

Residential Life Policies and Procedures

Care of Facilities

Residents are responsible for the cleanliness of their rooms and the proper and careful use of furniture and equipment. Furniture and equipment are to be kept from an assigned place of use (including window screens) or used in a manner contrary to its intended purpose. Students may be charged for repairing the room or property or replacing any items accidentally or intentionally damaged or removed from university property.

Occupants will be assessed a \$100 fine (in addition to the cost of materials) for a room that has yet to be returned to its original condition with the room furnishing in place.

If damage is done to any public area of a residence hall, such as lounges, lavatories, corridors, etc., or the personal property of staff members or students, which cannot be attributed to a specific person or persons, the cost of the damage will be assessed on a pro-rata basis to the group responsible. Such "a common damage" assessment may be charged to the residents of a wing, a floor, the residence hall, or another residence hall, depending upon where the responsibility for damages lies. Staff will conduct regularly scheduled health and safety inspections each semester during break periods. In the university-operated apartments, additional health and safety inspections may be required per the request of apartment ownership. These inspections will be publicized in advance so students may be present.

Decks and Lofts

For student safety, lofts and decks are prohibited in all residence halls.

Fire Safety

Fire Safety Procedures

In the case of a fire, please report it immediately by calling 911, VUPD, and reporting to Residential Life Staff immediately.

1. At the sound of the fire alarm, evacuate the building as quickly as possible.
2. Be sure windows are closed, drapes open, and the room door is closed and locked.
3. Bring a towel and coat and wear some kind of shoes.
4. After evacuation, move to a safe distance away from the building.
5. Return to the building on the all-clear signal.

Fire and police personnel will be advised of any areas or occupants whose safety or accountability is in doubt.

Periodic fire drills are required by Indiana State law. Students are required and expected to leave when a fire alarm sounds, as it may or may not be a drill.

Fire Safety Policies

The setting off of false fire alarms or the starting of fires will result in disciplinary action.

Altering the function of, or tampering with, any fire fighting equipment, including, but not limited to: exit lights, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, fire hoses, and sprinkler systems, is prohibited. Smoke detectors cannot be covered or removed at any time. You will be held financially responsible for any damage to the residence hall caused by tampering with these systems.

Per the Indiana Fire Code, open flames are not allowed in residence halls and congregate housing. Therefore, the burning or possessing burnt candles and incense is prohibited in residence halls. Candles or incense that have burnt residue will be confiscated. This policy also prohibits the use of lighters and other related products. Students residing in university-operated apartments may use outdoor grills on the ground at a minimum of five (5) feet from the building. Grills may not be used on decks or landings. Storing of charcoal, fireworks, and other flammable products is not permitted in university-operated residence halls and apartments.

Students who violate policies related to fire safety will ordinarily be required to pay a monetary fine and participate in an educational program, which may include a fire safety demonstration sponsored by the Valparaiso Fire Department.

Appliances

High-load, heat-producing appliances (ex., space heaters, hot plates, electric fry pans, etc.) and "octopus" electrical outlets are prohibited in residence hall rooms. Because of their high heat production, halogen floor lamps and light bulbs are prohibited. Halogen desk lamps may not exceed 50 watts and must have a protective glass lens over the bulb. Personal AC units are not permitted because they may overdraw electrical outlets.

Every traditional residence hall room has a leased MicroFridge unit (all-in-1 combination refrigerator, freezer, and microwave oven, with Safe Plug technology to save electricity and reduce the risk of overloading circuits. Student rooms in Promenade Apartments, Kade-Duesenberg German House, and the Sorority Housing Complex won't be furnished with a MicroFridge as there is access to community kitchen spaces. Additional microwave and fridge units are not permitted in rooms as they may overdraw electrical outlets.

Certain heat-producing appliances may be used in community lounges, including toasters, air fryers, rice cookers, and crockpots. Please inquire with the Office of Residential Life about additional appliances.

Guest Policy

Definitions

Guest(s) are defined as individual(s) who are not assigned by the University to occupy a given (particular) University-operated residence hall room.

