

# Community Standards

SMU Residence Life & Student Housing (RLSH) provides housing for more than 3,000 students in residential communities including 11 Residential Commons and 7 Upper-Division Housing facilities. Additionally, RLSH operates 22 apartment units and 9 fraternity houses.

Our goal is to provide a living environment that promotes and is compatible with the academic success and personal well-being of all students. As a result, the Resident Handbook contains the SMU RLSH Community Standards and policies.

By signing a [housing license agreement](#) as a residential community member, you agree to abide by and support the Community Standards as delineated in your agreement. All policies in the Resident Handbook apply to residents, apartment occupants, and all guests. We also ask that, as a conscientious residential community member, you consider your neighbors and help us maintain a quiet, clean, and respectful community environment.

► Building Policies and Expectations

▼ Community Standards for Residents

By becoming a member of the SMU community, students agree to abide by and be held accountable to the policies and procedure outlined in the [SMU Student Handbook](#). The handbook includes the Student Code of Conduct, the Honor Code, and other important information. In addition, Community Standards exist for the residence halls that provide a framework to help residents succeed in a community living environment.

**Community Standards Statement**

By signing a housing contract and living in an SMU residential facility, I understand that I am a member of a living and learning community. As a member of this community, I have certain rights as a resident and as a student. I recognize as well that other members of this community have these same rights, and, therefore, it will be important to learn to compromise with others in order to maintain an environment in which all members of the community may grow as individuals and may pursue learning as a fundamental part of the campus residential experience.

Community Standards are established to assist in shaping this environment, to protect our rights, and to assert the responsibilities we each have to one another. In recognition of the University's relationship to the United Methodist Church, I understand that it is my obligation to establish and sustain a living environment that supports individual needs and University values. Furthermore, where it is the University's vision to create and impart knowledge that will shape citizens who contribute to their communities and lead their professions in a global society, it is our goal for residents to learn how to be good citizens of their residential community, the SMU community, and the world at large. Additionally, we hope that residents will demonstrate appreciation for diverse cultures and respect the differences of others. The SMU community is one of free and open inquiry in which adults are encouraged to make responsible decisions in their lives. I accept that freedom of conscience determines such decisions, but agree further that this freedom does not imply license or encouragement to violate the law or University policy.

As a member of the residential community, I agree to abide by local, state, and federal laws, as well as by these Community Standards (and others that may be developed to further support this community), University policies, and the University Code of Conduct at all times while I am a resident of University housing at SMU.

**Alcohol**

In addition to the SMU Student Code of Conduct Policy A, the following standards are specific to the residential communities:

I understand that the legal drinking age in Texas is 21 years of age. I agree that I will not consume or possess alcohol unless I am 21 years of age or older and understand that this restriction applies equally to my residential community and elsewhere. I further

understand that I may not possess alcohol containers or paraphernalia if I am under 21 years of age. (Prohibited items include, but are not limited to cans, bottles, flasks, “yards,” bongs, and stills, even if they are intended to be “decorative.”) I further understand that all restrictions placed on residents who are 21 or older also apply to those who are not.

I understand that manufacturing alcohol is prohibited in SMU-owned housing.

If I am 21 and choose to consume alcohol, I will do so only in my room/apartment or in the room/apartment of another 21-year-old resident who is present at that time. I understand that neither a guest nor I may consume alcohol in a room/apartment where none of the assigned residents is 21. If I am over 21 years of age but my roommate is not, I understand that I may consume alcohol in my room/apartment, but I may not provide alcohol to my roommate or any other persons under the age of 21 according to Texas state law. If I choose to consume alcohol and I am at least 21, I will only purchase/consume alcohol from containers readily available as off-the-shelf packaging. I understand that off-the-shelf packaging does not include kegs, beer balls, or other large-volume containers. I understand that using beer bongs, playing alcohol drinking games, having open containers of alcohol in common areas, and/or similar activities are not permitted in SMU-owned housing.

I understand that there may be only one open container of alcohol per person of legal drinking age.

I agree further that I will at no time provide alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 or facilitate consumption of alcohol by someone under legal drinking age.

#### **Bicycles and Motorized Vehicles**

I agree to keep my bicycle, scooter, or similar conveyance (owned or borrowed) parked/stored outside SMU-owned housing at all times and in accordance with bicycle parking policies and vehicle regulations as established by the University.

#### **Disruptive Behavior**

I will not act in a manner that will disturb the academic pursuits or infringe upon the privacy rights, privileges, health, or safety of other persons. I understand that any activity that has a negative impact on others will not be tolerated.

