

Residential Living and Learning

Family Apartment Handbook

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RESIDENTIAL LIVING AND LEARNING STAFF

The Residential Living and Learning Staff consists of both students and full-time professionals, and is responsible for residence hall matters including student well-being, physical facilities, staffing, programs, room assignments, budgeting, policy formation and enforcement, and hall association advising.

Resident Assistant

A Resident Assistant (RA) is a student staff member who lives on your floor or in your building. They are carefully selected and well trained students who promote and provide leadership, support, friendship, and programs, as well as impart or obtain information and answer questions. They help students adjust to campus and residence hall life and provide aid in establishing effective residence hall associations. Enforcing procedures is another responsibility of the RA.

Desk Attendants

Desk Attendants maintain office hours so that the office can remain open during normal business hours. Their responsibilities include answering phones, and assisting the needs of the residents.

Hall Director

The Hall Director (HD) is a full-time professional staff member who has primary responsibility for the overall supervision, including discipline, of the residence hall community. He/She is concerned with helping students utilize the facilities to the fullest advantage, aiding student adjustment to University life, and acting as advisor to students and organizations within the residence.

Custodial and Maintenance

The building attendants are responsible for normal cleaning duties in public areas and community based facilities. Residents are responsible for cleaning their own rooms and apartments.

The maintenance staff is responsible for making repairs in the residence halls. Maintenance problems should be reported to a residence hall staff member. Do not call the maintenance department directly for repairs.

Note: Residents should never attempt to make room repairs.

GETTING INVOLVED

Residence Hall Association (RHA)

The Residence Hall Association is the campus-wide organization that works for all students living on campus. All residence hall students are members of RHA and are encouraged to become involved.

SERVICES

Sodexo (University Dining Services)

Our dining program has been designed with you in mind. Flexibility, varied hours and a choice of dining locations will enable you to find the perfect place at the perfect time. Please refer to our dining schedule when planning your meals.

Lion's Mane—Memorial Student Center

Monday-Friday

Breakfast: 7:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast: 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Dinner: 4:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. (Friday close at 6:00 p.m.)

Late Night Dining Option (Monday-Thursday)

8:30 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday

Brunch: 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Dinner: 4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Bistro—James Gee Library

Monday-Thursday: 7:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.

Friday: 7:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday -Closed

Cable Television

All residence halls are provided with basic cable services. Students wishing to receive premium services (HBO or Showtime) should contact Time Warner at (903) 455-0012.

Computer Labs

Computer labs are located in Smith, Whitley, West Halls, and New Pride Apartments. These labs are for residents' use only. Please check with the hall office for access to and operation hours of the lab. As a courtesy to others that may be using the equipment, and to protect the equipment, food and drinks are not allowed in the computer labs. You may only print 10 pages of an academic document.

Grills and Picnic Tables

Grills and picnic tables adjacent to the halls may be used by residents only (registered student organizations may request permission to use grills). The picnic tables may not be moved. Grills must be cleaned after each use.

Hall Office

The Family Apartments Office is located at Leberman 107, and the phone number is 903-468-4500.

Office Hours:

MWF: 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm, and 6pm-8pm

TR: 1pm-5pm and 6pm-8pm

Sat and Sun: 2pm-4pm

Laundry

All residence halls are equipped with both washers and dryers. A laundry card can be purchased from the front desk areas of Berry Hall, Smith Hall, Whitley Hall, West Halls, and New Pride. Most washers and dryers take only the laundry card but some utilize quarters. Any mechanical difficulties should be reported to the hall desks of the respected halls, and called into WEB services at the number posted near the machine.

(WEB services: 1-800-247-9323)

Mail Services

Family Apartments residents are required to have a post office box rented at the Sam Rayburn Student Center or the Post Office located on Park Street. Mail will not be delivered to your room. If you are receiving a package to your physical address via UPS, USPS, FEDEX, or other delivery services, and the package does not arrive at your home, please contact the carrier. Our office will not sign or deliver any packages for a resident. Any mail received at the Residential Living and Learning Office will be returned to sender.

Parking

All motor vehicles should be properly registered with the University Police Department at the time of class registration. All drivers should abide by University and State regulations. No parking on grass is permitted at anytime, including unloading or loading your car while in the process of moving. Any vehicles found parked on the grass will be referred to the University Police department for a ticket.

Pest Control

To prevent unwanted pests please keep your room clean by taking out trash, not leaving food containers open, etc. If pests are found please contact your hall desk, Residential Living and Learning provides pest control service through Ecolab every Wednesday. Orders must be turned in no later than 4:00 P.M. on Tuesdays.

Fogging or setting off bug bombs is not allowed by residents. This will cause the fire alarm system to be altered and will cause damage to the system. This will be considered tampering with the system. First offense will result in \$500 fine, bill for any necessary repairs and other disciplinary action as determined by the Assistant Dean of Students. Second offense will result in expulsion from University and bill for any necessary repairs.

Renter's Insurance

Residents desiring insurance protection must make their own arrangements for the necessary coverage. The University does not carry insurance covering the loss and damage (due to water leak, fire, etc.) to residents' personal effects. Students or their parents are encouraged to carry appropriate insurance to cover such losses. Information on two reputable vendors is available in the Residential Living and Learning office in Whitley Hall. Neither the University nor Residential Living and Learning benefit from any business residents provide these companies.

Room Repairs and Damages

Report all needed repairs to your hall office. No charge will be assessed for repairs resulting from normal wear and tear.

Any damages in the room prior to check-in should be marked on the Room Condition Form. Please review this sheet to ensure that any damages are noted. If, during the course of any given semester, damages occur within your room you must immediately report these damages to your hall staff. Damages that are caused by the resident or the resident's guest(s) will be billed to the resident's account.

Staff on Duty

At least one RA per hall and one HD are "on duty" every night of the week. The RAs on duty are listed on the hall's voicemail. If a problem arises, please contact the staff member on duty in your hall. During work hours contact your hall office or the Residential Living and Learning Office, 903-886-5797.

