

2026-2027 Resident Handbook



Housing & Residential Life

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA UPSTATE

Guide to Residential Living Sections:

Welcome Letters	2
At Your Service	8
Community Conduct	12
Community Conduct Policies	
Behaviors That Can Impact Safety	17
Housing and Residential Life Conduct Process	24
Emergency & Extreme Weather Procedures	27
Your Room	34
Housing Processes	39

Welcome Letters

As part of the Guide to Residential Living, we are including the three pre-assignment welcome emails sent to most students. These serve as an overall welcome to living on-campus as well as some expectations and advice.

Dear Students,

On behalf of the entire Housing and Residential Life team, welcome to USC Upstate! We are excited to have you as part of our 2026-2027 residential community.

In the coming weeks you will be receiving a series of letters via email to help you prepare for living on campus this academic year:

This first letter will cover some of the items to bring, and some key items NOT to bring this year- which includes some changes to past years.

The second letter will be about making the best of the roommate/suitemate experience.

The third letter will be about living in a residential community- both in terms of your rights and expectations for you as a student.

We will also send an assignment email to you in early July, or after we make your final room assignment if you put in your application later. This email will include your room and building assignment, a link to resources like our Move-Up Guide and the link to make your individual appointment for your Move-Up Day.

As you start preparing for this August, please review this guide and our web site on what you can and cannot bring to your room.

Some changes from recent years:

We provide a refrigerator for each suite common area or apartment. If you wish to bring one the maximum size is now 1.7 cubic feet for new students. Consider communicating with your roommate and perhaps share one.

Power strips and Extension Cords

- Only UL (Underwriters Laboratories) certified three-prong grounded extension cords that are 14 gauge or heavier or ETL certified multi-plug adapters (otherwise known as a surge protector/ power strip) with circuit breakers are permitted to be possessed and/or used inside the residence halls/apartments.
- The extension cord must be equipped to plug in one item only. *An extension cord that meets all other requirements and is designed for more than one item to be plugged into it is prohibited because this type of extension cord is considered a multi-plug device without a circuit breaker. See first bullet.*

We do allow commercially sold bed lifts 8 inches or under, and rental lofts from our current loft provider. *A link will be emailed to students with room assignments.*

Please reach out to Housing and Residential Life staff with any questions. We are happy to clear up any issues before you make purchases, or you arrive on campus.

Sincerely,

Aaron F Lucier,

Interim Director of Housing and Residential Life

Dear Students,

Welcome again to USC Upstate! My name is Jordan Mclelland and I am your Associate Director for Residence Education and Student Engagement. I want to start by thanking you for choosing our campus community as your home for this upcoming year. I chose Upstate as my home in 2023 when I joined the Housing and Residential Life team. The main areas where we will have the opportunity to interact this year will be with our Living Learning Communities, Student Staff Recruitment (Becoming an RA), and our House Council- our community organization which allows residents to make their voice heard on hall and in the community. One of my major roles on the Housing and Residential Life team is one which I hope is not the cause for our interaction this year- Lead Residential Conduct Officer. Thankfully, our communities will be hosting plenty of programs to make residents choose kickball over conduct. While our team is excited to host your first Rock the Block with us, the most important thing is going to be getting safely to campus and settling in.

As you prepare for your on-campus living experience, I want to share some thoughts on being a good roommate or suitemate. The key to a successful and enjoyable living arrangement is effective communication and mutual respect. Remember, the best way to get a good roommate/suitemate is to be a good roommate/suitemate.

One key responsibility all residents share is Cleaning. University staff will clean public restrooms and spaces. Cleaning your room and any shared space within your assigned unit is the responsibility of the students living there- including the shared bathroom(s) (kitchens as well for Villa students) and regularly taking out all trash to one of our dumpster locations. Students will need to communicate and coordinate cleaning responsibilities as a suite/apartment. Failure to keep a shared space clean may not fall to one single resident. Fear not- Resident Assistants will be stopping in once a month to check each space to confirm that they are within Health and Safety standards. Those outside the boundaries will be notified of the concerns and given 24 hours to make corrections to the issue. A pattern of failed Health and Safety Inspections may result in fines and even conduct.

Communication is Key

Open and honest communication is essential for building a positive relationship with your roommate/suitemate. Here are some tips to help you communicate effectively:

- **Set Expectations Early:** Discuss your habits, preferences, and expectations with your roommate/suitemates following move up. Include topics like cleanliness, noise, and sharing of spaces/items. Our required Roommate Agreement will help to facilitate this conversation, and your Resident Assistant (RA) can always join this conversation if they are needed.
- **Respect Boundaries:** Understand and respect each other's personal space and boundaries. Everyone has different comfort levels for things like sharing (food or certain personal items) or even topics of daily discussion, and it's important to be mindful of them. This is an important time to cut through the cringe of having a hard conversation to make the rest of your conversations for the year easier for everyone involved.
- **Be Considerate:** Small acts of consideration can go a long way. Whether it's keeping the noise down when those around you are studying or cleaning up after yourself, these actions show respect and thoughtfulness. If you turn the lights on and are noisy in the room when you return from a late night at the library, don't be surprised if your roommate does the same thing the next time they come home late.
- **Address Issues Promptly:** If any issues arise, address them calmly and promptly. Avoid letting small problems escalate into bigger conflicts. Approach conversations with a solution-oriented mindset. Use your RA as a resource as needed.
- **Stay Positive:** Maintain a positive attitude and be supportive of each other. Encouragement and kindness can help create a better living environment.

Being a Good Roommate

To foster a great living experience, focus on being the best roommate you can be:

- **Be Dependable:** Follow through on your commitments and responsibilities. Whether it's escorting and managing your guests or keeping shared spaces tidy, reliability builds trust.
- **Show Empathy:** Understand and empathize with your roommate's perspective. Everyone has their own challenges and stress. A little empathy can make a big difference.
- **Engage in Community:** Participate in community programming and get involved in House Council. Connect with others while contributing to a positive living environment.
- **Respect Differences:** Embrace the varied backgrounds and perspectives of your fellow residents. Respect for differences and common ground enriches the community and fosters mutual understanding.

I hope you have time to read our earlier letter from the Director of Housing and Residential Life welcoming you to campus and be on the lookout for our next letter about Campus Community. We

look forward to having you on our campus as we work together to create a vibrant and respectful community this upcoming year.

By being a good roommate and communicating effectively, you can ensure a positive and enriching experience for yourself and your fellow residents.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jordan McLelland

Associate Director of Residence Education and Student Engagement

Dear Students,

Welcome to USC Upstate!

My name is Chloe Jones, and I serve as the Associate Director for Housing Administrative Services and Business Operations in Housing and Residential Life. While that's a long title, my role centers around supporting your residential experience from housing assignments and billing to communications and other behind-the-scenes operations that help our community run smoothly.

As you prepare to move in, I want to talk about something that's at the heart of living on campus: community.

Living on campus is about much more than having a place to sleep. It's about building friendships, finding your people, and creating experiences that make college memorable. The people around you are navigating many of the same challenges, opportunities, and transitions that you are. Those shared experiences can help you feel connected, supported, and like you truly belong.

Creating that kind of community doesn't happen by accident. Housing and Residential Life is committed to providing an environment where every resident feels welcome, respected, and supported, but we can't do it alone. Every resident plays an important role.

Small actions make a big difference. Keeping shared spaces clean, being mindful of noise, respecting your neighbors, and getting involved in community events all help create a positive living environment where everyone can succeed.

As you begin your on-campus experience, we ask that you keep the following community expectations in mind.

As a member of the Upstate Residential Community, you can expect:

- A clean, safe, and welcoming living environment.
- Freedom from intimidation, harassment, and harm.
- Quiet hours that support studying and resting.
- Opportunities to participate in academic, social, and community-building programs.

- Respect for your privacy, personal beliefs, and belongings.
- Support from Housing and Residential Life staff whenever you need it.
- The ability to host guests responsibly within university policies.
- Freedom of expression while respecting university policies and the rights of others.
- Fair treatment and the opportunity to be heard throughout the student conduct process.
- A voice in your residential community through opportunities like House Council.

As a member of the community, you are responsible for:

- Following university and housing policies.
- Respecting the rights, identities, and experiences of others.
- Keeping your room, suite or apartment, and shared spaces clean and safe.
- Helping protect your community by making thoughtful decisions about who you invite into the residence halls.
- Escorting your guests and taking responsibility for their behavior.
- Speaking up when something doesn't seem right. If you see something concerning, report it.
- Staying engaged in your academic journey and participating in your residential community.
- Cooperating with Housing staff and other university officials when needed.
- Communicating with your parents or guardians as appropriate to help them stay informed throughout your college experience.

Your time on campus is what you make of it. By looking out for one another, showing respect, and contributing to your community, you'll help create an environment where everyone can learn, grow, and thrive.

We're excited to welcome you to campus and can't wait to see the community you'll help build. If you have questions about living on campus or your role as a member of our residential community, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any member of the Housing and Residential Life team.

Welcome home and Go Spartans!

