

2023-2024 Residential Living Guidelines

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Welcome

Living on campus at Western Carolina University will be one of the highlights of your college experience. You will make new and lifelong friends, create great memories, and build key skills that will help you well after college. Being around other students of all backgrounds, learning the give-and-take that building relationships requires, and making concessions for the betterment of others are all essential aspects of successfully living on campus. These guidelines are designed to enable your success as a residential student, make clear what is expected of you as a campus resident, and help you understand support available to you through the Department of Residential Living.

Residential Living Guidelines outline the rights, rules, and responsibilities of students living in WCU residence halls. Students are expected to comply with policies set by Residential Living, the University, and live by the WCU Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.wcu.edu/experience/dean-of-students/student-community-ethics/index.aspx>). Outlined in this document are many of the general Residential Living and University policies. For more specific information, please review the Code of Student Conduct. Information contained in the Residential Living Guidelines is subject to revision at any time. Notice will be provided to current on-campus students, via their Catamount email, if any significant changes are made to information in this document. These guidelines are effective beginning Fall 2023 at move-in.

Safety

- **Electronic Access**

All residence hall entry doors are equipped with electronic access. All residents are granted access to their building through their University CatCard. Students should carry their CatCard with them at all times to have access to their residence hall. These systems are in place to increase building security. Students are encouraged to assist in keeping buildings safe by not propping doors or allowing strangers to enter a building with them.

- **Evacuation Alarms**

When an evacuation alarm sounds, all residents should begin evacuation immediately. Residents should dress quickly, close windows and close and lock room doors as they evacuate. Everyone should stay to the right and proceed to the outside of the building through the nearest possible exit. If smoke is present, stay low, near the floor, cover face, and move as quickly as possible to the outside of the building. Elevators should not be used during any fire alarm situation. Reenter the building only when directed by staff. Failure to evacuate during any fire alarm could lead to sanctions, fines, and/or prosecution.

If you are required to evacuate the building for a fire, remember to not use the elevator, close all doors behind you, turn off all electronics, evacuate in groups, assist others, and evacuate in a safe and orderly manner. Elevator use during a fire alarm could result in judicial sanctions and/or fines.

If the building is being evacuated due to a bomb threat, follow the same steps as listed above, but do not turn on or turn off any electronic devices.

- **Evacuation Drills**

Each residence hall will conduct one planned and one unplanned fire drill each semester. Residents will not be notified of the time or date of this drill. All persons in the building are expected to evacuate the building when the alarm sounds.

- **Inspections**

Each semester, Residential Living staff will conduct health and safety inspections throughout the residence halls, including student rooms. Unsanitary conditions, violations of University or Residential Living policies, and safety problems will be documented, and residents will be notified of such problems and expected to resolve them. Additionally, any condition or violation subject to the Code of Student Conduct will be handled accordingly.

- **Medical Emergencies**

Western Carolina University Health Services is committed to providing quality health care for the campus community, and to promoting and maintaining the overall well-being of University students, faculty, and staff. For details and additional information, please visit the Health Services Web site at <http://www.wcu.edu/experience/health-and-wellness/health-services/index.aspx>. Additionally, WCU Health Services offers an ambulance service consisting of WCU students who are Certified Emergency Medical Technicians. The service is in operation 24 hours a day during fall and spring semesters and is dispatched by dialing 828-227-8911 from your cell phone or 8911 from any campus phone.

- **Safety**

Each member of a residential community is responsible for protecting and safeguarding the community, including the preservation and appropriate use of public area furniture and other building features (windows, doors, etc.). It is important for residents to be watchful for strangers to the community and report suspicious behavior immediately to Residential Living staff or University Police. In the interest of safety, please avoid propping doors, sharing keys, or leaving room doors unlocked.

- **Tornadoes**

Tornado warnings are ordered when a funnel cloud has been verified; a tornado watch is ordered when weather conditions are such that a tornado could occur. Staff members will alert each floor that a tornado warning is in effect. You should seek shelter from the upper floors of the building, leave your room and other areas with windows and take shelter in protected areas away from the exterior of the building. Doors to student rooms should be closed. Areas of shelter are interior hallways, basements, lower floors, and windowless rooms. You should remain within the building. The building staff will notify you when the tornado warning has expired and an all clear is announced from campus Public Safety Officials.

Policies

- **Alcoholic Beverage Policy**

Governing principles: It is illegal, and a violation of university policy, for any person under 21 years of age to consume, purchase, or possess an alcoholic beverage. Guests of a student under the age of 21 are not allowed to drink in the underage student's room. Albright-Benton, Water Rock, Shining Rock, Harrill, and Black Rock Halls are dry buildings no matter the age of the resident. Alcohol should not be consumed in any public or common area of a residence hall based on guidelines of [University Policy 81](#).

- **Cameras in the Residence Halls**

Students are permitted to use cameras in the residence halls for virtual meetings, academic assignments, presentations, etc., but students are not permitted to install or use cameras for security or surveillance purposes. Only WCU owned and managed cameras may be installed in the residence halls for security purposes.

- **Damage**

Residents are responsible for the condition of their rooms and will be charged for damage other than normal wear. The condition of public areas is the responsibility of all students. Please help maintain public areas by treating them with care. Damages occurring in public areas will be charged to those persons responsible for the damage. If the responsible person(s) cannot be determined, it is possible that the cost of cleaning, repair or replacement will be charged to members of the community. Residents can help keep costs down by encouraging others to respect public areas and assume responsibility for their actions.