#### **Drugs and Paraphernalia**

In addition to the SMU Student Code of Conduct Policy B, the following standards are specific to the residential communities:

I agree to neither possess, use, produce, sell, share, nor distribute illegal drugs or controlled substances. I understand that this standard applies to drugs, controlled substances, and/or related paraphernalia (i.e., hookahs or bongs) in or around SMU-owned housing. I understand that if I use prescription drugs or other controlled substances, I may be requested to provide proof that I am doing so under the supervision of a medical doctor. I agree to provide this proof immediately upon demand by a University official. I understand that it is illegal to provide my prescription drug(s) to another person. I understand that using another person’s prescription drug(s) is also illegal.

#### **Fire Safety**

I will practice effective fire safety at all times by exercising prudent judgment and following fire safety guidelines established or revised for SMU-owned housing. I will seek clarification from an RLSH staff member if I am unclear about these guidelines. I will use fire alarms, fire extinguishers, fire exits, fire sprinklers, and related equipment only for their firefighting purposes. I understand that I may not hang anything from a fire sprinkler head or pipe and will not tamper with fire, smoke, or heat detectors or other fire safety equipment. I agree to exit the building immediately and go to the designated gathering established for my building whenever the fire alarm sounds. I further understand that I am liable for all damages by my misuse of fire safety equipment. I understand that violations of fire safety standards and guidelines are subject to significant fines and other student conduct and/or legal action (see the [fire safety guidelines](#)).

#### **Community and Room Furnishing**

I agree to use University-owned furniture only for its intended purpose. I further agree not to remove or relocate furniture from apartments, rooms, lounges, etc. I understand that waterbeds, risers, and bricks and boards for elevating furniture including beds, lofts (that are not provided or approved by the University), and other construction, including attaching shelves to walls, are not permitted in my room/apartment.

#### **Guests and Visitation**

Guests are defined as any nonresident of a resident’s room/apartment. Guests who are not residents of that community must be escorted at all times by the resident whom the guest is visiting. I agree to escort my guests whenever they are visiting me in my

residence, and I understand that I must be present with my guest at all times. I agree further to abide by this standard when I am a guest in another residential community.

Residents are responsible for the actions of their guests, including any Community Standards violations or vandalism. I agree to be responsible and accountable for the behavior of my guests. I understand that it is my responsibility to inform my guests of all University policies and that my guests are expected to abide by these policies.

I understand and agree that the right to sleep, the right to study, and the right to privacy take precedence over visitation privileges, and I will at all times be considerate of these rights. I understand and agree that visitation is a privilege and that I will honor visitation hours established for my residential community.

I understand that my roommate(s) and/or suitemate(s) and I must agree in advance about having guests and, further, that overnight guest privileges are limited. I agree not to have any overnight guests during the first two weeks or last two weeks of the semester and understand further that stays are limited to three nights per week unless approved in advance by my roommate(s) and/or suitemate(s) and my RCD. I understand that guests may not stay overnight in common areas (lounges, laundry rooms, etc.).

#### **Community/Floor Meetings**

I understand that RLSH notify residents about building/floor meetings. I also understand that as a member of this community, I am expected to attend these meetings and that I am responsible for personally obtaining all information covered, whether or not I attend.

#### **Hall Sports and Games**

I will not participate in any kind of sport, horseplay, or physically active game inside SMU-owned housing, including but not limited to football, basketball, soccer, hockey, golf, rollerblading, Frisbee tag, bowling, and water fights. Additionally, I will refrain from playing sports/games outside the residential community when or where it presents the possibility of injury, damage to persons or property, or undue noise. I understand, however, that I may participate in activities that are organized and/or approved by RLSH.

#### **Community/Floor Rules**

I agree to abide by floor rules, or community rules established for my residential community that clarify, broaden, and enhance these Community Standards.

#### **Keys**

I agree that I am responsible for keys that are issued to me and for their proper use. I will not lend, duplicate, or modify these keys, and will not permit others to do so, nor will I permit others to use my keys or my SMU ID at any time. I agree further to immediately replace my lost or broken keys according to RLSH procedures and to obtain a new ID when lost.

#### **Noise**

I will not make or cause noise that intrudes on the privacy and the needs of others to sleep and study. I understand that noise that is disruptive to other residents is prohibited, both inside and outside of residential communities and that courtesy and consideration for others is expected at all times. I agree to respond positively and courteously to requests to reduce noise and to respectfully approach others with requests for noise reduction before reporting the noise to RLSH staff.