Students with Disabilities

The Student Support Services Office, which serves students with disabilities, is located on the third floor of the Student Services Building. The services are varied and there is no cost. Services are offered for those that are physically limited or those with learning limits. Accommodations can include extended testing time and an isolated testing environment, a note taker, large printed materials, a scribe, an interpreter, a reader, the use of adaptive equipment or the use of a computer. Disabilities that adjustments can be made for are chronic medical conditions, emotional/psychological disabilities, hearing impairments, learning disabilities, neurological impairments, orthopedic impairments, traumatic brain injury, or those that are visually impaired. For further information please call (903) 886-5833.

Telephone Service

The University does not furnish telephone service to each room.

University Police Department

The University Police Department (UPD) is a University community service and enforcement agency offering police, traffic, parking, prevention, and safety services, located in Henderson Hall. The University Police Department is deeply concerned about the safety and well being of students, faculty, staff, and visitors. To help further a safe learning environment, UPD conducts a number of safety programs such as Rape Awareness, Bicycle Safety, Alcohol Awareness, Crime Prevention, Safety Inspection, etc. In addition to these programs, the University Police Department publishes a weekly crime log in order to better inform the University community of current crime trends. Anyone wishing more information on crime statistics should contact UPD at 903- 886-5868. Any student experiencing an emergency may dial 911.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Courtesy Phones (“House Phones”)

A courtesy phone is located near the entrances of Whitley, Berry, Smith Halls, and New Pride Apartments. These phones are primarily provided for guests to contact residents in order to be properly escorted to the resident’s room/apartment.

Fire Alarm System

Each building is equipped with a fire alarm system. They are here for your protection and students should not tamper with them. Fire drills are conducted to familiarize the residents with the sound of the building alarm, emergency exits that are available, and the procedure for evacuating the building. During fire alarms please do not leave the parking lot in your vehicle. Driveways must be clear for emergency vehicles access. Failure to respond to a fire alarm will result in disciplinary action and a \$50 fine. Tampering with fire equipment will result in \$500 fine, billed for any necessary repairs, and other disciplinary action as determined by the Assistant Dean of Students. Second offense will result in expulsion from University, and billed for any necessary repairs. If a fire alarm sounds, you should:

1. Close your windows.
2. Check your door or doorknob. If it is hot, do not open, call 911. If it is cool, exit cautiously and close and lock your door.
3. Walk quickly, but in an orderly manner, through the exit for your area and continue to your hall’s assigned location.
4. Do not re-enter the building until you are told to do so by a residence hall staff member.
5. All residents must leave the hall whenever the alarm sounds. Failure to evacuate the building or failure to evacuate in a timely manner will result in a \$50.00 fine and referral to the Assistant Dean.

Additional tips include: When time is available or if smoke is present in the corridor, you could:

1. Quickly put on a coat and hard soled shoes

2. Take a wet towel with you to put over your face to prevent smoke inhalation.
3. Take your keys and your University ID card.

How to Protect Yourself and Your Property

With the large number of people living on campus, the University Police Department believes that security is everyone's business, and they solicit your assistance in protecting your own and other's property. The University cannot assume responsibility for accidents, loss, stolen, or damaged personal property. The following tips, if properly and consistently employed, will help prevent the most common losses sustained by residents:

1. Keep your apartment locked at all times. Do not loan your key to anyone. Promptly report the loss of your key to a Residential Living and Learning staff member.
2. To lessen personal losses, you are encouraged to carry renter's insurance on valuable items and keep a record of the serial numbers on your property.
3. Keep your car/motorcycle locked. Remove CB radio, antenna, and portable CD players and/or cassette tape players. Store valuables out of sight.
4. Mark all valuable and portable personal property with your driver's license number. Bicycles, CB radios and antennas, portable CD players and/or cassette tape players, stereos, televisions, children's toys and other property are all candidates for marking.
5. Keep your bicycle locked at all times when you are not using it. Bicycle racks are provided in all apartment complex areas.
6. Be aware of what is going on in your area. Promptly report suspicious persons or activities to the University Police Department at (903) 886-5868.

Have the emergency number to the University Police Department (911 or 5111) next to the phone.

Severe Weather

Local radio and television stations announce tornado watches when the weather conditions are right for a tornado but none have been sighted, tornado warnings when a tornado has been sighted, and storm warnings when a severe thunderstorm is approaching. You should follow these procedures, after a staff member announcement, if there is a tornado or storm warning:

1. Go to the lowest floor possible. If you cannot reach a lower floor, stay away from windows and go to an interior hallway.
2. Sit on the floor with your back to the stairwell or in the central portions of your room away from windows.

3. If a storm strikes, duck your head between your knees and cover the back of your head with your hands for protection.
4. Try to remain calm.
5. Do not move from shelter until the storm or tornado is well out of the area or instructed by a staff member.

ThorGuard is an advanced lightning warning system. When ThorGuard activates there will be a 15 second horn blast. Please seek shelter either inside a car or inside the nearest building. Once the area has been cleared for 30 minutes there will be three 5 second horn blasts. These horn clusters are located on top of Physical Plant, Morris Recreation Center, Memorial Stadium, and Henderson Hall. For more information about Thorguard, visit <http://www.thorguard.com/>

Sexual Assault

Texas A&M University-Commerce is committed to providing an educational atmosphere in which students can achieve their goals and maximize their potential. When students experience sexual violence (such as rape or dating violence), their sense of safety and trust is violated, which can seriously interfere with their lives and educational goals. Sexual assault is a serious, violent crime and is a flagrant violation of the University's standards of conduct. Students who are sexually assaulted or who are in violent relationships have a number of resources and courses of action available to them. If you have experienced sexual assault please do the following:

1. Report the incident to the University Police Department, located in Henderson Hall or call (903) 886-5868.
2. Seek medical assistance by contacting either the Student Health Services at (903) 886-5853 or the Presbyterian Hospital of Commerce at 2900 Sterling Hart Dr. at (903) 886-3161.
3. Seek emotional support through the University Counseling Center, located in the Student Services Building at 903-886-5145.
4. Residential Living and Learning staff is also available to help.

