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**Residence Life and Housing  
Handbook  
2024-2025**

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Updated 10/3/24

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# **RESIDENCE LIFE MISSION STATEMENT**

## **MISSION**

The mission of Residence Life and Housing is to provide a safe and supportive environment which allows our residents to engage and explore learning outside of the classroom. Within our well-maintained facilities, we strive to provide our residents with support and resources as well as activities that create a sense of belonging, community, civic responsibility and appreciation of diversity.

## **VISION**

Residence Life and Housing seeks to create an environment in which students feel comfortable to collaborate with others in support of their academic, social and personal development by fostering diverse, engaging and responsible communities.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

It is the policy of Pennsylvania Western University (PennWest) that there shall be equal opportunity in all of its educational programs, services and benefits and there shall be no discrimination with regard to a student's or prospective student's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation/affection, gender identity, veteran status or any other factors that are protected under local, state and federal laws. Direct equal opportunity inquiries to: The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, 724-938-5758.

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Welcome to PennWest and to Residence Life and Housing. Our staff understands the challenges that you are facing as you continue to pursue your academic goals and experience "out-of- the classroom" learning as both are significant to your college education. You will have ample opportunities to associate with students of different backgrounds, attitudes and lifestyles. We hope you will use your time in University Housing to participate in activities, develop new friendships and grow as an individual. To make your life easier, our staff has committed itself to providing you with the highest level of comfort, cleanliness and convenience possible.

Each student living in campus housing will contribute to, and be affected by, the total environment of the building and community. The degree to which these corresponding influences are positive or negative will

depend, to a large extent, on the willingness of each student to cooperate in and be responsible for this community living experience. We encourage you to make use of the numerous services available through Residence Life and Housing and PennWest and to participate in the variety of activities that the Community Assistant Staff will schedule during the year for your education and enjoyment. As a member of the community, you are expected to regulate your own conduct and behavior in accordance with the standards of reasonable and responsible citizenship. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures of the university.

This handbook will assist you in obtaining necessary information concerning Residence Life and Housing amenities, policies and programs offered. We are happy to have you with us, as we strive to make this time spent in campus housing enjoyable and rewarding.

## **PENNWEST CALIFORNIA CONTACT INFORMATION**

### Emergency Contacts:

- University Police/ Public Safety 724-938-4299, x4357
- Student Health Center 724-938-4232
- Fire Emergency 911
- Medical Emergency 911
- Police Emergency 911

### University Contacts:

- Counseling Center 724-938-4056
- SPHS Crisis Line 1-877-225-2567
- Residence Life & Housing 724-938-4444
- Academic Success 724-938-4186
- Student Financial Services 724-938-4415
- Student Accounts 724-938-4431
- University Registrar 724-938-4435

# HOUSING PROCEDURES

## RESIDENCE LIFE AND HOUSING STAFF

Residence Life and Housing is committed to the educational mission of the university. The staff is here to be of assistance in making the residential experience a meaningful part of your college life. Residence Life manages Carter Hall, Guesman Hall, Hall E, Johnson Hall and Smith Hall. Residence Life and Housing's main office is located in Residence Hall B.

The professional staff, Graduate Hall Directors (GHDs) and community assistants (CAs) are members of Residence Life and Housing Staff who reside in the residence halls. Professional staff are university staff members working in the residence halls who supervise hall programming. They are given direct supervisory authority and responsibility for hall operations and act as hearing officers of the student conduct code when requested by the vice president for Student and University Affairs.

Professional staff members assist individual students and act as referral agents to other campus offices.

Graduate Hall Directors (GHDs) also serve as assistants to the ADs. They live in the residence hall and assist the AD with community development, programming, advising hall government, operating the front desk and supervising CAs. As student leaders, they are a resource for you and are available in office as well as the on-call system.

Community Assistants (CAs) are student members of Residence Life and Housing staff who live in campus housing. CAs are responsible for building a community on the floor and in the building, as well as being a resource and referral agent. In seeking to create and maintain a positive community, the CA plans and implements community activities and programs, supports rules and regulations and assists with administrative responsibilities as directed by the professional staff member.

## HOUSING REQUIREMENT

All incoming undergraduate students who meet the following criteria are required to live in university housing for their first **four** semesters of enrollment:

- First-time-in-college students who are enrolled full time
- Transfer students who have earned less than 48 credits at a previous institution (who are enrolled full time)

- Exemptions:
  - First-time-in-college students or transfers who are living with a parent or guardian at their permanent address within a 50-mile radius of California
  - Married students
  - Students over the age of 21
  - Single parents
  - Military veterans who have been honorably discharged

To apply for an exemption, you must go to the housing portal at [my.PennWest.edu](https://my.PennWest.edu) and complete the Housing Exemption Request Form. Requests will be reviewed by the appropriate personnel and a decision will be communicated in writing within 10 days of receipt. Additional documentation may be required. Please note that all decisions are final.

## **HOUSING ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES**

All housing applications are completed at [my.PennWest.edu](https://my.PennWest.edu) on the housing portal. Get more information on housing applications and room selection procedures [here](#).

## **TERMINATION/CANCELLATION OF THE HOUSING CONTRACT**

Housing contracts will not be cancelled unless the student is no longer attending PennWest University. Once their withdrawal form is in, students may request to cancel the Housing Agreement/License Agreement by completing an online cancellation request form in the [my.PennWest.edu](https://my.PennWest.edu) portal. Depending on the date cancellation request form was turned into Residence Life and the reason for the request, cancellation fees may be assessed.

- No cancellation fee is assessed for the following circumstances if cancellation form and formal written documentation are provided prior to departure:
  - Student is participating in an education program that requires out-of-town residency (30 miles) for part of the academic year (i.e. student teaching, study abroad, clinical rotation and co-op/internship). This requires a one semester premium lease. Please see a professional staff member for details.

