

# **University of North Texas at Dallas**

## **Housing and Residence Life Student Handbook**

### **Introduction**

Living in University housing requires all individuals to be responsible and respectful of the policies, procedures, and standards that have been established to protect each student, to ensure personal and University property is well-maintained and protected. The items identified assist us in providing a safe, clean, academic environment. Additional information for students living in University housing is provided in the University Housing Contract.

By choosing to live on campus, students agree to:

Develop, embrace, and hold others accountable for the Community Standard Agreement for the community

Accept responsibility for their actions and for the actions of those they bring into the community

Respect and cooperate with custodial staff, maintenance staff, and University personnel who work within the community

**The following section outlines the policies and procedures necessary for building a respectful community and providing for efficient residence hall operations.**

**Check-in/check-out:** Procedures are important processes for all residents to follow. Upon arrival, you should obtain your Room Condition Report (RCR) and submit it to your appropriate Residence Life/Housing staff member. The paper or electronic RCR will protect you from being held responsible for damages that existed in your space prior to your occupancy.

All residents must follow certain check-out procedures as outlined by your building staff when moving out of your assigned space.

Residents will check out utilizing the Express Check Out process. Although charges incurred during the Express Check Out process are not able to be appealed through the University appeal process as detailed in this handbook, information/clarification regarding charges incurred can be obtained by contacting the Housing Office no later than twenty one (21) calendar days after the charge has been posted to your UNT Dallas student account.

**Closing and opening:** The residence hall will close at specified times as announced by the Offices of Housing and Residence Life. The residence hall will close at the end of the fall semester (December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 9pm) and re-open for the spring semester at 11:00 a.m. the Saturday (January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018) prior to the first day of classes. You are expected to vacate your room and building at the scheduled times and to properly follow all check-out procedures. Failure to vacate in the specified timeframe will result in the immediate removal of access to the residence halls, possible accrual of additional fees (packing, moving, storing of personal items, etc.), and possible University disciplinary action.

**Common-area space:** (lounges, hallways, kitchen, gym) is for the use and enjoyment of all residents. Common-area spaces are frequently used for individual studying, group study sessions, and occasionally for classes. Located in various lounges are pool table, televisions, microwave oven, ping-pong table, kitchenettes, and study areas. Residents are responsible for the day-to-day upkeep of these areas; therefore, student cooperation in maintaining a clean atmosphere is appreciated. Lounge furniture, cushions, or any University property must not be removed from common-area spaces.

**Community damage:** Is damage done to public areas that would not be considered individual room damage. The public-area losses or damages that are preventable (such as broken windows, stolen furniture, light fixtures, and elevator vandalism) and are not assignable to individuals will be billed in equal amounts to the floor or building community, or as determined by building staff. It is the responsibility of all residents to be aware of their environment and to hold students who vandalize property accountable.

**Personal property insurance:** The University assumes no responsibility for damage to personal property due to fire, theft, water leaks, interruption of utility service, or other causes. Residents are strongly encouraged to consider purchasing personal property insurance to cover loss or damage to personal property or facilities.

**Repairs and custodial services:** Are provided by Facilities. If your room needs a repair, you may submit a work order online. Reporting common-area maintenance problems to your building staff will keep your lounges, common areas, and hallways in top condition. If an emergency repair is needed (such as an overflowing toilet), report it to the first person you can reach, in the following order: your building staff; your service desk; the Resident Assistant on duty from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m., and all day throughout weekends; Residence Hall Coordinator; or the Housing Office, open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 972-338-1776. If none of these options are available, call Campus police at 972-338-3009.

**Room changes and swaps:** Are allowed according to established guidelines. Residents are encouraged to work out any difficulties they have with their roommates directly and proactively. If, however, a situation arises where irreconcilable conflicts exist, a room change might be possible during the established room-change period. Residents with roommate problems should contact their RA first and then complete the proper paperwork prior to the move. Room changes are not allowed during the first two weeks of each semester so that staff may complete accurate rosters and so that roommates will not request changes based on initial impressions.

