

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Residential Living and Learning Handbook**

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**UNIVERSITY PHONE NUMBERS**

Academic Advising.....	903-886-2682
Bursar’s Office.....	903-886-2682
Career Services.....	903-468-3223
Cashier’s Window.....	903-886-5050
Counseling Center.....	903-886-5145
CTIS.....	903-468-6000
Dean of Campus Life & Student Development.....	903-886-5171
Financial Aid.....	903-886-5096
Human Resources.....	903-886-5282
International Students Office.....	903-886-5097
Library.....	903-886-5720
Morris Recreation Center.....	903-468-3181
Office of Student Organizations.....	903-468-3086
Registration Office.....	903-886-5671
Sam Rayburn Student Center.....	903-886-5806
Scholarship Office.....	903-886-5915
Sodexo.....	903-468-4890
Student Government.....	903-886-5822
Student Health Center.....	903-886-5853
TAMU System.....	800-452-5772
University Bookstore.....	903-886-5830
University Police Department.....	903-886-5868
University Post Office.....	903-886-5062
Vice President of Student Access and Success.....	903-468-8707

**RESIDENTIAL LIVING AND LEARNING PHONE NUMBERS**

Berry Hall Front Desk.....	903-886-5785
Family Apartments Front Desk.....	903-468-4500
Greek and Women’s Halls Front Desk.....	903-468-4637
New Pride Apartments Front Desk.....	903-468-4422
Prairie Crossing Front Desk.....	903-886-7141
Residential Living and Learning Office.....	903-886-5797
Smith Hall Front Desk.....	903-886-5787
West Halls Apartments Front Desk.....	903-886-5791
Whitley Hall Front Desk.....	903-886-5790

**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. There is always someone available to assist a resident 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

**Resident Assistants**

A Resident Assistant (RA) is a student staff member who lives on each floor or apartment complex. They are carefully selected and well trained students who promote and provide leadership, support, friendship, and programs, as well as impart or obtain information, answer questions and uphold community standards. There is at least one RA available “on duty” every night that residence halls are open. From 6pm until 8am, residents can call their hall office to contact an RA on duty.

### **Desk Attendants**

Desk Attendants maintain office hours so that the office can remain open during normal business hours. Their responsibilities are office coverage and assisting the needs of the residents.

### **Hall Directors**

Hall Directors (HDs) are full time professionals who live in the residence communities and are responsible for the educational and operational functions of the living area. HDs have specialized degrees and significant experience working with college students which allows them to be advocates for residents' success. Much of the HDs' time is spent serving as an active resource for students who live in their area.

### **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 through the online work order system. Residents should not attempt to make room repairs.

## **GETTING INVOLVED**

### **Floor Meetings**

The first step residents can take to get involved in their hall is to attend the floor meetings. These brief meetings are very informative and can help residents get connected immediately to the staff members and services available to them.

### **Check MyLeo and Facebook**

MyLeo is the prime form of communication from departments, faculty and staff to students. If residents would like to be up to date on important deadlines and information, they must check their MyLeo account regularly. If residents would like to stay connected to their residence hall through Facebook, they can become a friend of their hall's group. Each hall page will be updated daily or weekly with news and programs that will give an additional layer of information about hall events specific to their area. These updates will include extra reminders about exciting program dates and times, as well as upcoming procedures, such as inspections, reapplication, and closing information.

### **RA Programming**

RAs host a variety of programs throughout the year. The goal of these programs is to provide opportunities for residents to cultivate relationships with others in their building. If residents have program ideas and/or would like to help plan and present a program, they are welcome to contact their RA.

### **Residence Hall Association**

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) is a representative organization that empowers on-campus residents to play an active role in residence halls through service, educational and social programming, and leadership opportunities. RHA also enacts change by advocating for the issues and concerns of residents with the ultimate goal of making the residence halls a more respectful and united community.

## **SERVICES**

### **Meal Plans**

Residential Living and Learning (RLL) offers a variety of meal plans. First year freshmen students are required to choose a meal plan. If residents would like to adjust their meal plans, they are encouraged to go in person to the RLL office located in the Halladay building, room 100.

