

## Residence Hall Handbook Table of Contents

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## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES** **for** **RESIDENCE HALLS**

### **GENERAL POLICIES:**

**CARD ACCESS SYSTEM.** The Department of Residence Life offers increased residence hall security through the use of the Bearkat OneCard system. All residence halls (except White Hall) are equipped with Card Access. Residence hall exterior doors are locked 24 hours a day after move-in. Each of the main doors is equipped with a card reader and, by sliding the magnetic stripe on the back of your ID card through the reader, you will gain access to your hall. Only the residents of your hall are coded for access to your hall; **therefore, it is important not to admit non-residents without an escort.** This system offers better security because if you lose your ID it can be instantly deactivated so that no one else can use it. Some other features of this system and related security policies are:

1. Doors propped or remaining open longer than 30 seconds will trigger a local alarm at the door.
  2. Entrances which do not have a card reader are labeled as emergency exits. An alarm will sound if an emergency exit door is opened at any time.
  3. Should any card be used in a reader that is not authorized to access that particular hall, the system will identify the ID number, record the unauthorized attempt, and deny access.
  4. Should there ever be a power outage, back-up batteries will allow the system to continue to operate for a limited time.
  5. 24-hour lost card cancellation is available on-line by logging in at [www.bearkatone.com](http://www.bearkatone.com). A temporary card may be obtained in two ways:
    - A. Obtain a temporary ID card from the Bearkat OneCard office in LSC 330 from 8am-5pm Monday-Friday. This office will be able to give you a temporary card that will grant you access to your housing assignment, meal plan, the library, etc. until your new replacement ID becomes available.
    - B. During hours when the Bearkat OneCard office is not open, (after hours and on weekends) you may obtain a Residence Life Temporary Hall Entry card through your hall staff (your RM or the RM on duty). **This card will only grant you access to your residence hall for 72 hours, and will not have capability for your other needs.** You will need to return this card to the RM or in to the Bearkat OneCard office when you obtain your temporary ID, or a charge of \$25 will be assessed.
- NOTE:** Having a temporary ID or a temp hall entry card will automatically deactivate your ID. No student will be able to have more than one activated card at a time. **Please do not delay in notifying staff or the Bearkat OneCard office of a lost ID or temp card. Your own security, as well as others, could be jeopardized by your delay.**

6. Guests should use the telephones located outside the main entrances of the residence halls to contact their host, and then must be escorted within the hall.
7. Hitting, banging on, or tampering with a reader will set the alarm off. Damages to a card reader can be assessed to an individual or group-billed, and can range from \$80 - \$400.

Typically, during the check-in and check-out processes at the beginning and end of each semester, the exterior doors will be unlocked within certain time periods to assist with students moving in or out. Residence hall staff will provide specific schedules when exterior doors will be unlocked.

Should you have any problems in accessing your building with your card, or any related questions, please notify your hall staff, or contact the Residence Life Office at 294-1812.

## **FAQs (Card Access)**

### **1. What if my ID card does not work in the reader?**

First, make sure your card has been activated. You may do this through the website at [www.bearkatone.com](http://www.bearkatone.com). Next, make sure that you are attempting to enter the residence hall where you have been assigned. Finally, try another door into the building in case the particular reader is out of order ( and then report that to staff, please!) If your card still does not work in any reader of your assigned building, please contact the residence hall staff.

### **2. What happens if I want to change halls?**

If you are granted a hall change, you will receive immediate access to your new assignment. Your access to your old building will only work for another 48 hours, therefore you must be moved within the 48-hour period.

### **3. Will I be able to get into the hall during the break periods?**

All students will be denied access to the residence halls during any of the break periods until they have signed up for the break and paid the appropriate break fee. Your inclusion on the break list will generate access for your building during the break period.

### **4. Can I loan my card to another resident or a guest?**

Cards are not to be loaned to anyone for any purpose. This card is for official university identification purposes, and should be carried at all times. It is non-transferable and its use is the responsibility of the named student. Misuse of the card may subject bearer and/or student to whom it is issued to disciplinary sanctions. Students must present their ID card when requested by any official of the university, including University Police, dining hall personnel, and residence hall staff.