Room swaps are allowed only when the proper paperwork is completed and approved by the respective Housing and Residence Life professional staff.

**Room Damage:** Room damage charges will be assessed once you have moved out of your space. The final assessment/walk-through of your space to determine room damage charges will be conducted by staff members of the Offices of Housing and Residence Life after you have moved out of your space. This

assessment/ walk-through will be conducted before any other entity/person takes occupancy of your vacated space. Although charges incurred during the Express Check Out process are not able to be appealed through the University appeal process as detailed in this handbook, information/clarification regarding charges incurred can be obtained by contacting the Housing Office no later than twenty one (21) calendar days after the charge has been posted to your UNT Dallas student account.

Each resident is responsible for damages beyond normal wear and tear in your own space as well any charges assessed through community damage charge process. This includes, but is not limited to, damage to painted walls caused by the use/removal of adhesive products. You will be billed for any cleaning needs that result from inadequate cleaning or excess trash being left behind after moving out of your space.

**Room Entry:** Room entry and safety inspections will occur periodically. The University balances the right to privacy of the resident students with the responsibility to maintain a safe environment for all students and staff in the residence hall. The University will take all reasonable steps to ensure the residents of a room or receive adequate notice prior to entry by University personnel for the purposes of verifying occupancy, repair, inventory, construction, and/or inspection. The University also reserves the right to enter a residence room without notice, for responding to real or reasonably perceived health and safety emergencies, and/or to ensure evacuation during fire alarms and/or during vacation periods. University personnel also have the right at any time to respond to situations where there is a reasonable suspicion that a violation of the law or University policies is occurring or has occurred inside a particular room. Under such circumstances, it is not necessary that the room's resident(s) be present; nor will a resident's refusal, either verbal or physical, prevent an entry or inspection. By entering into the University Housing Contract, the student consents to room entry and inspection under those circumstances indicated. Residents will be given 72 hour notice of or staff entering spaces for health and safety checks.

**Storage:** for all personal belongings, including luggage, is limited to the student's room. The Housing Office will dispose of all items not properly claimed and assumes no responsibility for belongings left in the residence hall. The Housing Office reserves the right to remove and store possessions left on the premises after term of residency ends, at the resident's expense.

**Animals:** With the exception of service animals and emotional support animals, fish are the only animals permitted in student rooms. Service animals and support animals that reside in the residence hall must be registered with the Office of Disability Services. Proper documentation will be required for registration. Non-service animals, including mammals, birds, insects, reptiles, turtles, arachnids, crustaceans, and amphibians are prohibited. Aquariums must be unplugged during semester breaks.

**Appliances:** Appliances are permitted as long as they pose no undue safety risk, include no exposed heating elements, or do not unnecessarily over utilize building utilities. Appliances that create undue

safety risks are not permitted within the residence hall. The University reserves the right to require the use of Energy Star rated appliances. Appliances should be no more than 1000 WATTS. Each room is allowed 2400 total WATTS.

APPROVED APPLIANCES IN ROOM	PROHIBITED APPLIANCES IN ROOM
Small Refrigerator	George foreman type grills
Small Microwave	Sandwich Grills
Small Oscillating Fans	Rice Cookers
Electric Space heater with auto turn off and tip over safety (should not be more than 1000 WATTS)	Coffee Pots (can be used in community kitchen)
Hair dryers, curling irons, straighteners, and irons (must always be unplugged when not in use or when the resident leaves the room)	Hot Plates of any kind
	Any appliance with exposed heating element

**Candles/Scent Producers:** Candles/open flames/incense are considered extremely dangerous due to the potential of fire and are prohibited. Unburned candles or incense sticks are also not permitted. Students may not create open flames of any kind for any reason in any University housing facility location. Grills cannot be used in or near the residence hall. All violations of this policy are considered to be serious as open flames pose the largest single safety threat to University housing facilities.