### **Television Services**

Direct TV is provided in all residence halls except for Prairie Crossing, which has Time Warner cable. All basic services are provided with the housing contract. Students wishing to receive premium services should contact their Hall Director (additional charges apply). Channel listings are provided on the RLL webpage.

### **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 who may be using the equipment, and to protect the equipment, food and drinks are not allowed in the computer labs. Printing services are available in all resident hall offices. Residents must provide their own paper and only 10 pages of an academic document may be printed.

### **Indoor and Outdoor Common Areas**

The majority of the residence halls have study lounges, a TV, and outdoor community areas for students' convenience. Please see the hall desk to inquire about these services.

Individual use of common areas is highly encouraged. Grills, picnic tables adjacent to the halls, and lobbies may be used by residents only. Registered student organizations may request permission to use common areas.

If a person or organization wants to reserve a common area, they must speak with the HD at least one week before the requested reservation time. Alcohol is not permitted in any public areas. Large group gatherings are not permitted after 10:00 pm due to quiet hours. Grills and all common areas must be cleaned after each use and individuals or groups must dispose of all trash and clean the area. The picnic tables may not be moved.

### **Hall Desk**

All residence hall offices hours are as follows. Please see your hall for more specific late night hours.

10am-10pm, Monday through Friday  
2-4pm and 6-10pm, Saturday and Sunday

### **Laundry**

All residence halls are equipped with both washers and dryers. Any mechanical difficulties should be reported to the hall desks.

### **Mail Services**

If residents wish to receive mail on campus, they must first request a Resident Verification Form at their front desk and then visit the campus post office. Mail will not be delivered to residence halls.

To receive a package delivered via UPS, USPS, FEDEX, or other delivery services, please contact the carrier to ensure delivery. *Residence hall offices will not sign for or deliver any packages for a resident.* Any mail received at the RLL 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 cars 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, residents must keep their rooms clean by taking out trash, not leaving food containers open, etc. If pests are found, please contact the hall desk. RLL provides pest control service through Orkin every Wednesday. Orders must be turned in no later than 4:00pm on Tuesdays to ensure treatment on Wednesday. Any order received after 4:00pm Tuesday will be treated on Wednesday of the following week.

*Fogging or setting off bug bombs is not allowed by residents.* This could cause damage to the system and will be considered tampering. All cases of tampering with the system will be documented and handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$250.

### **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. RLL highly encourages renter's insurance.

### **Room Repairs and Damages**

Report all needed repairs using SchoolDude, the online work order system. Log-in instructions can be found at the front desk. No charge will be assessed for repairs resulting from normal wear and tear.

Emergency work orders should be called in to the respective hall office immediately. If residents are not able to reach someone at their hall office, they should call the main RLL office at 903-886-5797. Emergencies consist of fire, flood, refrigerator issues, plumbing problems resulting in no access to sink or toilet, and HVAC issues that cause extreme discomfort.

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 a resident's room, these damages need to be reported to the hall staff. Damages that are caused by the resident or the resident's guest(s) will be billed to the resident's account.

### **Students with Disabilities**

The Student Support Services Office, which serves students with disabilities, is located in the library. RLL can accommodate residents with documented disabilities. Please visit or call our office for assistance.

### **Telephone Service**

RLL does not provide 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. UPD publishes a weekly crime log in order to better inform the University community of current crime trends. Anyone wishing for more information on crime statistics can contact UPD at (903) 886-5868. Any student experiencing an emergency should dial (903) 886-5111.

### **Vending Machines**

Vending machines are located throughout the residence hall areas. For vending refunds or to report a problem, please see instructions on the front of the machine.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **Fire Alarm System**

Each building is equipped with a fire alarm system. They are here for residents' protection and residents 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, residents are highly discouraged from leaving the parking lot in their vehicle. Driveways must be clear for emergency vehicles access. Failure to respond to a fire alarm will result in disciplinary action, which could include a \$50 fine. All cases of tampering with the system will be documented and handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$250. A second offense will result in the resident being referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

If a fire alarm sounds, residents should:

1. Close their windows.
2. Check their 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 to the hall's assigned location.
4. Do not re-enter the building until told to do so by an RLL staff member.