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

SUPPORT OFFICES AND RESOURCES

Campus Synergy Lab

Leadership has a new home at A&M-Commerce. In providing increased opportunities for involvement in meaningful programs, we open avenues that reach students that merely “attend class”, then leave. Active learning gives the student ownership of the educational process. We seek to help students gain confidence, develop character, and learn how to become effective citizens that can function locally and globally. For information regarding the Campus Synergy Lab, Graf/x Place, IdeaWorks, InfoSource, or the Serious Fun Prop Room, you may find this office located on the second floor of the Memorial Student Center. Information on Breakout Entertainment, as well as, Student Organizations and the Office of Greek Life can also be found through this office.

Career Services

If your goal is a college degree and a “real job,” **don’t** wait until you’re about to graduate to check out Career Services!

Need to pick a major? Ask us for a *Career Decision Kit* or a *Career Interest Inventory* or a password to the *Discover* program.

Need to write a resume? Pick up a *Resume & Cover Letter Guide* and then let us help you revise the finished product before an employer sees it.

Scared about a job interview? Pick up an *Interview Guide* and then schedule a “mock” interview with Career Services’ staff for practice.

Want a job? Attend our Job Fairs to meet employers who offer full-time, part-time, and internship positions. AND, use our NEW online *Lion Tracks* system to search for jobs and post your resume for employers to find. You can find us in Room 104 of the Halladay Student Services Building, or on the web at www.tamu-commerce.edu/careerservices

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center is located on the second floor of the Student Services Building. The services are free to currently enrolled A&M-Commerce students. The office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00am – 5:00pm, with evening hours available by appointment. The Counseling Center offers personal counseling, academic skills assistance, and career exploration, assessments and screenings, consultation and referral, crisis intervention, and educational outreach. For more information, please call 903-886-5145.

Dean of Students

The Dean of Students Office is located on the second floor of the Student Services Building. The Dean of Students is responsible for organizing and administering the departments that fall within Student Affairs. It is the responsibility of the Dean of Students Office to coordinate programs and activities for students.

Health Services

The Student Health Services Office, located in Henderson Hall, serves the students as an acute care facility restricted to diagnosis and treatment of ambulatory illness. The Student Health Services Office is only available to currently registered students and is open Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on the days that the University is in regular session. A full-time physician assistant and a nursing staff are available. In the case that an ambulance is needed from the residence halls, please contact a Residential Living and Learning staff member immediately for assistance. For more information please call (903) 886-5853.

Greek Life

Texas A&M University-Commerce recognizes the benefits its students receive through membership in fraternities and sororities. The mission of the office of Greek Life is to provide high-quality student development programming that enhances the academic mission of the university by facilitating opportunities for scholarly success, community service, campus leadership, and fraternal friendships in a safe, nurturing environment. The primary goal of the Greek Life Office is to facilitate an excellent co-curricular education for the Greek community. Our 350 fraternity and sorority members are provided the opportunity to participate in educational programs that focus on alcohol/drug awareness, leadership/community building, identity development/diversity, and academic enhancement throughout their college career. For more information please visit the Office of Greek Life in the Synergy Lab (room 202F) of the Sam Rayburn Memorial Student Center.

International Student Office

The International Student Office is located on the third floor of the Business Administration building in room 350. Services provided by the International Student Office include issuance of I-20 and IAP-66 documents, new international student orientation, and coordination of special activities for international students. Other services include liaison with Immigration and Naturalization Service regarding non immigrant students and exchange visitors, re-entry authorization for traveling outside the United States, employment authorization, and extension of study. For more information please call (903) 886-5097.

Sam Rayburn Student Center (SRSC)

The Sam Rayburn Memorial Student Center (MSC) is named for our most distinguished alumnus, Sam Rayburn. The MSC contains the University Dining Services which include the Mane Cafeteria and the Lion's Lair. Then University Post Office and the Alumni Office are also located within its premises. The Campus Synergy and the Student Government Association Office are located on the second floor, as well as the Candy Corner, Game Room and TV Lounge. For more information or to schedule a room please call (903) 8865809.

Office of Diversity and Cultural Affairs

The Office of Diversity and Cultural Affairs is available for advice and assistance with academic or social issues, with an emphasis on respecting your cultural heritage. Additionally, this office provides programs to assist the community in embracing diversity. The Office of Diversity and Cultural Affairs is located in the Halladay Student Services, Room 201 and is open Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. For more information or assistance please call (903) 886-5087.

Residential Living and Learning

In the “good old days” A&M-Commerce provided places to eat and sleep called “dormitories.” Today’s residence halls are places where life’s experiences are integrated with the total University educational program in the context of a supportive and safe environment. The importance of residence hall life becomes apparent when one considers that roughly 2/3 of the student’s time is spent outside of the classroom. What happens outside the classroom will have a major impact on one’s academic performance and overall growth as a person. Therefore, we strive to meet the student’s diverse needs by making the residence halls a living-learning experience.

Student Recreation Center (Morris Recreation Center)

The \$12 million state-of-the-art recreation facility, serves as the heart-beat of student life at A&M-Commerce. The Morris Recreation Center includes: 45-foot climbing rock, 3-lane jogging track, 4 racquetball courts, 2 basketball courts, large fitness room with cardiovascular and weight equipment, aerobics room, classroom, snack area, and locker rooms. The outdoor area includes: heated leisure pool (beach-type entry, fountains, water tunnel, current channel, bubble jet benches, 3-lap lanes), 2-tier hot tub with waterfall, 2 sand volleyball courts, 2 basketball courts, picnic tables, BBQ pits, and sunbathing area. For more information please call (903) 468-3170.

RESIDENTIAL LIVING AND LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS

Check-In

The residence halls are available for check-in the Wednesday prior to classes beginning at 10:00 a.m. This allows for residents to get settled into their living quarters prior to classes. A Room Condition sheet has been previously filled out by an RA with the conditions of each room. If there are any problems with your room, please report them to your RA as soon as possible. Throughout the semester you should report to your RA any damages that occur. You are financially responsible for all damages that occur in your room during your occupancy.