- Student can provide proof of graduation. This requires a one semester premium lease. Please see a professional staff member for details.
- Student must withdraw due to deployment for an armed service.
- Student has a medical condition requiring special accommodations that cannot be met by university housing.

Please review the housing contract and contract release request form for specific dates and fees.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM CAMPUS HOUSING**

Rooms must be vacated the manner in which they were found not more than 24 hours after a student withdraws from the university or after their last scheduled examination, unless the student has received written approval from the professional staff member to remain longer.

Students must officially withdraw through the Office of the Registrar and if refunds are due, they will be processed by Residence Life. When withdrawal occurs, the student is responsible for returning keys and other loaned property to the hall office and must have a residence life staff member make an end-of-occupancy room inspection.

- For on-campus, a minimum charge of \$75 will be assessed for the replacement of lost hall keys. An improper checkout fee is \$50. Other assessments are made for missing or damaged furnishings, unclean rooms and failure to check out of the residence hall properly.

## **ABANDONED ITEMS**

Students are obligated to remove all personal property upon departure. The office of Housing and Residence Life serves the right, without further notice, to remove students' personal belongings that remain in a residential facility 48 hours after the termination of the housing agreement for any reason (withdrawal, academic dismissal, housing revocation, etc.). The Housing and Residence Life office will contact the student and they will have 30 days from the date of the email to the student, to pick up the belongings from storage. If the student does not pick-up their abandoned items within 30 days, they will be disposed of. The student will be charged for expenses incurred in the disposal of such property. At the end of the academic year during move out, all belongings left behind are discarded by housekeeping staff immediately upon closing. The 30-day pick-up policy for belongings does not apply.

## REFUND POLICY

For refunds after opening, housing and meal plans may be prorated. Residence Life follows the university refund schedule.

## FULL OCCUPANCY

While the university is committed to housing as many students as possible, demand sometimes exceeds housing capacity. If this happens, students with junior and/or senior class status may not have access to the housing application. If vacancies develop, these students requesting to live in university housing will be contacted to complete the housing application.

The housing requirement states that students in their first **four semesters** at PennWest are required to live in university housing. Please see Housing Requirement for more information.

## TEMPORARY HOUSING

During the fall semester, a high demand for residence hall rooms may necessitate the establishment of temporary housing in some areas. Temporary assignments may include adding a third person to a double room or housing students in university guest facilities. As permanent spaces become vacant, usually within the first few weeks of the semester, students will be moved from temporary rooms to regular student rooms. Every effort is made to reassign students in the same area.

## BREAK HOUSING

Residence halls are closed during breaks. Students currently living in campus suites are encouraged to leave the facilities during this time. Students who are required by the university to remain on campus will be provided break housing in predetermined spaces. Non-affiliated university requests to stay may be charged \$50 per night. An online request form can be found in the [my.PennWest.edu](https://my.PennWest.edu) portal under Housing prior to breaks for students to complete. Students will be notified of any costs and if they were approved. Any costs associated with these requests must be paid in advance.

## ROOM CHANGES

Based on occupancy, room change period may only be offered if spaces are available. If there are spaces, there will be a two week hold on all room changes at the beginning of each semester. Otherwise, room change requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

If a room change is requested, a meeting with the CA and professional staff will need to take place to discuss the reasoning. If it is discovered there is a suitable reason to change, a fee will not be accessed.

If the resident wants to room change without a mediation or meeting with Residence Life staff, a \$150 charge and a possible cleaning fee may be charged to their student account.

Any unauthorized room or hall change shall be considered a violation of the housing agreement and may subject the resident to disciplinary action, eviction and/or fees. Specific instructions will be given in August and January regarding room/hall changes for the beginning of each semester.

## **ROOM CONSOLIDATION POLICY**

Students who find themselves in University Housing without a roommate will be expected to keep their belongings on their side of the room and only use their furniture. Residence Life and Housings reserves the right to assign students to vacancies at any time but do try to provide a 24-hour notice of a new roommate unless there is an extenuating circumstance. Room Styles and roommates may be considered if consolidated. If a consolidation process were to take effect, the residents would be notified with options and a timeline in which the moves would have to take place.

Students who lose roommates must be prepared to accept a roommate at any time throughout the semester (which requires keeping belongings on one side of the room in preparation for a new roommate). Residents found to be using both sides of the bedroom will be documented by the Residence Life and Housing staff. A check will be done within 48 hours to see if the resident complied and removed their items to only be on their side and in their own furniture. If the student did not remove items from the other side or furniture and failed to comply, a mandatory consolidation into another room will take place or another resident will be moved into that room. Paperwork notice will be given to the resident and all instances will be documented in the Judicial process and possible follow up with the Dean of Students staff may be necessary if the student fails to comply.

## **CONTRACT TERMINATIONS BY RESIDENCE LIFE**

The university reserves the right to terminate occupancy, repossess or reassign rooms and take such other steps as it may, from time to time, deem necessary and advisable for the proper conduct of its housing program.

Some examples of situations which could be considered cause for termination are listed below:

- Failure to comply with the stated occupancy calendar.
- Failure to comply with the stated contract procedures.
- Damage and/or abuse of residence hall or apartment facilities or furnishings.

- Behavior which is disruptive.
- Failure to comply with stated check-in and check-out procedures.
- Disciplinary actions, recommending contract termination or contract reassignment for student conduct violations.
- Housing Removal: Removal from campus housing for a specified period of time. Access to campus housing including visitation is prohibited. Should circumstances warrant, housing removal could be permanent. In accordance with Residence Life policy, in such instances there will be no refund of housing fees

#### Individual Student Stipulations:

- Restitution: Reimbursement for damage to, or destruction of, university property.
- Housing Reassignment: Movement from a current residential assignment to another location in campus housing. Housing rates may be impacted.
- Failure to complete class registration procedures.
- Failure to keep your PennWest Account in good standing.