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

1. Quickly put on a coat and hard soled shoes
2. Take a wet towel to put over the face to prevent smoke inhalation.
3. Take keys and 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 residents' assistance in protecting their 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 rooms locked at all times. Residents should not loan their keys to anyone. Promptly report the loss a room key to an RLL staff member.
2. To lessen personal losses, carry renter's insurance on valuable items and keep a record of the serial numbers on property. UPD offers a free service of engraving and logging serial numbers.
3. Keep cars/motorcycles locked. Store valuables out of sight.
4. Keep bicycles locked at all times when they are not in use. Bicycle racks are provided in all residential areas.
5. Be aware of surroundings. Promptly report suspicious persons or activities to the University Police Department at (903) 886-5868.
6. Residents are encouraged to program the University Police Department into their phones. The non-emergency phone number for UPD is (903) 886-5868. The emergency number for UPD is (903) 886-5111.

### **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. Residents should follow these procedures if there is a tornado or storm warning:

1. Go to the lowest floor possible. If a lower floor cannot be reached, 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/>

In addition to ThorGuard, the campus houses a tornado warning system. This system is tested on the first Wednesday of each month.

### **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 sexually assaulted, 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. RLL staff are also available to help.

### **Sprinklers**

In addition to the fire alarm system, sprinklers have been installed in Smith, Whitley, and New Pride Apartments. These are for the safety and protection of the residents, their belongings, and the property of the University. According to current fire code standards, nothing can be stacked, stored or constructed within 18 inches of a sprinkler head. Hanging objects from sprinkler heads is likewise strictly prohibited. Such actions constitute tampering. Tampering with the sprinkler head will cause the sprinkler head to activate, thereby dumping tons of water into the resident's room/apartment in a short amount of time. All cases of tampering with the sprinkler system will be documented and handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$500. A second offense will result in the resident being referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

## **RESIDENTIAL LIVING AND LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Check-In**

The residence halls are available for check-in the Wednesday prior to classes. Each room is inspected prior to residents moving in. A Room Condition Form is completed by an RA and is reflective of the current condition of each room. If residents notice a discrepancy, they must record the discrepancy on their copy of the Room Condition Form and return it to their RA within 24 hours of checking in. Residents are financially responsible for all damages that occur in their room during their stay.

### **Room Changes and Hall Changes**

RLL will have a designated time to facilitate the majority of room changes. Residents should check their MyLeo accounts soon after classes begin for more information about room changes.

### **Consolidation**

RLL reserves the right to consolidate residents who have not paid for a private room and have no roommate. Private room, selected roommate, and particular requests are accommodated as much as possible in keeping with the above statement. Residents who fail to follow directions concerning consolidation are subject to private room charges and disciplinary action.

### **Break Housing**

In the traditional halls (Berry, Smith, Whitley), room payments do not cover periods when classes are not in session. Therefore, these particular residence halls close during Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Break holidays, as well as Mini Semesters prior to the summer and fall semesters. Students who need to stay in housing during those times may do so for an additional fee if space is available. Students interested in break housing should contact the RLL Office well in advance. The University is not responsible for the loss or damage to personal property that is left in rooms during breaks or holidays.

### **Contract Release Request**

The RLL contract is binding for the academic year. Requests to break the contract may be considered. Please do not make other housing arrangements until it is verified that a break in contract is approved. Most requests to break housing contracts will not be approved. For more specific details, contact the RLL Office or consult the RLL 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 12 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 RLL 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. Residents **MUST** check their MyLeo accounts for the most up to date information regarding this process.

### **Re-Assignments**

Assignment guarantees space, not specific apartments/rooms, within the residence hall. RLL 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**

Room charges will be included on residents' University bills, 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 RLL or withdraws from the University must go to the RLL Office and then complete the check-out process. Students will have 48 hours to move from the time of withdrawal. Failure to follow these steps may result in charges remaining on residents' accounts 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 undue 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 of RLL staff including HDs, RAs, Desk Attendants, and RLL 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, RLL 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 charge of \$75 billed to the resident's account.

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. Violations of the alcohol policy will be handled judicially. The following expectations are for all residents and their guests (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.

