

# RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY CONDUCT GUIDELINES

FALL 2016 - SPRING 2017



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**THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY**

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WASHINGTON, DC

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## Community Accountability

The Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs is responsible for all residential community regulations and policies. These regulations and policies are part of the **Housing License Agreement** between the university and the resident. Each resident should be familiar with these and other regulations that may be published later.

Each resident is responsible for helping to maintain an acceptable residential environment, with the assistance of residence hall councils, community meetings, community agreements and residence hall staff. The residential facilities help to round out the academic and living experience at GW by providing an atmosphere that can be academically as well as socially stimulating and supportive.

Violation of regulations will result in administrative and/or disciplinary action by the university through the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs, or its designee, to include but not be limited to, the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities and GW Housing. These Residential Community Conduct Guidelines (RCCGs) shall apply to all residential facilities owned or rented by the university through GW Housing. It is expected that individuals living in other housing situations not owned or leased by the university will comply with laws, rules, and regulations applicable to such housing. Failure to comply may, at the discretion of the university, result in disciplinary action. A resident who is accused of being an accessory to a violation is subject to the same charges as the perpetrator of the violation. Disciplinary action may result in a range of sanctions, including, but not limited to, expulsion, suspension, termination of the Housing License Agreement for the remainder of the current academic year and/or for an indefinite time period and/or revocation of the privilege to reside in university-owned/controlled housing for successive year(s). The university reserves the absolute right to terminate or not renew a Housing License Agreement, or to administratively move a resident at its sole discretion.

Serious violations of regulations may result in the imposition of an interim removal from university housing and/or suspension from the university, pending the outcome of a hearing. Violations of the “Code of Student Conduct” (“Code”) in a residential facility may also lead to suspension or expulsion from the university.

## Residential Community Conduct Guidelines

### *I. Community Standards*

#### **1. Conduct Guidelines**

**All residents are subject to the following conduct guidelines that are particularly applicable to conduct within university residential facilities. A resident or visitor's conduct at the university should always be**

**governed by respect for the rights of others. The following types of conduct are unacceptable:**

#### **A. Depriving Others of Their Rights & Privacy**

Residents are free to express themselves in a responsible manner. Such expression is unacceptable when the expression impinges on the rights of others, or when it disrupts administrative activities or approved programs or events.

1. A roommate who subjects others in the room to systematic stress and harassment will be subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action. In cases where it becomes clear that roommates have irreconcilable differences, some or all parties may be subject to an immediate administrative move or disciplinary action.
2. Taking photographs or making audio or video recordings of another person without his or her permission in any context in which that person has a reasonable expectation of privacy is prohibited. For example, residents and visitors may not photograph or make recordings of other residents or visitors in any area, including rooms, suites, or restrooms, within the residential facilities without permission. In such areas, permission must be granted by all persons being photographed or recorded.
3. In a situation in which it is not acceptable to take a photograph or make a recording, it is also not acceptable to publish it. Transmission, in print, by phone, via email or any other means of technology constitutes publication. Publication of any photograph or recording is also subject to all applicable policies and laws, including copyright, in the same manner as any other image or document.

#### **B. Abuse**

Abuse, threats, and intimidation of others, through the use of electronic, written, verbal or physical means, are unacceptable and are subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action.

#### **C. Chronic Misbehavior**

A resident establishes an unacceptable pattern of misconduct when he or she frequently violates university policy, although individual offenses might be minor. A pattern of recalcitrance, irresponsible conduct or manifest immaturity may be interpreted as a significant disciplinary problem. Residents and visitors must comply with the directions of university personnel, including hall staff, GW Police officers and others appointed by

the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs and/or the GW Police Department (GWPD). Failure to comply with administrative directions and/or disciplinary sanctions imposed by those with proper authority is unacceptable conduct and will result in severe disciplinary consequences. **Generally, the third violation of any policy may result in a referral for termination of the Housing License Agreement.**

#### D. Misuse of Staff Resources

A resident who occupies an inordinate amount of staff time and energy reflecting their dissatisfaction with residential living, and/or who exhibit behaviors that signify the inability to live in a residential community may be required to meet with an Office of the Dean of Student Affairs staff member to discuss whether the resident should be moved to another residential facility, should continue in residence, and/or whether the Housing License Agreement should be renewed for a future academic year. The University reserves the right to terminate or not renew a Housing License Agreement, or to administratively move a resident at its sole discretion.