Room Changes and Hall Changes

Changes can be made only after receiving approval from the Hall Director. Students wishing to move from one residence hall to another should speak with the Hall Director where he or she wishes to move. The Hall Director from the receiving hall will begin the room change process. All hall transfers (check-in and check-out) must be completed within a 24 hour period unless approval is given for an extension. Students who make unauthorized room/hall changes will be subject to disciplinary actions. An improper room change fine of \$50.00 will be given if the above procedures are not followed.

Check-out procedures are as follows (this applies anytime you are moving out of a room/apartment):

1. Complete appropriate paperwork with the Hall Director of the receiving hall.
2. Remove all personal belongings from apartment/room.
3. Make sure that apartment/room is clean and orderly and that all furniture is in its place.

4. Make an appointment with your RA to be checked out. If your RA is not available at the requested time contact your hall office.
5. Your RA will take your room key, pick up your Room Condition Form and inspect your room with you present.
6. Any damages, missing furniture, or lost keys will be marked on your Room Condition Form and a damage statement will be issued to you.
7. After you and your RA sign your Room Condition Form and Room Occupancy Card, you have completed your check-out.

Students who fail to follow the above steps for proper check-out will have their rooms inspected in their absence, will be charged for any applicable damages, and will be charged a \$30.00 improper check-out fee, plus \$45.00 if the room key is not returned. A records hold will be placed until total payment is received by the University.

Contract Release Request

Your Residential Living and Learning contract is binding for the academic year. Requests to break the contract may be considered. Please do not make other housing arrangements until you find out if your request is approved. Most requests to break housing contracts will not be approved. For more specific details, contact the Residential Living and Learning Office or consult your copy of the Residential Living and Learning contract.

Hours Requirement

Students must be enrolled full-time in order to be eligible to live in campus housing. To meet this requirement, undergraduate students must be registered for a minimum of twelve semester credit hours in the fall and spring semesters. Graduate students must be registered for a minimum of nine semester credit hours in the fall and spring semesters. Undergraduate and graduate students must be registered for six semester hours in each summer term to be eligible to live in campus housing. Any exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Residential Living and Learning Office.

Re-Application Process

The reapplication process affords residents the opportunity to re-apply for a residence hall assignment for the following academic year. Re-application information is available prior to Spring Break.

Re-Assignments

Assignment guarantees space, not specific apartments/rooms, within the residence hall. Residential Living and Learning reserves the right to reassign students to other apartments, rooms, or halls, when to do so is in the best interest of individuals or groups of students, when it is determined that a student is not actually residing in his/her assigned space or to address policy violations. Private room, selected roommate, and particular requests are accommodated as much as possible in keeping with the above statements.

Room Charges

Your room charges will be included on your University bill, and are payable to the University according to published deadlines.

Summer School Housing

Summer housing is available. Information will be provided in the Spring Semester.

Withdrawal

Students who are withdrawing from school during the semester must first go to the Assistant Dean of Students Office to initiate formal withdrawal from the University. A student who is being removed from Residential Living and Learning or withdraws from the University must go to the Residential Living and Learning Office and then complete the check-out process. Students will have 48 hours to move at the time of withdrawal. Failure to follow these steps may result in charges remaining on your account until the end of the semester.

RESIDENCE HALLS PROCEDURES

In a community living situation, such as one finds in the residence halls, it is necessary to impose certain standards for conduct and behavior to ensure that there is some order to the environment. Each resident living in the residence hall has certain rights they are entitled to. These rights are:

1. the right to sleep;
2. the right to one's personal belongings;
3. the right to free access to one's room/suite facilities/apartment;
4. the right to a clean environment in which to live;
5. the right to read and study free from undo interference in one's room;
6. the right to express concerns and be heard;
7. the right to personal privacy;
8. the right to be free from verbal or written abuse, threats, intimidation, or violence.

Residents are expected to respond appropriately to the reasonable requests of other residents and Department of Residential Living and Learning staff including: Hall Directors, Resident Assistants, Desk Attendants, and Night Security staff, and Residential Living and Learning Office staff.

Residents will respect the rights of other residents, and each resident is responsible and held accountable for his or her behavior, as well as for the behavior of his/her guest(s). Procedures in all residence halls will be consistently and strictly enforced by University officials at all times. Violation of any of the following procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Abandoned Property

In those instances where items are left in residence hall rooms after the resident has checked out or failed to properly check out, at the end of the semester or the academic year, or has withdrawn from the University but has failed to properly check out, Residential Living and Learning shall declare the property abandoned and it will be held for one semester before being discarded by the University. The University will pack and inventory all belongings and there will be a minimum of a \$75 charge. Note: if large items are left and space is not available to store the items they will be discarded.

A resident who does not return for any semester will be charged \$5 a day beginning the day the halls open until the resident returns and properly checks out. Should the resident not return by the no-show date the resident's property will be treated as abandoned as stated in the paragraph above.

Alcohol

Texas law requires that individuals must be at least 21 years old to purchase, possess, or consume alcoholic beverages. The following expectations are for all residents and their guests (Note: Whitley Hall is an alcohol-free residence hall):

1. Students 21 or older, who choose to consume alcoholic beverages, are expected to do so in moderation to ensure other residents' rights to privacy, sleep, and study within their rooms.
2. Loud or disruptive behavior, interference with the cleanliness of the residence halls, or drinking habits which are disruptive or injurious to the health or education of individuals will not be tolerated.
3. In order for alcohol to be allowed in the room, at least one of the residents of that room must be of legal age.
4. Alcoholic beverages may be possessed or consumed, but not sold or manufactured, in the privacy of student rooms by those residents and their invited guests who are 21 years or older.
5. Possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in hallways, lounges, stairways, courtyards, community bathrooms, parking lots, patio/balconies, or any public areas on campus. All alcohol transported through public areas must be unopened and concealed in a box/sack.
6. All private gatherings held in student rooms must be confined to the specific room and the door must be closed.
7. Kegs, party balls, trash cans, or other large vessels that contain alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the residence halls.
8. Advertisement of private gatherings in a resident's room is prohibited.
9. Residents are responsible for the behavior of their guests at all times. Alcohol use/misuse does not excuse disruptive, excessively noisy, or indecent behavior.
10. If one individual in the room is 21 and one roommate is under 21 and any minor is found consuming and/or possessing alcohol in the room ALL alcohol present will be confiscated and turned over to the University Police Department.