### **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 4.3 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. 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: (*other appliances not listed must be approved by the HD in advance of being in the room*)

1. Halogen lamps of any kind
2. Hot plates
3. Deep fryers
4. Broilers
5. Freezers
6. Space heaters
7. Potpourri pots
8. Sun lamps and tanning beds
9. Any open faced or heating appliance
10. Personal BBQ grills
11. Toaster ovens

In apartments that are equipped with dishwashers, please use the correct cleaning products. Do not use liquid dish soap in place of detergent that is made for dishwashers.

In apartments that are equipped with garbage disposals, please take care to keep them in proper working order. Run water in the disposal side of the sink as you are using the disposal. Do not put things such as lettuce, rice and grease in the disposal. Large amounts of food should be put in the trash. Run ice through the disposal about every two months to sharpen the blades.

### **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. RLL 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:

1. Buildings
2. Trees
3. Handrails
4. Banisters
5. 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 gain any information about a potential bomb threat, please notify UPD at (903) 886-5111.

### **Candles/Open Flames**

Candles, incense, fireworks (all types, including sparklers) are considered to be an open flame and, therefore, a fire hazard. These items are prohibited both inside and outside all residence hall properties, including parking lots. Possession of items violating this policy will result in immediate confiscation and will be handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$25.00 and disciplinary action. *Candles for decorative purposes only are allowed, given that the wick is completely removed.*

### **Carpet**

If residents' carpets become stained, they should contact their HD immediately to confirm and facilitate the cleaning process. If the carpet is damaged above normal wear and tear, the resident will be charged. Continual mistreatment of carpet will result in disciplinary action.

### **Chalking**

Chalking of sidewalks or brick must be approved by the HD prior to chalking. The chalked area must be removed no later than 24 hours after the event. Staff reserves the right to remove any chalking that is inappropriate, offensive or not approved.

### **Christmas or Holiday Trees**

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

### **Cleanliness**

Living areas must be kept clean at all times (dishes clean, food stored properly, etc.) First offense will result in a warning and the expectation that the area is cleaned to standard. Further offenses will result in disciplinary action which could lead to reassignment to a room without cooking facilities for residents living in apartments.

RLL expects residents to take pride in their spaces. It is expected that dusting, mopping and cleaning be done to maintain a general level of cleanliness. While it is the expectation that residents provide their own cleaning supplies and equipment, some equipment is available to check out at the front desk.

To protect residents' health, bathrooms should be held to the highest standard of cleanliness. This includes using shower scrub products, disinfecting wipes and toilet brushes. The general disinfection of all surfaces is recommended on a regular basis. Residents must supply a shower curtain for the shower or bathtub. Failure to provide a shower curtain will result in a warning with the expectation that the residents provide a shower curtain. Failure to obtain a shower curtain by the second check will result in disciplinary action, which could include a \$50.00 hold placed on the student's account until the shower curtain is obtained.

Residents must have a fitted sheet on their bed at all times. Failure to follow this policy will result in a warning with the expectation that the resident provide a fitted sheet. Failure to obtain a fitted sheet by the second check will result in disciplinary action, which could include a \$50.00 hold placed on the student's account until sheets are obtained.

### **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. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Keeping clothing and other personal belongings in the room.
2. Being an overnight guest in the room for more than two nights in a fifteen day period.
3. Using the bathroom and shower facilities as if they lived in that room.
4. Using keys or ID cards to enter the residence hall or room.

Violation of this rule will be handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$100.00 for the violation and an additional \$50.00 fine will be charged to the resident for each guest found cohabitating.

### **Contact Paper**

Contact paper is not allowed. If residents wish to line their shelves, the use of a non-adhesive alternative is recommended.

### **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 ensuring that proper sanitation, ventilation, and fire safety precautions are taken. For the list of approved cooking appliances, please see "Appliances." Cooking is allowed in hall kitchens. Microwaves are for cooking only. Do not put any type of metal in the microwaves. Also, do not try to dry any type of clothing product in the microwaves, as you may start a fire.

Community Kitchens must be kept clean at all times (dishes clean, food stored properly, etc.) Violation of community standards will be handled judicially, which could include a minimum fine of \$50.00 and disciplinary action.