- **Decorations**

- Residents may have artificial trees, but live holiday trees (either cut or with root ball) are not allowed. Plastic or metallic-plastic trees must be clearly labeled that they are constructed of slow burning plastic, and metal trees should have indirect lighting only. Please avoid setting trees near any source of heat (radiators, curling irons, irons, etc.).
- All tree trimmings (i.e., bulbs, garland, candy canes, cranberries, icicles, etc.) should be of noncombustible material.
- Placing holiday trees in stairwells and hallways is prohibited.
- No decorations are permitted in the hallways, common spaces, or suite spaces of residential facilities. This includes, but is not limited to pumpkins, artificial trees, string lights, and doormats. These items may be used as decorations inside residence hall rooms; however, perishable items must be disposed of immediately following the holiday or event (i.e. pumpkins).
- Judaculla and Harrill residents should follow the guidelines listed for "hallways" when decorating suite space. Please refer questions to residence hall staff.

- **Disorderly Conduct**

Behavior which is disruptive to orderly community living or the daily operation of the residence halls or the university is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: playing in the halls, throwing items in the hallways, bouncing balls on the floors or walls, pranks, wrestling, outdoor games, fighting, verbally disruptive behavior or any other behavior which may cause community disturbance, physical injury, damage to property or behavior that is potentially dangerous to the health and well-being of residents.

- **Illegal Drugs Policy**

Western Carolina University is an academic community dedicated to the transmission and advancement of knowledge and understanding. The illegal use of and trafficking in drugs can jeopardize the welfare of members of this academic community. Accordingly, Western Carolina University has adopted a detailed policy on the illegal use of and trafficking in drugs that can be found here [University Policy 38](#).

- **Lofting Beds**

All students living in the residence halls are provided with a bed system that can be lofted. The system includes two headboards, two footboards, mattress with mattress platform, stabilizing bars, safety rail, and a ladder. Lofted beds must have the stabilizing bars installed. For student safety, beds may not be lofted using any materials beyond the bed system provided for each resident. A roommate's unused bed components may not be used to extend a lofted bed.

- **Motorized Modes of Transportation**

Any motorized mode of transportation (including but not limited to, electric scooters and e-bikes, motorcycles, mopeds, hoverboards, self-balancing scooter boards, Segway's, etc.) are prohibited in the residence halls (which includes for charging purposes). This does not include motorized wheelchairs and other ADA vehicles.

- **Noise**

Each resident is responsible for keeping noise levels to a minimum at all times. In order to provide an environment conducive to positive group living, studying, and sleeping, certain hours have been established as "Residence Hall Quiet Hours." These hours are 9 p.m. to 8 a.m. daily. Regardless of the time, "Courtesy Hours" are always in effect. Courtesy Hours are defined as residents being considerate of all others and the demands of living in a group environment. Noise should not exceed a reasonable level at any time. In a communal living situation, a certain amount of background noise is commonplace and should be expected. During exam week, a 24-hour quiet hour policy will be in place.

Helpful tips for reducing noise where you live:

- Close your door to minimize sound travel.
- Locate stereo speakers, radios, and TV to reduce the amount of sound that travels through the floor and walls. It is helpful if one does not place these items directly upon the floor or up against the wall. Using an outer wall or a piece of foam rubber behind the speaker can reduce the sound that may disturb your neighbors next door.

- Put a piece of tape on the volume control that indicates the maximum volume for residence hall living. Confirm this with your next-door neighbors and RA.
- Do not place speakers or radios in your windows. Outdoor noise amplification is prohibited without authorization.
- Use headphones if you enjoy listening to loud music.
- Discuss with your roommate appropriate times to watch TV, listen to music, etc.

If you feel that your rights to quiet time are being infringed upon, you should:

- Speak to the person/persons causing the disturbance and politely ask them to modify the noise level. (If you are asked to lower your noise level, please respond courteously and appropriately.)
- If this action does not produce satisfactory results, contact your Resident Assistant, the RA on duty, or any residence hall staff member.

- **Open Flame Items and Flammable Liquids**

Open Flame Items (including but not limited to candles, incense, candle warmers, scent warmers, plug-ins, and scent pot burners) are prohibited in all residence halls for fire safety purposes. This includes decorative candles with burned or unburned wicks. Flammable Liquids and solvents (butane, gasoline, kerosene, lighter fluid, propane, etc.) are not permitted in the residence halls.

- **Public Area Furniture**

Furniture is placed in public areas of residence halls for the use of all residents of the building. Public area furniture is not to be removed for use in resident rooms.

- **Public Common Area Use**

Public common areas (bathrooms, kitchens, study rooms, TV lounges, hallways, stairwells, suite living room areas, and lobbies) are for the use of residents living in the respective residence hall. Any sponsored activity taking place in the residence hall lobby or lounge must be reserved in advance through the Area Coordinator or Graduate Community Coordinator. Resident groups have priority over nonresident groups. Groups reserving residence hall space must be affiliated with the university. Any activity that creates a disturbance for other residents is not permitted in public common areas. Lobbies and suite living room areas should be clear of any debris or blockage for traffic flow. If conditions of the public common areas are becoming messy or cluttered, Residential Living reserves the right to close or limit access to these spaces.

- **Pets**

The only pets allowed are fish. A resident may have fish in a tank not larger than ten gallons.

- **Residence Hall Door Installations**

Doors to student rooms in the residence halls may not have installations (e.g., decorations, message boards, fliers, etc.) affixed to the surface that total more than 50% of the door's surface.