#### 2. Noise

All residents will be considerate of others within their community with respect to noise level. All residents have the right to sleep and study without undue interference. Noise that interferes with or has the potential to interfere with those rights is considered a violation. All residents are expected to help maintain an atmosphere suitable for study or sleeping during those hours when their roommates, suitemates, or other residents are studying or sleeping. Residents should respond to requests from other residents or staff members to lower the noise level of their activity, and to adhere to residential facility quiet hour rules. Excessive noise may be defined as, but is not limited to, the following: blaring sound systems, banging on doors or walls, shouting out of windows or down hallways, music, and shouting or talking that is audible beyond the confines of the room. Failure to respond to requests to lower the noise or music level will result in administrative or disciplinary action. Quiet Hours will be in effect in all residence halls during the following hours: Sunday-Thursday: 10pm-7am; Friday-Saturday: 2am-10am. During reading days and final exams, quiet hours will be in effect 24 hours per day, unless otherwise expressly authorized by GW Housing or the Center for Student Engagement. **In general, a resident's right to quiet supersedes any other resident's right to make noise.**

#### 3. The Playing of Sports

The playing of sports of any kind in the hallways and/or other common areas of the residential facilities is

prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: water fights, biking, in-line skating, skateboarding, or "hall ball" of any kind. The university reserves the right to bill the resident(s) responsible for damage caused by playing sports in the residence halls.

#### 4. Animals

Animals are not permitted in residential facilities, even for a brief visit, except for properly attended service or assistance animals for individuals with disabilities (registered through the Office of Disability Support Services) or as required by applicable laws. Residents, who because of a disability, seek approval for an assistance animal must request reasonable accommodations through the Office of Disability Support Services and must provide supporting documentation. Residents may not bring an assistance animal to campus until after receiving approval from the Office of Disability Support Services and GW Housing. In the event animals, including laboratory specimens, are found in a residential facility, the university reserves the right to have them removed and to bill the resident(s) responsible for necessary extermination, cleaning services, and other costs associated with removal of the animal or repair of residential facilities. Disciplinary action also may be taken.

#### 5. Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited in all University owned and managed residential facilities, including residence halls and townhouses. Residents may not smoke or inhale tobacco or other smoking product, by any method, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, e-cigarettes, and hookahs inside a residential facility or within twenty-five feet from any GW residential facility including within courtyards and on balconies.

It is a policy of the university to promote a smoke-free environment at each of its campuses generally, including in all university owned and managed buildings, university owned and leased vehicles, and on university owned outdoor spaces as well as on public space that abuts buildings in the Foggy Bottom campus. Further information on the university's smoke-free policy can be found at the Smoke-Free GW web site at: [smokefree.gwu.edu](http://smokefree.gwu.edu).

### II. Alcohol and Drugs

#### 1. Alcohol

Only individuals who are 21 years of age and older may possess and consume alcoholic beverages in residential facilities and rental properties owned or controlled by the university.

Individuals who are 21 years of age and older may not consume alcoholic beverages to the point of intoxication or otherwise endanger their own safety or

the safety of others. No individual younger than 21 years of age is permitted to possess or consume alcoholic beverages within any area of a residential facility owned or controlled by the university.

Individuals who are 21 years of age and older may only possess and consume alcoholic beverages within the confines of their rooms and the rooms of other individuals who are 21 years of age and older.

If an individual is at least 21 years of age, and resides with another individual who is younger than 21 years of age, only the individual who is at least 21 years of age may possess and consume alcoholic beverages within the shared room or suite. Individuals 21 years of age and older may not provide any alcoholic beverages to individuals younger than 21 years of age.