Sincerely,

Chloe A. Jones

Associate Director for Housing Administrative Services and Business Operations

At Your Service – HRL Staff & USC Upstate House Council

Housing and Residential Life Staff

Director for Housing and Residential Life is responsible for the overall planning, organization, implementation, and supervision of all campus housing services and personnel, including budget development, orientation housing and summer conferences.

Associate Director for Housing Administration and Business Operations is responsible for housing applications, assigning rooms, and coordinating the re-application process for returning students. They chair and oversee the Housing Contract Release and Housing Exemption processes. They are also responsible for monitoring the budget for the office, Visa accounts, debits and credits to students' accounts, payment of housing fees, and other financial reports. They serve in an on-call capacity.

Associate Director for Residence Education and Student Engagement is responsible for department-wide student staff recruitment, selection, training and development. They also co-advise the House Council. They serve as the point person for residential education, programming and the further enhancement of our Living Learning Communities. This position is a full-time live-on professional staff member and serves in an on-call capacity.

Assistant Director for Housing and Residential Life is a full-time live-on professional who focuses on building a positive community within the residence halls and Villas by assuming leadership responsibility for staff development, residential programming, operations, and student success. They also supervise the Residential Life Community Directors in the two Treehouse buildings (Magnolia & Palmetto) and the Community Managers in the Villas. This position is the point person for supervising summer program staff and coordinating intern housing. This position is a full-time live-on professional staff member and serves in an on-call capacity.

Assistant Director for Operations and Communication is a full-time live-on professional who focuses on department communication and marketing, providing updates to the website and coordinating the media board as well as department social media. They coordinate monthly communication (email/newsletters) to students and their parents/families and contribute to the Parents' Association communications. This position is a full-time live-on professional staff member and serves in an on-call capacity.

Office Manager is responsible for managing the daily administrative tasks for the office. They are the main contact point for visitors to the office, callers, and general emails. They also supervise Student Office Assistants.

Facilities Supervisor is responsible for facilities management, including the coordination and supervision of the **Maintenance Technicians**. We also have student assistants who work in HRL Maintenance.

Resident Assistant(s) (RA) - The RA position is the most comprehensive leadership/employment position a student can hold at the University. RAs are upper class students (sophomore through senior) hired after a rigorous group process retreat and interview, who work to establish a safe and accepting environment in a community of care for his or her residential community by offering support, information, and opportunities for education and entertainment (programming) throughout the year. The RA is responsible for a floor of students (Treehouses) or a section of the Villa Apartments. Their work includes MoveUP/check-in, twice monthly community meetings/head counts, monthly health-safety-wellness-fire inspections, fire drills as well as Detector/Extinguisher inspections, and check-out. They serve in an on-duty rotation.

Graduate Community Director/ Community Director/ Community Manager are experienced graduate or undergraduate students that manage one of the three residential communities. They live in the building they are assigned to and supervise the Resident Assistants and in the Tree Houses- the Desk Assistants. They are responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of a residential area and assuming leadership responsibility for staff development, residential programming, operations, and student success. They serve in an on-call capacity, and Graduate Community Directors may assist in the Student Conduct Process.

Office Assistants (OA) work in the main housing office answering the phones, answering emails and serving as front-facing greeters for guests and students to our office. They support HRL office functions from MoveUp to closing. While we may hire freshmen, the positions are generally filled with sophomore-seniors. When we have vacancies, we will post the application as well as share information over our website, social media and email.

Desk Assistant (DA) - The DA is hired to work at one of the two front desks (Magnolia, Palmetto) within the residential facilities, helping to monitor the daily activities and operations of the desk services. While we may hire freshmen, the positions are generally filled with sophomore-seniors. When we have vacancies during the academic year, we will post the application as well as share information over our website, social media, and email.

Who Should I Contact?

Depending on the circumstance, you may need to reach out to HRL staff members or other members of our Upstate community to get help:

- *I lost my key/can't get into my room.* During the day stop by the desk for your hall or the Housing and Residential Life office. After Hours? Call the RA on call for your building.
 - Magnolia House: 864-809-3049
 - Palmetto House: 864-809-8304
 - The Villas: 864-809-8305
- *My room/apartment has a maintenance issue.* Fill out a maintenance request. This form can be found in your Housing portal.
- *I'm having trouble getting along with my roommate/suitemate. I want to get involved in my community. I need to know more about campus resources.* Reach out to the RA on your hall (The Treehouses) or assigned to your building (The Villas). If you need additional help after reaching out to your RA, reach out to your community's Graduate Community Director/ Community Director/ Community Manager.
- *I want to change rooms or have a question about my housing contract.* Reach out to the Housing and Residential Life office.
 - Email: hrf@uscupstate.edu
 - Phone number: 864-503-5422
 - Office location: Palmetto House Basement
- *I have an immediate medical or safety emergency.* Call 911.
- *I have a non-emergency safety concern or question. I have a question about parking.* Call USC Upstate Police at 864-503-7777.

Get Involved – House Council at USC Upstate

The House Council serves as the governing body for the three communities, ensuring residents have representation in decision-making processes, promoting a positive living environment, and supporting the overall mission of the residence halls. Specifically, the Council:

- Represents the interests of all residents within each community.
- Plans and organizes community events and activities.
- Addresses concerns, issues, and needs of the residents.
- Serves as a liaison between the residents and the Housing Residential Life staff.

The House Council shall consist of elected members from each of the three residence hall communities: Palmetto House, Magnolia House, and The Villas. Each residential community will elect 4 members to the Council. Then officers are elected from 12 members. In addition to elected members, the House Council will occasionally create committees that address a particular need in the community. Participation is typically open to all students living in the communities but will prioritize council members first.

Community Conduct

The base of living in a community is knowing that your behavior impacts those around you. This is even more important in a compact community like a residence hall or apartment complex.

USC Upstate and the Housing and Residential Life (HRL) Department have a range of policies in place to set clear expectations of behavior in the campus-owned housing. These expectations include adherence to the [Student Code of Conduct](#) by residents.

These expectations start with the USC Upstate Spartan Creed and extend from these into specific policies.

USC Upstate Spartan Creed:

- I will practice personal and academic integrity;
- I will respect the dignity of all persons;
- I will respect the rights and property of others;
- I will discourage bigotry, while striving to learn from differences in people, ideas and opinions;
- I will demonstrate concern for others, their feelings, and their needs for conditions which support their work and development.

Community Conduct Policies

01. Harm to Persons:

- a. Actions or conduct which threatens to cause harm to another, results in physical harm, has the potential for physically harming another person, or which create conditions that pose a risk of physical harm to another, or which cause reasonable apprehension of physical harm are prohibited.
- b. Use of, or threatened use of, physical force or violence. This includes fighting or violent acts of a sexual nature are prohibited.
- c. Any attempt to, or participation in, actions, which endanger the health or safety of any person(s) are prohibited.
- d. Individual or group activity, which results in disturbance or distress to others and/or adversely affects the living, learning, or working environment are prohibited. This includes University staff, student-staff, or faculty.

02. **Public Health and Communicable/Controlled Illnesses:** Residents are prohibited from engaging in behavior that poses a public health risk to themselves

or others. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, excessive trash in a residential space, unsanitary cooking practices, defecation, urination, vomiting in places outside of a restroom, and/or not following public health guidelines implemented by the University or Student Housing. Residents will immediately report to Housing and Residential Life staff any infections or contagious diseases occurring within the facility.

03. Residential Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy: (for more details the full Alcohol and Other Drugs University Policy <https://uscupstate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/AOD-POLICY-04012024.pdf>)

ALCOHOL

No alcoholic beverages or empty alcohol containers are permitted in the Magnolia or Palmetto House or other residence areas even if residents or guests are at least 21 years of age. Alcohol is permitted in the Villa apartments for those who are at least 21 years of age; alcohol must be limited to one six-pack of beer or one bottle of wine (not to exceed 750 ml). No distilled/spirituous liquor is allowed in a university housing facility.

Full Policy

The presence, possession, use, manufacture, or distribution of alcohol in or surrounding Student Housing facilities or activities is prohibited. Cereal malt beverages and alcoholic liquor (this includes all alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine, energy drinks with alcohol, etc.) may not be brought into or consumed in educational buildings or in university student housing facilities. This regulation pertains to any person, regardless of age, student status, or position within or outside of the university setting. South Carolina law prohibits providing alcohol to guests under the age of 21. Adults charged with a violation of the hosting law face penalties under the law and University policy.

There is an exception to this prohibition on possession and use of alcohol for persons of legal drinking age, who possess and consume alcohol in an amount consistent with personal consumption, in the confines of individual apartments in the Villas. *The alcohol must be limited to one six-pack of beer or one bottle of wine (not to exceed 750 ml). No distilled/spirituous liquor is allowed in a university housing facility.*

Consistent with the policy permitting possession only for the purposes of personal consumption, alcohol containers in excess of 750 ml, including kegs and party balls, are prohibited in all University housing facilities.

