
Campus Policies

Rights and Responsibilities of Resident Students

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Chapter 416 of the Laws of 1988, the State University Board of Trustees has directed that all campuses operating residence halls adopt policies relating to the rights and responsibilities of resident students. Trustees also directed that such campus policies be published in student handbooks and other similar publications and distributed to resident students. Guidelines to assist campuses in establishing new policies or reviewing any existing policies or codes have been developed at the request of the Board of Trustees.

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines for development of campus policies on rights and responsibilities of resident students in the residence halls of State University of New York are intended to supplement those principles and policy statements already developed by each campus in consultation with students and with the assistance of its campus council.

1. In the development of campus policies on rights and responsibilities the “1987 ACUHO-I Statement of Student’s Rights and Responsibilities” adopted by the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International should be utilized as a model.

SUNY Oneonta adheres to this guideline in the formulation of its campus policies on rights and responsibilities.

2. The Residence Hall License and other handbooks or publications which incorporate a statement of the campus minimum living condition standards and the campus policies relating to resident students rights and responsibilities should use words with common and everyday meanings and should be clear and coherent.

The language in all the above distributed to students are reviewed for coherency and clarity.

3. Campuses should make provisions for the enforcement of resident student rights and responsibilities.

SUNY Oneonta will educate the resident student body and assure their rights and responsibilities are both maintained and enforced.

4. Resident students shall not be subject to unreasonable searches and seizures by University officials. Examples of warrantless searches which are proper include those involving threats to health and safety and those which are conducted as inspections with advance notice to student residents. Fire alarm systems should not be utilized for any purpose other than actual fires or fire drill procedures. Residence hall training programs include instruction on the basic principles relating to unreasonable searches and seizures.

Residence Hall Students at SUNY Oneonta will not be subjected to any of the aforementioned improprieties during their stay in residence. All fire safety equipment and procedures will be strictly utilized and enforced in the manner for which they were intended. Residence Hall staff will be versed on the basic principles of unreasonable searches and seizures.

5. Inspection for residence hall damages which will be assessed to resident students should be conducted, when possible, before residents vacate the residence halls. At the time of their departure

from the residence halls, resident students should be informed of the damages which have been identified as assessable to them. To the extent possible, at the time damages are identified, resident students should be given a standard repair summary which lists the typical costs for certain categories of damages. A campus appeals process should be instituted through which students may initiate complaints regarding damage assessments. Resident students who vacate residence halls without formal notification to campus officials are not entitled to these pre-departure inspection or identification procedures prior to the assessment of damages.

Residence Halls as SUNY Oneonta are inspected both before and after students vacate the halls. Students are given the opportunity to discuss possible damage charges with the Residence Hall Direction and housing Associate Director during pre-departure inspections. Costs and/or estimates of identified damages are provided upon request of residence hall students. Students may appeal any and all charges assessed during the process through the housing office and directly with the Residence Hall Director.

6. Resident students will be held accountable for damage to residence hall property (buildings, equipment, and furnishings). Resident students have a responsibility to refrain from causing property damage through vandalism or other intentional or reckless misconduct. It is incumbent upon resident students to report to residence hall staff situations involving property damage due to vandalism, along with the names of those responsible, in a timely manner. Resident students and other students responsible for property damage will be billed for damage and may also be subject to discipline in accordance with campus procedures.

All monies collected from students attributable to damages for which they are responsible should be applied, whenever possible, to the repair of that damage within one semester, or during the summer recess period. When the repair is delayed, the cause of the delay should be noted in the physical plant reports.

SUNY Oneonta makes every attempt to assure the culpability is accurately represented with regard to any and all damages incurred in residence. The application of funds collected in the damage charge process are always applied to repairs in residence halls. If a discrepancy or delay is experienced in the application of funds to a particular damage the Residential Community Life Office should correct the discrepancy and/or investigate the delay and will duly make note.

7. Resident students should continue to be involved in campus committees that study or develop policies that impact directly on their living situation; e.g., program planning, budget review, codes of conduct, and residential life planning committees.

Student representation will continue to be involved in the development and study of policies that impact directly on their living situation; e.g., through residence hall government, RSO and the internal consultative structure.

Minimum Living Condition Standards for University Residence Halls

STANDARD I

The residence halls shall be constructed and maintained to conform with all applicable safety codes and health standards.

GUIDELINES:

1. All furnishings and equipment supplied by the University will meet applicable fire and safety code standards promulgated by the State of New York.

SUNY Oneonta is in compliance with this guideline and meets all applicable state codes when purchasing furnishings and equipment.

2. Each resident's sleeping room will have an operational smoke detector.

The maintenance department for the residence halls at SUNY Oneonta inspects all smoke detectors twice a year and keeps records of the inspections. Once notified of a non-working smoke detector, this department responds immediately to repair it.

3. Resident students are required to adhere to applicable safety codes and health standards in the use of private equipment and appliances (where permitted).

SUNY Oneonta students are required to sign a residence hall license which informs them to College safety regulations and sanctions regarding the use of private equipment and appliances. New students are given the STUDENT HANDBOOK which also includes this information.

4. Access to residence hall living on each campus that operates residence halls will be provided for the differently abled in accordance with applicable codes and standards (i.e., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973).

SUNY Oneonta is in compliance with this guideline. Ford Hall has disabled accessible rooms and facilities.

5. Inspections and assessment of the physical facility and its components (e.g., water, electricity, and heating systems) will be conducted by appropriate campus personnel. The report of the inspection should be distributed to appropriate campus personnel. A priority list (as determined by appropriate campus personnel) of repairs/refurbishment should be part of this report, with recommended timetables for completion. Backlogs from earlier reports should be noted.