**Elevators:** It is expected that the elevators will be used properly. Overloading (too many occupants), jumping or swaying in elevators, or the misuse of elevator equipment is a serious safety risk and is strictly prohibited. Costs associated with misuse will be charged to the community or the individual(s), if known at market rate for repairs. Residents must operate elevators in a safe manner and are prohibited from engaging in the following activities:

- Prying elevator doors open or jumping inside the elevator.
- Loading more than approved capacity in elevator.
- Sounding emergency alarms and making emergency stops in non-emergency situations.
- Evacuating people from the elevator without trained personnel. Students and guests who are trapped in an elevator are expected to sound the alarm and wait for help. Residents and guests must not attempt to evacuate an elevator without the assistance of emergency personnel.

**Furniture:** Upon checking out, students are required to return furniture to its original configuration. Water beds are not permitted inside the residence hall at any time. All University-issued furniture must remain in designated room and is not to be taken outside.

Halogen-bulb lamps have been the cause of multiple residence hall fires around the country. To promote the safety of students living in residence halls, torchiere halogen-bulb (i.e., floor lamps) lamps are not permitted in the residence hall.

**Guests:** Residents may have guests of the opposite sex in their resident rooms, in the hallways, and on the wings during designated guest visitation hours provided they secure the consent of their roommate(s) and comply with all guest policies. Because a resident should feel safe and comfortable in his/her own room, a resident's request for any guest to leave his/her room, regardless of the guest's sex, must be honored, even if the request is made during visitation hours. Guest visitation hours (7am to 12am) The spirit of this policy should be upheld irrespective of sexual preference and regardless of the sex or gender of the guest. Any guest who intends to stay longer than three consecutive nights or for more than a total of seven nights each semester must obtain prior written permission from Residence Life staff. Cohabitation is not permitted in University residence hall. The University reserves the right to remove guests from campus who are found in violation of policy.

#### **Overnight Guests**

- In all cases of overnight guests, roommates should discuss the upcoming visit(s) and set guidelines prior to the guest's stay. If there are problems, it is the responsibility of the roommate who is unhappy with the situation to enlist the RA to assist in finding a resolution to the problem.
- A maximum of one guest is allowed in a room on a given night.
- If a resident wishes to have a sibling or child who is a minor stay overnight the resident must obtain the consent of the Office of Housing and Residence Life, and a letter of consent from the parent or guardian. Emergency contact information of the minor must be provided to the Housing Office.

#### **Guest Expectations**

- Guests should respect residence hall policies at all times and cooperate fully with hall staff.
- Guests must register at the front service desk.  
Residents are responsible for the behavior of their guests and will be responsible for any damages their guests cause.
- Guests must enter and exit through the main entrance and are expected to stay in the room they are visiting and not wander the halls.
- Guests need to be accompanied by the resident when entering and leaving the residence hall.

**Keys:** should be in your personal possession at all times. Do not loan out your residence hall keys to anyone. Students should immediately report lost or stolen keys to the Housing Office. Residents will be charged market rate for a standard room lock change, and for replacement of an ACCESS key card. Locks are changed to protect both current and future residents and their belongings. If you drop your keys down the elevator shaft or a sink, you will be held responsible for any resulting maintenance expenses.

The Office of Housing and Residence Life recognize that students will occasionally lock themselves out of their room. The first three lockouts during the academic year will not result in a fine. However, after the third lockout, there will be an incremental fee structure beginning at \$50 for the fourth lockout, \$75 for the fifth, and \$100 for any lockout thereafter. Students should take great care in securing their keys/key card when leaving campus for break periods. Due to the high volume of lockouts during the first 24 hours after a break period, the Housing Office reserves the right to increase the fine up to \$100 for lockouts performed during this period.

**Light fixtures and fire equipment:** (sprinklers and smoke detectors) should never be used to hang things from and must never be tampered with or turned off in any fashion. All room/space fixtures (including but not limited to appliances, electrical outlets and switches, plumbing, and door hardware) are not be removed or altered in anyway.

**Roofs, ledges, and windows:** are not available for use by students or for the placement of a student's belongings. Due to the obvious danger present, disciplinary action may include the maximum disciplinary fine with possible suspension from the University.