## **RESIDENCE HALL OPENING AND CLOSING**

The date of opening will be determined by Residence Life and announced to students. Procedures for moving out of the residence halls for closings or breaks will be posted in each residence hall and emailed to each residence hall student.

Unless otherwise stated, the residence halls close at 6 p.m. on the last day of classes or examinations. Students who are not graduating should vacate their residence hall room within 24 hours of their last exam, or the 6 p.m. deadline, whichever comes first.

Arriving early before the housing contract begins or staying after the housing contract ends may result in a \$50 per day fee.

## **ROOM KEYS AND ID ACCESS**

The residence halls are locked 24 hours a day, making your key and OneCard (Your PennWest Student ID) extremely important. You are responsible for both. Your key will open your wing, suite and bedroom doors, computer labs and the residence hall front door as needed. Lock your door at all times and always carry your key and OneCard so you don't lock yourself out of your suite or hall.

There is a significant charge for lost keys due to replacement and/or re-coring expenses and there is also a charge for lost OneCards. Keys and OneCards are for the sole use of the person to whom they are issued and may not be loaned or transferred to any other person. To do so is a policy violation addressed through the student conduct process.

If you lose your key, report it to the residence hall office or CA on-call as soon as possible to quickly regain access to your room. If you lose your OneCard, report it to the OneCard Office at the Student Center Information Desk between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., or to California University Police when the Information Desk is closed.

## **CARD ACCESS SYSTEM**

Tampering with the card access system is considered destruction of or misuse/abuse of university property and will be considered a violation of the code of conduct. Tampering includes forcing or propping doors open, permitting other individuals to gain access illegally (“tailgating”) and transferring student identification to another individual.

Your OneCard acts as your cardkey in buildings that utilize the card access system. Cost of a replacement Card is the responsibility of the student. If your card stops working and doesn’t let you access the building, contact the Information Desk or email [onecard@pennwest.edu](mailto:onecard@pennwest.edu) to get the issue resolved.

## **LOCK OUT POLICY/PROCEDURE**

Keep your room key and OneCard with you at all times. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to your room. Should you get locked out, CAs are available, they can access a master key to open your room. This service is offered as a courtesy only; a student who acquires more than three lockouts in a semester will be referred to their AD. The first two weeks of the semesters will be a free period of lock outs. After that timeframe, each student is allowed one “free” lockout per semester. Students will be charged \$15 for each lock out after that until the end of the semester. Access will be given only to the certified resident of a particular unit, or bedroom within a unit. You will be required to provide your OneCard or some form of photo identification to verify your identity.

## **HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students who requesting housing accommodations within the Residence Hall, should first contact the Office for Students with Disabilities to submit appropriate disability related documentation and a Student Request for Disability Accommodations Form. This documentation must verify the existence of a disability

as defined under section 504 and under the ADA; and establish a clear connection between the effects of the disability and the accommodations being requested.

Upon receiving the appropriate disability related documentation and a Student Request for Disability Accommodations Form from the student, the Coordinator will conduct an individualized assessment to determine if the request submitted qualifies as a reasonable accommodation as defined by applicable federal and state laws. If the request qualifies as a reasonable accommodation, the Coordinator will forward its recommendation to the Office of Residence Life and Housing. A student may request a housing accommodation at any time during the academic year, but students are given priority consideration when Residence Life receives the recommendation from the Office for Students with Disabilities by the following dates:

- To be prioritized as an Incoming freshman a recommendation will need to be submitted to Residence Life and Housing by June 1.
- Returning upperclassmen need to have their recommendation to Residence Life and Housing by November 1 for the following year Room Selection process.

Students must renew their requests for housing accommodations each academic year. Requests received after the above dates for an assigning process will be accommodated base upon availability. Depending on the nature of the accommodation request, the availability of a housing accommodation may be quite limited. A student does have the right to decline an offered assignment, however Residential Life may not be able to offer another accommodation.

Students who require a specific room or specific type of room as a housing accommodation (e.g. single room, room with kitchen or bathroom), shall be charged no more than the room rates available to other students. The room rates will be based upon the type of room available to other students without a housing accommodation at the time. The costs associated with the various room styles can be found at: <https://www.PennWest.edu/campus-life>.

**NOTICE:**

PennWest will make reasonable modifications to its housing policies, procedures and practices when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination, unless the modifications will fundamentally alter the nature of the housing services provided by the university.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Office for Students with Disabilities

G-35 Carter Hall

724-938-5781

**PET POLICY AND COMFORT ANIMALS**

Students may have fish. They must be kept in a fishbowl or aquarium with a maximum size of 10 gallons. One 10-gallon aquarium per person is allowed. Fish must be removed from the residence halls at the end of each semester, and during some breaks. The fish owner assumes all responsibilities and consequences resulting from improper care and for violation of fish ownership rules and regulations.

Turtles, hermit crabs, lizards or another other reptile that lives outside of water is not permitted.

Residents may also have comfort animals that are approved by Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).

ADA animals do not need approved as they are already permitted to be on campus. Once the comfort animal is approved, the resident must complete additional paperwork from Residence Life before the animal is brought to campus. This includes showing proof of having the animal spayed or neutered, providing flea and tick information, copies of vaccines and other documents if required. If the animal creates damages or is a disruption, Residence Life will work with the student to be sure they are following the proper guidelines for the animal but may have it removed.

Any resident that brings an animal not approved to be within our campus housing facilities will be fined \$300 with the instruction to remove the animal immediately (within 24 hours) and be sanctioned through our student code of conduct.