### **Cooperation with University Officials**

Your residence hall staff are University Officials. Residents must immediately comply with directions from any University Official. Verbal and/or physical abuse directed towards a University staff member will not be tolerated. Failure to follow this policy will result in 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. Thumb tacks and pushpins are highly recommended for hanging purposes. Residents will assume responsibility for any damage beyond normal wear and tear. Single strand lights with small bulbs may be used, but more than one strand may not be connected together at any time. **Do not use double-sided tape on any surface as it will cause excessive damage.** If a resident wishes to use an adhesive, 3M Command Adhesives are recommended as they have been found to be removed easily. Contact a residence hall staff person for further details. To comply with Fire Marshal regulations, only 20% of each side of room doors may be decorated.

### **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 may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Drugs**

The University prohibits the manufacturing, possessing, selling, transmitting, using or being part of 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.

### **Electrical Power Strips**

Do not overload electrical circuits. Electrical power strips used on RLL 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 HD to see if the device is acceptable prior to use. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action and the item will be confiscated and stored until time of check-out. Approved surge protectors are available for checkout at most front desks while supplies last.

### **Emergency Exits**

Emergency exits are to be used for emergency evacuations. The misuse of emergency exits will be documented and handled judicially.

### **Emergency/Safety Equipment and Fire Alarm System**

The paths to the exit door, windows, and all safety appliances and vents should be kept clear at all times throughout the living unit. 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, emergency exits, fire alarm pull stations or designated emergency doors. Tampering with emergency/safety equipment could endanger everyone. All cases of tampering with the fire equipment will be documented and handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$250.00. A second offense will result in the resident being referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

### **Empty Room/Bed Spaces**

If at any time a resident is living in a room, suite or apartment without a roommate/suitemate, they are responsible for keeping belongings out of the empty space and may not utilize that vacant space in any way. This policy exists because an incoming resident may be assigned or moved into an empty space at any time throughout the semester. This resident has the right to move in without prior notice and therefore no belongings may be stored in or under additional furniture or closets and the bed may not be used for storage or for hosting guests.

### **Escorting Guests and Visitors**

Guests and visitors must be escorted by their host resident at all times. Please see "Guests and Visitation" for more information.

### **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. Possession of items violating this policy will result in immediate confiscation and will be handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$25.00 and disciplinary action.

### **Furniture**

Each student room is provided with RLL furniture. Residents may not move additional University items into their rooms from any other area of the hall, including lounge furniture. Moving bedroom furniture into another room must be approved by the HD. Waterbeds are not permitted in the residence halls. Violations of this policy will be handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$25.00 and disciplinary action.

### **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 the 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 the 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.

Each resident's active involvement in reducing damages within their community is encouraged.

### **Guests and Visitation**

RLL recognizes the value of visitors in a vibrant, educational community. The shared concerns and wishes of the roommates and community are of paramount importance and determine what are acceptable or unacceptable visitation privileges within a specific room or community. Guests and visitors are defined as any individual who visits an A&M-Commerce residence hall with the invitation of one of the assigned residents. Any individual who is under 16 years old may not stay overnight in the residence halls. Hosts are responsible for the behavior of their guests at all times and for informing guests of all University and residence hall procedures. Residents may not have guests more than two days, consecutive or nonconsecutive, within a 15 day period. A host must secure the permission of their roommate to house a guest.

Guests and visitors are expected to be escorted at all times. All guests and visitors will be responsible for carrying picture ID with them. **At no time should a guest or visitor be left unattended while the resident is out of the room, suite or apartment.** Guests or visitors left unattended or unescorted may be asked to leave the building. Each resident may have group visitation (such as study groups or dinner gatherings) as long as they do not disturb others in the community. However, each resident may have no more than two guests in the room or apartment after 10pm.

Specific visitation plans outline the maximum hours during which visitors or guests may visit. Berry, Smith, Whitley and F-Halls have visitation hours of 10am to 2am every day. *No guests or visitors of the opposite sex may visit between 2am to 10am.* West Halls, New Pride, and Prairie Crossing have open visitation as long as rights of roommates and other hall residents are respected.