**Windows:** Hanging items such as banners or posters outside windows and balconies is also prohibited unless permission from Housing and Residence Life staff is obtained in advance. Any items that face outward and are visible to the general public may not include any mention, either implied or explicit, of alcohol or drugs and must be in "good taste" (at the discretion Housing and Residence Life staff ). Items that contain material and or language that is deemed to be offensive (nudity, foul language, etc.) or degrading to others, either implicitly or explicitly, based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ability, or social class must be taken down. Dropping objects out of buildings (windows, balconies, etc.) is strictly forbidden. Due to the obvious danger, as well as potential for broken windows, the throwing or dropping of anything from University residences is not tolerated.

**Room Numbers/Doors:** Resident room numbers must be clearly visible and unobstructed at all times on all doors for security and safety reasons. Resident room doors cannot be completely covered and must be recognizable as a door to emergency responders. Door handles/hardware, name tags, room numbers, etc., cannot be covered. Paper decorations should not exceed 80 percent of the door. Room doors must remain in the closed position at all times unless (1) a person is actively moving through the doorway in order to gain entry or exit the room, (2) the door can be held open using a University-installed magnetic door hold device, and (3) the room door opens onto an outside corridor.

**Room alterations and decorations:** Decorations for your room consisting of sheets, nets, curtains, or large pieces of material hung or draped from the ceiling and walls is not recommended due to the combustion hazard they present. Pieces of any material covering more than 50% of the total wall or ceiling area or fabric above the bed in any residential space is prohibited. Painting is completed by Facilities personnel or painting contractors. Because a great deal of effort is expended in repainting student rooms, residents are not permitted to paint their rooms. Students will be held responsible for any and all damage done to walls, windows, doors, or furniture. To prevent damage to the painted walls in your space, we encourage the use of push pins, 3M command strips, and blue tape to post items. The use of any other adhesive or hanging hardware, including screws, large nails , or double stick tape is not recommended and often will result in wall damage charges.

**Room and building security:** Propped open exterior doors seriously jeopardize the security of the residents and property within the building. NEVER PROP OPEN ANY EXTERIOR DOOR. The University

reserves the right to fine communities where propped doors are repeatedly found. Entrance into residence hall is by ACCESS card only. Residents should always escort guests into the buildings and should not allow guests to wander the facilities unescorted. Students should be careful to lock their resident room doors and secure their room windows when they are not present, or while sleeping.

**Room Occupancy Limits:** Single room occupant limit is 4 persons. Double room occupant limit is 8 persons. These occupancy limits must be adhered to.

**Smoking:** Smoking and other tobacco products are prohibited from use at all times in University facilities. This includes offices, work areas, classrooms, or residential facilities.

**The following items have the potential to interfere with a reasonable sense of order, structure, and well-being in the residential facilities:**

**Air conditioners:** window air conditioner units are not permitted in University residence hall at any time.

**Amplified musical instruments and drums:** are not permitted due to noise levels. Stereo equipment is permitted; however, the Residence Life staff reserves the right to regulate the sound level and to require that residents remove sound equipment from the residence hall if problems with excess noise persist.

**Bikes:** may be stored in a student's room. Bikes, however, may not be stored in hallways or other common areas within the hall. For safety reasons and to meet fire codes, bikes must not be attached to stairways or exit areas.

**Commercial/business:** use of facilities is prohibited. Students may not use their room, or any University housing facility for commercial/business purposes. This includes use of data and cable TV connections/lines, as well

**Noise/quiet hours:** Pose a common problem when large groups of people live under one roof. Because of this, residents are expected to be considerate of other residents at all times, including respecting others' rights to sleep, to study, and generally, to not be disturbed. Yelling out windows or into buildings is not permitted. Quiet hours (sound level confined to one's room) are in effect from 11 p.m. to 8 a.m. Sunday through Thursday and from 1 a.m. to 8 a.m. Friday and Saturday. All other times are considered courtesy hours, which means students must comply with any request to be quieter. During final exam periods, quiet hours are in effect 24 hours a day.