**BANNERS AND SIGNS**

Hanging signs in the halls is a good way to advertise an event or show your school spirit. Any student or student organization wishing to post signs or posters in the residence halls must deliver them to the Residence Life and Housing office for approval and distribution by the hall staff. Residence Life will provide the number of signs needed to post per floor/CA.

## **GUIDELINES FOR RESIDENCE HALL DECORATIONS**

In order to conserve energy, and in the interest of safety and fire prevention, the following guidelines have been adopted regulating decorations for the residence hall rooms and corridors. permissible, check with hall staff) or on university-installed bulletin boards. No items may be placed on or hung from the hallway or room ceilings and light fixtures, or any corridor areas except the student room doors and bulletin boards. Residents should exercise caution when hanging items on doors as they may be billed for damages to the door surface.

- No lights or other electrical apparatus may be used to decorate corridor areas, including student room doors.
- Decorations may not be strung from door to door.
- Items on student room doors or bulletin boards should not extend into the corridor.
- All materials used in areas where decorations are permitted should be noncombustible, such as foil-type papers. The use of crepe paper and the practice of completely covering student room doors with sheets of paper are prohibited.
- The university reserves the right to remove items which may be hazardous or inappropriate. Students who fail to remove hazardous or inappropriate items may be billed for removal.
- Students wishing to decorate windows or mirrors should use only water-soluble paint. It is the responsibility of those who decorate the window or mirror to remove the paint. Cleaning charges may be applied.
- All holiday decorations outside of student rooms must be removed before the holiday break and are not to be left until students return for the spring semester.
- Students are not allowed to hang decorations in windows that fully cover the window. Hanging or flying signs, banners, or any materials outside of your window is strictly prohibited.

## PANDEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PennWest will continue to monitor the fluctuating circumstances of any pandemic and will institute any regulations for our campus housing that would be necessary to keep our communities safe per CDC guidelines. Regulations ***that may be*** instituted but are not limited to:

- Required mask wearing.
- Social distancing.
- Isolation and quarantine guidelines if exposed or tested positive. These may include asking the resident to go home or relocate to another room to help reduce the spread of the virus.
- Limited guests.
- Limited access to common area lounges and kitchens.

Residence Life and Housing Staff will be monitoring any expectations that may be issued to keep the communities safe. Failure to abide by our policies may result in immediate removal from housing, temporary removal until the case is adjudicated and referral through the student conduct process. It is crucial to follow these policies to avoid a potential outbreak.

## RESIDENCE HALL FACILITIES

Students will therefore be held responsible for the general conditions (cleanliness, damage, etc.) of their living quarters. Restrooms, study rooms, lounges and corridors in the non-public areas are part of the living quarters. All residents are collectively responsible for the general conditions of these areas and will each be charged for excessive common area damages which cannot be attributed to one individual or a group of individuals.

We anticipate students will find their rooms in satisfactory condition when they check in. However, if there is a problem, it should be reported immediately to the hall staff and also documented on the Room Condition Report which students will be asked to review during move in. It is important that students review the Room Condition Report carefully before signing, because students will be held responsible for any damages in their room which were not listed when they checked in.

During the checkout process that takes place when students vacate their room at the end of the contracted period, each room will be checked twice for damages. The preliminary checkout takes place during the last week of the semester and is conducted by a CA. The final damage check is carried out by the professional staff and occurs after the students have vacated rooms and all belongings have been removed from bed, desk, dressers, walls, etc.

## **HALL MAINTENANCE**

Repair, replacement, remodeling, or refurbishing of residence hall facilities is the responsibility of the residence hall management. Throughout the year, any damage or breakdown of equipment should be promptly reported through the online workorder system that can be found in your [my.PennWest.edu](https://my.pennwest.edu) portal. Click on *Asset Essentials - Work Orders* link. Students should not attempt to make repairs themselves. Periodically, maintenance personnel will be present in the building to repair and inspect residence hall facilities.

## **RESIDENCE HALL FURNISHINGS**

Residence hall furnishings are marked for identification and placement and removal of these items from areas in which they are placed, including removal from the building or removal to other areas of the building without authorization, is considered an act of theft. The presence of university property or other stolen property (such as unauthorized university furniture, cafeteria equipment, or items such as road signs or commercial signs) shall be considered evidence of theft and treated as such by the university administration unless rightful ownership can be proven. Room occupants may be assessed a fee for each item of furniture which must be removed from student rooms.

## **PERSONAL DECORATIONS**

- Students may want to add some personal touches such as plants, posters and rugs to make their room a little more 'homey.' Residents are asked not to use materials which may damage or remove painted surfaces within the room. Nails are not permitted.

## **FURNITURE REMOVAL/STORAGE**

- Every piece of furniture in your room at the time you move in must stay in your room for the duration of your residency. You must not remove, store, or trade CU furnishings. Furniture may not be taken from lounges or public areas and kept in student rooms.

- If a student is residing in a double room and there is no roommate assigned, the student may not push beds together and take over the other furniture. This furniture is to be left empty as a roommate can be assigned at any time. If a student pushes the beds together and uses the other furniture, they will be warned once by Residence Life and Housing staff to return it. If they are found using it a second time, the Residence Life and Housing office has the right to bill for the other side being now occupied. While we do not wish to bill, students are only paying for single occupancy and roommates can be assigned at any time.
- The university does not provide storage facilities for personal belongings left in the residence halls. All personal belongings not removed from student rooms at check-out will be disposed of by the university.
- If summer storage would be available to students, Residence Life will advertise the cost and location.

## **DAMAGES**

- Common Area:
  - When hallways, bathrooms, elevators and other residence hall public areas receive undue abuse, we expect the assistance of residents in identifying the responsible individual(s).
  - When the individual cannot be identified, all residents in that area will be required to pay a share of repairing such damages.
- Room:
  - You are responsible for any damage that occurs in your room during your occupancy. If damages are accidental, you must still pay repair costs.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKS**

Once a month, the CA will post notice the week the health and safety checks will be completed. The CA will be accompanied by another staff member when entering rooms and being sure that the resident is following procedures for not having illegal items, not covering the sprinkler or smoke detector and HVAC unit. The CA will not go through items but will look around for any items of concern and will report them to the Assistant Director.