All who are present during an alcohol policy violation will be subject to further action under the university and housing conduct process, regardless of their participation level. The irresponsible use or misuse of alcohol by any resident, whether or not of legal drinking age, and any inappropriate behaviors that results from consumption of alcohol, including the inability to exercise care for one's own safety or the safety of others due in whole or in part to alcohol consumption, is considered a violation of the housing and university alcohol policy. Being under the influence of alcohol, even when the use of alcohol is permitted by university policy, is not an excuse for misconduct or failing to follow university and housing rules and policies.

In addition, the following are prohibited:

- Hosting a gathering where alcohol is available to minors.
- Participating in high-risk alcohol consumption. Examples include, but are not limited to, kegs or significant amounts of alcohol, beer pong, flip cup, and/or other drinking games, inability to function without assistance, incoherence, disorientation, unconsciousness, loss of control of bodily functions, community disruption, and/or endangering self and/or others.
- Possessing devices to rapidly consume alcohol. Examples include, but are not limited to, beer bongs and funnels.
- Containers once containing any alcoholic beverage are prohibited in *Magnolia or Palmetto House regardless of the age of the resident*, or in the Villas where the residence where the occupants are not at least 21 years of age. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, beer cans or bottles, liquor bottles, wine bottles, kegs, funnels, beer bongs, and/or flasks. Discovery of an alcoholic beverage container or other alcohol paraphernalia will require immediate discarding of the item, container and contents, if any, in the presence of a staff member.

DRUGS

Medical Cannabis: Medical cannabis may not be possessed or used on University of South Carolina Upstate property. Please contact Housing and Residential Life for any questions regarding residents who have a medical cannabis license.

The illegal possession, illegal or inappropriate use, or presence of drugs is prohibited.

Policy violations include, but are not limited to:

- Manufacturing, growing, selling, providing, and/or distributing drugs and/or controlled substances is prohibited.
- Possessing drug paraphernalia is prohibited.
- Misuse of prescription medications of any kind is prohibited.
- Inhaling, injecting, or ingesting any substances that may alter your mental state not directed by a medical professional, is prohibited.
- Possession of prescription medications other than those prescribed to and in possession of the resident is prohibited.
- Hosting a gathering where drugs and/or controlled substances are present and/or consumed is prohibited.

- 04. Noise Policy:** An atmosphere conducive to study and sleep is necessary in an academic community. The general expectation is that noise levels will be always held to a minimum and students will be expected to adhere to campus quiet hours. Magnolia and Palmetto Houses will observe specific quiet hours from 9 p.m. to 8 a.m., seven days a week, other than during reading and final examination periods, when twenty-four-hour quiet hours will be observed. During the quiet hours, there may be no amplified music (or other sounds) emanating from a room, apartment, or suite within the residences, including noise from televisions, computers, or other electronic devices. At no time may music (or other sounds) be played from windows or in hallways. Headphones may be helpful for students who wish to maintain a respectable noise level.
- 05. Self-Care and Concerning Behavior:** Engaging in behavior that poses a threat of danger or harm to the life, health, well-being, safety, or property of any member of the University community (including oneself) is prohibited. Residents are responsible for their own self-care and are expected to independently manage daily life functions. Examples include, but are not limited to, appropriate personal hygiene and management of medical conditions.
- 06. Smoking/Tobacco/Vaping:** USC Upstate is concerned about the toll that smoking, vaping, and tobacco use has on the health and well-being of the University community. As a public institution of higher education with departments that have interest in and treat the effects of smoking, second-hand smoke, and other tobacco use, USC Upstate believes it has an obligation to exercise leadership by promoting a healthy tobacco-free and smoke-free

environment for its students, faculty, staff, and visitors. As part of a global wellness initiative for the University, USC Upstate is a completely tobacco-free, vaping-free, and smoke-free campus. The policy expands the 2011 smoke-free/tobacco-free policy to include the use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes/vaping) of any kind (either prescribed or non-prescribed electronic nicotine delivery devices). Civility and respect are expected by all members of the University community as we make this transition. For a full review of the policy, please reference the USC Upstate website (www.uscupstate.edu/smokefree).

Students who smoke inside the campus perimeter may be subject to disciplinary action. Residential Life staff will intervene to support those situations where residents have been unable to resolve conflicts, or where violations of the smoking perimeters and designated areas are suspected.

07. Solicitation and Operation of Business:

- a. Posting of any flyers, posters, signs, or messaging in public areas, doors, and entry areas; and sidewalk chalk in residence hall areas are by approval of professional Housing and Residential Life (HRL) staff ONLY. Inquiries can be made at the HRL office in the ground floor of Palmetto House.
- b. Solicitation for businesses, events, and/or individuals for commercial, promotional, or personal gain (including door-to-door sales and distribution of advertisements) within the residence halls/ apartments is prohibited except when sponsored by HRL, or another University department/organization with HRL approval. Violators should be reported to HRL staff or residents should call University Police. Inquiries can be made at the HRL office in the ground floor of Palmetto House.
- c. Residents are prohibited from pursuing any business on the premises or in the residence halls/apartments.
- d. The apartment unit should be used solely as a residence. Examples of business operations include, but are not limited to, babysitting, automobile repair, hair, nails, and other cosmetic endeavors.
- e. Residents of registered or sponsored student organizations may use public and commons areas with approval from Housing and Residential Life staff & from the Office of Student Involvement. Guidelines and approval forms are available at the Housing Office.
- f. Residents are prohibited from inscribing or affixing any sign, advertisement, or other notice to any part of their residence hall room, apartment or on the outside of any Villa Housing building.
- g. Solicitations, signs, other marketing and alcohol advertisements/signage are prohibited from being placed in windows. Signage and other items in windows can be a distraction to those on the ground.

Behaviors That Can Impact Safety

Safety rules in a community are essential to creating a secure, respectful, and comfortable living environment for all residents. These guidelines help prevent accidents, reduce fire hazards, and ensure that shared spaces remain clean and functional. By following established safety protocols, residents contribute to a community where everyone can thrive, feel protected, and focus on their academic and personal growth.

Behaviors that can directly endanger other students' life or safety may result in the student's immediate removal from housing. This includes criminal acts, door propping, misuse of keys/ID Cards, violations of the guest/visitation policy, and fire safety regulations.

01. Door Propping/Exterior Doors and Security:

- a. Propping the door to a residential facility violates the Housing Agreement and is a fire/safety hazard.
- b. Residents are prohibited from allowing people who are not their visitor/guests into the building or onto the floor of the residence hall/into the apartments.
- c. Residents are prohibited from propping open or causing any floor exit door or building exterior door to be propped open.
- d. Non-residents are prohibited from entry into the residence halls/apartments unless escorted by a resident of that location.
- e. Continued issues with door propping may result in sanctions being applied collectively to a person, suite, floor or entire hall.

02. Misuse of Keys/ID Cards:

- a. Keys/ID Card Access are only issued to the resident contracted for student housing for a particular bedroom and suite/apartment. No person may use or possess any University key without proper authorization.
- b. Residents are prohibited from duplicating keys or ID cards. Residents are prohibited from borrowing/loaning keys and ID cards for any period of time. Residents are also expected to keep the keys and ID cards issued to them in a safe area and/or under their control so as not to adversely affect the security of their room and community.
- c. Tampering with keys, and/or access card readers or with lock mechanisms is prohibited and could result in financial charges.

- d. Residents are prohibited from storing keys outside their room or apartment using realtor lockboxes, magnetic key storage, or hiding keys within gardening, plant statues or under mats.
- e. Additional locks may not be added to doors or other University property or equipment.

03. Cleanliness, Trash, and Pest Control:

Residential Rooms/Suites and Apartments are to be kept generally clean, and trash is to be disposed of in an approved trash container. Residence Halls/Apartments will be periodically inspected by the Residence Life Staff. Students with rooms not meeting inspection standards set by HRL will be subject to disciplinary action.

a. Trash

All residents must properly dispose of trash, recyclables, boxes, etc. in the appropriate dumpster or recycling container. If the dumpster is full, please take your trash to the next available dumpster. Students are expected to follow directions/restrictions posted at the dumpster or any other trash/recycling receptacle.

All trash must be disposed of immediately and should never be left outside of rooms in the hallways or outside of apartments. Residents will be charged a minimum \$25 per bag for trash bags found outside of the suite/apartment.

Personal trash may not be left or disposed of in public areas. Residents who leave personal items will be held financially responsible for cleaning, removal, and/or damage. Students may not dispose of personal/room trash in the University trash canisters near the entrances to the buildings.

b. Pest Control

Preventative pest control services are periodically performed by Housing and Residential Life for insect control purposes. Students are expected to report any issues with pests in a timely manner. Students may be billed for pest control treatments if it is deemed that the students created an environment that encouraged pests, or for failure to follow pest control protocols in case of evidence of pests.

Residents must allow Housing and Residential Life or contracted vendors to enter rooms for pest control inspection and treatment unless a prior medical exception has been filed with Housing and Residential Life.

It is the responsibility of the owner of an approved Emotional Assistance Animal (ESA) to assure the welfare of their animals during pest control services and to use a flea preventative as needed.

Outside pest control services are prohibited, including purchased products such as bug spray, insect bombs, and insect traps or bait.

