

# A PARENT'S GUIDE TO Residence Hall Living



## *Dear Parent:*

Sending a daughter or son off to a university is a big step, whether it's your first time or your seventh time. The excitement of their achievement is often tempered by your anxiety over their welfare and satisfaction. Certainly a big part of that welfare and satisfaction involves their living environment while they are at Pittsburg State. The University Housing staff works hard throughout the year to provide the best service for our students!

Often times, having accurate information can assist parents in being more at ease about the transition and the new world that their son or daughter is entering. This publication is an attempt to provide parents with information about topics that might be on their mind about the daily living of their student.

While this material will not be able to fully answer all of your questions, we hope that it will provide you with some basic facts which may begin to provide answers. We also hope it may be helpful in developing other questions our University Housing staff can answer.

I think you will find Pittsburg State University to be a caring, student-centered university full of individuals truly interested in helping students be successful. Certainly the Department of University Housing strives to operate from this perspective. Communicating with our students and parents plays a big part in our ability to be successful in this endeavor. As such, we encourage you and your student to talk with our staff members about any concerns that you might have.

I look forward to your student joining us in the residence hall community for the coming year and to perhaps meeting and talking with you during move-in or beyond.

Sincerely,

Allison Ouellette,  
Director of Residence Life

## Campus Residency Policy

PSU requires that all first-year students live in the residence halls for their first two academic semesters on campus and purchase the 7 Day Access Plan or the 5 Day Access/\$100 dining dollars meal contract. All other students may live in housing of their choice. Prior to signing the contract, exceptions to the policy will normally be granted where any of the following circumstances exist:

- The student lives at home with parents or legal guardians and is commuting within 50 miles of the PSU campus.
- The student is married and living with his or her spouse and/or has dependent children in their care.
- The student is a veteran with one or more years of active service.
- The student is 21 years of age or older.
- The student is a transfer student and is transferring 24 hours of credit or more (concurrent enrollment credits do not qualify).

Any other exceptions must be reviewed and considered prior to submitting a contract for a residence hall assignment. First year students may not cancel their contract once it is submitted if they remain enrolled at the university. Forms for applying for exemption to the Campus Residency Policy are available by contacting the Office of University Housing.

Students not in compliance will have a hold placed on their record, blocking the completion of registration and enrollment.

# Since you asked about...

## building security and access

All exterior doors of the residence halls are locked at all times (with the exception of designated check-in days). This reduces access traffic to only building residents and their escorted guests. Locked exterior doors improve the safety and security of residents, reduce behavioral problems caused by non-residents, and lower overall damage occurrences. With the exterior doors locked, it is extremely important that residents carry their keys each and every time they leave the building. Staff members are on duty from 6 p.m. through 7 a.m. each day and make periodic rounds of the facilities from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. Resident Assistants in each living area are watchful of the events and happenings in that area.

## damage costs

Damages that are not billed to the individual responsible for them are prorated among the residents. Although this may seem like a harsh solution to vandalism, it has resulted in a significant reduction of the amount of vandalism occurring in the halls since this policy was adopted.

We have also found that very little occurs in a residence hall that somebody doesn't know about. Please encourage your daughter or son to report any acts of vandalism immediately to hall staff. Every dollar spent by University Housing comes from student housing fees. Every dollar spent on damage repair is a dollar that can't be spent on refurbishment, renovation, furnishings, programming, recreational equipment, etc.

## noise

The pervasive issue of excessive noise is important in a residence hall community. Everyone wants the hall to be quiet at times when they want to sleep or study. Many students also like to play loud music and cheer over a ball game or a television show. Quiet Hours attempt to provide guidelines for hall noise. Each hall has specific Quiet Hours (voted on at the first floor meeting) that may be

extended beyond but not reduced to less than 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. Residents should consult with hall staff if they are unsure of the quiet hours for their hall.

Regardless of Quiet Hours, residents are expected to be considerate of other residents at all times. This means respecting others' rights to sleep, study, or generally not be disturbed. If a person is making too much noise for you to sleep or study, please ask the person to turn down the volume. **Important:** Those who continue to violate quiet hours will be subject to disciplinary action. Sanctions may include the removal or confiscation of any equipment that is creating the noise violation.

## laundry

Laundry facilities (washers, dryers, and sink basins) are located in the lower level of each residence hall. Washers or dryers cost \$.75 per cycle. Students need to purchase "Banana Bucks" in order to utilize the laundry facilities. Machines **are not** coin operated but utilize a card system. Liquid detergent is required.

