Living Option (SLO) in a Special Living Option common area space.
 - e. Weightlifting equipment in individual rooms.
 - f. Liquid-filled beds and other liquid-filled furniture in student rooms.
6. Residence halls have exterior balconies as part of the architectural facade. Access to these balconies is prohibited.
7. Nothing is to be strung across the room for the purpose of hanging decorations. Darts and dartboards are not permitted. No decorations may be hung from the exterior of the residence hall.
8. No antennas are to be strung out of the windows and no food or beverages are to be stored between the windows and the screens on the outside ledges. Removal of window screens is prohibited.
9. Because of incidents of chinaware and glassware breakage, wearing shoes or other protective footwear in the dining commons is mandatory. Acts of "horseplay" are not permitted because of the possible injury to others in the dining commons.

Fire Safety and Regulations

1. To comply with state and local fire regulations, fire drills will be conducted in all residence halls once a month. Everyone present in the building during the emergency drills must participate by vacating the building according to instructions. Rooms may be checked during fire drills to ensure compliance. Failure to vacate the building will result in disciplinary action.
2. Fire alarms and fire extinguishers are located on every floor in each building. All residence hall rooms are equipped with a smoke detector that is electronically operated. In rooms where sprinklers have been installed, the smoke detector is monitored by University Police. All other smoke detectors operate independently from the building fire alarm system. The detectors and sprinklers are for students' safety and should not be tampered with. Tampering with equipment is a serious matter that could jeopardize the safety of a number of people. Tampering with any of this equipment can result in severe disciplinary and/or criminal action. Any student who experiences a problem should contact Housing management or an RA/CA.

Elevators

Most residence halls have elevators for moving people and equipment between floors. Students should refrain from the following behaviors when using an elevator:

1. Tampering with or abusing any of the elevator equipment or controls
2. Prying open elevator doors or holding them open by the safety edges
3. Attempting to exit an elevator that is stuck between floors without directions and assistance from elevator technicians or emergency personnel
4. Jumping up and down in the elevator

In addition, students should never use an elevator in a fire.

Engaging in any of the above behaviors may result in a referral to the community standards process or the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Room Inspections

Routine room inspections of all residence hall rooms are done periodically to evaluate the condition of the room and furnishings, to identify required maintenance and repairs, and to check for fire and safety hazards.

Security

Card Access System

Every residence hall on the University Park campus is equipped with an electronic, computerized card access system that permits access to the hall by residents of the building only.

The system is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Adjustments to access hours may be made during the fall arrival period and spring semester closing.

Students may enter their buildings by swiping their id+ cards in the card reader, located at the front lobby, and—in some halls—at other doors.

If the id+ card fails to unlock the student's assigned residence hall, the student may gain entry with the assistance of a roommate, a member of the Residence Hall Security Unit who is acting as the area rover, the staff member on duty in the commons building, or, in an extreme emergency, by contacting University Police.

If a student has pizza or other food delivered, the student must be in the lobby to meet the vendor at the front door. The delivery person will not be given access to the lobby.

Students who want to visit a resident who lives in another building will need to announce their planned arrival using the exterior telephone provided in the area or the commons building. The resident host must come to the entrance and escort the visiting student to the room, and later out of the residence hall.

If a student or guest leaves the hall through any of the regular building exits, they should be aware that exit doors are not to be held open for prolonged periods of time. An alarm at the door will sound and someone will be dispatched to determine if the door has been blocked open.

Helpful Hints

1. Students should give their room telephone numbers to any guests or visitors.
2. id+ cards should be kept in good condition and should never be let out of the owner's possession.
3. Students should immediately report any problems they experience.

If a student's id+ card is lost or stolen, the student should follow the procedures below:

1. Report the card lost at www.idcard.psu.edu. This service is available 24 hours

a day, seven days a week. It is the student's responsibility to deactivate the lost id+ card. The University is not responsible for any loss or expense resulting from the loss, theft, or misuse of the card.