Extension or suspension of visitation privileges for an individual, a floor or an entire residence hall may be issued by RLL with just cause. Violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially.

### **Halogen Lamps**

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. Violations of this policy will be handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$25.00 and disciplinary action.

### **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. RLL will not accept ignorance, humor, anger, alcohol, or substance abuse as an excuse, reason, or rationale for harassment.

### **Health and Safety Inspections (HSIs)**

RLL staff will conduct Health and Safety Inspections four to six times a year. These checks will be announced and are made to ensure that:

1. University property is being used properly;
2. Reasonable standards of room cleanliness, safety, and sanitation are being observed;
3. Maintenance needs are reported;
4. RLL procedures are being observed;
5. All directives of the State Fire Marshal are being observed.

### **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.

**Horseplay**

Horseplay including wrestling, running in the halls, and pranks in the halls are prohibited. These actions can lead to injuries and/or damage to the halls. Violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially.

**Identification**

Residents are required to have their University IDs in their possession at all times. Proof of identity may be requested of any person in the residence hall by a University official. Failure to identify oneself to a University staff member upon request is a violation of University regulations. Cooperation is appreciated should such an occasion arise.

**Keys**

Room keys are issued to each resident. Residents are responsible for possession of their keys at all times and may not lend keys to another person at any time. Violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially.

**Latches/Door locks**

No additional locks or latches may be installed anywhere in residents' rooms. Installation of additional locks or latches impedes entrance of staff and emergency personnel. Violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially, which will include the removal of the latch/door lock and the cost of repair.

**Lockouts**

If residents are locked out of their rooms, they are encouraged to visit their front desk to borrow an extra key. Lockout keys are for the purpose of retrieving the resident's original key and must be returned within 10 minutes. Documentation will be recorded at each transaction and residents must present their assigned keys when returning their borrowed key. If a key is lost, a \$45.00 per lock charge will be billed to the resident's account in order to change each lock affected. If lockouts become habitual, this will be documented and handled judicially.

**Neighbors Conflicts**

If neighbors are having a conflict, first discuss the problem with each other. Do not use passive aggressive behavior in an attempt to resolve the conflict. Face to face, calm discussions are always the preferred route. If a resolution cannot be found for the problem, then residents are encouraged to see their RA. If the RA feels that the problem is not being resolved, a referral will be made to the HD. If the problem cannot be resolved, RLL has the right to relocate one or both of the neighbors.

**Noise**

Quiet hours are in effect everyday 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 rooms within ten feet of the front door. 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. Twenty-four hour quiet hours will be in effect for the last two weeks of each semester. Violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially, which could include a minimum fine of \$25.00 for the first offense.

**Pets**

Fish are the only pets permitted in the residence halls. A resident wishing to keep fish may use one aquarium no larger than 10 gallons. Any pet or proof of pet found in a resident's room will result in a \$75.00 fine and the immediate removal of the pet. Daily checks at a cost of \$10.00 per day will be charged until the pet and all pet items are removed. Additional cleaning and/or disinfecting and/or charges to respond to flea treatment 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 in the area, please contact UPD at (903) 886-5868 to request removal.

**Posting**

Posting of flyers, announcements, or any other printed or written material must be approved by the HD prior to posting in or around any area of the residence halls. Staff reserves the right to remove any posting that is inappropriate, offensive or not approved.

### **Pranks**

Pranks which result in disturbances or distress to others or cause damage to University or personal property are prohibited. Violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially.

### **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 be documented through the RLL judicial system and possibly through UPD. It is highly encouraged that residents avoid this behavior as they may be held responsible for personal injury and/or property damage.

### **Quiet Hours/Courtesy Hours**

Please see "Noise".

### **Restricted Areas**

No student shall make unauthorized entry into any University building, office, attic, roof, or other restricted University facility. Violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially.

### **Room Entry**

Room entry by RLL Staff is occasionally necessary. While respecting residents' personal privacy at all times, the University reserves the right to authorize entry into their rooms at times when their welfare or the welfare of their room is concerned; to ensure proper care, maintenance and safety of the facilities; to make necessary repairs; to complete a preliminary condition report for a room being vacated; to conduct maintenance and Health and Safety inspections; and to investigate violations of University regulations. Every effort will be made to give advance notice when a room entry is necessary; notice will be left when the maintenance department has responded to requests for repairs.