- **Resident Rights and Responsibilities**

Residents of University Residential Living possess specific individual and group rights, and with those rights come certain responsibilities. The following statements define expectations regarding these rights and responsibilities.

Residents have the right to:

- Reside in reasonably affordable, clean and secure living accommodations.
- Sleep and study without interruption or interference, free from unreasonable noise.
- Express themselves creatively within established guidelines.
- Confer with staff who provide assistance, guidance, and support as needed.
- Enjoy individual freedoms without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, political affiliation, and National Guard or veteran status.
- Participate in residence hall governing bodies, educational and developmental opportunities in their living community, some Residential Living departmental committees and personal judicial proceedings.
- Obtain written copies of the Residential Living rules and regulations, or individual building policies, which govern individual and group behavior, and to expect fair and consistent enforcement of the Residence Hall Agreement/Contract, Residential Living Policies, and Code of Student Conduct.

Residents have the responsibility to:

- Follow the established guidelines for and to make personal efforts toward a clean, safe and secure living community.
- Respect the rights of fellow residents, staff and University officials, treat these individuals with respect and comply with reasonable requests made by these people.
- Meet expected room and meal plan payment schedules.
- Participate actively in floor meetings, educational and developmental activities, and in Residential Living departmental committees.
- Express themselves individually or by association with groups.
- Become familiar with the policies and procedures of the University and the Department of Residential Living, adhere to all rules and regulations and assist staff in their efforts to hold all residents and their guests accountable to these policies.

- **Screen Opening/Removal**

Screens have been installed in all room windows to improve security and comfort. Please do not tamper with or remove screens from any windows. Residents are not permitted to personally replace damaged screens or broken windows. Residents who find a screen missing upon check-in should request screen replacement by placing a work order online at <https://housing.wcu.edu/> and clicking on "Service Request."

- **Solicitation**

Unauthorized sales and solicitation in the residence halls are prohibited. Information regarding gaining permission for authorized solicitation activities within the residence halls can be found in University Policy 114.

- **Sports Activities in the Residence Halls**

Participating in sports activities in areas not designated for that purpose is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to playing with sports balls, Frisbees, nerf guns, splat guns, and other thrown or projected objects indoors.

Living On Campus Regulations and Processes

- **Bicycles**

Residents may keep bicycles in their room or outside the residence hall on the provided racks. Bicycles should not be parked in hallways, stairwells, inside or outside entranceways, or in any other public area in the residence hall, as this creates a safety hazard. Bicycles may not be stored by hanging from hooks installed in ceilings or by hanging or storing on pipes. And of course, please, no riding inside the buildings.

- **Computer Network**

Computer network connections are available to every student. The connection in the room provides direct access to the WCU campus data communications network and to the Internet. Network connections are also located in study areas. All residence halls are also equipped with wireless network connections. All residents are expected to abide by the WCU Computer Policy, found at <https://policy52.wcu.edu>. For additional information or problem resolution, residents may contact Student Computing or the Computer Center Help-Line (828-227-7487).

Please do not use the Wi-Fi option on printers.

While the University provides anti-virus and spyware blocking programs, it is the student's responsibility to keep their copies up to date and his/her computer(s) scanned and virus and spyware free. Infected computers will be remotely disconnected from the campus network to protect other campus computers, and not reconnected until the computer is repaired.

- **Elevators**

Report all problems with elevators immediately to a Residential Living staff member. In the unlikely event a resident is stuck in an elevator:

- Remain calm.
- Press the call button, UPD dispatch will answer.
- Do not try to pry open the elevator doors.

- **Energy Conservation**

We are committed to raising awareness about the ecological and economic benefits of conserving energy and reducing energy consumption on campus. Please participate by following these simple tips.

- Turn off your lights when you leave your room.
- Keep windows closed in winter.
- Study in common areas where light is provided.
- Use sunlight for illumination.
- Use LED or CFL lights.
- Buy ENERGY STAR labeled products.

- **Guests**

A “guest” is defined as a person present in a particular residence hall or residence hall room with the consent of a hosting resident of that hall or room. Student living in WCU residence halls only have access to the specific residential space to which they are assigned and are considered guests in all other residential communities. A resident should consult with roommate(s) and/or suitemate(s) before inviting a guest to their space and should have approval from the roommate(s) for all guests. All residence halls have 24-hour visitation. Each resident is allowed to host 2 guests in the Residence Hall at a time.

- A maximum of 2 overnight guests are permitted to a resident at a time. A guest can stay overnight only if that resident’s roommate(s) has no objection. No guest may stay more than three consecutive nights, three nights in a calendar month, or ten nights in a semester.
 - Only residents assigned to a room or apartment may live there. Cohabitation is prohibited. Cohabitation is defined as living together or sharing the same space for longer than three consecutive nights, three nights in a calendar month, or ten nights in a semester.
- The resident host must escort their guest(s) at all times throughout the building. Guest(s) should not be left alone in the residence hall room.
- Guests must contact their resident host from outside the building to be escorted into the building.
- The resident host will assume all responsibility for the actions of the resident’s guest(s).
- Residents are responsible for ensuring that their guest(s) abide by all University Policies and Residential Living policies. If a guest is involved in any violations of University or Residential Living policy, the hosting resident, as well as the guest, may be subject to disciplinary action. Residents may be held responsible for violations of University or Residential Living violations that occur while in the building.
- If, at any time, the number of guests present in a room poses an issue in the community due to noise or other violations of University or Residential Living policies, staff may direct them to leave the residence hall.