**Solicitation:** Solicitation that is prohibited includes, but is not limited to, selling products or services, door-to-door collections or campaigning, flier delivery, or posting of materials in facilities owned, operated, or controlled by UNT Dallas, including kiosks, light poles, and in parking lots. Solicitors or tradespeople, including those who may be UNT Dallas students, faculty, or staff, are prohibited from entering the residence hall for the purpose of transacting business and/or campaigning and should be reported immediately to the appropriate building staff members or Campus police.

**Sports:** in the hall are prohibited due to the potential danger to individuals and property, including safety equipment.

**Theft:** should be reported to Campus Police immediately.

The Resident Assistant should also be notified. The University is not responsible for an individual student's belongings. Each student should insure her or his own property.

**Trash, composting, and recycling:** should be removed from your room daily to assist with cleanliness and pest control issues. These items should be taken outside and placed in the proper containers. Individual trash cannot be dumped in bathroom, community kitchen, lounge, or any community trash containers.

**Vandalism:** refers to misuse of or damage to University property and is strictly prohibited. Vandalism detracts from the physical appearance of student living areas and may also create safety problems. Vandals will be held responsible for their actions and/or the costs of repair/replacement. Students who observe vandalism should make a report to the building staff or Campus Police

### **Posting Within University Residential Facilities**

Advertising events in residential facilities can assist student organizations and University departments maximize exposure by reaching students in the various communities. There are two options for publicizing events in residential facilities, digital flyers on display monitors in each lobby area and/or paper flyers to be posted throughout the hall. While posting of such information can be valuable to organizations and departments, the Office of Housing and Residence Life must also balance the need for equity in posting, as well as ensuring enough lead time for staff to post materials. It is for this reason the following guidelines have been provided. To ensure posters are placed on appropriate surfaces, all postings will be hung and removed by staff members of the Office of Housing and Residence Life. Students or departments may not gain access to residence hall in order to post or remove postings. Staff will attempt to post in the most visible locations, but specific posting locations cannot be guaranteed.

### **Building Evacuations and Fire Safety:**

The following standards are for the safety of all resident and non-resident students. Violation of these standards is also punishable by local and state law.

#### **In the Event of a Fire**

If you smell smoke or detect a fire, activate the nearest alarm and call 911 immediately from a safe location on or off campus. Before opening any door, use the back of your hand to see if it is hot. If it is hot, leave it closed and stuff wet towels or clothes in the cracks and open a window. If the door is not hot, open it slowly and be prepared to close it quickly if necessary. Exit the building cautiously and carry a blanket or towel to protect you from flames and smoke. Do not use elevators. If you see or smell smoke in a hall or stairway, use another exit. If you have knowledge of what may have caused a building evacuation, please immediately notify University staff.

#### **Evacuation Alarms**

Evacuation is required of all occupants of University buildings whenever an alarm is sounded. Be familiar with emergency evacuation routes from buildings in which you spend time.

Specific procedures are:

- Exit the building immediately by the proper pathway.
- Lock your door and take your key if you are a resident and in your room at the time the alarm sounds.
- Use stairways, do not use the elevators.
- Once outside, move to your designated emergency assembly point.
- Do not return to an evacuated building until the all-clear signal is given and permission is explicitly granted by a member of the Housing and Residence Life staff or a Campus Police officer.

Failure to evacuate for an alarm is a violation of city and state ordinances and will be treated as a serious violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Fire alarms and fire-safety equipment are located in each building to save lives and property. Initiating a false alarm or tampering with fire-safety equipment is a violation of University policy.

### **Fire Prevention**

All students must maintain an obstruction-free evacuation route to all exits. The minimum clearance of the route must be 48 inches wide.

Students must follow manufacturer guidelines when using power surge strips in order to ensure that they are not overloaded

### **Fire Safety**

Occupants should follow all safety precautions, including fire safety, and report any violations they observe to their building staff as soon as possible.