2. Go to the id+ Office, 103 HUB-Robeson Center to obtain a replacement card. If the id+ Office is closed, a temporary ID can be obtained at the student's area commons desk. The student must present positive proof of identification to have a picture reprocessed. The replacement card will be active immediately for some services, such as meal plans and residence hall access. Other services may take up to 72 hours to reactivate. The student will be charged the current replacement card fee. This fee can be charged to the student's account or can be paid by cash or check.

Note: Students whose id+ cards are reported lost, misplaced, or stolen will not be allowed access to any dining commons or cash operation using their A La Board meal plan until they have obtained a replacement card. The id+ card has monetary value and should be treated the same as cash. The University will not be responsible for any value loss due to misuse or fraud.

Residence Hall Security Unit

Students are hired as rovers to check for propped doors, monitor activities in the commons building, and assist students who have questions or difficulties with the card access system. In general, they are on duty from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., although shifts and locations vary from area to area and on weekdays and weekends. Students who are interested in working with the Residence Hall Security Unit should contact University Police.

Safety and Security Tips

1. Students should not allow strangers to enter the residence hall with them.
2. Students should notify the staff member on duty if someone has insisted upon entering the hall with them. The student should try to get a good description of the offender and observe the direction in which he/she heads.
3. Students should keep their rooms locked at all times, even when they are sleeping, and especially when they are gone.
4. A malfunctioning card access reader or door should be reported immediately.
5. Students should meet any guests/visitors at the lobby door.
6. Students should not lend their id+ cards or room keys to others.
7. Lost or stolen id+ cards should be reported immediately.

Report Suspicious Activity Immediately

Suspicious activity includes: persons going from room to room trying doorknobs; persons loitering at unusual hours and locations; persons running (especially if something of value is being carried); persons exhibiting unusual mental, emotional, or physical symptoms; persons carrying University property or other items not wrapped; open or broken doors or windows; unusual noises or screams, etc.

Some people fail to report suspicious activity because they are not aware of what seemingly innocent activities might be suspicious. Others may notice activity and may be hesitant to call for fear of seeming over-reactive or embarrassed. Still others take it for granted that someone else has called. Students should call immediately about any suspicious activity. There is no need to worry about bothering staff on duty because that is why we are here. Students should not be concerned about being embarrassed if their suspicions prove unfounded. They should think instead about what could happen if they do not act.

Students play a critical role in maintaining a safe and secure environment. No matter how many security assistants we employ or how sophisticated a mechanical system we install, the safety and security of the residents can be compromised by careless resident behavior. Students should think about this the next time they are tempted to prop a door open or not lock their room doors.

Solicitations

Solicitations or Sale of Products or Services

1. Definitions.
 - a. A residence hall is a University-owned building that contains rooms assigned to students for sleeping, dressing, studying, and socializing, and that also contains common facilities and areas used by all students assigned to such residence halls, including common means of entering and exiting, common lavatories, common study lounges, common storage areas, and areas used in common for organized educational and social functions.
 - b. The solicitation of a sale of products or services that are for sale.

2. Except as hereinafter provided, no person (including a student), firm, business entity, charitable organization, religious organization, or other organization may solicit money or sell or solicit the sale of any product or service anywhere in a residence hall.
3. A student assigned to a room in a residence hall may invite a person, firm, business entity, charitable organization, religious organization or other organization to that student's assigned room to solicit money or to sell, or to solicit the sale of products or services with that student only. Such solicitation or sale must occur only in the assigned room of the student-inviter. The solicitation of money or the sale or the solicitation of a sale of products or services to any other student is prohibited anywhere in the residence hall.
4. Registered student organizations and residence hall house governments may solicit money or sell/solicit the sale of products or services in a residence hall in accordance with the regulations governing student organizations found in the Student Guide to General University Policies and Rules, found on the Web at <http://www.sa.psu.edu/ja/pdf/PoliciesRules.pdf>.
5. Nothing in these regulations shall be deemed to preclude any solicitation or sale by mail, e-mail, telephone, or other communication media.