## electrical appliances

The residence halls are not wired to permit the use of large electrical appliances (air conditioners, large refrigerators, space heaters, etc.). Smaller appliances such as stereos, televisions, fans, coffee makers, etc., are acceptable. **No refrigerators over 4 cubic feet are allowed.**

**Do not overload electrical outlets.**

**No extension cords are allowed.**

**Only grounded power strips with resettable breakers are permitted.**

Radio transmission of any type (including citizen band equipment) or satellite TV receiving equipment is not permitted in the residence halls. The use of open-element cooling/heating units and/or the use of cooking fats and greases, candles or other open flames, is not allowed. Cooking with woks, toaster ovens, crock pots, hot plates, open element, or any other cooking devices are forbidden. Cooking in rooms is prohibited except for microwave cooking.

## internet access

Residents have access to direct Ethernet and wireless access to the internet at no additional cost. GusNet provides network services to students living in the residence halls. Every resident will have an Ethernet port, which provides for open hardwire connections to GusNet. GusNet hardwired connections provide quick and reliable access to campus systems like: GUS, GusMail, Canvas, library resources (including card catalogs and search engines) and a host of other educational services. Students are responsible for supplying their own computer and items required to connect to the system.

Wireless internet has been improved to include access points in every room. All resident rooms and lobby area have GusNet wireless internet access. Accessing GusNet is simple and quick, see all details on GusNet at [pittstate.edu/wireless](http://pittstate.edu/wireless). Please note that signal strength can vary depending on the student's device, distance from the wireless access point, and interfering wireless signals.

**All printers, including wireless printers and wireless routers are NOT permitted in the residence halls.** These devices send out a signal that interferes with GusNet and blocks residents from accessing GusNet. Print stations are in place in the residence halls. If rogue devices are found in the residence halls, the resident will be asked to remove the interfering device immediately.

Students are highly encouraged to use Ethernet ports in their rooms to get the best Internet service possible. If your device has an Ethernet port, this will give you the most reliable access to the internet.

Students should contact the Gorilla Geeks with questions about wireless access and setup instructions. Gorilla Geeks: 620.235.4600, [geeks@pittstate.edu](mailto:geeks@pittstate.edu), 109 Whitesitt Hall.

## phones

Local phone service is available upon request through your RA. Students are required to supply their own phone.

# Best deal on campus!

When you compare total expenses for both residence hall living and off-campus living, we are confident that you will find residence hall living to be the most economical option. Residence hall room and board cost includes rent, food, utilities (gas and electric), water, ethernet/wireless internet, and parking. With residence hall living you know your exact cost for the year. There are no hidden costs, no inflation, no hook-up charges. Everything is included at one low price. Pittsburg State works hard to keep your costs down.

## 2021-2022 ANNUAL ROOM & BOARD RATES FOR RESIDENCE HALLS

All costs are subject to change. Rates listed are for one academic year (mid-August through mid-May) or two semesters. These rates are for single occupancy rooms. Per semester rates are half of the rates listed below.

MEAL PLAN	TRADITIONAL STYLE	CRIMSON COMMONS	WILLARD HALL
7 Day Access	\$9,196	\$9,196	\$9,196
5 Day / \$100	\$8,956	\$8,956	\$8,956
*1,000 Dining \$	\$7,971	\$7,971	\$7,971

Double room discount is \$1,000 per academic year. Doubles will be limited and singles are the default.

*\*Freshmen are not eligible for this option.*

## PAYMENT, LATE FEES, STATEMENTS

Payments are to be paid to the University for housing accommodations, dining service, and properly billed charges in accordance with the rate and payment schedule specified in the contract and/or payment plan terms. The Cashiers and Student Accounts office will maintain and publish tuition, housing and fees billing for all students enrolled at PSU. Billing will be produced each month and notification is then sent to the students official GUS e-mail address. Students will access their e-bills through the GUS portal and can set up other users and notifications. Visit the Cashiers and Student Accounts, [pittstate.edu/cashier](http://pittstate.edu/cashier), to view payment dates and options, billing cycle, installment fees, late fees and other related payment policies.

A late fee will be charged if payment (semester, installment, and properly billed charges) is not received by the fifth of each month. If charges remain unpaid, meal service will be suspended, and procedures to evict the student from University Housing will be initiated. Past due accounts will be sent to a collection agency and/or the state set-off program for collection. Collection costs will be assessed and added to balance due on these accounts.

Statements are accessible through the student portal (GUS) with your ID and password. Details about the payment options and credit card policies are available online at [pittstate.edu/cashier](http://pittstate.edu/cashier). Timely payment in accordance with established schedules is not dependent upon receipt of statement.