Roommate(s) and suitemate(s) should outline in their Roommate agreement guest expectations and preferences. Roommate Agreements may be amended as needed with the agreement of each resident. If there is a concern or problem, it is the responsibility of the roommate to bring it to the attention of their roommate(s) or suitemate(s). If the concerns are not resolved, it is the responsibility of the roommate who is concerned with the situation to enlist the aid of the Residential Living staff to assist in resolving the concern.

- **Half Empty Rooms**

Students living in a double room without a roommate and who do not purchase the room as a private room must only occupy half of the room. This means that the second desk, dresser, wardrobe/closet and bed must be clear in order to accommodate another student at any time. Staff members will periodically check the condition of half empty rooms. Any student found to be occupying an entire room will face disciplinary measures, **including a \$75 dollar charge**. Following the first offense, students will have one week to correct the issue before a staff member re-inspects that room. If the student is found to be still occupying the entire room, he/she will then be required to move to another half empty room or purchase the room as a private.

- **Hall Offices**

Residence hall offices are staffed each day by residence life staff, Resident Assistants, Graduate Community Coordinators, or Area Coordinators. If you need assistance, stop by your hall office during the posted hours or call your RA, Graduate Community Coordinator, or Area Coordinator. Resident Assistants are available at other times in their rooms.

- **Housing Accommodations**

Western Carolina University does not have a separate admissions process for students with disabilities. All applicants must meet the criteria for admission to WCU. Admissions decisions are made without regard to disabilities.

Housing assignments are made on a first-come, first-serve basis. Electronic Residence Hall Agreements are available at <http://onlinehousing.wcu.edu>. Also, information regarding the features and floor plan of each residence hall is available at <https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/RoomLayouts.pdf>. A \$300 non-refundable enrollment deposit is required for incoming students and a \$150 non-refundable housing deposit is required for returning students is required with the application.

Applicants who require special housing accommodations for medical reasons should complete the Request for Housing Accommodations form. This process starts by completing a Request for Housing Accommodations through the Office of Accessibility Resources. Students will be directed to complete additional forms and submit appropriate documents as requested through the Accessibility Resources portal.

The request for housing accommodations form for the next academic year must be submitted prior to June 1. Any request form received after June 1 will be assigned on a space available basis.

Those students who need a personal attendant to live in or nearby should indicate this on the application so that at the time of room assignment, special accommodations can be considered. Accessible features and facilities vary in each hall. Students should request additional information from Residential Living and visit the halls to evaluate the facilities that best fit their needs before listing their housing preferences on the application.

Rooms have been adapted in all residence halls to offer a variety of campus housing to students who have disability related needs.

It is important for students, with disabilities, who are transitioning from high school to college to understand their rights and responsibilities. Please refer to this website: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>.

- **Insurance**

The university does not assume any legal obligation to pay for the loss of or damage to residents' personal property; nor does it provide insurance for residents' personal belongings. Students are encouraged to keep valuable items off the floor to minimize any possible water damage. We recommend that residents who desire insurance coverage check with their insurance companies about coverage through homeowner's policies or seek renter's insurance.

Students who have property damaged because of negligence on the part of the University may submit a tort claim to the State of North Carolina to request payment for the property. To find detailed information on this policy or to request a Tort Claim Form, please contact the Safety and Risk Management office at 828-227-7443.

- **Keys**

It is important to take all of your keys with you at all times. Exterior entry doors will be locked at all times and will require your CatCard to gain access. If you find yourself locked out of your room, contact a Residential Living staff member to unlock your door for you. Report all lost keys to a Residential Living staff member as soon as possible.

- **Laundry**

Each residence hall has a laundry room equipped with washers and dryers. These facilities are for residents only. Students should not leave personal items unattended in the laundry room, as the University cannot be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged clothing/items. It's a good idea to set a timer on your phone so you can be reminded when your laundry is done. Please note that all washers are HE front load machines, and therefore, only require a small amount of laundry detergent. Please follow usage instructions placed in laundry rooms and on detergent bottles. Should you have problems with a machine, notify a staff member immediately and post an "Out of Order" sign on the machine.

- **Lockouts**

Residents are issued room keys when they check in and are expected to be responsible for those keys. If you are locked out of your room, you may wait for your roommate to return or find an RA to assist you. You must show identification and sign the lock out documentation form before a staff member will let you into the room. You will be charged an administrative cost of \$10 each time a staff member lets you into your room, beginning with the first lockout.

- **Mail**

United States mail is collected and distributed to the Student Mail Center, located in A.K. Hinds University Center, Monday through Friday, and delivered to each resident's mailbox before the end of the day.

If you do not receive your mail key at move-in, during your first week on campus you should stop by the Student Mail Center to receive it. To ensure that your mail reaches you as quickly as possible, make sure that correspondents have your correct address and zip code. This is the proper format for your residence hall address:

Your Name
245 Memorial Drive
Suite __
Cullowhee, NC 28723

If you have a mail problem, speak with someone in the Student Mail Center between 10:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please note that during the summer sessions mail is not delivered to the individual boxes. Students may pick up their mail from the Student Mail Center during designated times.

UPS/Federal Express and most USPS packages should be picked up at the Student Mail Center between 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. U.S. Mail packages that are insured or classified as Priority Mail can be picked up at the Cullowhee Post Office. In all cases, proper student identification must be shown.