Bed Bugs

The university has a set bed bug protocol, and each room has been checked by a contracted pest control contractor before students arrive.

In instances of suspected bed bugs, a room/area will be reinspected by the university's contracted pest control contractor. If found students will have to follow a specific protocol. The university is not responsible for relocating residents as they go through this process.

Students may be billed for pest control treatments if it is deemed that the students created an environment that encouraged pests, or for failure to follow pest control protocols in case of evidence of pests.

04. Elevators Misuse:

Residents and their guests are prohibited from tampering with, jumping/jostling within, or riding on top of an elevator at any time. Ringing the elevator bell or call button in nonemergency situations is also prohibited. Residents and their guests are prohibited from tampering with the call pad code buttons. The elevator should only be "held" by using the open door button; the door can cause damage or the elevator to shut down for safety reasons.

05. Destroying or Tampering with Property /Damaging and Vandalism:

- a. Every student is expected to treat University property and the property of others with respect. Damage to University premises/property or property of any other person is prohibited. Residents may be held responsible for damages to university property.
- b. Tampering with or disabling fire safety equipment, fire alarms, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers is prohibited and may result in immediate removal from housing.
- c. All residents are responsible for room/floor/section/apartment/building damages (including but not limited to microwaves & refrigerators, common area recreation equipment, televisions, exit signs) and will equally pay for

charges assessed to the room/floor/section/apartment/building as appropriate. Entire buildings may be subject to fining/billing for costs if littering and damage become an issue. *HRL will make every effort to bill the segment (room/floor/section/apartment/building) of the community deemed responsible for the damage or extra cleaning if the individual responsible is not identified.*

- d. The destruction of public or private property is prohibited on Housing and Residential Life properties which include, but are not limited to, residence hall and apartment buildings, commons, and inside and outside common spaces. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, the destruction or unwarranted alteration of bulletin boards and hall decorations.
- e. Pranks, practical jokes, and/or mischievous acts which include but is not limited to activities that may or may not damage property, cause potential injury to self or others, violate noise policy, or inconvenience other residents, guests, and staff are prohibited on Housing and Residential Life properties which include, but are not limited to, residence hall and apartment buildings, commons, and inside and outside common spaces.

06. Indoor Sports:

Any type of sport that involves throwing any form of projectile, kicking or hitting objects is not allowed in the buildings, parking lots, and/or surrounding and restricted areas due to foreseeable damage or injury. This includes, but is not limited to baseballs, bats, eggs, flying discs, footballs, golf balls, ice, paint balls, potatoes, soccer balls, softballs, water balloons, and any object that may cause damage. Restricted areas include cars, inside and near buildings, and areas that have the potential to cause damage.

07. Transportation Devices: *Note Restrictions under the Your Room Section*

- a. Transportation devices (i.e., bicycles, scooters, hover boards, mopeds, motorcycles, any fuel-operated machines, etc.) are prohibited within university buildings, residence halls, or tennis courts, and in high traffic pedestrian areas (i.e., front entry ways of buildings).
- b. Bicycles, scooters, and mopeds are to be stored in the racks outside the building and may not be placed in stairwells or chained to stair rails, fences, or posts. Motorcycles must be parked outside in accordance with Upstate Parking regulations.
- c. Additionally, skateboards and other devices (including kick scooters, e-scooters, roller-skates or in-line skates) may not be ridden on railings, curbs,

benches, or any such fixtures that may be damaged by these activities, and individuals may be liable for damage to university property caused by these activities.

08. Guests and Visitation:

USC Upstate's HRL Guest and Visitation Policy was developed in an effort to balance student privileges with academic demands, the rights of occupants not hosting a guest, and health and safety. It should be noted that visitation is a privilege, not a right. Students violating this privilege or the rights of others may be subject to the loss of some or all visitation privileges up to the loss of campus housing.

Sound judgement is necessary when exercising your freedom and responsibility regarding guests in the residential facilities. Visitation guidelines are in place to provide a measure of safety for the residential communities. Please understand that any system is only as safe as those who are using it, allow it to be. Safety is a shared responsibility. Your cooperation in escorting your guests and informing visitors and overnight guests of our visitation policies when entering facilities is expected. Failure to comply with visitation guidelines will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

- **Visitation**

Refers to the approved times during which residents may host guests in their assigned room, suite, apartment, or common areas. Visitation may not interfere with the rights of roommates or other residents.

- **Visitors (Non-Overnight Guests)**

A *visitor* is any individual who is not assigned to the room, suite, or apartment they are visiting and does not stay past designated visiting hours or sleep overnight.

- **Overnight Guests**

An *overnight guest* is any individual who is not assigned to the room, suite, or apartment and remains in the space overnight or sleeps in the unit.

General Expectations

- Residents are responsible for the behavior of their visitors and overnight guests at all times.
- Guests must remain with their host and be escorted at all times within residential facilities.
- Guests must comply with all university policies and residence hall regulations.

- Guests may not be provided independent access to a room or apartment by HRL staff.
- The presence of a guest must not:
- Deny a roommate access to their space
- Create discomfort or undue hardship for any resident
- Residents may be held responsible for policy violations occurring in their assigned space, regardless of presence.

Face Coverings/ Identity Concealment

For the safety and security of the residential community, guests and residents are prohibited from wearing masks, face coverings, or any items intended to conceal their identity within residential facilities, except when worn for legitimate health, occupational, or religious purposes.

Failure to comply may result in removal from the facility and disciplinary action.

Hours and Breaks:

Treehouses (Magnolia & Palmetto Houses)

- Visitation hours: 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 a.m. (Monday–Thursday)
- Visitors must depart by 2:00 a.m.

Overnight Guest Restrictions (Sunday–Thursday):

- No overnight guests between 2:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.
- Applies to all non-residents, including family members
- Thursday–Saturday Nights:
- Overnight guests are permitted only if all roommates/suitemates agree and the roommate agreement allows
- Any guest (visitor or overnight) who is not a current USC Upstate student and remains after 11:00 p.m. must be registered through the official HRL overnight guest registration process, and check in the desk for the respective house like all visitors/guests.

Villas (apartments)

- The Villas- visitation in the apartments is 24 hours/7 days a week providing the roommate/suite agreement allows overnight guests.

- ALL overnight guests or visitors after 11 pm that are not currently an USC Upstate student, must be registered with Housing and Residential Life via the official HRL overnight guest registration process.

There will be no overnight guests over break periods (Fall Break, Thanksgiving, Winter Break, Spring Break) or during restricted timeframes (Finals Week each semester).

Removal of Visitors or Overnight Guests:

If, for any reason, including but not limited to noise complaints, possession of alcohol or other prohibited substances/materials/items, or noncompliance with university rules of any kind, visitors/ overnight guests may be asked to leave by university staff at any time.

Underage Guests:

Visitors who are under legal age (18) must be escorted by a legal guardian or parent. Overnight guests must be of legal age (18) or older unless special permission is provided by HRL. Babysitting is prohibited in the residence halls.

Cohabitation:

A non-assigned person may not live/stay in a residence hall space for more than 48 hours in a seven-day period, regardless of the approval of the assigned resident(s).

Maximum Occupancy:

Each suite or Villa Apartment can host a maximum of 10 people including the residents, and residents should communicate and plan accordingly with their room/suitemates.

Emergency Situations

Residents, visitors, and overnight guests should follow the direction of university staff including RAs, uniformed officers, and other emergency personnel during emergencies such as fire, severe weather, or an incidence of violence, or failure to follow posted emergency procedures or evacuation for fire alarms.

Housing and Residential Life Conduct Process

The Housing and Residential Life Office is responsible for reports of **Community Conduct Policy** violations, **Community Behavior Violations**, and **Code of Conduct Violations** that occur within the Residential Life community from any Resident or Guest for which a resident is responsible while visiting a USC Upstate Housing and Residential Life community. Upon receipt of a report, the Conduct Officer assigned to the case will investigate the report to determine if there is enough information to support an alleged violation of the Community Conduct Policy, Community Behavior Policy, or the Code of Conduct within Residential Life, and if so, those involved will be documented and will receive notice of any further investigation if needed based on significance, severity and recurrence of the reported violation.

Steps in the Process:

All notifications, communication, and documentation in this process will be delivered as a formal electronic letter to the resident's student email address.

- Policy breaches or behaviors which have clear evidence and are outlined within this handbook or the University Code of Conduct may result in immediate documentation/warning with an option to appeal if the residents believe they are not responsible for the policy breach or behavior. This documentation/warning is delivered as a formal electronic letter to the resident's student email address.
- Policy breaches or behaviors without clear evidence of responsibility may result in a Conduct Meeting. This meeting will be scheduled by the Conduct Officer assigned to the case for a time based on the resident's classes as well as the conduct officer's schedule.
- If the Conduct Officer determines sufficient information does exist to prove an alleged violation, and the involved resident accepts responsibility for the alleged violation, the Conduct Officer will provide the resident with suggested sanctions.
- The Resident can either agree to the sanctions as discussed in the meeting **or** disagree with the proposed sanctions and request a formal hearing on the issue of appropriate sanctions.
- If the Conduct Officer determines sufficient information does exist to prove an alleged violation, and the Resident does **not** accept responsibility, the case will be referred for a formal hearing.
- Any rescheduling of conduct meetings must be completed 48 hours prior to the time of said meeting. The residents are responsible for presenting their own information at the meeting. If the resident chooses not to participate, or fails to attend the

meeting, the conduct officer may review the available information and make a determination in the resident's absence.