## **RIGHT OF ENTRY**

The university unconditionally reserves the right to enter and/or inspect room Reserving Residence Hall Facilities

Lounges, meeting rooms and other areas of the halls will have restrictions and occupancy limits.

Building kitchens will be closed and residents will be able to check out a key to use the facilities. Residents will need to sign-up to access the area and are expected to wipe down the equipment and area before and after each use. Cleaning staff will clean the facility daily.

## **LAUNDRY FACILITIES**

Laundry facilities are provided on each residence hall floor and are serviced and maintained. All students pay for laundry with Shop Dollars accessed by their OneCard. The laundry area should be kept neat. Please be considerate of others waiting to do their laundry. It is highly recommended that you do not leave your laundry unattended. The university is not responsible for any personal items that are left unattended. If you experience any issues, such as washers, dryers, or OneCard reader not working properly, please contact the CA on call for further instruction. Tampering with or maliciously damaging any appliance is prohibited.

## **STUDY LOUNGES/TV LOUNGES/RECREATION AREAS**

Every residence hall has areas designated for quiet study. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in and around the study lounges.

## **ELEVATOR USE**

Elevator occupancy cannot exceed the maximum allowed at any time.

## **BICYCLE STORAGE/FACILITIES**

Students are permitted and encouraged to bring non-motorized bicycles to the university. The university is not responsible for theft or damage to any bicycle. Bicycles may not block exits such as windows or doorways and may not be hung from walls, ceilings, or furniture.

Bike racks are located at various points around the campus, including locations near or in the residence halls. Bicycles should be locked when not in use. Students should check with the hall staff if there are questions concerning bicycles.

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS IN CAMPUS HOUSING

Residents are expected to comply with the [Student Code of Conduct and Community Standards Document](#).

In addition, residents are expected to respect one another, the residence life staff and the housekeeping/maintenance personnel.

Conduct which interferes with, interrupts, or inconveniences the normal and usual activities of others violates the Student Conduct Code. Residents should be aware of the possible effects of their behavior on others. Residents are also responsible for the behavior of their guests.

Students are accountable for conduct violations which occur in their rooms. They may be held accountable for conduct violations due to their presence in a situation where a violation occurs. They also may be held accountable for conduct violations if such accountability is reasonably concluded from the circumstances of the incident.

## CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS

Living in close quarters with other students requires sensitivity as to how one's own behavior affects other people. Every resident has the right to a living environment which allows him or her to sleep and study within their room or apartment. With this right, all residents accept responsibility for monitoring their own behavior, so it does not violate the rights of others.

Students will be required to complete Roommate/Apartment Agreements at the start of the year and if there is a change in roommate(s).

## TIPS FOR LIVING WITH ROOMMATES

- Treat your roommates as equals.
- Respect your roommates' right to privacy.
- Keep borrowing to an absolute minimum.
- Avoid trying to correct your roommates or "reform."
- Work out mutually agreeable division of chores.
- Make a sincere effort to be friendly.
- Accept routine inconvenience without complaint.

- Keep your promises and commitments without exceptions.
- Respect efforts of others to study.
- Prepare and live with a realistic budget.
- If you have a disagreement with a roommate, discuss it as soon as possible.
- Have a discussion and agree to boundaries about various relevant items.

## **OCCUPANCY IN ROOMS**

For safety reasons, each resident may only have up to three guests each in any on-campus residence hall suite; However, max occupancy is no more than six people in a room. Six includes the residents assigned to the room. Any questions should be directed to the professional staff member regarding occupancy of their particular situation.

## **NOISE POLICY**

Residents are expected to refrain from interfering with another residents' ability to sleep, read and study. An atmosphere that supports studying and sleep takes precedence at all times in university housing. Students who are asked to lower their volume during quiet or courtesy hours by fellow students or staff are expected to do so.

- Unreasonable noise consists of slamming of doors, running or shouting in the halls/breezeways, carrying on conversations from windows, musical instruments and excessive noise in rooms, halls, lounges, stairwells, bathrooms, apartments, breezeways, or parking lots. Sound speakers, unless for official residence life sponsored activities, are not to be played or placed out of windows.
- Violations of any of these forms of noise may result in judicial action, fines, removal of audio equipment from the residence, housing reassignment and/or loss of university housing privileges for the student.
- Quiet hours are specific times designated by Residence Life Services when noise from stereos, televisions, conversations and other activities must not be clearly heard in residence hallways, nearby rooms, breezeways, stairwells, or through open windows.
  - **Quiet hours** are in effect for all university housing, seven days a week. Quiet hours extend from 10 p.m. until 10 a.m., Sunday through Thursdays and from Midnight until 10 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. "Courtesy Hours" are in effect at all other times (24 hours).

Other excellent study places are university housing lounges, the library and some classrooms in

certain academic buildings.

- In order to maintain an appropriate environment within university housing, **Courtesy hours** are always in effect, and residents should respect the rights and requests of their fellow students with regard to noise levels in university housing. Therefore, music or noise should not extend beyond three doors down the hallway during courtesy hours in the residence halls. Courtesy hours also apply to the immediate perimeter of each building (including courtyard areas and parking lots).
  - Shouting to or from windows, playing loud music which carries strongly into hallways or outside of windows is prohibited. Students wishing to plan an activity which may include high levels of noise (such as a hall barbecue or dance) must obtain permission from the residence life staff of all nearby housing at least one week prior to the event.
  - All residence hall doors and apartment doors should be shut after midnight to help the community adhere to an atmosphere of quiet. Doors open after midnight will be shut by residence life staff and/or security aides.
  - **24-hour quiet hours** will be in effect near the end of each semester in order to facilitate studying for final exams. Additional information regarding 24-hour quiet hours will be posted in individual halls late in the semester.
- As with any of our policies, students are responsible for their guests' behavior and compliance with the noise policy. Students are also expected to respect the requests of others for quiet and share in the responsibility for developing and maintaining a positive atmosphere in their community.