You will receive e-mail notification, via your Catamount e-mail account, for any packages received in the Student Mail Center. Therefore, it will be your responsibility to check your Catamount account regularly or forward that e-mail account to another account. In addition, please check your "Clutter" folder regularly for notifications automatically directed there. When checking out of the residence hall, please complete a Mail Forwarding Address Card to ensure your mail is forwarded to you. You will also need to return your mailbox key to the Mail Center to avoid a key replacement charge.

- **Meal Plans**

University policy requires students who live in a residence hall to purchase a meal plan from the available plans each semester. First-year residential students must choose from either the Unlimited Premium or Unlimited Basic plans. For complete details about Catamount Dining, please visit <https://westerncarolina.campusdish.com/>.

- **Off Campus Partners**

The Student Affairs Division has entered into an agreement with Off Campus Partners to list off-campus housing opportunities. Off-Campus Partners provides a site to link potential tenants with potential landlords/property managers. Users are provided with a variety of online services, including but not limited to the capability to search a database of off-campus properties, to post properties for rent or sale and to post and search messages on message boards. The link to this service is available at: <http://www.wcu.edu/offcampus/>.

- **Prohibited Items:**

- Air conditioners
- Alcohol consumption devices (including kegs, keg taps, party balls, funnels, etc.)
- Ammunition
- Amplifiers
- Aquariums (larger than 10 gallons)
- Archery equipment
- Candles, incense, hookah, or any flammable devices
- Ceiling fans
- Cooking equipment with exposed/accessible heating elements or open flames including but not limited to: air fryers, coffee makers, crockpots, hot plates, indoor grills/boilers, induction cooktops, pressure cookers/instant pots, toaster, toaster oven, etc.
- Contact paper, wallpaper, removable stickers (“glow-in-the dark” stars, etc.)
- Darts/dartboards
- Decorative weapons
- Drones
- Drug paraphernalia (including bongos, pipes, etc.)
- Electric blankets
- Electrical items that are not U.L. approved
- Explosives or fire accelerants (including gasoline, kerosene, lighter fluid, etc.)
- Extension cords
- Fireworks
- Halogen or incandescent lights/lamps
- Motorized modes of transportation (including hoverboards, electric scooters, etc.)
- Oil lamps
- Pets (other than freshwater fish)
- Portable laundry equipment
- Power tools
- Refrigerators > 5 amps
- Smoke/fog machines
- Space heaters (electric, ceramic, or kerosene)
- Television mounts and/or other wall installations
- Waterbeds
- Weapons including, but not limited to; knives, bb guns, air/gas pistols or rifles, firearms of any type, pressurized guns, paintball guns, splat guns, stun guns, toy guns or weapons (water, Nerf), and martial arts weapons.
- Weights/weightlifting equipment
- Wireless routers

** This list is not all-inclusive. If you have an item you’d like to ask about specifically not listed on the to bring or not to bring lists, please contact the Department of Residential Living at: housingquestions@wcu.edu or via phone at: 828.227.7303.

- **Private Rooms**

If double rooms are available to be purchased as private rooms, Residents wishing to have a private room may meet with the Room Assignments Coordinator. Requests will be honored if space is available. Residents must sign a Private Room Contract, indicating agreement to occupy the room as a private room for the academic year or remaining portion thereof, and to pay the fees indicated on the contract.

Residents may be assigned a temporary roommate at the beginning of the semester, based on space limitations. Temporary roommates will be assigned to permanent space as soon as possible. If a temporary roommate is in a private room for more than a reasonable period of time, a prorated refund will be due to the private room resident.

- **Recycling**

Glass, plastic, aluminum, cardboard, and paper recycling bins are located in specific areas outside of each residence hall near the dumpsters. Residents are encouraged to use the bins to dispose of all aluminum drink cans and paper products. Tons of recyclables can be diverted from the Jackson County waste stream if taken into the Facilities Management recycling program. Please do your part for the environment. Recycle!

- **Re-keys**

If your key has been misplaced, you will be charged \$105.00 to replace it. A rekey is submitted by making an online maintenance request. The key will be available for pick up at residential living between 4:30 and 5 PM. If you're unable to make it the key will be with your RA on duty after 8 PM. You will only be able to pick up your key. Your roommate must pick up their own.

- **Repairs**

Should you become aware of a maintenance problem related to your room or a public area within the residence hall, please report the problem immediately using the following method. Submit an online maintenance report. Online maintenance requests may be made by going to <https://housing.wcu.edu>, and selecting "Service Request" on the right side of the page.

Please describe the problem as specifically as possible. Urgent or emergency repairs should be reported immediately to a residence hall staff member or to Residential Living (828-227-7303).

- **Residence Hall Agreement**

The following information responds to some of the common questions residents have regarding the Residence Hall Agreement. Please keep in mind that this section addresses some, not all, of the stated agreement terms. Residents should refer to the Residence Hall Agreement for complete details.

Each student living in a residence hall must sign a Residence Hall Agreement for the entire academic year, or any part of the year remaining when the student moves into the residence hall. Students who breach this agreement will be required to pay an \$1,000 housing cancellation fee. First-year students who must meet the residency requirement outlined in [University Policy 96](#) but who do not complete a Residence Hall Agreement will be assigned a room and meal plan for the full academic year. Per [University Policy 96](#), students completing their first year will be expected to go through Residential Living's Room Selection Process to choose a room for their

second year. Those students subject to the second year of residency who do not go through the Room Selection Process but have paid a housing deposit and submitted a completed Residence Hall Agreement will be assigned a room and a meal plan. Those students enrolled and subject to a second year of residency per the policy who do not pay a housing deposit and/or submit a completed Residence Hall Agreement will be assessed \$2,500.00 on their student account. The Department of Residential Living must be notified of cancellations in writing and with appropriate documentation.