**FRESHMAN REQUIRED HOUSING AND MEAL PLAN POLICY.** To assist in the transition from high school and home life to college, all freshmen are required to reside in the University residence halls and participate in the 20 MEAL PLAN, 15 MEAL PLAN, or ANY 160 MEAL PLAN during their freshman year, which will normally include Fall and Spring semesters. Some exceptions to this requirement may be made by the Office Coordinator for financial hardship; marriage; commuting from the home of parents, grandparents, or a brother or sister; previous military service; or graduation from high school prior to the current academic year. Students must request an exception to this policy by completing a Request for Waiver of the Freshman Required Housing and Meal Plan Policy, and submitting proper documentation. This form and more information is available at the Residence Life Office.

**HOUSING CONTRACT TERMINATION.** Only official resignation from the University will terminate the contract immediately and meal plans will be prorated through the end of the week (for freshmen contracts); the \$200 deposit will be forfeited, with room rent prorated on a daily basis until the proper and official check out is completed. **If students move out of the hall for any other reason without approval, their contract obligates them to the full room and/or board payments for the duration of the contract.** If a student does not enroll for the Spring semester, the \$200 deposit will be refunded if notification was received by the Residence Life Office *prior to December 1, 2007; without such notification the deposit will be forfeited.* Should a student wish to request a termination based on a major change in circumstances which he/she has made every effort to resolve, he/she may complete an Application to Terminate Contract, which is available at the Residence Life Office. Early termination of the contract, **if approved**, will result in forfeiture of the \$200 deposit, plus a \$100 liquidated damage fee, or a \$125 liquidated damage fee for freshman contracts.

**MEAL PLAN CONTRACT TERMINATION.** Only official resignation from the University will terminate the contract immediately and the meal plan will be prorated through the end of the week. If a student desires the meal plan to be terminated without resigning, the student may request this by completing an Application to Terminate Contract at the Residence Life Office. If the meal plan is approved to be terminated, it will be prorated through the end of the week in which the contract is terminated and the student will be charged a \$25 liquidated damage fee.

**COHABITATION.** Cohabitation is not allowed in the residence halls. Only same sex roommates are allowed.

**ROOM CHANGES/HALL TRANSFERS.** Room changes and hall transfers are allowed at

certain times and dates throughout each semester. These times and dates will be posted in each residence hall or house, as well as the Residence Life Office. No moves are allowed during **"FREEZE PERIODS."** Room changes within your hall may be requested and approved at your hall office. All hall (building) transfers must be requested and approved by the RM in charge of the area you want to move to. After your hall transfer is approved, you must make a check-in appointment with your new RM. Check-in appointments are made on the following business day from the day you pick up your transfer papers. All room changes/hall transfers must be completed within 48 hours (2 business days) of receiving your check-in appointment. If an approved transfer is not completed within 48 hours the student must adhere to the following policy:

1. If the student receives a clearance to move and fails to initiate any move within 48 hours (2 business days), the student's request will be automatically canceled.
2. If the student receives a clearance to move and checks out of the current room but fails to check in to the requested room/hall within 48 hours (2 business days), the student's request will be canceled and the student will be given two options:
  - a. If the hall and room request is still available after being canceled, the student may continue the move with a required fee of \$100.00;
  - b. Otherwise, the student must return to the Residence Life Office for reassignment.
3. If the student receives a clearance to move and checks into the new room/hall, but does not complete the check-out of the previous room within 48 hours, any personal belongings remaining in the previous room will be considered abandoned property and will be packed up by the staff, with a fee charged to the student (see ABANDONED PROPERTY). The room/entrance door lock(s) will also be re-cored, and the student will be charged for the key(s).

**NOTE: THE 48 HOURS ALLOWED INCLUDES CHECKING OUT OF YOUR PREVIOUS ROOM AND CHECKING INTO THE REQUESTED ROOM. MOVES MADE WITHOUT CLEARANCE FROM THE RESIDENCE LIFE OFFICE WILL RESULT IN A \$100.00 DAMAGE CHARGE - (See UNAUTHORIZED ROOM CHANGES).**

**UNAUTHORIZED ROOM CHANGES.** All room changes or building transfers should be completed in full compliance with room change/hall transfer policy. This also includes the unauthorized use of an empty suite room. Any student who moves from his/her assigned room or building without express written consent of the RM and/or the Department of Residence Life will be charged an administrative fee of \$100.00 and will be subject to disciplinary proceedings. It will be the decision of the RM and/or the Department of Residence Life to approve or disapprove any resident staying in the unauthorized room. The resident, in most circumstances, will have to move back to the originally assigned room. The room change/hall transfer policy was developed to help promote the safety and security of the residents by allowing University officials to know exactly where students are residing.