When all residents of a room are younger than 21 years of age, the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages in that room is strictly prohibited.

Individuals who violate the foregoing policies are subject to arrest and/or disciplinary action under the "Code of Student Conduct."

**In addition to the restrictions and obligations imposed by law regarding the possession or use of alcoholic beverages, an individual's right to reside in an alcohol free environment supersedes another individual's choice to violate the law and/or the university's alcohol policies.**

Staff will confiscate or dispose of alcoholic beverages in the possession of individuals younger than 21 years of age. If alcoholic beverages are confiscated from a room and no resident or visitor accepts responsibility for the alcoholic beverages, all residents and/or visitors of the room may be held accountable and subject to disciplinary action. The university may deem alcoholic beverages found in any area of an individual's room or suite to be in the individual's "possession." No resident or visitor may provide alcoholic beverages to any individual younger than 21 years of age; and no resident may allow any individual younger than 21 years of age to consume alcoholic beverages in the resident's room. Violators are subject to disciplinary action and may also be referred to local law enforcement authorities for prosecution.

- A. The possession, sale, service and consumption of alcoholic beverages in a residential facility owned or controlled by the university is subject to the Alcoholic Beverage Consumption and Distribution Policy.
- B. Student groups and organizations holding events in a residential facility owned or controlled by the university shall comply with GW's Alcoholic

Beverage Consumption and Distribution Policy. Clubs, groups, and organizations must also abide by any policies imposed by the groups or organizations with which they are affiliated, provided these policies are not inconsistent with university policy.

- C. Individuals who are 21 years of age and older may possess or consume alcoholic beverages at registered and approved events within residential facilities owned or controlled by the university, in accordance with the Alcoholic Beverage Consumption and Distribution Policy.
- D. Kegs and other bulk or common source containers, as well as large quantities of alcohol are prohibited. Individuals in possession of kegs, other bulk or common source containers, or large quantities of alcohol may be subject to disciplinary action with possible outcomes to include the termination of an individual's Housing License Agreement, in addition to other sanctions.
- E. Alcoholic beverages must be in closed and concealed containers when transported to, from and within any residential facility owned or controlled by the university.
- F. Drinking games and contests of any kind are prohibited. Individuals who participate in or allow drinking games or contests to occur within any area of their assigned residence, including an individual's room, suite, or other common areas of the residential facility owned or controlled by the university, are subject to disciplinary action.
- G. No resident or visitor may manufacture or distill alcoholic beverages within any residential facility.

## 2. Drugs

Possession, use, distribution, manufacture, or sale of illegal drugs and controlled substances is prohibited. The possession of paraphernalia associated with the use of illegal drugs or controlled substances is also prohibited. The misuse or unauthorized possession of controlled substances, including but not limited to, prescription medications, by a resident or visitor is also prohibited. The university may deem any prohibited substance or paraphernalia found in any area of an individual's room or suite to be in the individual's "possession." Distribution includes any form of sale, exchange or transfer of illegal drugs or controlled substances, including but not limited to, prescription medications.

Staff will confiscate illegal drugs and controlled substances, unless individuals in possession are properly authorized to possess controlled substances such as prescription medication. Staff will also

confiscate paraphernalia associated with the use of drugs or controlled substances. Staff will transfer custody of such items to the GWPD or another appropriate police agency, such as the Metropolitan Police Department. If prohibited substances or paraphernalia are confiscated from a room or suite and no resident, or visitor accepts responsibility for the item(s), all residents and/or visitors of the room may be held accountable and are subject to disciplinary action. Violators are subject to disciplinary action and may also be referred to local law enforcement authorities for prosecution.