Any student who is permitted and/or authorized to occupy a residence hall assignment outside the dates of the contract (i.e., early arrival, interim, etc.) are subject to and responsible for all additional charges associated with that occupancy.

**RENOVATED!** All of our residence halls have been renovated over the past few years. The residence halls are furnished with a bed, mattress, desk, chair, chest, and wardrobe. A small refrigerator (no larger than 4 cu. ft.) is allowed. A fan is recommended.

**No additional furniture is allowed to be brought into the residence halls. Rooms are furnished with all the same furniture and the space doesn't allow for additional furniture. (Example: futons, chairs, large bulky items.)**

## OUR TEAM

The University Housing staff exists to help students obtain the greatest value from the residential experience. Staff members are committed to providing the support and services necessary to enable students to reach their goals. The following is a brief description of the staff and their involvement in creating and maintaining a positive community within our residence halls.

### AREA COORDINATORS

The Area Coordinators are full-time staff with master's degrees, all who live in the residence halls. It is their responsibility to manage the operation of the hall, train and supervise assistant hall directors and resident assistants, implement the rules and regulations, coordinate programming, and counsel students with personal and behavioral problems. It is their charge to develop a comfortable and productive living environment.

### LEAD RESIDENT ASSISTANT

Lead RAs are returning Resident Assistants and live in the hall. They are upperclassmen or graduate students who have been carefully selected and trained to manage the operations of their building.

### RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

A resident assistant (RA) is assigned to each floor or wing. These upperclassmen or graduate students have been carefully selected and trained to facilitate a floor or a wing of a residence hall. They are an excellent source of information regarding both personal and college related matters. The RAs are responsible for creating a wing community, providing a variety of social and developmental programming, and enforcing policies and procedures. The RA is a personal liaison between the University community and the residence hall student. If you have a problem or question, the RAs are here to help you in any way possible.

### STAFF ON CALL

RAs are available each day for assistance, maintenance problems, or emergencies. From 6-10 p.m. nightly, a staff member will be on duty at the building desk. From 10 p.m.-7 a.m. a staff member is on call. Information regarding how to contact this person will be posted at the hall desk.



# DINING SERVICES

Meals are currently provided for residence hall students by Sodexo Dining Services in Gibson Dining Hall. Sodexo is dedicated to providing quality campus dining. During the 2021-22 academic year, three meal plans will be offered. All first year students must select either the 7 Day Access Plan or the 5 Day Access Plan/\$100 Dining Dollars for the first semester and must remain on either of these two plans for the second semester. The \$1,000 Dining Dollars are available only to students who are exempt from the Campus Residency Policy or who have completed two or more semesters of residence hall living at PSU.

## MEAL PLAN OPTIONS

- **7 Day Access:** This plan provides unlimited, personal access to Gibson Dining Hall during dates of operation provided within this contract.
- **5 Day Access/\$100 per semester Dining Dollars:** This plan provides unlimited, personal access to Gibson Dining Hall **Monday through Friday** during dates and hours of operation provided within this contract plus \$100 in Dining Dollars to spend at any university food service operation. Unspent Dining Dollars from the fall semester will NOT be carried forward into the spring semester. All Dining Dollars must be expended by end of each semester or forfeited.
- **\$1,000 Dining Dollars:** This plan provides \$1,00 per semester in purchasing power to spend at any university food service operation. Unspent Dining Dollars from the fall semester will NOT be carried forward into the spring semester. All Dining Dollars must be expended by end of each semester or forfeited.

**MISSED MEALS** No refunds or credits will be made for missed or unused meals.

**DINING DOLLARS** Dining Dollars can be spent at any university food service operation. This includes food operations in the newly renovated Overman Student Center, Axe Grind, Kansas Technology Center, etc. Unspent Dining Dollars from the fall semester will NOT be carried forward into the spring semester. All Dining Dollars must be used by the end of the each semester or forfeited.

**MEAL PLAN CHANGES** Students may make changes to their selected meal plan for each semester up until three weeks after the official starting day of classes (as listed in the official university calendar) for that semester without any additional change fees, however meal plan charges would change accordingly. First year students required to purchase the 7 Day Access meal plan or the 5 Day Access/\$100 dining dollars meal plan may only choose to move to one of those two meal plans for the semester. Students not required to purchase the 7 Day Access meal plan or the 5 Day Access/\$100 dining dollars meal plan may choose to move to any other meal plan until that time. Request to change to a higher meal plan can be done at anytime. Students must come to the University Housing Office, 209 Horace Mann, to complete proper paperwork.