I agree to be particularly sensitive to this issue during established quiet hours and understand that these hours extend for a minimum of 10 consecutive hours daily, but may be established for longer periods in different University residential communities. Quiet hours are initially set for 10 p.m. to 10 a.m. on weeknights and midnight to 10 a.m. on Friday and Saturday evenings; however, each community may adjust or extend them. I understand that 24-hour quiet hours go into effect during final exam periods beginning at 7 p.m. on the last day of class each term.

I understand that excessive noise at any hour is not acceptable and that at no time should amplified sound or yelling be directed out of or toward resident windows. I understand that reasonable quiet in areas near University residential communities must be maintained and that noise may be deemed disruptive if it can be heard through a wall, closed door, or window.

#### **Personal Responsibility**

I will take responsibility and be accountable for my behavior and for the choices I make as a member of the University community. I agree not to engage in behaviors that could endanger myself or others. I understand that if I violate the Community Standards or University policies, I am responsible for my own behavior and that harassment of other individuals involved in the situation will not

be tolerated.

### **Pets**

I agree that the only pet(s) I may have in SMU-owned housing will be fish in one tank and that the maximum permitted tank size is 10 gallons. I understand that residents with disabilities and proper documentation may have assistance animals.

### **Respect for Property and Environment**

I will respect my personal property, as well as property belonging to other members of the community and the University. I will not damage property nor condone damages committed by others. I will promote a clean and safe environment in my residential community, including my room/apartment, bathroom, trash/recycling room, and common areas. I understand that residents may be billed individually or collectively for any damages or for excessive cleaning necessary as a result of individual-resident or group behavior. I also understand that I will be charged a minimum of \$25 per item/bag for inappropriately discarded trash.

### **Safety and Security**

I agree to actively promote safety and security within the University community at all times. I will not prop open or otherwise disable the latching/locking mechanism of any door to the building and will unprop any door that I find propped open or otherwise unsecured. I will not permit access to the residence community by nonresidents who are not my personal guests and will not condone others doing so. I will keep my room/apartment door closed and locked when not in the room and understand that I can enhance my personal safety and that of my roommate(s) by keeping the door closed and locked at all times.

I agree to immediately inform a member of the RLSH staff and/or SMU Police Department about any unsafe condition or behavior that threatens the safety or security of this or another campus residential community.

### **Smoking**

I understand that all SMU-owned buildings are smoke-free. I understand that this includes e-cigarettes and vaping-type devices. I agree that if I choose to smoke, I must be located at least 25 feet away from any building. I will also ensure that my smoking does not affect residents or guests when they are inside the building or as they enter or leave it. Cigarette or cigar butts, matches, etc. must be disposed of properly. I understand that hookahs and other water pipes are not permitted in or within 25 feet of SMU-owned housing.

### **Unauthorized Access**

I will not enter restricted-access areas unless specifically authorized to do so by RLSH staff. I understand that restricted areas may include but are not limited to Area Service Desks, roofs, porches, balconies, attics, or machine rooms of any SMU-owned housing. I understand that I will not allow “tailgating” or others to gain access when I am entering or departing. I understand further that it is prohibited for a nonresident to be in a residential community while unescorted or after being restricted from visitation. I will not allow access to SMU-owned housing by any person who has been criminally trespassed by SMU Police Department, RLSH, or the dean of student life.

### **Weapons**

In addition to SMU Student Code of Conduct Policy K, the following standards are specific to SMU-owned housing:

I will not bring any type of weapon into SMU-owned housing. I understand that “weapon” includes but is not limited to firearms (or CO2 cartridge guns), dangerous chemicals, any explosive device, numchucks, brass knuckles, hunting knives, toy guns, weapon replicas, decorative knives, paintball guns of any kind, and other materials that can be used in the endangerment of others. I understand further that anything used to threaten, endanger, or harm others may be considered a weapon.

I understand that if I live in an apartment, I may have a kitchen knife.

### **Windows**

I will not remove, prop, and/or damage the windows or screens in any SMU-owned housing. I understand that it is dangerous and will refrain from leaning out windows and from dropping, suspending, throwing, or shooting anything from or through them. I agree not to enter or exit SMU-owned housing through a window, except in the event of fire or other similar emergency situation. I understand that I may not have anything extending from my window, including but not limited to flags and satellite dishes. Refer to the [fire safety guidelines](#) about items that should not be placed in front of windows.

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