11. Alcohol decorations and containers (empty or full) may not be displayed in rooms where residents are under 21.

Apartment Entry

Entry by Residential Living and Learning Staff into your apartment/room is occasionally necessary. While respecting your personal privacy at all times, the University reserves the right to authorize enter into your apartment/room at times when your welfare of the welfare of the apartment/room is concerned; to insure proper care, maintenance and safety of the facilities; to make necessary repairs; to complete a preliminary condition report for an apartment being vacated; to conduct maintenance and safety inspections; and to investigate violations of University regulations. Every effort will be made to give advance notice when an apartment entry is necessary; notice will be left when the maintenance department has responded to your request for repairs. For additional information, see the A&M-Commerce Student's Guidebook.

Appliances

Residence halls have definite limits on the capabilities of their electrical systems. Overloading these systems can present a fire and safety hazard. Small microwave ovens are permitted. Refrigerators which operate at 115 volts and are a maximum of 3.6 cubic feet are permitted in residence hall rooms. Only UL approved, sealed unit coffee makers and air popcorn poppers are allowed, but are not to be used for cooking purposes. Use of other appliances such as radios, TVs, stereos, desk lamps with non-halogen bulbs, or electric blankets are permitted provided the total electrical requirements do not exceed the capacity of the system, and the equipment is kept in safe operating conditions. No outside antennae of any type are permitted. Cooking appliances are only allowed on table tops and counter areas; never allowed on floors or window sills. There will be a \$25 fine if an appliance is found in any other area than a table or counter. Cooking appliances are not allowed on the patios/balconies. Unauthorized appliances will be confiscated and stored until the student checks out. The student will be charged \$25.00 for each appliance confiscated. The following appliances are not permitted in the apartments:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. halogen lamps of any kind | 7. potpourri pots |
| 2. hot plates | 8. sun lamps and tanning beds |
| 3. deep fryers | 9. any open faced or heating appliance |
| 4. broilers | 10. personal bbq grills |
| 5. freezers | 11. toaster ovens (only allowed in West Halls apts. without ovens) |
| 6. space heaters | |

Allowed appliances: (other appliances must be approved by the HD in advance of being in the apartment)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Toasters | 3. crock pots |
| 2. George Foreman Grills (small) | 4. rice cookers - One per resident |

Bicycles/Motorcycles

All bicycles should be registered with the University Police Department. Cyclists are to abide by all traffic regulations. Bicycle racks are placed in convenient locations throughout the campus, including all residence halls, and bikes should be secured with a lock and chain. Bicycles can be stored in residence hall rooms with the consent of the roommate. If a bicycle is stored in a room it must not block the door or be ridden in the hall. Residential Living and Learning will enforce bicycle procedures in accordance with the University Police Departments Traffic Rules and Regulations, Article XVI, Section B, Part 3 & 4, which states: Bicycles may not be tied, locked, or secured in any way to permanent fixtures to include but not limited to:

- a. buildings
- b. trees
- c. handrails
- d. banisters
- e. walk way guardrails

Bicycles secured to permanent fixtures will be removed at owner's expense. A resident violating this policy will be subject to a \$25.00 fine, second violation will result in a \$25.00 fine and removal at owner's expense.

Motorcycles must be registered with the University Police Department as if it were a four-wheeled vehicle. Motorcycles, mopeds, motor scooters, and other internal combustion engine vehicles should never be brought into the residence halls. Gasoline cans are not permitted in residence halls.

Bomb Threats

If you receive a bomb threat or any other threatening phone call gain as much information from the caller as possible and leave your phone off the hook. Notify the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 5111.

Candles

See Open Flames

Chalking

Chalking of sidewalks or brick must be approved by the Hall Director prior to chalking. The chaked area must be removed no later than 24 hours after the event.

Christmas or Holiday Trees

Due to the National Fire Protection Association codes and safety concerns within residence halls, cut/live Christmas trees are not permitted.

Cohabitation

Cohabitation is not permitted in the residence halls. Cohabitation is defined as a person using a residence hall room as if that person were a resident of the room, but not actually being assigned as a resident of the room. Students who are involved in an intimate relationship may not share a room. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Keeping clothing and other personal belongings in the room.
2. Sleeping overnight in the room.
3. Using the bathroom and shower facilities as if they lived in that room.
4. Using the address for mail service

Violation of this rule will result in a \$100 fine for the resident and \$50 additional fine to the resident for each person cohabitating and disciplinary action. Violations of this rule may also relate to the “guests” and “roommate conflict” procedures as outlined in this handbook.

Contact Paper

Contact paper is not allowed.

Cooking

In accordance with the residence hall appliance procedures, cooking in the residence halls is allowed with approved cooking appliances only. Residents are responsible for insuring that proper sanitation, ventilation, and fire safety precautions are taken. For the approved cooking appliances, please see Appliances

Cooperation with University Officials

Your residence hall staff are University Officials. Residents must immediately comply with any directions from any University Official. Failure to follow this policy will result in disciplinary action. Verbal and/or physical abuse directed towards any University staff member will not be tolerated and will be immediately referred to the Assistant Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

Decorations

Decorations are encouraged as long as they do not create health or fire hazards or damage the apartment/room. No decorations may hinder the use of or restrict access to hallways, doorways, stairs, corridors, or fire related equipment. Do not attach anything to or tamper with light fixtures, smoke detectors, sprinkler heads or exit signs. Tension rods may be used to hang curtains for windows only. Thumb tacks and pushpins are allowed for hanging purposes. No nails may be used except in New Pride where only 1” panel nails may be used. No wall mounted shelves or curtain rods are permitted. Christmas tree lights may only be used for two weeks prior to the end of the fall semester. Only small bulbs may be used. Single strand lights with small bulbs may be used during the regular year but more than one strand may not be connected together at any time. Masking tape is the only adhesive allowed for decorating purposes. Do not use double-sided tape on any surface in the apartments. This tape will rip large chunks out of the wall or not come completely off the walls. Only 3M Command Adhesives may be used and no imitations (http://www.3m.com/us/home_leisure/command/) are allowed. Contact a residence hall staff person for further details. To comply with regulations from the Fire Marshal both sides of room doors may not be decorated with anything other than message boards. See Dry Erase Boards section.