## **CANDLES, INCENSE, FIREWORKS, FIREARMS, FLAMMABLES AND EXPLOSIVES**

Due to fire safety and personal safety, both the possession and the use of any items that might be classified under these headings are strictly forbidden in university housing.

## **ALCOHOL POLICY**

The possession, consumption, or serving of alcoholic beverages on the grounds of PennWest - California campus is prohibited. Being present where alcohol is present or being served may be considered a violation of the university's alcohol policy. Any use or possession of alcohol on campus, which violates university policy, will result in disciplinary and/or legal action.

Because PennWest is a state institution, we are required to follow all state and local laws regarding alcohol possession and consumption. Police may be called if alcohol is found in your residence hall room. Note: Residence Life has adopted a “no empties” policy. The presence of empty alcohol containers will result in documentation for violating the university alcohol policy. This includes decorations. Please refer to the [alcohol policy for PennWest](#).

**PLEASE NOTE:** The university maintains a Medical Amnesty Policy, which provides limited exceptions to charges under this section in the interest of encouraging Students to seek help for drug- or alcohol- related medical emergencies. Please refer to the university’s [Medical Amnesty Policy](#) for more information.

## **DRUGS**

The use, possession, or sale of drug paraphernalia, narcotics, marijuana, or other legally controlled substances prohibited by state and federal law are strictly prohibited in the university housing and on PennWest campuses. This includes, but not limited to, medical marijuana in any form. A student with a prescription for medical marijuana would still not be permitted to have it on any campus location due to it being federally prohibited.

The use of substances which violate this law will result in disciplinary and/or legal action. Suspected drug or alcohol overdoses should be reported immediately to the staff, student health center, or hospital for evaluation.

## **SMOKING IN AND AROUND UNIVERSITY HOUSING**

Students are not allowed to smoke or vape in University Housing. Students, staff, visitors, or guests are asked not smoke or vape within a 25-foot perimeter of any University Housing building. Students will be billed for any odor remediation due to smoking and or vaping inside of any housing facility. The cost is typically \$1,000.

## **FIRE SAFETY**

Any student who willfully compromises the safety of fellow residents by tampering with fire safety equipment or sounding false alarms will be subject to criminal prosecution, university disciplinary action, fines and/or eviction. All students must evacuate the building when the alarm sounds. Failure to do so will subject the student to disciplinary action.

## **FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS (SPRINKLERS)**

All university housing buildings have sprinkler systems. These systems are designed to operate when an area reaches extremely high temperatures. Tampering with any part of the suppression system is considered destruction of or misuse/abuse of university property and is a violation of Pennsylvania state law and additionally will be considered a violation of the code of conduct.

## **MISUSE OF FIRE ALARM AND FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT**

Placement of fire hoses, extinguishers, alarms, sprinkler heads and other firefighting apparatus is required by law. The presence and conditions of these items are periodically inspected by the Department of Labor and Industry. Any missing or non-working equipment results in a citation against the university. The university is required to conduct periodic fire drills in its residential housing.

It is expected students know the rationale for firefighting equipment (such as smoke detectors and pull stations) in university housing and understand their intended functions. Any student who violates campus safety regulations by setting fires, tampering with fire safety or suppression equipment, reporting false fire alarms, or otherwise threatening the safety of member(s) of the campus community, will be liable under both the university judicial system and Pennsylvania state law. The Department of Public Safety prosecutes for these violations.

According to Pennsylvania law, false alarms to agencies of public safety are misdemeanors of the first degree, punishable by imprisonment up to five years and/or a fine of up to \$10,000. Residence Life considers such actions a violation of the housing contract. University sanctions may include suspension, expulsion and/or fines.

## **FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

As mandated by state law, PennWest is required to conduct regularly scheduled fire drills in all on-campus housing. Because students will not know of the fire drills in advance, they will be expected to respond each time as though there were a real fire. Failure to leave the building during a fire drill may result in disciplinary action. During evacuation, students may not use the elevators. Instructions for evacuation will be discussed at your first community meeting with your CA.

When the alarm sounds, students should check see that their windows are closed and their drapes are open. They should also dress appropriately and should carry a towel. Residents must close and lock their doors upon leaving. Students should leave the residence hall through the nearest fire exit and exit at least 100 feet from the building. A signal will be provided to alert students when they may re-enter the building.

During an alarm, particularly one which takes place during inclement weather, residents may go to an alternate facility until informed they may re-enter their residence hall. Designated residence life staff will accompany residents to alternate facilities.

## **TORNADO WARNING**

Students should know the difference between a tornado watch and a tornado warning. A tornado watch simply means that conditions are favorable for the formation of a tornado. A tornado warning is issued when a tornado has been sighted or indicated on radar.

In the situation that a tornado warning is in effect, students should open their room window approximately one-half inch. This relieves internal pressure and will lessen the possibility of injury should a tornado strike. Students are then advised to go to the bathroom or to the basement if their hall has one with a portable, battery-operated radio. Once the tornado warning has been lifted, the immediate danger is over and students can resume normal activity.

California Alerts help communicate these weather warnings. [Students are encouraged to sign up for alerts.](#)

## **WINTER STORM**

Students should be prepared for winter storms. Several items a student should have available are cellular phone, flashlights with spare batteries, snow and ice removal equipment for vehicles and a fully stocked first aid kit.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY/LIABILITY/DAMAGE**

The university assumes no responsibility for theft or damage to students' personal property. Students are strongly encouraged to secure renter's insurance for their belongings.