- All appropriate parties will be notified following the close of the investigation.

Parental Notification Policy

Students under the age of 21:

The University of South Carolina Upstate will implement the following parental notification provision of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act: 34 CFR 99.31(a)(15)(i):

The disclosure is to a parent of a student at an institution of postsecondary education regarding the student's violation of any federal, state, or local law, or of any rule or policy of the institution, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance if

- The institution determines that the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to that use or possession; and
- The student is under the age of 21 at the time of the disclosure to the parent.

Specifically, when the University of South Carolina Upstate has knowledge of a student's alcohol consumption or drug use under the circumstances described below, the University of South Carolina Upstate will notify the parent/legal guardian of a student enrolled on the Upstate (Spartanburg) campus who is under 21 years of age. Initial notifications may be telephonic, but all notifications will be followed up with a written notification.

- Following the first known violation of university policy or state law regarding drugs.
- Following the first known violation of university policy or state law regarding alcohol, when the suspected use of alcohol has:
 - placed the student in a life-threatening situation as determined by an attending medical professional or reasonably determined by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee.
 - caused the student to be in a physical or mental state that has prompted intervention by university personnel, police, or medical personnel out of concern for the student's wellbeing or to address the student's conduct.
 - endangered the health or welfare of another person, including any report by police of arrest for driving on campus under the influence of alcohol.
- Following the second known violation of university policy or state law regarding alcohol.
- Following a violation of university policy or state law regarding alcohol or other drugs that results in the cancellation of the student's university housing contract.

All students, regardless of age:

In addition, the University of South Carolina Upstate will notify the parent/legal guardian of any student enrolled on the Upstate (Spartanburg) campus, regardless of age, when the student's suspected alcohol or drug use has placed the health or safety of the student or others in danger and notification is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This notification will be made by telephone and follow-up will be made in writing.

Department of Public Safety and University Police Notification and Response

USC Upstate Department of Public Safety and University Police (hereto referred as UPD) is the responding Police agency for the University of South Carolina Upstate buildings and property. At times, Housing & Residential Life staff procedures dictate calling UPD to assist in responding to incidents. UPD may also be present in the building when not initiated by HRL staff to address safety and community concerns.

Additionally, UPD/Parking Transportation Services will respond to incidents in parking facilities across campus, including those near housing facilities. UPD also enters USC Upstate Housing & Residential Life space to engage with staff, attempt to build community, and facilitate educational programs.

Residents should anticipate a response from UPD in the following situations: illegal substances, wellness checks involving illegal substances, community damages/vandalism, active violence, community threats and suicide ideation. Residents are also able to call the Department of Public Safety and University Police as they wish to report: theft, crimes, violence, assaults, threats, damage to property, and other reasons, as needed.

Emergency & Extreme Weather Procedures

After Hours and Emergency Procedures

Monday through Friday between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:30 a.m., and all day on the weekends, the following procedures shall be followed for after-hours problems and emergencies:

- RA's on-duty phone numbers are posted in 1st floor lobby of the Palmetto/Magnolia House. The Villa RA's on-duty phone number is posted near each Villa and in the Landing and is listed here:
 - Magnolia House: 864-809-3049
 - Palmetto House: 864-809-8304
 - The Villas: 864-809-8305
- The RA is called upon for noise, maintenance problems, roommate complaints, lockouts and any other housing related issues.
- The University Police are called for any criminal activities, such as illegal, underage drinking, theft, assault and battery, vandalism of personal property, domestic violence, trespassing, etc. They can be reached by calling 864-503-7777 (non-emergency) or 911.

Student Responsibilities for Safety and Fire Prevention

It is important to become familiar with your surroundings. The North Spartanburg Fire Department and University Police would like you to review the following safety tips to assist you in preparing for a fire.

- Plan ahead.
- Have a flashlight with you.
- Read the fire evacuation plan carefully. If one is not posted in your room, request one from the HRL.
- Count the number of doors between your room and the exits. This will assist you in case of an emergency evacuation.
- Locate the fire alarms on your floor- *If a student fails to vacate their area in sufficient time as deemed by the fire department, they will be required to attend a fire safety course.*

Life Safety Tips

- If the fire is in your room, get out quickly. Close the door, sound the alarm and notify University Police.

- Always use a stairwell, never an elevator. The elevator could stop at the floor of the fire
- If the fire is not in your room, leave if it is safe to do so. Be sure to take your room key with you in case the fire blocks your escape and you need to re-enter your room
- To check the hallway for fire, touch the door with the back of your hand to test the temperature. If the door is cool, get low to the floor, brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. Be ready to close it quickly if there are flames on the other side. Crawl low in the smoke to the nearest exit; the freshest air is near the floor
- If your room door is hot, do not open it. Instead, seal the door with wet towels or sheets. Turn off fans and air conditioners. Call the University Police to give your location
- Signal from your window

Fire Training and Prevention

It is incumbent upon the staff of Housing and Residential Life to provide as safe of an environment as possible for the students in their stay at USC Upstate. Thus, the following tasks will be performed each year and documented by Housing and Residential Life staff and/or University Police.

- At least two fire drills are conducted each semester – all alarms should be treated as a real fire event, don't assume it is a drill.
- Smoke detectors are placed in each bedroom within campus student housing and common living space of each dorm room
- Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are inspected by housing staff three times a semester
- Fire escape routes and information are posted on the back of each bedroom and exit door

Residence Hall Fire Procedures – Treehouses (Magnolia & Palmetto Houses)

In the event of a fire, sound the fire alarm immediately. Call 911. Provide important details including possible breaks in gas or electrical lines or other special hazards. Notify University Police at 864-503-7777 after getting to safety.

Evacuate the building according to the following procedures and escape plan:

- Everyone should walk out of the designated exit in a quiet orderly manner. RA's will check their respective halls and be the last individual to leave.
- Do not close windows.
- No one should enter the building when the alarm sounds.

- Students, staff and visitors will evacuate to the residential parking lot across from Magnolia and Palmetto Houses.

University Police will designate alternate sites if the need arises. Everyone must remain out of any driveway or other hard surfaced area close to the building. University Police will be designated to meet the first responder with a master key.

Access roads will be kept open for emergency vehicles. University Police will have a designated individual or group of individuals to ensure that all access roads are open. Students and staff members will be allowed to return to the building at the direction of the head housing officer at the scene, and only upon the recommendation of the Fire Department and University Police Department.

Fire Procedures – Villas

If the fire is in your apartment, get out quickly. Close the door, sound the alarm by yelling “FIRE,” knock on other doors as you exit and notify the University Police 864-503-7777 or 911. If the fire is not in your room, leave if it is safe to do so. Be sure to take your room key with you in case fire blocks your escape and you need to re-enter your room.

- Students, staff and visitors will evacuate across the parking lot in front of your Villa building, following the directions of staff.

To check for fire, touch the door with the back of your hand to test the temperature. If the door is cool, get low to the floor, brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. Be ready to close it quickly if there are flames on the other side. Crawl low in the smoke to the nearest exit; the freshest air is near the floor. If your room door is hot, do not open it. Instead, seal the door with wet towels or sheets. Turn off fans and air conditioners if possible. Call University Police 864-503-7777 or 911 to give your location. Signal from your window. Make note of the address for your apartment listed on the back of your front door. Your physical address is not the same as your mailing address.

Smoke Detectors

If the battery dies in your smoke detector, place a maintenance request. Residents are responsible for notifying HRL if smoke detectors are not operating properly. Any resident alleged to have committed an act of improper use or abuse of fire prevention and control equipment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including loss of housing privileges and/or criminal prosecution.

Severe Weather Information

The campus police department monitors weather for the campus community and takes responsibility for keeping the campus community informed of possible weather events.

The terms “watch” and “warning” are frequently used with weather conditions or events. A thunderstorm or tornado watch means that conditions are favorable for such an event. A warning, which is more serious than a watch, means that the weather event is imminent and you should take immediate action.

Tornadoes are a common weather phenomenon in the southeastern United States. Tornadoes are formed by severe thunderstorms, most frequently in the spring and summer, and are nature’s most violent and erratic storms. A tornado can travel for miles along the ground, lift, suddenly change directions, and strike again. There is little that can be done to protect buildings from the strength of tornado winds, but there are actions that can be taken to protect oneself. The first of these is to know the significance of warnings.

Tornado Watch

A tornado watch is given when weather conditions are favorable for the formation of tornadoes; for example, during severe thunderstorms. During a tornado watch, keep an eye on the weather and be prepared to take shelter immediately if conditions worsen.