The Residence Hall Agreement may be cancelled for the following reasons without breach of agreement:

- Graduation - A student graduating at the end of the Fall Semester must provide written notice to Residential Living before December 1.
- Medical reasons - A physician must certify medical reasons or injury making it necessary for a student to live off campus or withdraw from the university.
- Marriage - Proof of marriage must be presented to the Department of Residential Living.
- Academic or disciplinary dismissal from the university.
- Participation in an educational program that requires living off campus.
- Official withdrawal from the university.
- Dependent children.
- Military: Called to active duty.

Students who desire waivers or who wish to appeal breaches of the Residence Hall Agreement must submit a written letter outlining their reasons to the Director of Residential Operations in the Department of Residential Living, who will then render a decision based on the information provided. If the student wishes to appeal the ruling, the student must submit a letter of appeal to the Residential Living Appeals Board for review at their next scheduled meeting. The Director of Residence Life chairs the Appeals Board. The Appeals Board membership includes student, faculty, and staff representatives. Rulings of Residential Living Appeals Board are final. The only issue to be considered in any appeal at any level is whether the individual's appeal request fits the criteria listed above.

The University reserves the right to cancel an Agreement if a resident poses a problem to the interest, order, health, discipline, or general well-being of other members of the residential community or University.

The University reserves the right to make all assignments and reassignments as necessary, including temporary accommodations during breaks and holidays.

- **Room Changes**

Room, roommate, or building changes can take place beginning on August 28, 2023, during the fall semester and January 23, 2024, during the spring semester. This waiting period is necessary for Residential Living to verify which students have moved in for the semester.

Residents who are changing rooms must officially check out of the current room and residence hall, if changing buildings, and check into the new room. Any questions about the moving process should be directed to your Area Coordinator, Graduate Community Coordinator or Associate Director of Residence Life.

Students who are housed in Albright-Benton, Black Rock, Harrill, Shining Rock, and Water Rock will only be permitted to make room changes within and between those buildings.

- **Room Selection**

Room selection for the following academic year will take place during spring semester. (For example: Room selection for the academic year 2024-2025 will take place early in spring semester 2024.) Detailed information will be distributed to all residents and posted in all residence halls. Students will be permitted to select their roommate, residence hall and room on a space available basis.

A non-refundable housing deposit of \$150 must be paid and a Residence Hall Agreement (which is valid for the entire academic year) must be electronically signed and submitted to the Residential Living office before a room may be selected.

The Residence Hall Agreement for the subsequent year may be canceled without penalty (other than loss of the non-refundable housing deposit) if the student making the application cancels before June 1 (for the following fall semester). Those canceling after June 1 will be considered in violation of contract and will be responsible for the \$1,000 housing cancellation fee.

All regular room changes will begin to take place during a designated time around the second week of classes each semester. Specific dates will be posted in each residence hall. The Room Assignments Coordinator must approve all room changes. Residents who make unauthorized room changes will be assessed a \$50 charge.

- **Roommates**

The foundation of a residence hall community is built from positive roommate relationships. Roommate relationships require common courtesy, consideration, understanding, and the time that any friendship requires. Roommates who are not accustomed to sharing a room or whose lifestyles are completely different can live together happily, if they are willing to communicate, compromise, and respect the other's space.

Tips for cultivating positive relationships and resolving problems include:

- Completing the "Roommate Agreement" and "Suitemate Agreement" if applicable
- Openly communicating concerns
- Giving constructive criticism
- Being willing to hear constructive criticism
- Being willing to meet halfway/compromise

A roommate relationship is a shared responsibility, with both individuals contributing positively to the relationship. If a problem occurs between roommates and cannot be resolved, it is recommended that a neutral party be asked to mediate the situation. RAs or other staff members may serve as mediators, allowing roommates to speak freely, with respect, to resolve differences. In the event a mediator is unable to assist in resolving a conflict, a room change may be granted.

- **Storage**

Storage is not available in the residence halls (including the storage of residence hall room furniture to make room for other furniture). Residents who need to store items should make arrangements with a local storage company. All room furniture should remain in the room and must be in the room at checkout, to avoid charges. Personal items and room furniture may not be stored in hallways, stairwells, closets, alcoves, or other public space.

Residents may not leave or store belongings in the residence halls between spring semester and summer session or between summer session and fall semester.

- **Summer School Housing**

Residents planning to live on campus while attending summer school need to complete a summer Residence Hall Agreement. For more information about summer housing, speak with the Room Assignments Coordinator in Residential Living, or call 828-227-7303.

- **Withdrawal from the University**

Students withdrawing from the University should complete the appropriate paperwork with the Office of Student Retention, located on the first floor of Killian Annex Building, and make arrangements to move out of residence halls within 24 hours.

Residential Living Information and Processes

- **Consolidation**

When vacancies occur in double occupancy rooms during the academic year, the University reserves the right to reassign residents to consolidate occupancy. Residents wishing to retain private rooms should notify the Room Assignments Coordinator. Requests will be granted if space is available. Residents are required to sign a Private Room Contract and pay the additional private room fee. Residents who are not interested in obtaining private rooms may be assigned a roommate or be assigned to a new location. Any student with an empty space in his/her room must keep half of the room, including one bed, desk, dresser/wardrobe/closet clean and empty in preparation for a roommate to move in.