**SUSPENSION OF MEAL PRIVILEGES** The University may suspend meal privileges if the student fails to make proper payment, fails to abide by all terms of the contract, or fails to attend a University Housing discipline meeting/hearing.

**CONTINUOUS DINING** Students on the meal plan may access the facility at their convenience during the hours of operation and within the provisions of the selected meal plan. Gibson Dining Hall hours: Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.; Sat. 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun. 11 a.m.-7:30 p.m. Dining times are subject to change.

**ID CARD:** Upon registration, students will be issued a PSU student identification (ID) card. This card will be coded with the meal plan that they have chosen and will allow students to either have a meal in Gibson Dining Hall or purchase food (with Banana Bucks) in the Gorilla Crossing or University Club.

The PSU ID card is non-transferable and must be presented to a cashier to gain entrance to any meal. Any misuse of the meal card (lending it to others), or misconduct in the cafeteria will result in disciplinary action.

**NOTE: Beginning immediately with the first meal served for the 2020-2021 academic year and at each subsequent meal at Gibson Dining Hall, students MUST PRESENT THEIR PSU STUDENT ID CARD for admission to the facility.**

Replacements for lost, stolen or damaged cards cost \$20 per card. The PSU ID card offers additional benefits, including library card and PSU student ticket (including athletic events).

## LEADERSHIP

## INVOLVEMENT

The Residence Hall Assembly (RHA) is the campus-wide residence hall student government body. The purposes of RHA are:

- To act on the behalf of all students who live in the halls and to represent their interests on levels of the University government, making recommendations to University administration as the need arises.
- To provide programming for the residence hall students, while serving as a link between campus wide programming, (GAB, CAC, etc.) and the residence halls in order to assist in coordination of events on campus.
- To recommend and review policy which governs residence hall living.

New students will have the opportunity to seek appointment/election to Residence Hall Assembly during the first few weeks of the fall semester as assembly members from their hall. RHA provides an excellent opportunity for leadership development and involvement. Interested students should watch for further information after arriving on campus!

# We're all under the same roof

## Alcohol Policy

The use of alcoholic beverages shall not interfere with the educational goals of the University and the educational environment of the residence halls. Its use shall be compliant with the state and federal law; in accordance with the State Board of Regents policy; consistent with principles of common courtesy; and, respectful for the rights and privacy of all others within the residence hall community. Only alcoholic beverages containing not more than 5 percent alcohol by weight may be possessed and consumed within PSU residence halls.

- The privilege of possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages containing not more than 5 percent alcohol within the residence halls is extended (and strictly limited) to those who have reached their 21st birthday (minimum age for legal possession and consumption of alcohol beverages within the state of Kansas).
- Alcoholic beverages containing not more than 5 percent alcohol is only allowed in rooms where all room occupants are 21 years of age and older.
- Alcoholic beverages containing not more than 5 percent alcohol shall not be possessed or consumed in any residence hall room unless one assigned occupant of the room is present and all persons in the room (including all room occupants and guests) are of legal drinking age.
- Non-residents may not transport alcoholic beverages in or out of a residence hall, regardless of their age.
- Alcoholic beverages containing not more than 5 percent alcohol must be transported in the original container with the seal intact.
- The possession or consumption of alcohol in volume containers (kegs, party balls, etc.) is prohibited within the residence halls.
- Paraphernalia related to beverages containing alcohol (signs, posters, advertising, etc.) is prohibited from being displayed in windows or posted in any public area of the residence halls (including outside of student room doors).
- Cans/bottles may not be stored or displayed in residence hall rooms.
- The possession or consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited by persons of any age in common areas such as hallways, lounges and exterior entrances to the building.
- Behavior that is inappropriate and/or disruptive to the community as a result of intoxication is a violation of the alcohol policy.
- Persons who possess or consume alcoholic beverages containing not more than 5 percent alcohol or any other beverages containing alcohol in violation of the residence hall policy, university regulations, or state/federal law will be subject to University Housing disciplinary action and subject to prosecution according to state statutes.

## Drugs

Possession or use of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia as determined by law enforcement personnel not prescribed by a physician are illegal. **If you use, produce, hold, or sell drugs, you will face disciplinary consequences which may be eviction from the residence halls and subject to criminal prosecution.**

## Tobacco Free Campus

PSU is a tobacco free campus, as such the use or sale of tobacco products on PSU property is prohibited. This policy applies to all individuals. In addition to cigarettes, this policy applies to smokeless tobacco, clove cigarettes and e-cigarettes. The policy covers, but is not limited to, buildings, university grounds, parking areas, walkways, recreational and sporting facilities. Failure to abide by University policy may result in contract termination. This policy includes all residence halls and student rooms. To view the full tobacco free policy, visit [pittstate.edu/tobaccofree](http://pittstate.edu/tobaccofree).