Decorations violating this regulation will be removed by the hall staff. Damages will be assessed and billed to the resident.

Door Propping

Propping of any residence hall door and/or tampering with locks is considered a serious security violation. Anyone caught propping an exterior door will be subject to disciplinary action and a fine of \$50.00.

Drugs

The University prohibits the manufacturing, possessing, selling, transmitting, using or being part to any illegal drug, controlled substance or drug paraphernalia on University premises or at University sponsored activities. Referrals will be made to The University Police Department for any violation of the above stated policy. Violations may result in arrest and/or suspension from the University.

Dry Erase Boards

Dry erase boards are allowed to be mounted with an adhesive backing to the outside or inside of residence hall room doors only. They may not be attached with adhesive to walls within the residence hall rooms and must be no larger than 12 inches by 12 inches.

Electrical Power Strips

Do not overload electrical circuits. Electrical power strips used on Residential Living and Learning property must conform to the following requirements. The device must have a cord assembly, multiple grounded outlets, a 15-amp circuit breaker or fuse, housed together in a plastic case with a common plug, and UL listed. All other multiple plug adaptors, extension cords, and outlet extenders are strictly prohibited. It is the student's responsibility to check with the hall director to see if the device is acceptable prior to use. Violation of this policy will result in a \$50.00 fine and the item will be confiscated and stored until time of check-out. Approved surge protectors are available for checkout at the front desk (except New Pride).

Emergency Exits

The paths to the exit door, windows, and to appliances and vents will be clear at all times throughout the living unit. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

Emergency Safety Equipment/Fire Alarm System

Tampering, damaging, or inhibiting the use of emergency/safety equipment including propping open doors in any residence hall is prohibited. Residents may not use emergency equipment for any purpose other than emergency use. This includes but is not limited to fire extinguishers, heat and smoke detectors, exit lights or panels, fire alarm pull stations or locked exterior doors. Tamper with emergency/safety equipment could endanger everyone. First offense will result in a \$500 fine, bill for any necessary repairs, and other disciplinary action as determined by the Assistant Dean of Students Office. Second offense for tampering will result in expulsion from University and bill for any necessary repairs.

Escorting Guests

All opposite sex guests must be escorted in all single sex facilities. At no time should a resident escort a guest that they do not know personally. Residents are responsible for the conduct of their guests. In every facility, guests left unattended or unescorted may be asked to leave the building. Residents must remain with their guests at all times while in rooms, public areas, TV lounges, laundry rooms, hallways or stairwells.

Fireworks, Explosives, and Hazardous Materials

Fireworks, smoke bombs, and explosives of any kind are not permitted in the residence halls or on campus. Please see the University Police Department for more information. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Furniture

Apartment furniture may not be taken outside. If any university owned furniture is taken outside there is a \$50.00 fine for violation of this policy.

Waterbeds are not permitted in the residence halls.

Gambling

Gambling for money or stakes representing money on University property is a violation of state law and is thereby prohibited.

Group Billings

Financial charges relating to the cleaning of, damage to, or theft of University property are billed to the specific individual(s) responsible whenever such individuals can be identified. However, when damage or theft cannot be assigned to a specific individual(s), the charges may be divided equally among the residents of the affected floor, building, or area.

This means that if any damage occurs in such areas as your floor, hallway, or community bathroom, which cannot be properly charged to an individual, all members of the floor or community may be billed equally for repairs. Similarly, damage or theft in your building, which cannot be assigned to an individual, may result in all building residents equally sharing in repair or replacement costs. If applicable, each resident will be billed for their "share" of public area damages at the end of each semester. Residents will be given every opportunity to identify individual(s) responsible for the damage before a group billing is finalized.

Your active involvement in reducing damages within your community is encouraged.

Guests

Hosts are responsible for the behavior of their guests at all times. Hosts are responsible for informing guests of all University and residence hall procedures.

Halogen Lamps, Torch, or Torchiere Lamp

Due to fire safety codes all kinds of lamps that contain halogen bulbs are not permitted in any residence hall rooms. Halogen light bulbs can reach temperatures over 1000° F. The fine for having a halogen lamp is \$25.00 and the lamp will be confiscated and stored until the student checks out.

Harassment

All residents have the right to be free from all forms of harassment including verbal, written, and sexual. Threats, intimidation, and violence will not be tolerated. Residential Living and Learning will not accept ignorance, humor, anger, alcohol, or substance abuse as an excuse, reason, or rationale for harassment.

Health and Safety Checks

Residential Living and Learning staff will conduct health and safety room checks on a twice a semester basis. These inspections are made to ensure:

1. That University property is being used properly;
2. That reasonable standards of room cleanliness, safety, and sanitation are being observed;
3. That maintenance needs are reported;
4. Residential Living and Learning procedures are being observed;
5. All directives of the State Fire Marshal are being observed.

Notices of these inspections will be posted on hall bulletin boards at least 24 hours in advance for the first inspection of the academic year. All subsequent inspections will not be posted.

HIV/AIDS

The residence hall staff will maintain the confidentiality of any student they have knowledge of testing positive for HIV or seeking HIV testing or counseling.

Identification

For the safety and welfare of all students and to protect the property of the university, you are required to have your University ID in your possession at all times. Proof of identity may be requested of any person in the residence hall by members of the residence hall staff. Failure to identify yourself to a University staff member upon request is a violation of University regulations. Your cooperation is appreciated should such an occasion arise.

Kitchens/Apartment cleanliness

Apartments and kitchens must be kept clean at all times (dishes clean, food stored properly, etc.) First offense will result in disciplinary action. Second offense will result in a \$50 fine and disciplinary action. Third offense will result in a \$100 fine and disciplinary action and University Custodial Services will clean the

apartment/room and the resident will be billed for the services. Fourth offense will result in reassignment to a room without cooking facilities or removal from campus housing. Also, the University Custodial Services personnel will clean the apartment/room before the next resident is assigned and will charge resident no less than \$50 for this service.