### **III. Health, Safety, and Security**

#### **1. Identification**

All residents and visitors must present proper identification on request of any residence facility staff or authorized representative of the university. Failure to do so, or presentation of altered, fraudulent, false or otherwise illegal identification, will result in disciplinary action taken by the university. Please note that it is a violation for a student to lend his or her GWorld card to anyone else. It is also prohibited for a student or resident to allow another person the use of their residential facility card's access rights to gain entry into a facility. A student found possessing or using another person's GWorld card will also be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **2. Visitors**

Residents will be held responsible for the behavior of their visitors and for their visitors' adherence to residential facility and university regulations. Visitation within student rooms is determined by mutual agreement among roommates at the beginning of the year and whenever occupancy of the room changes. A primary obligation of GW Housing is to attempt to ensure adequate study and sleep conditions for residents. These priorities take precedence over residents' social activities.

Cohabitation is not allowed in the residence halls. Cohabitation is defined as a person using a residence hall room as if that person were living in the room but not actually being assigned as a resident of that room/suite.

Two important overall considerations govern in permitting visitors in halls and rooms. One is the need to provide for the rights of roommates, suitemates, and neighbors to not have company, and the other is the need to protect residents from access to the halls and rooms by unauthorized individuals.

Residents may not admit into residential facilities individuals who are not known to them or who are not their own personal visitors. Residents must escort their

visitors at all times within any residential facility. Authorized representatives, including, but not limited to, GW Housing or GWPD staff, are instructed to prevent admittance of unauthorized individuals when they observe it. Cooperation with this policy is essential to the safety of persons and property.

Conflicts or problems regarding visitation and infractions of visitation policies or procedures will be subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action, as appropriate.

#### **3. Safety Hazards**

There is need for constant vigilance against the possibility of fire or other hazardous conditions in any group living situation. GW staff will conduct periodic health and safety inspections to monitor compliance with university policy on safety hazards.

Residents and visitors are prohibited from possessing or using items which are identified by the university as being hazardous to the residential community. **Prohibited life or fire safety hazards deemed by the Office of Health & Safety include, but are not limited to, the following:** candles, incense, lanterns, oil lamps, flammable liquids for cleaning, burners for heating or any other purpose (ex. objects with open flames), halogen lamps of any shape or style, and any other potentially dangerous materials. Possession or use of heat-producing appliances for food preparation in resident's licensed space or in any other area not specifically designated for this purpose is prohibited. Hanging sheets or similar combustible materials is also prohibited. Any "prohibited item" found to be in a resident's or visitor's possession will be immediately disabled, confiscated and/or disposed of without compensation. Violations of this policy are subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action, as appropriate.

Information related to health and safety inspections or an administrative search of a licensed residential space can be found in the **Housing License Agreement** between the university and the resident. A detailed list of prohibited items is available on the Office of Health & Safety website at: **[http://www.gwu.edu/safety/health/program/environment\\_health\\_safety/health\\_safety\\_inspections.cfm](http://www.gwu.edu/safety/health/program/environment_health_safety/health_safety_inspections.cfm)**.

University buildings and office areas are to be entered only during scheduled hours. It is prohibited for a person to enter any area where access is limited only to authorized personnel (e.g. attics, roofs, tunnels, equipment and storage rooms, private housekeeping closets, private office areas, unoccupied rooms, unoccupied university-owned apartments, loading or service areas, etc.), except where permission has been expressly granted in each instance. Alarms and emergency stop buttons located in elevators are to be used only in cases that dictate an emergency. Elevator

maximum capacity limits are to be followed. Jumping, shaking and related activity is prohibited in elevators. The university strongly discourages possession and use of fire ladders. All residents are advised that the university will bear no responsibility for the use of these ladders under any circumstances and that non-emergency use of such ladders will result in disciplinary action.

#### 4. Fire and Safety

Fire safety equipment in the halls includes, but is not limited to, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, "EXIT" signs, fire extinguisher cases, fire panels, and all components of the sprinkler and other safety equipment systems. Accessing without authorization and tampering with fire safety equipment is an offense against the residential community and the university. Residents who engage in activities listed in this section will be responsible for the cost of restoring the equipment to its normal operation and for the cost of any damage to the building and its contents, whether owned by the university or by the other occupants of the building. Residents are subject to administrative and/or disciplinary action, and may be fined, have their Housing License Agreement terminated and may also be charged and prosecuted for these offenses under the laws of the District of Columbia.