Host(s) are defined as a resident of a given University-operated residence hall room who has admitted a guest(s) to their designated residence hall.

Overnight Guest(s) are defined as guests who are in temporary or short-term occupancy of a host's residence hall room and/or are in a host's room past 1 am (Sunday – Saturday).

Overnight Guest Policy

First-Year Students

First-year students are not permitted to host overnight guests (guests in a room past 1 am) during the first four (4) weeks of the Fall semester. After the first four (4) weeks, first-year students can host overnight guests per the returning student overnight guest guidelines (noted below).

Returning Students

Students may host overnight guests within the following guidelines:

1. All students wishing to host an approved overnight guest in their room may only do so with the consent of their roommate(s) and have [registered](#) their guest(s) with Residential Life at least 24 hours in advance.
2. Students may host no more than one guest per bed in the applicable room. The total number of guests per applicable room may not exceed one guest per bed. Example: a room has two beds. There may be no more than two overnight guests hosted in that room.
3. Each overnight guest is limited to no more than three (3) consecutive nights in a host's residence hall.
4. Each overnight guest may not spend more than five (5) nights per semester in a host's residence hall.
5. Hosts must escort their guest(s) to the appropriate bathroom and shower facilities during their visit. Due to safety and security concerns, guest(s) are not to be left unattended within the residence hall.
6. Roommates have the right to a safe and healthy living environment. They have the right to sleep and study without being disturbed in their room. The roommates' rights to a safe and healthy living environment supersede the privilege of the host having a guest visit the space. As such, hosts and guests are not to violate these roommate rights. If this occurs, the guest(s) may be asked to leave the space immediately.

7. All guests and hosts are expected to abide by the Guest and Escort policy terms.
8. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in losing overnight guest privileges, and appropriate judicial action may be taken against the guest and/or hosts.

Guest and Escort Policy

Guests, whether they are Valpo students or not, must be escorted by their hosts at all times within the residence halls. Guests and hosts are responsible for signing in and out with the residence hall main desk using the Guest Sign-In Sheet or related process.

Guests are expected to abide by all regulations which apply to their hosts. Hosts must escort their guests at all times within the residence halls. Hosts are responsible for the actions & behaviors of their guests within the residence halls. If a guest violates a University policy, it will be adjudicated in accordance with the appropriate judicial procedures. Since the host is responsible for their guest(s), the host may also be held responsible for the actions of their guest(s).

Guest Policy in Floor Lounges

Floor lounges may be designated as a 24-hour visitation area with an 85% affirmative vote of floor residents. Only those lounges that are fully enclosed and possess a closeable door may be designated as 24-hour visitation areas. Overnight sleeping is not permitted in any residence hall lounges unless the space has been designated as temporary housing.

Sorority Housing Visitation Hours

For non-member female guests, access to the Chapter Room area and the residential spaces will be Sunday – Thursday, 10 am to 1 am Friday – Saturday, 10 am to 2 am.

For male guests, access to the Chapter Room area will be Sunday – Thursday, 10 am to 1 am Friday – Saturday, 10 am to 2 am. The residential spaces are not available for Visitation.

Locking of Residence Halls

University residence hall main entrances are locked 24 hours a day.

Lost Keys

For security reasons, lost student room keys will necessitate a lock core change. A work order will be provided to Facilities Management by the RLC for the appropriate building. The appropriate fee will be charged to the student account to cover the cost of the new keys, a new lock core for the student room, and external and internal building access keys

where appropriate. The student is responsible for making payment for this fee to the Student Accounts Office. Specific costs related to lock core the and key charges for each individual building are available from the RLC.

Pets

For health and sanitation reasons, pets are not permitted in residence halls, except fish. Aquariums may be a maximum of ten (10) gallons.

Quiet Hours

Quiet Hours for residence halls are:

- 10 pm to 8 am (Quiet Hours) – A level of quiet should be maintained so that noise from student rooms or common areas cannot be heard by residents in another room with the door closed.
- 8 am to 10 pm (Respect Hours) – A spirit of mutual respect and concern should guide one's actions in determining a level of noise acceptable to the various community members. Residents should respect others' needs for an acceptable level of quiet to allow for sleep and study.