- **Living-Learning Communities**

In a Living-Learning Community (LLC), students are organized into learning cohorts that appeal to their interests and live alongside one another in designated wings throughout our residence halls. The integration of learning in both the classroom and residential community is supported collaboratively by faculty and Residence Life staff to foster a greater sense of community through the exploration of a shared theme. Students enrolled in one of our special interest communities will see their theme reflected on their residence hall floor as we believe the power of learning transcends the classroom space and these cohorts will therefore have targeted support from their Resident Assistant (RA) that aligns with their LLC interest area. These courses, housed within the Leadership Minor, are designed to assist students in transitioning to university life by providing a balance of challenge and support as they learn about campus and community resources aimed at student success.

* Those denotated as a *Themed Community* instead of LLC follow a similar model with a shared interested in a theme within a designated space within a residence hall, however these students

rely on experiential learning outside of the classroom to explore their theme versus enrolling in a course together.

** Denotes a separate application process

Participation in any of the LLCs or themed communities designates your housing assignment to better foster a sense of community outside of the classroom that is characteristic of this unique opportunity. If you are interested in being a part of one of our communities, please work with your academic advisor to enroll in the course that aligns with your interest area. LLCs and Themed Communities offered for 2022 – 2023 include:

- *Band of Brothers – LLC*
This community focuses on leadership and the exploration of their personal selves through the thematic lens of masculinity, manhood, and brotherhood. Students are provided opportunities to engage in reflection, express emotions in an appropriate manner, and rely on one another for support toward reaching and utilizing their potential. There will also be focus given to raising awareness of men's issues, among others, in the campus community and to explore the bonds that are created between men.
- *Call Me MiSTER – *Themed Community*
The purpose of the Call me MiSTER (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) at WCU is to increase the pool of available teachers from diverse backgrounds in the Western Carolina region and across the state of North Carolina. With racially and ethnically diverse students emerging as the majority population in our public schools, it is vital that students see teachers that look like them in their public-school buildings and classrooms. Each Call Me Mister cohort is comprised of 3-5 male students from racially or ethnically diverse backgrounds and MiSTERS must be interested in pursuing a degree in Elementary, Inclusive, or Middle Grades Education. Students interested in this opportunity should reach out to the Program Director, Dr. Charmion Rush, or visit <https://go.wcu.edu/cmm> for more information. **
- *Cultural Competency – LLC*
Students are provided experiences to explore their personal selves in relation to concepts of cultural competency and social justice. Students in this community are challenged to look at the world through different eyes and think critically about differences they see. Topics such as diversity, civic engagement, globalization, and personal responsibility are explored.
- *Global Awareness & Citizenship – LLC*
Students in this community will be looking at culture and its powerful impact on our lives and perceptions. They will discuss crossing cultures and how to be mindful and open to new learning in that journey. They will consider what it means to have a global worldview. The aim of this community is to develop an awareness of the realities, opportunities, and complexities of the world outside of the United States and to explore the bonds that are created between those of different nationalities and global identities.

- *Going Global! – *Themed Community*
The Going Global! themed community is open to students from the U.S. and around the world who want to think globally while connecting locally. Students will be enriched in this internationally focused environment through a combination of global engagement programming, interactive cultural experience, and community service. A variety of activities will be offered, and student input and engagement are expected. This community will explore international movies, community service, cooking and cuisine, coffee hours, and much more! Campus globalization activities will be centered around the UN Sustainable Development Goals (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>).
- *Going Green – LLC*
This community examines the principles of leadership through the thematic lens of sustainability. Students examine concepts of sustainable development and global climate change evaluating the ecological, social, and economic impacts in our society and beyond. There will be opportunities to begin raising awareness on environmental issues, among others, in the campus community and to explore environmental activism.
- *Freshman Leadership Initiative – LLC*
This community is intended to serve students who apply to participate in the Freshman Leadership Initiative (FLI). The goal of this community is to provide a brief introduction to widely known leadership theories using an interdisciplinary model. In addition to being matched with an upperclassmen leader through the FLI Mentoring Program, as a member of FLI, students will participate in campus events, community engagement, and other opportunities to help develop their leadership potential while contributing to the WCU community. FLI operates on a 3-tiered program focused on Living, Learning, and Leading. Those interested in learning more should contact Leslie Cavin in the Department for Campus Activities. **
- *Secrets of Powerful Women – LLC*
This community uses the frame of femininity, sisterhood, and womanhood to examine the relationship between friendship and women's empowerment. Students will explore their personal strengths, skills, and values that will prepare them to be an active participant throughout their holistic career at WCU. Students will explore opportunities to express emotion in an appropriate manner and in a setting where individuals rely on one another for support towards reaching and utilizing their full potential. There will be opportunities to begin raising awareness of women's issues, among others, in the campus community and to explore the bonds that are created between women.
- *Whee Teach – LLC*
This community is for future teachers and explored what it means to be a leader in the classroom and the field of education. This community is also an Academic Learning Community which enrolls students in a shared class in both the fall and spring semesters. **

- **Residence Halls**

There are seventeen (17) buildings that make up the Western Carolina University residential campus. Each building has its own special appeal, offering a different community and amenities based on building structure and student experiences or needs. For detailed information about each residence hall, please visit <https://www.wcu.edu/experience/life-on-campus/residential-living/residence-halls/index.aspx>.