Tornado Warning

A tornado warning is given when a tornado is sighted or indicated by radar. Because tornadoes can form and move quickly, there may not be time for warnings. It is important to stay alert during severe storms. Although there is no guaranteed safe place during a tornado, some locations are better than others. In event of a tornado warning, students should take shelter immediately. Students will receive text messages and emails from the University to warn them of a tornado warning as well as for the “all clear” notice.

By following the following suggested safety tips, one can increase the chances of survival:

Treehouses (Magnolia & Palmetto Houses) Vacate your suite. Remain in the hallway, seated with back against the wall protecting head and neck as appropriate with pillows or other items, until your RA tells you that it is okay to return to your room. If possible, go to the lowest floor hallway (basement). Cover your head with a pillow. One basic rule to follow wherever you are is to avoid windows. An exploding window can injure or kill. Should it be deemed necessary to follow the above protocol, HRL staff will give the ok for the students to return to their suites under public safety’s direction.

In the Villas: Please go to the back-bedroom’s bathroom and close door. Use pillows, blankets or even your mattress to protect yourself from flying debris. Remain there until it is safe to venture out.

After the Storm: Emergency services personnel are usually on the scene quickly after a tornado. Wait for help to arrive. If you are outside, avoid power lines and do not go into damaged buildings; they may collapse completely.

Hurricane Precautions

South Carolina is one of the many states along the Eastern seaboard of the United States that is threatened annually by hurricanes. Fortunately, the school is well inland and has only been affected by a few hurricanes in recent history. Campus and community residents can expect several days of early warning of hurricanes that could affect Spartanburg and the surrounding area. During that time, emergency plans will be reviewed and detailed instructions issued to the university community. Should a hurricane actually strike the campus, the same procedures outlined for tornadoes are to be followed.

Human Incidents

Active Shooter/Assailant

If an Active Shooter/Assailant enters your residence hall, classroom, meeting room, or other campus building you should:

- Do your best to remain calm.
- Try not to do anything that will provoke the active shooter.
- If there is no possibility of escaping (get out) or hiding out, only as a last resort when your life is in imminent danger should you make a personal choice to attempt to negotiate with or overpower the shooter.
- If the active shooter(s) leaves the area, barricade the room or go to a safer location.

At a location distant from the active shooter, such as on a different building or floor; or you are not able to leave the area safely:

- Remain calm
- Warn other staff, visitors and students to take immediate shelter
- Go to a room that can be locked and/or barricaded
- Lock and barricade doors or windows
- Turn off lights
- Close blinds
- Block windows
- Turn off radios and other devices that emit sound
- Keep yourself out of sight and take adequate cover/protection (i.e., concrete walls, thick desks, filing cabinets)

- Silence cell phones
- Have one person call 911 and state: "Name, building and location." We have an active shooter on the campus, - shots fired.

If you are in an outside area and encounter an active shooter, you should:

- Try to remain calm.
- Move away from the active shooter or the sound of gunshot(s) and/or explosions(s).
- Look for appropriate locations for cover/protection (i.e., brick walls, retaining walls, parked vehicles, etc.)
- Call 911 and provide the information listed above.

What should I expect from responding officers?

The objectives of responding law enforcement officers are:

- Immediately engage or contain the active shooter(s) in order to stop the killing.
- Identify threats such as improvised explosive devices.
- Identify victims to facilitate medical care, interviews and counseling.
- Investigate

Police officers responding to an active shooter are trained to proceed immediately the area in which shots were last heard in order to stop the shooting as quickly as possible. The first responding officers may be in teams; they may be dressed in normal patrol uniforms, or they may be wearing external ballistic vests and Kevlar helmets or other tactical gear. The officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns and handguns.

Do exactly as the team of officers instruct. The first responding officers will be focused on stopping the active shooter and creating a safe environment for medical assistance to be brought in to aid the injured.

How to react when the police arrive at your location:

- Remain calm and follow the officers' instructions.
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets).
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers.
- Keep hands visible at all times.
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as attempting to hold on to them for safety.
- Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling.
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or directions when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the area.

When the police arrive, the following information should be available:

- Number of shooters
- Number of individual victims and any hostages
- The type of problem causing the situation
- Type and number of weapons possibly in the possession of the shooter e) All necessary individuals still in the area
- Identity and description of participants, if possible
- Police will have/be provided keys to all involved areas as well as floor plans
- Locations and phone numbers in the affected area

Your Room

Room Personalization and Decoration

Decorating your suite/apartment can immensely add to the comfort of your apartment and make it more homelike. Residents are encouraged to personalize their rooms and decorate suite/apartment areas within established guidelines to prevent damage or potential safety hazards. Residents should seek the advice of Housing and Residential Life staff members before beginning to personalize their rooms if there are questions or concerns about possible room damage. In all cases, students are responsible for damage to their room and suite/apartment, even with approved items.

University owned furniture cannot be removed from the room or disassembled. Any furniture moved should be reset to its original location at move-out. Residents will be held responsible for damages for leaving furniture in hallways or lounges and for furniture removal and/or replacement.

- **Bed Setups**
 - Approved: Commercially sold bed lifts 8 inches or under, rental lofts from our current loft provider.
 - The bed clearance is 36 inches minimum from the top of the mattress to the ceiling.
- **Prohibited materials** for decoration:
 - Contact paper, wallpaper, stickers.
 - Cans, bottles, neon signs, posters, aluminum foil on windows.
 - Solicitation materials or personal messages in/on windows.
 - Road signs or public signage (e.g., stop signs, restroom or wet floor signs.)
 - Painting of furniture or of rooms/common areas.
- **Wall hanging restrictions:**
 - No nails, screws, duct tape, or adhesive-backed coverings including 3M Command Strips.
 - Small tacks, poster sticky tack, blue tape are permitted for hanging of items.
- **Tapestries and fabrics:**
 - Cannot be draped over lighting fixtures.
 - Cannot be hung across hallways, balconies, or used as partitions.
 - Banners, flags, or clothes may not be hung out of windows or balconies.

- **Plants:**
 - One or two small tabletop-sized houseplants are allowed.
 - Must not obstruct windows.
 - Terrariums over 10 gallons are prohibited.
 - Live cut trees (holiday trees) are not permitted.
- **Hallway decorations:**
 - Only HRL-approved signage or program publicity is allowed.
 - No wrapping of doors, wreaths, marker boards, or other additions to the door or wall are permitted.

Prohibited Items- These are items prohibited due to safety, possible damage, or impact on the university facilities.

- **General Prohibited Items:**
 - Incandescent/halogen bulbs – all bulbs should be LED for safety and energy savings
 - Wi-Fi routers or private internet services – the university provided Wi-Fi service is the only allowed service
 - Metal-tipped darts
 - Candles, incense, or other items that create an open flame
 - Flammable items (charcoal, lighter fluid, open flame grills, butane torches, fireworks, etc.)
 - Lava lamps, halogen lamps, oil lamps, wax melters
 - Self-Adhesive LED strips due to wall damage
 - Second-hand/used furniture due to bedbug risk
 - Outdoor grills of any type without approval of HRL
 - Saltwater fish tanks, or fresh water over 10 gallons. ONLY fish are allowed, no amphibians or reptiles.
 - Homemade bed lifts/lofts or commercial bed lifts over 8 inches, unapproved lofts
 - Additional door locks (e.g. chain or deadbolt)
 - *Weapons. Possession, use, or distribution of explosives (including fireworks and ammunition), guns (including air, BB, paintball, facsimile weapons and pellet guns), or other weapons or dangerous objects such as arrows, axes, machetes, nun chucks, throwing stars, or knives with a blade of longer than 3 inches, including the storage of any item that falls within the category of a*

weapon in a vehicle parked on University property- from the USC Student Handbook

- **Transportation Devices**

- Transportation devices with Lithium Ion Batteries (e.g. hoverboards, skateboards, scooters, etc.) unless the device is approved through Disability Support.
- Gas powered, electric powered, and/or battery powered scooters (including but not limited to lithium ion batteries) are not permitted in any residential facility. Thus, such devices may not be stored in a resident's room/apartment/suite.
- Indoor use of bicycles, skateboards, or roller skates is prohibited.

Appliances and Electrical Devices

- **Prohibited:**

- Air Conditioners/Space Heaters Residents are prohibited from having a portable AC unit in their room/apartment.
- Kerosene heaters, electric heaters, radiant heaters, open coil space heaters.
- Commercial grade or permanently mounted air purifier or filtration systems are prohibited- including but not limited to ionizer air purifiers, ozone generating air purifiers.
- Ceiling fans (except select Villa Apartments.)
- Personal large appliances- dishwashers, washers, dryers, freezers.