The SUNY Oneonta facilities office is responsible for inspecting the physical facility annually and reporting the list of repairs/refurbishment to the following campus personnel: The DIFR committee, the Vice President for Administrative Affairs, Physical Plant Director and the Associate Director of Residential Community Life.

STANDARD II

The campus maintenance plan shall provide for a regular schedule of cleaning and repair for all common areas in residence halls.

GUIDELINES:

1. A regular schedule for cleaning of common areas including lounges, hallways, bathrooms, and areas used by all residents should be established. Copies of the schedules should be posted.

The lounges, hallways, public bathrooms, and laundry rooms will be cleaned every 1-2 days with consideration given to staffing patterns, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 7am-3:30pm. Bathrooms in the apartments and suite halls will be cleaned once each week. In the apartments and suite buildings a notice will be placed on the apartment and suite doors the day before those bathrooms are to be cleaned. The residents of that room will remove personal belongings and someone will be available at the time indicated, or give the staff permission to enter the room.

2. Every reasonable effort by the campus administration and resident students should be made to keep residence halls sanitary and vermin free, and all appliances provided by the University in working order or removed from services.

SUNY Oneonta has a contract with a local pest control company to service the residence halls. The custodial department in the residence halls also purchases a residual insecticide spray to control crawling pests when needed. If rats or mice are found in or around residence halls, custodial staff will respond and eliminate the problem. If the staff incurs difficulty with any type of pest removal the pest control company will be called in to eradicate it.

Washers and dryers are checked five days per week and are normally put back into service within two days of notification of not being in working order.

3. Campuses should have an established procedure, developed in conjunction with the Central Administration Offices of Finance and Business, Capital Facilities, and Student Affairs for declaring student rooms unlivable and for removing them from service until conditions are corrected.

The Director of Residential Community Life or his/her designee will make a recommendation to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice President for Administration as to whether a student room is unlivable and should be removed from service, based on pertinent information from the Director of the Physical Plan and/or appropriate campus personnel. Every attempt will be made to determine if a room is unlivable prior to the period that students occupy the residence halls. If unlivable conditions become apparent after residence hall opening the situation will be handled as stated in Standard V.

STANDARD III

The campus shall provide each student resident with adequate living space, furniture, and appropriate and sufficient heat, light, and hot water.

GUIDELINES:

1. The campus will provide each resident student with adequate living and lounge furniture. As a minimum, except in the case of tripling, each student resident will be provided with: a bed, adequate area illumination, chair, dresser/chest, desk/carrel unit, closet or wardrobe. All such equipment should be clean, sturdy, free from major scarring and of acceptable appearance.

SUNY Oneonta is in compliance with this guideline. On an annual basis all rooms will be inspected to determine the condition of the each piece of furniture. Pieces identified as unacceptable will be removed from service.

2. Campuses should provide for a planned replacement or rehabilitation of residence hall furnishings.

SUNY Oneonta replaces residence hall furnishings on a regularly scheduled basis. Items such as mattresses, lamps, closet doors, and mirrors are reordered each year on an as needed basis.

STANDARD IV

The campus shall establish procedures for routine and emergency repairs to residence hall facilities.

GUIDELINES:

1. Protocols will be established to promptly address inquiries, requests, and complaints regarding routine repairs and maintenance for the provision of heat, lights, and hot water. The resident student should also be apprised periodically of the status of his/her request. These protocols, along with appropriate telephone numbers should be provided in writing to each resident student. All repairs, especially those involving heat, light, and hot water, should be accomplished within a reasonable amount of time.

Requests regarding routine building repairs and maintenance are handled through the work request system.. If a problem persists, the Residence Hall Director should be requested to inquire regarding the status of the work request. Situations regarding heat, hot water and electricity should be reported to the Residence Hall Director or building Janitor. If the Residence Hall Director or the building Janitor is not available, the Maintenance Operations Center should be contacted directly. The trades person requisitioned to address a problem regarding heat, hot water, or electricity will leave an emergency work request slip at the Residence Hall Director's office if the problem is not resolvable. This will enable the Residence Hall Director to apprise residents of the action take with regard to their request.

2. To the extent possible, major rehabilitation or other capital projects should take place at times when students are not in occupancy of the residence halls. Major construction projects which are disruptive to on going programs should not continue during scheduled examination periods. If this is impossible, arrangements should be made to house residents elsewhere.

SUNY Oneonta is in compliance with this guideline.

STANDARD V

The campus shall establish procedures for redress for resident students in the event of the loss of services such as heat, light, and hot water in residence halls for extended periods that are within the control of the campus.

GUIDELINES:

1. These procedures will include a plan for reassignment on campus if conditions continue for an unreasonable time which involve the loss of heat, light, or hot water or the creation of any other condition which is detrimental to the life, health or safety of the resident students.

If a condition exists that is detrimental to the life, health or safety of a student or is declared unlivable for any other reason, that student will be reassigned. SUNY Oneonta reserves the right to assign to: A) any available space on campus; B) any guest room on campus. Determination of what is an unreasonable length of time a student experience a loss of services (heat, electricity, or hot water) will take into account details specific to each situation such as prevailing weather conditions and timing of the semester.

2. If reassignment on campus is not possible, the procedures should also include a plan for the provision of alternate housing at no additional charge to resident students and/or refund of a portion of room rental charges where applicable. **If no campus space is available as cited above, the College will assign the student to a local hotel/motel off campus.**

When a student experiences a loss of services (heat, electricity, or hot water) for an unreasonable length of time, (as determined by Standard V #1 Guidelines) and the situation is determined to be within the control of the campus, then that student should be reimbursed for the amount of time they were inconvenienced. The reimbursement shall never exceed the full cost of the room rent for the number of days the student has been affected by the detrimental condition.



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