## **PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES/APPLIANCES/CONFISCATED PROHIBITED ITEMS**

The Office of Housing and Residence Life reserves the right to confiscate or authorize personnel to confiscate any prohibited item, or items deemed to be a danger to the individual, other residents, or college property at any time. Confiscated items will be put in your residence hall's office and labeled. These items must be picked up by the resident within thirty (30) days of confiscation for the purpose of taking the item off-campus. If these items are not picked up within thirty (30) days, they will be disposed of. Residents are responsible for any charges related to confiscated items including, but not limited to, storage or transport.

## PROHIBITED ITEMS LIST:

- Alcohol, including empty alcohol containers. Please see [PennWest's alcohol policy](#).
- Animals (Unless prior approval has been obtained)
- Appliances
- Air conditioners (both window and portable units)
- Space heaters
- Candles and/or Incense/Wax Warmers (including candle and mug warmers or potpourri burners)
- Cooking Appliances – Appliances that capable of producing high heat, smoke, or steam in the cooking process, including appliances with exposed heating elements. Exception: Microwaves in designated cooking area
  - Examples:
    - Air fryers
    - Crockpots
    - Deep fryers
    - Electric skillets
    - Hot plates
    - Instant pots
    - Sous Vide Immersion cookers
    - Indoor/Outdoor grills
    - Pressure cookers
    - Rice cookers
    - Sandwich makers
    - Toasters
    - Toaster ovens

- Waffle makers
  - Popcorn makers (unless air popper)
- Electric Transportation Devices – Prohibited in all university buildings
  - Electric bikes
  - Electric scooters
  - Hoverboards
  - One-wheel skateboards
  - Other similar devices
- Extension Cords and Multi-Plug Adapters – UL approved power strips or surge protectors with overload protection are allowed be used when plugged directly into the wall. No daisy chaining multiple power strips or surge protectors together.
- Furniture (non-university approved)
  - Large items such as couches, oversized beanbag chairs, etc. may be prohibited at the discretion of the Residence Life and Housing Office. Upholstered, padded, or cushioned furniture or beanbag chairs that are not certified by documentation from the manufacturer as being flame-retardant are prohibited.
  - Waterbeds
  - Lofts, cinderblocks and lofted furniture of any kind
  - Entertainment/Fitness Poles and/or Aerial Equipment are prohibited.
- Halogen lamps and sun/heat lamps or similar heat producing bulbs

- Hazardous materials (except for consumer grade products in small limited quantities, such as air spray or hand sanitizer)
  - Examples:
    - Chafing dish fuel
    - Gasoline
    - Motor oil
    - Propane
    - Charcoal
    - Lighter fluid
    - Paint thinner
    - Photographic development chemicals
    - Pesticides
    - Fireworks
    - Black powder
    - Compressed gas cylinders
- Heat-generating Appliances – Appliances that have an exposed heating element or surface that produces heat that is hot to the touch. Exceptions: Irons, Curling Irons or hair straighteners
- Hookahs or illegal smoking paraphernalia
- Illegal Drugs
- Immersion Coils
- Laser Engraver Machines/3-D Printers
- LED lights are NOT prohibited, but the adhesive tape that adheres them to the wall/paint is prohibited. Students may drape or use the lights creatively but are not to adhere them directly to the walls due to the extensive damage that is caused when removed.
- Oil Lamps, Lava Lamps

- Smoke or fog producing machines or devices (including products that produce mist, fog, smoke, or simulated smoke conditions)
- Weapons (of any kind):
  - Knives
  - Firearms
  - Stun guns
  - Tasers
  - Spears
  - Daggers or swords
  - Paintball guns
  - Ammunition
  - Projectile weapons (including Nerf weapons, air soft, water balloon launchers/sling shots)
- Wireless routers and printers (these interfere with the university's wireless internet system)
- Students are prohibited from throwing or shooting anything out their windows (bb guns, pellet guns, water balloons, garbage, etc).

\* *This is not an all-inclusive list and the Residence Life and Housing Office has the right to add any items that they see fit to prohibit. **When in doubt, ask first.***

## **APPROVED ITEMS LIST**

- Coffee makers with automatic shutoffs
- Refrigerator (4 cu. ft. max) - one per resident
- Microwave (700-watt max) - one per room
- Electric tea kettle
- Bathroom rug(s)
- Bedding and bathroom supplies, including a pillow, comforter, mattress protector and/or egg crate.
- Bed risers that are 4 inches or less.

- Class/desk supplies
- Cleaning supplies
- Clothing hangers
- Computer/laptop with Ethernet cord
- Dust buster, broom and/or vacuum
- Fan
- First-aid kit/prescription medications
- Flashlight and batteries
- Grooming supplies
- Hand truck/dolly for moving your belongings
- Large trash bags
- Laundry supplies (may include a basket/bag, detergent, softener, iron)
- Microwave-proof containers/dishes
- Personal documents (such as your medical insurance card and renter's insurance information)
- Small lockable storage chest
- Storage crates (small and stackable)
- Supplies for your car (if applicable, including a small snow shovel and de-icer)
- Surge protector (please check prohibited items list for guidance before purchasing)
- Televisions

\* *This is not an all-inclusive list and the Residence Life and Housing Office has the right to add any items that they see fit to prohibit.*

## **ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES**

All appliances must be UL-approved and surge protectors must be used. The unsafe, improper, or careless use of any electrical appliance may result in its confiscation. Personal possession of cooking appliances other than those listed in “Cooking and Food Storage” below is not permitted. Residents should exert reasonable caution to make certain approved appliances are used on a non-flammable surface and never on upholstery, bedding, or wood surfaces. Appliances should be attended while in use and unplugged when not in use.