- **Treehouses (Magnolia & Palmetto Houses) Specific Prohibitions:**

- Coffee makers (except mini-Keurig)
- George Foreman grills
- Hot plates

- **Microwaves:**

- One microwave is provided per suite/apartment
- No additional microwaves allowed

Authorized Items

- **Air Purifiers:**

- Portable/personal units only (non-ionizing, non-ozone generating)
- **Cooking Appliances (Allowed in all rooms):**
 - Air popcorn popper
 - Mini/personal Keurig
- **Cooking Appliances (Kitchen use only in Villas):**
 - Air fryer
 - Bread maker
 - Ceramic sealed hot plates/ induction plates
 - Drip coffee maker
 - Electric crock pot
 - Electric fondue pot
 - Electric griddle
 - George Foreman™ or similar grill
 - Hot dog cooker
 - Rice cooker
 - Toasters (not toaster ovens)
 - Waffle maker
- **Convenience Items:**
 - Blenders, mixers, can openers, juicers
- **Personal Care Devices:**
 - Hair dryers, curling irons, straighteners (must be plugged directly into wall outlets)

Refrigerator Guidelines

- Must be UL, ETL, or CSA approved
- Door gaskets must be in good condition
- Must have a 3-prong grounded plug
- If using an extension cord:
 - Max 10 feet, 14 gauge or thicker, one item only
- Max amperage: 3.5 amps
- Max size: 1.7 cubic feet for new students (4.2 cubic feet for 2024/25 or earlier- USC Upstate residents)
- One refrigerator per resident
- Must be kept in the bedroom

- Must be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition
-

Extension Cords/Multi-Plug Adapters:

- **Permitted:**
 - Only UL (Underwriters Laboratories) certified three-prong grounded extension cords that are 14 gauge or heavier or ETL certified multi-plug adapters (otherwise known as a surge protector/ power strip) with circuit breakers are permitted to be possessed and/or used inside the residence halls/apartments.
 - The extension cord must be equipped to plug in one item only. *An extension cord that meets all other requirements and is designed for more than one item to be plugged into it is prohibited because this type of extension cord is considered a multi-plug device without a circuit breaker. See first bullet.*
- **Restrictions:**
 - Extension cords must power only one item
 - Cords cannot exceed 10 feet
 - Only one extension cord per double outlet
 - No daisy-chaining (connecting cords or power strips together)
 - Built-in outlet plugs on appliances are prohibited
 - Max 3 items per surge protector per double outlet
 - Max wattage per double outlet: 1,500 watts
- **Prohibited:**
 - Multi-plug adapters/outlets without circuit breakers
 - Mini generators/ Lithium battery banks with 120-volt outlets
 - Drop cords (over 10 feet)

Housing Processes and Standard Procedures

Apartment/Room Changes

Rooms may be occupied only by the students to whom they are assigned. Rooms may not be sublet to another person. Students assigned to an apartment or suite may not use or occupy an empty bedroom within that apartment or suite. Residents shall not switch or move apartments/rooms without the written permission from HRL. The specific Apartment/Room Change process email sent at the start of each semester.

It is important for the University and the HRL staff to have accurate records of where residents live for safety and security reasons. Switching or moving to another suite/apartment/room without written permission may result in a \$200 fine and disciplinary action.

Unauthorized Occupancy

Vacant space will be utilized by new residents and residents who change apartments/rooms. In most cases, unless an emergency, you will receive notification from HRL regarding any newly assigned person(s) to your apartment/room. It is under the authority of HRL to make room assignments.

Vacant space must remain unoccupied at all times. If by chance your roommate moves out, the bedroom does not become exclusively yours. This includes, but is not limited to keeping clothing and other personal belongings in the room, beds being placed together, and using the extra closet space or dressers.

Individuals who fail to keep the unoccupied space in the room open, clean, and ready for a new resident may be billed \$250. If the problem is not rectified, the responsible resident may face room change and/ or single room rate charges as well as disciplinary action.

Consolidation

The Department of Housing & Residential Life must efficiently and effectively utilize all available spaces in the residence halls. To accommodate the needs of all students, the HRL reserves the right to utilize the following consolidation policy as needed. In order to maximize housing space, HRL reserves the right to move residents from one unit to another at any time deemed necessary by the Director. Although HRL will make every possible effort to contact all affected by the move, the office reserves the right to fill any vacancy as deemed necessary without prior knowledge of the residents.

At any point during the semester, students may find themselves left in a room without a roommate. These students have the following consolidation options:

- Consolidate with another student in the same residence hall who is without a roommate or voluntarily move to a space in another residence hall.
- Request the Department of Housing & Residential Life to reassign them to a double room with a roommate.
- Opt to pay the pro-rated Double as a Single room fee and remain alone in their room, for that semester. HRL will actively attempt to assign a student to the space at spring semester unless the student chooses to pay the Double as a Single for the remainder of the year.
- Stay in the room by themselves without paying the private room fee. The Department of Housing & Residential Life may assign another student to the room at any time. While students are there alone, they must occupy only half of the room and leave the other side for the room unused. Once a student is notified that they will be receiving a roommate, they cannot opt to pay for a single room at that time to prevent a new roommate from moving in.
- Students who do not choose any of the above options may be charged the private room fee.

Energy savings, water conservation, and Power Bills

Energy costs impact housing costs for future years and energy/water conservation can help the environment.

HRL will pay the power bill for each Villa apartment up to \$90 a month. Any amount over the allotted \$90 dollars may be split and billed between the residents.

Energy Conservation Tips

- **Unplug Devices When Not in Use-** Many electronics draw power even when turned off. Unplug chargers, lamps, and appliances when they're not needed to reduce "phantom" energy use.
- **Use Natural Light During the Day-** Open blinds or curtains to take advantage of daylight instead of turning on lights. This reduces electricity use and creates a more pleasant environment.
- **Limit Use of Personal Appliances-** Share appliances like mini-fridges or fans with roommates when possible, and avoid using high-energy items like space heaters or personal microwaves.

- **Turn Off Lights and Electronics-** Always turn off lights, computers, and TVs when leaving the room, even for short periods. Consider using a power strip to make it easier to shut off multiple devices at once.

Water Conservation Tips:

- **Take Shorter Showers-** Aim to keep showers under 5 minutes. Reducing shower time by just a few minutes can save gallons of water each day.
- **Turn Off the Tap While Brushing or Washing-** Don't let the water run while brushing your teeth or washing your face. Turn it off until you need to rinse.
- **Report Leaks Immediately-** A dripping faucet or running toilet can waste a significant amount of water. Notify maintenance staff as soon as you notice any leaks.
- **Only Run Full Loads-** If your residence hall has shared laundry facilities, wait until you have a full load of clothes before using the washing machine.
- **Reuse Water When Possible-** Use leftover water from your water bottle to water plants instead of pouring it down the drain.

Missing Student Procedure

Students residing on campus (Magnolia House, Palmetto House and the Palmetto Villas) may identify and register a contact person(s) in the Housing portal to notify if the resident student is determined to be missing. If a student is under 18 years of age, is not an emancipated individual and is determined to be missing, USC Upstate must notify the contact as well as a custodial parent or guardian within 24 hours. To register missing student notification information, submit the information in your housing portal or contact the HRL Office at or prior to move-in.

Missing persons should be reported to the USC Upstate Department of Public Safety, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Dean of Students or the Director of HRL.

Keys/ID Cards

A room key is issued to students based on their assignment designation at the time of check-in. You are responsible for keeping this key with you at all times. All keys are property of USC Upstate, and are not to be duplicated outside of the university system. This is a violation of USC Upstate policy and a breach of security. Keys are to be turned in when a student checks out; duplicate keys will not be accepted at checkout.

In addition, your student ID must be carried with you at all times. Card access through student ID cards are used on individual halls, floors and their suite or front apartment door (temp cards in the event of a lost ID).

Students who are locked out of their rooms/ apartments should go to the HRL office during business hours. After business hours, students should contact the RA on-duty. Students must verify their identity with a photo ID or by other means before they will be given access to their room by a staff member keying them into the space. Students are allowed three lockouts per academic year before being charged \$25/ lockout for every lockout thereafter.

Lost keys will result in a \$75 lock change each (the lock/core is replaced for security purposes).

A lost temp key card results in a \$25 replacement charge from HRL.

Keys/cards are not to be loaned to other people and/or duplicated, especially to those individuals who are not residents.

All residents are reminded not to bend, make holes in or mutilate their ID cards in any way. If their card ceases to work due to such damage the student will be expected to pay a \$15 replacement card fee at the Public Safety and Parking Department. Lost card replacements are \$35.

Winter Break and Closing

During University designated “winter break” the residence halls and Villa apartments are closed. Residents are to be out of the buildings during these times. Information on winter break including closing times, procedures, and requirement for registering will be sent to student’s USC Upstate email in advance of the break period. The cost to remain on campus during winter break is \$475 and will be added to the resident’s student account.

Residents are permitted to remain in campus housing during Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, and Spring Break provided they have communicated by the due date with the Housing and Residential Life office; students may leave their personal items in their rooms during all breaks.

Closings

At the conclusion of each semester (fall, spring and summer), residents who are not remaining in campus housing must vacate 24 hours after their last final. Graduating seniors must vacate by posted times following graduation. The residence halls and apartments officially close at the conclusion of the fall and spring semesters. Any students remaining in housing must be approved and may be charged a per night rate equivalent to their room

charge. Information on closing, including closing times, procedures, and requirements for check out appointments will be sent to student's USC Upstate email in advance of each break period.

All personal property must be removed at check-out/time the student's contract is ending.