A 24-hour quiet period is maintained during final exams. The 24-hour quiet period begins at 10 pm before Reading Day and continues until 6 pm on the last day of final exams each semester.

Because the residence halls are located near academic buildings, students should exhibit courtesy and conscientiousness regarding activities outside the residence halls. In addition, at no time are speakers placed in or near the window in order to amplify music or other sounds to the outside.

Residence Hall Security

Students are encouraged to assist in ensuring that the exterior doors of residence halls remain closed and locked. In addition, students are encouraged to lock the door to their rooms when they are absent from the room or when they are sleeping. Students who compromise the safety of other residence hall students will be subjected to disciplinary action. Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to propping open exterior doors, intentionally allowing non-residents access to the building, failing to escort guests, duplicating and/or loaning keys, and damage to lock mechanisms or other security devices.

For safety reasons, certain additional behaviors are also prohibited in the residence halls. These include, but are not limited to:

- removal of window screens
- entrance to roof areas
- sporting activities in corridors or other areas of the hall not designated for such activities
- throwing or dropping objects from windows
- sealing windows or doors closed that would prevent entry in cases of emergency

The residents of a particular room are responsible for what happens in their room. Therefore, it may not be in one's best interest to allow others unsupervised access to their room or to leave one's room unlocked.

Residence Hall Storage

For international students and those who live 500+ miles away, limited storage facilities are available at the university to store possessions during the academic year or the summer. The RLC will determine which items may or may not be kept in storage areas. Any possessions stored on university premises are stored at the student's risk. The university cannot guarantee their safety. The university accepts no financial responsibility for the personal property of students. University room furnishings may not be removed from a student's room and/or placed into storage.

More information about residence hall storage is available [here](#).

Room Decoration

Students may decorate their rooms with posters, wall hangings, etc., provided no permanent damage is done to walls, floors, etc. Masking tape and/or poster putty are recommended. 3M command or adhesive are not recommended in buildings with drywall walls. However, all residue from tape and other materials must be completely cleaned off walls, or a student may be billed. Students may not paint their rooms.

For reasons of fire safety, decorations may not be affixed to the ceiling or suspended overhead. Decorations on the door or door frame that may interfere with the proper closing, opening, and locking of a door are not permitted. No decorations may run under or between the frame and the door. All door decorations must be at least 24" off of the floor. Live Christmas trees and other flammable decorations are prohibited.

The outside of one's room door is considered a public area. Students may be asked to remove any materials that are considered lewd or offensive from the outside of the door. This policy also includes the patio and deck areas of university-operated apartments.

Alcohol beverage containers; alcohol-related signs, posters, promotional items; and other materials which refer to or allude to alcohol consumption may not be displayed in rooms

or university-operated apartments so that they are visible from outside the building.

Smoking Policy

All residence halls and university-operated apartment facilities are designated nonsmoking, including student rooms and common areas of the building. Common areas include restrooms, kitchens, lounges, computer labs, recreation rooms, lobbies, etc. This policy also includes the prohibited use of e-cigarettes, vape pens, and other related products. Violations of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Further, the Tobacco-Free Campus Policy is also applicable to all students.

Tornado Alert Procedures

In case of tornado alert:

1. A tornado watch or warning will be announced through local radio and television.
2. Proceed to the lowest floor, which can be reached before high winds or the tornado strikes. Never use the fire alarm for notification purposes.
3. Sit in central corridors covering your head with folded arms.
4. Stay away from windows.
5. Remain calm. Try to prevent panic amongst fellow residents.
6. If a tornado strikes, only move to see the damage once the storm is well out of the area.
7. In open country, move away from the tornado's path at a right angle. If there is no time to escape, lie flat in the nearest depression, like a ditch or ravine.

Water Beds

Waterbeds are not permitted in residence halls.