### **Room Modifications/Painting**

Residents are expected to attempt to leave their room in the condition they found it. Modifying electrical or telephone wiring is prohibited. Installation of ceiling fans is prohibited. Carpet may not be taped/glued down. Painting is prohibited. While it is encouraged that residents avoid using nails or anchors, residents who choose to use them will be billed accordingly to return the room to its original condition.

### **Roommate Conflicts**

If roommates are having a conflict, first discuss the problem with each other. Do not use passive aggressive behavior in an attempt to resolve the conflict. Face to face, calm discussions are always the preferred route. If a resolution cannot be found for the problem, then residents are encouraged to see their RA. If the RA feels that the problem is not being resolved, a referral will be made to the HD. If the problem cannot be resolved, RLL has the right to relocate one or both of the roommates.

### **Smoking**

Smoking of any substance is prohibited in all RLL facilities; this includes porches, balconies, stairwells, sidewalks, and enclosed inner courtyards. Smoking is permitted in the designated smoking areas 10 feet away from buildings.

The smell of smoke and/or evidence of butts/ashes found in a resident's room will be considered a violation of this policy. Violations of the smoking policy will be documented and handled judicially, which could result in a minimum fine of \$100.00 for the first offense. All subsequent violations will be handled judicially and will include the cost of rehabilitating the room and could result in reassignment. Residents will be held responsible for the actions of their guests.

### **Solicitation**

RLL does not allow solicitation by outside groups, student organizations, or companies in the residence halls without prior approval from the Associate Director of RLL. If residents are approached by sales personnel in the hall, they are encouraged to contact their hall staff and UPD immediately. Research may be conducted in the residence halls with prior written approval from the Associate Director of RLL.

### **Sports in the Hallways**

Residents may not engage in any sports or “sport related” activities within the residence hall rooms, lounges, hallways, or stairwells.

### **Swimming Pool (Prairie Crossing)**

Residents and guests wanting to use the swimming pool must be escorted at all times by a resident of Prairie Crossing. Anyone found using the pool without an escort will be asked to leave immediately.

### **Syringe Disposal**

Residents 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 confiscated and turned over to the University Police Department.

### **Trash**

Residents must take personal trash to the dumpster adjacent to each hall/apartment complex. Personal bagged trash must be taken to the dumpster. Community trash cans are intended for the disposal of small, individual items and are not receptacles for apartment, room, kitchen or bathroom trash. Staff reserves the right to open trash in order to find identifying items. Violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially, which could include a \$25.00 charge per item or bag of trash.

### **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. 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. Items will be confiscated and violations of this policy will be documented and handled judicially.

### **Windows and Window Screens**

Window screens may not be removed or altered in any way. No articles may be thrown or hung from windows. The threshold of all windows and balconies may not be crossed at any time for any reason. 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. Violation of this policy will be documented through the RLL judicial system and possibly through UPD. It is highly encouraged that residents avoid this behavior as they may be held responsible for personal injury and/or property damage.

## **RESIDENCE HALLS DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM**

### **Contact Reports**

Contact Reports are the primary means of communicating what occurs in the halls. The reports are used by RLL as information and 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. Residents may request a Contact Report, but RLL reserves the right to share only what is necessary in order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved parties.

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

When an apparent violation of University or residence hall policies, procedures or standards occurs, a Contact Report is filed. Based on this report, specific violations are determined. Residents who have violated residence hall policies or standards are subject to meet with the HD as the judicial officer of that community. For the judicial meeting, residents are encouraged to come prepared to have a discussion about the incident and how they can be a successful member of the community. If a sanction is issued as a result of a judicial meeting, the proper paperwork will be completed. Sanctions can include, but are not limited to, community service hours, programs, bulletin boards, written reports, restriction of privileges, and/or fines and charges. Some infractions will be referred from the HD to either the Associate Director of RLL or Judicial Affairs, which could include removal from the residence halls.

Residents have the right to appeal sanctions with the Associate Director of RLL within three (3) business days of the judicial meeting with the HD.