Contract Release-First-Year Students

The deadline to submit a request for release from the academic year housing contract for the spring semester is December 1. Approved requests will incur a non-refundable \$500 release fee in addition to pro-rated housing charges for the period the student occupied the residence.

First-year students may be eligible for a waiver of the \$500 release fee if they meet one of the following criteria:

- Documented medical emergency (with no prior condition) necessitating university withdrawal
- Documented mandatory withdrawal from an academic program
- Departure due to military orders

Please note that pro-rated housing charges will still apply in these cases.

Requests based on the following reasons will not be approved:

- Disputes with a roommate
- Deciding to live at home mid-semester

These are not considered acceptable grounds for breaking the housing contract.

First-Year students who wish to break their contract for any reason other than those documented above must make a request through the Contract Release Committee. The Contract Release Committee is comprised of the Associate Director of Housing Administration and Business Operations (chair), one Residential Life professional staff member, a student and at least one (1) non-Housing and Residential Life staff person; The Director of HRL serves in an ex-official role on the committee, as they are the appeals officer. The committee reviews all requests regarding the cancelling of the housing contract as well as requests to have cancellation fees reduced. Until the committee renders a decision regarding a student's contract, the student should not make any off-campus housing arrangements. Once a decision is made by the Contract Release Committee, a resident has 5 days to appeal the decision. Appeals must be made in writing to the Director of Housing and Residential Life.

Contract Release-Upperclassmen/Transfer Students

Upperclassmen students currently residing in on-campus housing at USC Upstate who wish to move off-campus while remaining enrolled will be subject to a \$500 contract release fee. Additionally, prorated housing charges will apply for the period the student occupied the residence.

The \$500 cancellation fee may be waived if the student meets one of the following criteria:

- Documented medical emergency (with no prior condition) necessitating university withdrawal
- Documented mandatory withdrawal from an academic program
- Departure due to military orders
- December graduation

Contract Release-All

Residents who have been granted a cancellation of their contract must have all their personal belongings removed and be properly checked out of his/her fall assignment 24 hours after the last day of fall semester exams. Residents who fail to remove their personal belongings from their room/apartment will be billed a minimum \$25 removal charge (per bag). Personal property will then be treated as abandoned property and therefore disposed of at that time.

Note: Contract Release requests will be determined on a case-by-case basis in regards to the policies and procedures in this contract. It is HRL policy to withhold any monies to be refunded if a student has an outstanding balance on their account.

Abandoned Properties Procedure

With reasonable notice, Housing and Residential Life (HRL) staff may dispose of abandoned property in lobbies, floor lounges, study rooms and public bathrooms.

HRL shall not be held responsible for student's belongings left after a scheduled move out date or left more than 24 hours after an unscheduled move out. Such belongings will be deemed abandoned, and HRL reserves the right to take possession of and discard such belongings. Residents who fail to remove their personal belongings from their room may be charged \$25/bagged items removed as well as \$25-50/large item removed.

Property such as clothing, books, computers, refrigerators, microwaves, etc., left in on-campus housing by students who have left campus will be secured by the Residence Life staff and the owner contacted, if at all possible. If contact cannot be made or if property is

not picked up, the abandoned items will be disposed of after 10 days. A charge will be made to the account of the student responsible.

Additionally, if a student has left campus without checking out, HRL will change all applicable locks and charge the student for all necessary expenses to change core and rekey locks.

Student Withdrawal and Credit Requirements

To maintain eligibility for on-campus housing, students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester. Students who drop below this threshold should promptly contact the Director of Housing and Residential Life (HRL) via email to discuss their situation.

If a student's enrollment falls below six credit hours without prior notification to HRL, they may be required to vacate their housing assignment. In such cases, housing charges will be prorated accordingly. HRL receives regular reports on student enrollment statuses and may initiate contact regarding housing eligibility or to discuss potential exceptions.

Refunds for housing charges are subject to the university's established refund schedule, which varies depending on the timing of withdrawal during the semester. For detailed information on refund eligibility and procedures, students should consult the Bursar's Office.

Freshmen Live-On Exemptions

Exemptions to the residence policy are granted to students who fall under one or more of the following categories if met by the first day of classes in the fall semester:

1. Commuters, defined as students who reside with their parents or legal guardians not more than 35 miles from the USC Upstate campus. The residence must be with parents or guardians, not other relatives. The exemption application must be accompanied by evidence that the address given is the bona fide principal residence* of the parents or guardians and has been for at least five years. That should include, at a minimum, a copy of an assessment notice showing that the property is assessed as the principal residence of the owner, and evidence of ownership for the required time. If parents or guardians have changed their principal residence within the five-year period, there must also be evidence of sale of the previous residence. If the parents or guardians rent, and do not own, their residence, copies of leases reflecting the necessary continuous period of occupancy must be provided. Further corroborating information may be required at the discretion of the Residential Life staff.

2. Married students.

3. Students with legal dependents.
4. Students age 21 or older by the start of the academic year.
5. United States military veterans.

Application to apply for one of the exemptions must be made through the housing portal in StarRez with supporting documentation as required in the instructions; items that may be requested include but are not limited to a assessment notice/property tax, rental house or apartment lease, utility bill of the permanent address, a driver's license copy of the primary resident and certain forms may need to be notarized. Students must complete all of the steps in the approval process and meet one of more of the requirements to be granted approval to reside at home and commute to campus. Housing can still be provided even if a student qualifies for one or more of these exceptions.

*"Principal residence" means the one place where an owner of the property has their true, fixed, and permanent home to which, whenever absent, they intend to return and that shall continue as a principal residence until another principal residence is established. The principal residence shall be one of 5 years or more.

Room Entry Procedure

All efforts are made to reduce the frequency that staff of Housing and Residential Life or the university must enter a student's living space. For routine maintenance (such as pest control, air filter changes, health safety inspections) the office of Housing & Residential Life will provide at least 48-hours' notice. Notices will be e-mailed to your Upstate email account.

Occupants cannot prohibit authorized University Housing and Residential Life staff to enter, without notice, any part of the dwelling unit for the purpose of making safety evaluations regarding persons or property, apartment improvements, or repairs to any part of such dwelling unit; or when authorized personnel have a reasonable belief that a violation of any part of the Resident Handbook, University regulation/ policy, local ordinance, state or a federal statute is in progress; and/ or for other emergency purposes. We may also enter to conduct wellness checks and/or check who is occupying the room.

There are some circumstances that can occur where notice will not be given to you:

- Emergency repairs to protect the facility and/or health and safety of residents
- Behavioral concerns of a student may constitute a violation of college policies and/or pose a risk to the health and safety of a student

- Work order was submitted to Housing and Residential Life requesting that specific work be completed in a suite or apartment

The following guidelines are used by university staff/student staff in regard to room entry:

- Authorizing university personnel will not enter a student room without first knocking and identifying oneself
- If assigned occupants are not present, a master key/ ID card may be used to gain entry. If assigned occupants refuse entry, the staff member may ask for additional staff support and/or depending on circumstances may contact campus police for additional help
- Whether the occupants are home or not, staff will announce they have entered the space
- Whenever possible, the purpose of the entry will be stated to the occupants of the room
- Staff are not authorized to enter a student's room upon the request of another student
- Rooms are routinely entered during the break periods for safety and security reasons (i.e. check thermostat, perform routine or preventative maintenance, etc.)

Insurance and Liability

USC Upstate does not assume any liability or responsibility for the loss, damage or theft of any personal property or damages resulting from negligence of any residents, accidents, acts of nature and/or appliance/equipment failure; this includes water leaks in the suite/apartment.

The easiest way to avoid loss of your belongings is to keep your suite/apartment locked whenever you are not there and valuables securely put away. Residents wishing to protect themselves from the possibility of such losses should cover their belongings with insurance.

We require all residents to have personal property insurance or rider to a Homeowner's policy uploaded in SSC on the Housing portal. Contact your local or hometown insurance agent to obtain renters insurance. In some cases, dependents may find coverage under their parents' existing homeowner's policy. All residents are encouraged to check their homeowner's policy to make sure their belongings are properly insured while living on campus. There are companies that work solely with college and university students to insure them at very low premiums and deductibles; check out Grad Guard (linked in our portal), NSSI (linked on our website), or Dorm Defense. Failure to provide a declaration of

renter's insurance may result in student charges and weekly fines of \$100.00 assessed to the student.

Parking at Upstate

Students/visitors/guests parking on campus are required to register their vehicles (car, truck, motorcycle) and follow parking regulations. More information:

<https://uscupstate.edu/about/campus-resources/parking-on-campus/>

Pets/Animals on Campus

USC Upstate is responsible for assuring the health and safety of all employees and students. In keeping with this objective, USC Upstate does not permit employees, students, and visitors to bring pets inside facilities that are owned, leased or operated by USC Upstate.

Residence Hall Students may have freshwater tank 10 gallons or smaller. ONLY fish are allowed, no amphibians or reptiles.

Full Policy, Including Service Animals / Emotional Support Animals Information

<https://uscupstate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Animal-on-Campus-Policy.pdf>