All residence halls at Western Carolina University are smoke-free facilities. Smoking is not allowed in any part of any residence hall per state law. Smoking is not allowed within 50 feet of any University facility.

- **Residential Living Records**

The Department of Residential Living maintains all student records in compliance with FERPA and [University Policy 108](#).

Check In/Out Processes

- **Check In**

Residents checking into a residence hall should report to the location designated in your assignments email, where a staff member will issue your keys. Each resident must complete a Room Condition Report (RCR) and complete the electronic signature for the Room Condition Report to acknowledge the condition of the room.

Any resident moving into a residence hall before the official move-in begins, each semester, will be assessed \$30 per day, unless the resident is required to arrive early due to an approved University function. If a resident arrives without approval there will be an additional \$20 charge.

- **Check Out**

Residents must check out with a staff member when moving out of the residence halls or complete an express checkout. All personal belongings should be moved out of rooms prior to official checkout. All university furniture must be in rooms and set up as it was upon check-in, and keys must be turned in. Any damages or missing items will be noted on the Room Condition Report (RCR), and the student's account will be assessed for such items.

Residents should ensure that the following are complete at checkout:

- **Make sure room is clean and properly assembled, including floors, walls, counter and desktops, and all furniture.**
- **Assemble beds as directed.**
- **Students living on the 1st floor should close their blinds, students living on floors 2 and up should open their blinds.**

During final exam week, residents are expected to check out of residence hall rooms within 24 hours of their last final exam. Residence halls close, for most students, at 5 p.m. on the last day of exams. Students who are scheduled to take a late final examination on the last day of exams are permitted to remain in the residence halls until 9:00 a.m. on the following Saturday.

Graduating seniors and students participating in graduation will be permitted to remain in the residence halls after the official closing date, but must notify building staff members. All residence halls will be closed by 6:00 p.m. on the Saturday following exams. All students needing to remain past this time must receive approval, at least one week in advance, from the Area Coordinator or Graduate Community Coordinator.

A resident officially withdrawing from the university must check out with a Residential Living staff member or complete an express checkout within 24 hours after withdrawal.

- **Disposition of Student Property**

If a student abandons his/her property in a residence hall area the Department of Residential Living is not responsible for lost or unattended property. Residential Living staff will dispose of abandoned/unattended property consistent with WCU policies and procedures. If a student's property is left unattended due to illness or death, Residential Living will work with the student's designated emergency contact on record in WCU systems or with an appropriate individual producing a valid power-of-attorney or similar documentation. Students are encouraged to keep their emergency contact information current.

- **Express Checkout**

Express checkout procedures provide flexibility and save time at the end of each semester. This option allows residents to check out of residence hall rooms at any time of day or night prior to the residence hall checkout deadline. Beginning the week before final exams, residents may pick up an Express Checkout key envelope from the express checkout box of their residence hall, or see their Area Coordinator or Graduate Community Coordinator, or the front desk in the Department of Residential Living.

Residents choosing the Express Checkout option should:

- **Make sure room is clean and properly assembled, including floors, walls, counter and desktops, and all furniture.**
- **Fill out the requested information on the key envelope, put keys in the envelope, and deposit the sealed key envelope into the Express Checkout drop box.**

Residence hall staff will check each resident's room at a later time. Residents will be responsible for any damages to the room or furnishings that were not previously recorded on the Room Condition Report. Residents choosing Express Checkout may **not** appeal damage charges. If there are concerns related to the condition of your room, Residential Living encourages you to check out through a staff member.

- **Room Condition Report**

The Room Condition Report (RCR) is an electronic form that indicates the condition of the resident's room prior to occupancy. Prior to check-in, each resident will receive an email copy of their RCR which will need to be reviewed. The resident should carefully and thoroughly examine his or her room and record any discrepancies. It is the resident's responsibility to notify the Area Coordinator or Graduate Community Coordinator within 24 hours of check-in if there are any discrepancies or repairs that need to be made to the room or items in the room.

Once repairs are made, the RA will make corrections on the RCR. When a resident checks out of the residence hall, a staff member will use the RCR to again check the condition of the room. The resident will be billed for any damages that have occurred to the room during the resident's occupancy. If ownership of damage cannot be determined, the charge will be divided between roommates/suitemates. The process to appeal any charges will be provided to all students billed for damages.

- **Break Closing**

During the December break, all residence halls must be vacated. During this time, the University shuts down its physical operations to a maintenance level only, including heat, steam, hot water, and electricity. Residents who need to stay in Cullowhee during the break should make arrangements for off-campus housing. Residents are encouraged to take valuables, including needed medications, home during the break, but other items may remain in rooms. Residential Living staff will inspect all rooms during the December break. Unsanitary conditions, violations of University or Residential Living policies, and safety problems will be documented, and residents will be notified of such problems and expected to resolve them. Additionally, any condition or violation subject to the Code of Student Conduct will be handled accordingly.

Residents should ensure that the following tasks are completed before leaving for December break:

- Clean, defrost, and unplug refrigerators.
- Unplug all appliances, including fish tanks, computers and phone chargers.
- Leave the heat ON.
- Close and lock all windows.
- Remove items from floor.
- Empty all trash.
- Take all valuables and money with you.
- Turn off all lights, close blinds, and lock door.
- If leaving the residence hall permanently, check out with an RA or complete an express checkout.