### MENINGITIS VACCINATION REQUIRED

The Kansas Board of Regents requires state universities to establish policies that require all incoming students residing in university housing to be vaccinated for meningitis. All newly enrolled PSU students living in university-owned group housing are required to be vaccinated for meningitis within the past five (5) years. If the vaccination was received greater than 5 years ago, a booster dose will be necessary. In the absence of proof of the meningitis vaccination, an enrollment hold will be applied and the student will be unable to enroll in subsequent semesters.

In addition, Pittsburg State has an immunization compliance policy for ALL new incoming students. For more information, click on the "Immunization Compliance" link on the Bryant Student Health Center website: [pittstate.edu/health](http://pittstate.edu/health).

# Room Assignments

A variety of studies have examined the process by which rooms are assigned at universities throughout the United States. While these studies often indicate that the use of certain variables **perhaps** produce “better” matches in roommates, no conclusive evidence exists which indicate which factors (personality, habits, interests) truly contribute to producing quality results in predicting successful matches between residence hall roommates.

At PSU two primary factors, **DATE OF CONTRACT RECEIPT AND LOCATION REQUESTED**, are first utilized in making room assignments. In assigning rooms we first work in order of date of completed contract pre-payment received and, as space availability provides, honor stated preferences for assignment location. Beyond those two defined factors, we attempt to keep birth dates of roommates within two years of one another and to match online responses: type of music preferred, sleep schedule, and personal habits (organized, cluttered, etc.)

**Room assignments are going out around Thursday, July 8, 2021 via your GUS email address.**

# Room Changes

Because the beginning of the semester is hectic and chaotic for all concerned, students are not allowed to change rooms prior to a designated period of time following the completion of the second week of classes. Typically, until that time, accurate information is not available as to vacant space. Also, the start of the semester is a turbulent time for students, especially those new to the residence halls. Often, they are overwhelmed with all aspects of life. As such, it is difficult for them to make good judgements about the compatibility of roommates and the appropriateness of a living situation. In order to prevent a student from jumping from a perceived “frying pan” into a true “fire,” we ask that they give the situation a few days to develop before making a decision about moving to another space.

Once the room change process is opened, students can survey a listing of available space (if any) and select on a first-come first-serve basis, a spot to which they would like to move. In the event that no vacant space is available, students who wish to change assignments must locate an individual with which they would like to switch assignments. Proper procedures must be followed for approval of moves and/or switches. Students can not simply change assignments of their own accord. Students who wish to initiate a room change must work with their Area Coordinator to properly complete all procedures.

# Roommate Conflicts

Each new resident hall student will have the unique experience of having a new roommate. Perhaps the individual will be someone the student has known for several years. Chances are that in the majority of the situations, that will not be the case and the person will be a total stranger. Chances are pretty good that students have had their own room and haven’t had to be concerned about someone else’s needs or opinions. At first, both roommates will likely be on best behavior. But best behavior evaporates soon.

Pittsburg State University approaches roommate relations from the perspective that each person has rights as roommates.

When problems exist between roommates, it is expected that each person will take considerable ownership and responsibility for addressing problems. Staff are available and willing to provide assistance and intervention in resolving disputes. Staff members are trained in mediation tactics and have various resources at their disposal to help work through issues between roommates. Students are expected to participate in activities designed to resolve conflicts before moves are considered as an option for resolving concerns.

# Visitation/ Overnight Guests

Visitation hours in the residence halls are 24-hours, seven days a week. The following are general reminders regarding visitation:

1. All visitors must be escorted by (in the immediate company of) a resident of the hall.
2. Guests will be asked to leave the residence hall if their behavior is disturbing residents.
3. Residents assume complete responsibility for the action of their guests. Make certain that guests are aware of residence hall policies.
4. Individuals who have been evicted and/or banned from the halls are prohibited from entering the residence halls and are not to be assisted by residents in entering the halls.
5. Overnight guests may stay in your room **with your roommate’s permission**.
6. Overnight guests are not allowed to stay for more than three consecutive nights and not to exceed six nights per month. You must confer with your roommate before inviting guests.
7. Cohabitation in residence hall rooms is not allowed. Residence hall staff reserves the right to define or limit cohabitation at any time.

# Assignment Reminder

- Room assignments start going out July 8, 2021.
- Emailed to your GUS account.
- Halls open Saturday, Aug. 14 at 9 a.m.
- Visit [pittstate.edu/housing](http://pittstate.edu/housing) for updates.