Residents must take personal trash to dumpster, adjacent to each hall/apartment complex. Residents who do not take their trash to the dumpsters will be charged \$25 for each item that must be removed (front door of apartment, ground or by trash cans) by a member of the apartment staff.

Residents must have a fitted sheet on their bed at all times. Failure to follow this policy will result in a \$50 fine. Residents must supply a shower curtain for the shower or bathtub. Failure to follow this policy will result in a \$25 fine.

Latches/Door locks

No additional locks or latches may be installed anywhere in your apartment. Installation of additional locks or latches will cause damages to be assessed for these to be removed, and the holes repaired. A second incident will result in disciplinary action.

Light Fixtures

Florescent bulbs are replaced by custodial staff through submitting a work order at the front desk. Incandescent bulbs that need replacing are the responsibility of the resident.

Lockouts

If for some reason you are locked out of your room you will be able to borrow an extra key from your hall front desk. There is a limit of three times per semester that a key may be borrowed. If the key is not returned within a ten minute time frame from the time it is borrowed, a \$10.00 fee will be assessed. The fourth time, and every time thereafter, a \$20.00 charge will be assessed. Documentation will be recorded at each transaction and you must present your assigned key when returning your borrowed key. If a key is lost a \$45.00 per lock charge will be billed in order to change each lock affected.

Lounge/Lobby/Courtyards Usage and Facility Guidelines

1. The area atmosphere should be conducive to small scale social interaction for residents and their guests. Appropriate attire and conduct is expected in public areas at all times.
2. The areas may be the meeting place for hall activities as well as a recreational center during specified times of the day.
3. Residents and their guests are expected to show consideration for others at all times and should avoid excessive noise. Quiet hours are enforced.
4. Removal of furniture from its assigned location, except with permission from the Hall Director, is grounds for disciplinary action and a \$50.00 fine. Replacement charges will be assessed if lost.

5. Residents and their guests are responsible for compliance with University and hall policies regarding these area guidelines and may be subject to disciplinary action if a violation occurs.

Neighbor Conflicts

If you and your neighbors are having a conflict, first discuss the problem with each other. If a resolution cannot be found for the problem, then see your RA. If the RA feels that the problem is not being resolved, a referral will be made to the Hall Director. If the problem cannot be resolved, Residential Living and Learning has the right to relocate one or both of the neighbors.

Noise

Quiet hours are Sunday through Saturday 10:00pm-10:00am. Residents and guests are expected to be considerate of roommates and neighbors 24 hours a day. This means that any behavior that disrupts others is unacceptable at any time. Noise should not be heard in surrounding apartments or within ten feet of the front door. Twenty-four hour quiet hours will be in effect for the last two weeks of each semester. Quiet hours are expected to be observed in parking lots adjacent to residential facilities. If noise can be heard within a ten foot radius of a vehicle, the resident will be found in violation of the quiet hours policy. Failure to follow the above policy will result a warning for the first offense, \$25 fine for the second offense, \$50 fine and further disciplinary action for the 3rd offense.

Open Flames

Candles (with or without a wick), wax sculptures, incense, fireworks (all types, including sparklers) are considered to be an open flame and, therefore, a fire hazard. These items are prohibited on the grounds, apartments, or buildings located in Residential Living and Learning. Possession of items violating this policy will result in immediate confiscation and a fine of \$25.00 for the first violation, and a fine of \$25.00 per item for every subsequent violation and disciplinary action.

Outside the Building /Personal Items

Personal items outside of the apartment may extend no farther than 18 inches from the exterior wall of the apartment doors, and should be limited to flowers, chairs, a small table, door mat, toys. Items not approved are subject to a \$25.00 fine.

Painting

Should you wish to paint your room contact your Hall Director. All paint will be provided by Residential Living and Learning pending availability. You must sign a paint contract form and return it to the Hall Director before painting has begun. If your paint job does not meet the approval of the Hall Director the room must be repainted immediately or you will be charged a repainting fee (\$35 a wall).

Pests

Residents who fail to keep their apartment clean or who bring in pests will be charged for pest control services and the replacement of damaged items.

Pets

Fish in one 10-gallon aquarium or a bird in a cage are the only pets allowed in Family Apartments. Any pet found in your apartment or proof of pet (by report from other residents and/or observation by staff of animal food and/or animal feces), other than the above exceptions, will immediately result in a \$75.00 fine, charged to your account. Furthermore there will be a \$10.00 per day charge until the pet is removed. Additional cleaning and/or disinfecting and/or charges to respond to fleas or damages caused by the pet may also be charged to your account. Animals around the area will be considered strays and will be removed. If you feed or encourage, in any way, a stray animal to remain in the area you will also be subject to a fine of \$75.00. If you are aware of any stray animals, please contact the Family Apartments Office. We will notify UPD and request removal of the animal.

Posting

Posting of flyers, announcements, or any other printed or written material must be approved by the Hall Director prior to posting in or around any area of the residence halls.

Pranks

Pranks which result in disturbances or distress to others or cause damage to University or personal property are prohibited. Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone disregarding this regulation.

Projectiles

For reasons of health and safety, propelling devices such as rockets, catapults, slingshots, or any homemade device for the purpose of launching an object are prohibited. Objects may not be thrown into or out of windows. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Quiet Hours/Courtesy Hours See Noise

Restricted Areas

No student shall make unauthorized entry into any University building, office, attic, roof, or other restricted University facility.

Room Modifications

Permanent fixtures and construction are not permitted. All items in the room must be free standing. Modifying electrical or telephone wiring is prohibited. Under no circumstances should nails, screws, or wall anchors be used to affix items to walls or ceilings. Installation of ceiling fans is prohibited. Carpet may not be taped/glued down.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all Residential Living and Learning facilities; this includes porches, balconies and stairwells. The smell of smoke and/or evidence of butts/ashes will be considered a violation of this policy. First offense will result in a \$100 fine and disciplinary action. Second offense will result in a \$200 fine and disciplinary action. Third offense will result in termination of contract and charges for the remainder of that

semester's housing contract. Smoking outside of halls is restricted to approved areas. Smoking is not allowed within 20 feet of the building as per University Policy. Residents will be held responsible for the actions of their guests.