A. Regardless of whether fire systems and equipment responds or not, residents shall not knowingly or negligently cause or attempt to cause a false alarm by setting off a fire alarm system or give any other common or recognized alarm of fire or bomb threat. Such action endangers the lives of others and may cause damage to the persons and/or equipment responding to such false alarms.

Activating the emergency alarm in an elevator when no emergency exists is considered tampering with safety equipment, as well as a violation of the noise regulation, and will result in disciplinary action.

B. Tampering with, abusing, misusing, accessing without authorization or in any way reducing or eliminating the efficiency of smoke or fire detectors or fire safety panels located in hallways, other common areas, or in rooms, and misuse or tampering with or purposefully or accidentally damaging fire extinguishers, sprinkler systems, security cameras, or any other fire or safety equipment is prohibited. **Touching or hanging objects from sprinkler heads or other fire safety equipment is prohibited. Residents may be held financially responsible for damages caused by tampering with, abuse or misuse of fire safety equipment.**

C. Regardless of whether fire systems and equipment responds or not, individuals shall not make and/or communicate to another by any means any threat to bomb, burn, destroy or in any manner damage any place of assembly, building or other structure or any means of transportation. Individuals shall also not communicate to another, by any means of information, knowing the same to be false, as to the existence of any peril of bombing, burning, destruction or damage to any such place of assembly, building or other structure, or any means of transportation.

D. Individuals shall not knowingly or negligently cause or attempt to cause a fire in a university building. Such action endangers the lives of others and may cause property damage or loss. Residents must adequately monitor items being heated in ovens. Residents or visitors may also be charged and prosecuted for these offenses under the laws of the District of Columbia.

#### 5. Fire Drills

Immediately upon moving into a residential facility, every resident or visitor should become familiar with fire exit routes and locations of fire extinguishers. Detailed instructions and procedures to be followed in case of fire and for fire drills are posted in every room. When a fire alarm sounds, all persons must immediately evacuate the building, exiting by the most direct safe route. Occupants must evacuate the building to points sufficient to ensure their personal safety. All residents and visitors must report to their designated evacuation points. All occupants must evacuate in a timely manner. Disciplinary action may be taken in cases of failure to evacuate in a timely manner.

#### 6. Endangering Behavior

Behavior of any kind that imperils or jeopardizes the health or safety of any person or persons is prohibited.

#### 7. Windows, Balconies, Rooftop Decks and Pools

Window screens are to be left in and closed at all times. Tampering with restrictors on screens, windows or doors is strictly prohibited. Doors to balconies that the university has prohibited access to may not be tampered with by any individual to permit access. Individuals are prohibited from accessing the roofs of university residential facilities, unless otherwise posted or authorized in writing by proper university authorities. Swimming pool use is limited to designated time period(s) between Memorial Day and Labor Day as posted, when a lifeguard is present. Unauthorized use of or access to the swimming pool, deck, or patio area is strictly prohibited.

Intentional or unintentional throwing, dropping, allowing to fall, lowering of or in any way putting any

object, solid or liquid, out of a window or from a balcony or rooftop deck of a residential facility is strictly prohibited. If the offender cannot be determined, charges may be assessed and equally billed to all residents of the residential facility where the damage occurred. Violations will be subject to administrative or disciplinary action. When such acts seriously threaten or injure the life, safety or property of others, a violator may be subject to disciplinary action with possible outcomes to include the termination of a resident's Housing License Agreement, suspension, or expulsion. The university may, at its sole discretion, limit or prohibit the use of balconies and rooftop decks at any time.

## 8. Trespass

No person may enter, attempt to enter, or remain in any residential facility owned or managed by the University, including without limitation any room, area, or part thereof, without an effective license or authorization. All visitors of licensed residents must adhere to university policies relating to visitation by non-residents, and must vacate the residential facility upon request by the university or the individuals they are visiting. Any person who violates this policy may be subject to arrest and/or disciplinary action under the "Code of Student Conduct."