Residents may use extension cords on a temporary basis, provided the cord is not placed across aisles, wrapped around metal fixtures or furniture, run through doorways, or under carpets or bedding.

Extension outlet bars equipped with circuit breakers are the recommended extension devices. Overloaded electrical outlets and any appliances with frayed cords are prohibited.

## **COOKING AND FOOD STORAGE**

Student rooms and living areas in on-campus housing do not have adequate disposal facilities, ventilation and safety design for food preparation and such activities are violations of health and safety regulations. Cooking of food is prohibited in student rooms and should be done in areas designated for cooking. Students may use coffeemakers (equipped with an automatic electrical shut-off) or thermal/insulated carafes in their rooms.

Care should be taken in the storage of food so it does not create a health hazard. Residents who store food in their rooms must make certain food is kept in tightly closed containers. Items are not allowed to be stored outside windows.

## **UNIVERSITY VISITATION POLICY AND GUEST GUIDELINES**

A mature attitude is necessary when exercising your freedom and responsibility regarding guests in the residence hall. Visitation procedures are in place to provide a measure of safety for the residential communities. Please understand any system is only as safe as those whom are using it allow it to be. Safety is a shared responsibility. Your cooperation in escorting your guest and informing on visitation/escort policies when entering any on-campus residence is expected. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary actions.

All guests are required to comply with the policies in this guide. The resident is responsible for the behavior of all their guests and will be held accountable for their behavior. Guests should in no way become a nuisance to the neighbors/roommate(s). A roommate(s) has the right to object to future visits and staff will mediate any concerns regarding the presence of guests. Guests are allowed only with the permission of all roommate(s) and must be escorted at all times.

Guests are allowed 24 hours a day, subject to these provisions:

- A guest is defined as any individual who does not live in the room they wish to enter.
- Any non-university between the ages of 14-18 must provide written parental permission and contact information to visit, and also must have a two-week prior approval from the Residence Life Professional staff. PARENTAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT and CONSENT FOR A RESIDENCE HALL VISIT BY A MINOR BETWEEN THE AGES OF 14 AND 18 form is provided by Residence Life and Housing.
- All guests, regardless of gender, who wish to use common area facilities (laundry, vending, TV room, computer room, study room, etc.) must be escorted by a resident.
- Residents may host up to three guests at one time however apartments cannot reach over six occupants. Six occupants include the students assigned to the apartment. Roommates must agree to the presence of guests in the room or apartment. The rights of the resident who does not wish to have a guest take precedence.
- The same guest is not permitted to stay overnight for more than three days during a seven-day period. Those who violate this policy may be billed, removed and/or banned.
- The university does not condone or permit cohabitation.
- Guests may be asked to leave and residents may lose visitation right if guests are disruptive or violate policies.
- Staff may temporarily suspend visitation privileges from any building or other area to ensure the safety, security or well-being of residents or in response to policy violations.

# **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **SALES/SOLICITATION**

Residents are not permitted to use their rooms or other facilities of the building for any commercial purpose. Performing work for tips, donations, gratuities are also forbidden (some examples include cutting hair or work involving hair, editing, writing, tutoring, etc. If in doubt ask your professional hall staff first). Solicitation by residents or outsiders is strictly forbidden.

## **RESIDENCE HALL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

PennWest provides a comprehensive set of technology-based services. Available services for students include:

- High-speed internet access to the university's network and the internet.
- A student help desk located on campus to assist students with computer and television questions

Tampering with residence hall technology equipment is considered destruction of or misuse/abuse of university property and will be considered a violation of the code of conduct. Tampering includes defacing or destruction of the modular wall unit that contains the room's telecommunications connection outlet.

## **PARKING**

Parking regulations are available from the Department of Public Safety. Automobiles parked in campus lots must be registered with Public Safety. Visitors may obtain temporary parking permits by registering their cars at the Public Safety Office located on Wood Street. Illegally parked student automobiles may be ticketed, booted/immobilized, or towed.

## **MAIL**

You can retrieve your mailbox assignment and combination by visiting the mailroom in Dixon Hall. Mail is delivered to the residence halls Monday through Friday when school is in session, with the exclusion of national holidays. Outgoing mail service and stamps are available at the Student Center Information Desk. UPS and FedEx deliveries are made to the campus mailroom and you will have to sign for them there. Correspondence from the university is also sent to your campus mailbox, so you should check your mail regularly.

Your mailing address is:

Your Proper Name

Building and Box Number (e.g. Smith Hall 111)

PennWest California

250 University Ave.

California, PA 15419

If the sender does not include your proper name, room number or box number, we cannot guarantee you will receive your mail. If you change rooms, you should notify anyone from whom you receive mail.

Over semester breaks, first class mail only will be forwarded to the permanent address on record, so please make sure your permanent address is listed correctly with Academic Records and on your online account.

If your permanent address changes, you need to notify Academic Records and update your online account.

## **ILLNESS**

Students who become ill at any time or suffer an injury should notify their CA or other staff members.

[Student Health Center hours of operation](#)

## **NEEDLE/SYRINGE DISPOSAL**

Students who require use of hypodermic syringes must dispose of them in a container designed for that purpose. Containers may be obtained by contacting the Student Health Center at 724-938-4232.

**NOTE:** Needles are not to be disposed in university housing garbage.

## **CALENDAR FOR OCCUPANCY AND DINING HALL SERVICE**

Occupancy and dining hall service will be in accordance with the university academic calendar.

[Dining Hall Service Information](#)

## **FEES AND PAYMENTS FOR DINING**

Food and housing are billed to student accounts. Students can contact the Student Accounts Office for a payment schedule. Fees are subject to change without prior notice.