Solicitation

Residential Living and Learning does not allow solicitation by outside organizations or companies in the residence halls without prior approval from the Director of Residential Living and Learning and/or the Assistant Dean of Students. Door to door solicitation is never permitted. If you are approached by sales personnel in your hall, please contact your hall staff and UPD immediately. Research may be conducted in the residence halls with prior written approval from the Director or Assistant Director of Residential Living and Learning.

Sports in the Hallways

Residents may not engage in any "sports or sport related activities" within the residence hall rooms, lounges, hallways, stairwells, or other public areas.

Supervision of Children

Children must be accompanied by an adult. Failure to supervise children may result in termination of the Residential Living and Learning Contract and/or disciplinary action. Residential Living and Learning is not responsible for unattended children. Also, please refer to the Noise section of this handbook.

Syringe Disposal

Students should not place exposed hypodermic needles directly in trash containers. Please dispose used needles in a puncture proof container. If no container is available please take used needles to the Student Health Center.

Traffic Signs

Traffic signs, as well as state and city directional or informational signs, are not allowed in student rooms since possession of these items is illegal. These signs will be turned over to the University Police Department.

Visitation

Visitation provides an opportunity for hall residents to create a more desirable living experience and further personal growth through greater interpersonal contact among students of both sexes. The responsibility of this policy rests upon the individual who must maintain the element of academic privacy in the living areas, maintain his/her conduct in a manner which is considerate of roommates or other concerned parties and act in accordance with all University policies. Guests are expected to be escorted at all times. **At no time should a guest be left in a room or apartment while the resident is out of the room, suite or apartment.** All guests will be responsible for carrying a student ID with them. Each resident may have no more than three guests in the room or apartment at any given time. The maximum hours for visitation within the residence halls of Smith, Berry, Whitley and F Buildings are 10:00 a.m.-2:00 a.m. seven days a week. West Halls, New Pride, and Whitley Hall have open visitation as long as rights of roommate and other hall residents are respected. Violations of these responsibilities shall be subject to disciplinary action and repeated violations may be grounds for removing the individual or individuals from the living area.

Weapons/Firearms

Weapons, firearms, paintball guns, or ammunition of any kind are not permitted in the residence halls. This includes, but is not limited to, pellet or BB guns, slingshots, arrows, axes, machetes, numchucks, throwing stars or knives with a blade four inches or longer. Also, all items listed above may not be stored in vehicles which are parked on University property. There are no exceptions to this policy. Please see the University Police Department for more information.

Windows and Window Screens

Window screens may not be removed or altered in any way. No articles may be thrown or hung from windows. Curtains, shades, etc. may only be hung from tension rods. Students who place items in windows that the University determines to be offensive and/or obscene will be asked to remove the items immediately and may be subject to disciplinary action. Foil is not permitted in room windows unless a white backing is present and viewed from the outside of the building. Failure to follow the above procedures will result in a \$25.00 fine.

RESIDENCE HALLS DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM

Disciplinary Procedures

When an apparent violation of the University or residence hall regulations occurs, a Contact Report is filed. Based on this report, specific violations are determined. Residents who have violated residence hall regulations are subject to meet with a Hall Director. Major infractions will be referred from the Hall Director to either the Assistant Director of Residential Living and Learning or the Assistant Dean of Students.

Contact Reports

Contact Reports are the primary means of communicating what occurs in the halls. The reports are used by Residential Living and Learning as information and an historical record of events, as well as a tool for follow-up investigations or disciplinary actions. Contact Reports are not limited to violations of residence hall procedures, but may be purely informational in nature. Students may request the opportunity to read any report that involves them. However, Residential Living and Learning reserves the right to protect the privacy and confidentiality of others involved with the incident.

Sanctions

If a sanction is issued due to an incident within the residence halls an Educational Conference Resolution Form is filled out. This form is used as a tool to change the behavior in an educational, rather than punitive, manner. By signing the Educational Conference Resolution Form, the resident is agreeing to the terms of the sanction. Sanctions can include, but not be limited to, the following: community service hours, written report by resident, restriction of privileges within the residence halls, and/or monetary fines. Sanctions for major infractions may result in removal from the residence halls.

UNIVERSITY NUMBERS

Academic Advising 903-886-5133

Assistant Dean of Students 903-886-5171

Career Services 903-886-5110

Cashier's Window 903-886-5050

Counseling Center 903-886-5145

CTIS 903-886-5426

Dean of Students Office 903-886-5084

Financial Aid 903-886-5096

International Students Office 903-886-5097

Morris Recreation Center 903-886-5778

Library 903-886-5715

Loan Office 903-886-5051

MACH III 903-886-5833

Memorial Student Center 903-886-5808

Morris Recreation Center 903-886-5778

Office of Student Organizations 903-886-5816

Records and Reports Office 903-886-5071

Registration Office 903-886-5102

Scholarship Office 903-886-5915

Sodexo 903-468-4890

Student Employment Services 903-886-5282

Student Government 903-886-5822

Student Health Center 903-886-5853

Student Health Insurance 903-886-5084

University Bookstore 903-886-5830

University Police Department 903-886-5868

University Post Office 903-886-6965

RESIDENTIAL LIVING AND LEARNING NUMBERS

Berry Hall 903-886-5785

Family Apartments 903-468-4500

Greek and Womens Halls 903-468-4637

New Pride Apartments 903-468-4422

Residential Living and Learning Office 903-886-5797

Smith Hall 903-886-5787

West Halls Apartments 903-886-5791

Whitley Hall Apartments 903-886-5789

Staff Directory

Residential Living and Learning Central Office
903-886-5797

West Halls 903-886-5791

Whitley Hall 903-886-5790

Family Apartments 903-468-4500

Honors and Greek 903-468-46