## 9. Excessively Aggressive Recruitment Tactics

All students, visitors, groups, campus organizations, nationally affiliated organizations and religiously-affiliated groups must follow university policies and procedures regarding the recruitment of individuals who reside in the residential facilities. Recruitment of residents as potential new members of any group or organization shall not be conducted in an excessively aggressive manner. Recruitment activities that rise to the level of harassment shall be considered excessively aggressive. In the event recruitment activities are directed toward an individual, after the individual has indicated that he/she does not wish to join the group or organization, the activities will be considered excessively aggressive. Continued visits, phone calls, electronic communications, and unreasonable pressure to join any group or organization are behaviors included within, but not limited to, the scope of this section.

## IV. Solicitation & Postering

### 1. Solicitation

The use of resident rooms, suites, apartments and townhouses is limited to residential housing use, and is not to be used for any business or commercial use or any social organization, groups, including but not limited to Greek social organizations, associations, clubs or non-Greek organizations, etc. Exceptions to this policy may be made at the university's sole discretion.

Soliciting and selling in residential facilities owned/managed by GW Housing is strictly forbidden. Residents are not allowed to conduct private businesses or to use residential facility telephones or computers for this purpose. Residents engaged in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action. This includes conducting business from an on-line service provided by the university over the Internet from a residential facility. All individuals must follow the Code of Conduct for Users of Computing Systems and Services, and Network Usage and Security Policy. Both documents can be found on the Division of IT Helpdesk web site at: <http://helpdesk.gwu.edu>. Fund-raising activities by any individual, student groups or organizations may be authorized within specific guidelines approved by the Dean of Student Affairs or designee, and enforced by GW Housing staff.

### 2. Postering

All residents, visitors, groups, campus organizations, nationally affiliated organizations and religiously-affiliated groups must follow university policies and procedures regarding the recruitment of individuals within residential facilities.

Postering and the distribution of palm cards or other print marketing material is subject to specific guidelines and only approved materials may be posted. Posters and palm cards may be posted on residential facility bulletin boards only; poster and palm cards may not be placed on any painted wall surface. Students are prohibited from causing damage to, destruction of, or drawing graffiti on bulletin boards and their contents.

Copies of postering guidelines are available on the GW Housing website at <http://living.gwu.edu/posters-promotions>. Posters and palm cards must be approved by GW Housing, located in Philip Amsterdam Hall at 2350 H Street, NW, Suite 106. Residents, students, groups, and/or student organizations found postering, distributing, or littering unapproved fliers, posters or palm cards may be charged through the disciplinary process.

**ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF REGULATIONS CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE RESOLVED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE "CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT" OR BY GW HOUSING, AS APPROPRIATE.**

**RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR COMPLYING WITH ALL UNIVERSITY RULES, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES. INDIVIDUALS CAN REVIEW THE MOST CURRENT VERSION OF THE GUIDE TO STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AT: [HTTP://STUDENTCONDUCT.GWU.EDU/GUIDE-STUDENT-RIGHTS-RESPONSIBILITIES](http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/guide-student-rights-responsibilities). PLEASE**

**CONTACT THE OFFICE OF STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES AT 202-994-6757 OR VIA E-MAIL AT RIGHTS@GWU.EDU WITH ANY QUESTIONS.**

**THE UNIVERSITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO UPDATE AND MODIFY ANY OF THE TERMS AND CONTAINED IN THESE GUIDELINES, AT ANY TIME AND IN OUR SOLE DISCRETION, BY POSTING A CHANGE NOTICE OR NEW GUIDELINES ON OUR SITE. INDIVIDUALS CAN REVIEW THE MOST CURRENT VERSION OF THE TERMS OF THESE GUIDELINES AT ANY TIME AT: [HTTP://LIVING.GWU.EDU/CONDUCT-GUIDELINES](http://living.gwu.edu/conduct-guidelines).**

Revised January 2016