**PRIVATE ROOMS.** Private rooms are only available as space permits for an additional charge of half of the double occupancy rate. Students requesting private rooms should contact their RM and submit a written statement indicating their desires, prior to September 15, 2007 for the Fall semester and January 31, 2008 for the Spring semester.

**RESIGNATIONS.** Residents who resign during the academic year are required to check out within 48 hours of resignation. Residents who do not properly check out with their hall staff will be assessed an improper check-out fee of \$50.00.

**CONSOLIDATION.** The University reserves the right to make assignment and re-assignment of accommodations as considered necessary. Students in double rooms without roommates will be required to consolidate to fill all half filled rooms. Consolidation will be required *as needed* until September 15, 2007 for the Fall semester and January 31, 2008 for the Spring semester. When consolidation is required, residence hall staff will notify you in writing with your options.

When consolidation is required, students occupying single rooms must select one of the following options:

1. Elect to contract and pay the additional fee for the private room.
2. Choose to move to another half-filled room in the same building.
3. Find another on- or off- campus student willing to move into the room.

This policy does not require a student to move to another residence hall, but rather requires a student to pay for the private room or move in with a person who is living singly in a double occupancy room. It is the student's responsibility to find a roommate when consolidation is warranted.

If a resident is occupying a double room without a roommate, the resident must:

1. Keep the unoccupied half of the room in such a condition that would allow someone to move into the room on short notice. Any resident found using the unoccupied half of the room will be documented and required to remove their belongings from the unoccupied half of the room immediately. The University reserves the right to periodically inspect half-filled rooms.
2. Display an attitude of cooperation and acceptance toward any resident who may examine the room prior to considering occupancy.
3. Agree that the room maybe shown to prospective occupants without prior notification and in his/her absence.
4. Agree to accept a roommate assigned by the Department of Residence Life.

Residents who are directed to consolidate, but fail to do so, will be billed automatically for a private room. Residents who refuse to accept an assigned roommate, or who elect to pay for private room after a roommate is assigned, will also be automatically charged the private room rate prorated from the date single vacancy occurs. Consolidation will not be required after September 15, 2007 for the Fall semester and January 31, 2008 for the Spring semester, unless deemed necessary by the Director of Residence Life.

**SINGLE OCCUPANCY OF A DOUBLE ROOM.** If a resident is occupying a double room without a roommate, the resident must:

1. Keep the unoccupied half of the room in such a condition that would allow someone to move into the room on short notice. Any resident found using the unoccupied half of the

room will be documented and required to remove their belongings from the unoccupied half of the room immediately. (Residents found with a second violation for using the unoccupied half of the room will be charged the private room fee prorated from the date single vacancy occurs.) The University reserves the right to periodically inspect half-filled rooms.

2. Display an attitude of cooperation and acceptance toward any resident who may examine the room prior to considering occupancy.
3. Agree that the room may be shown to prospective occupants without prior notification and in his/her absence.
4. Agree to accept a roommate assigned by the Department of Residence Life.

**HOLIDAYS.** Room payments do not cover periods when classes are not in session. The residence halls will be closed over Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring Break holidays, and prior to the Summer and Fall semesters. Students who need to stay in a residence hall during those times may do so for an additional fee only if space is available. Interested students should contact the Residence Life Office well in advance. The University is not responsible for the loss or damage to personal property stored during break periods or holidays. During the break periods, all University and Residence Life rules and policies apply. However, 24 hour visitation in the lobby areas of residence halls is prohibited during the break periods and holidays.

#### **PAYMENTS.**

<u>Plan</u>	<u>Remainder of fees - Fall (Spring)</u>
A	balance due at registration
B	1/2 balance due at registration
	1/4 balance due by 09/21/07 (spring 2/15/08)
	1/4 balance due by 10/26/07 (spring 3/21/08)

A charge of \$10 will be made if payment is received late for any installment payment (see SHSU Tuition & Fees Installment Policy). Payments must be made by these deadlines, or the student is subject to action by the University and cancellation of the housing contract. The University may also turn past due accounts over to the credit bureau and the amount due will be posted on the student's credit report as past due.

All refunds to students will be first applied to any outstanding debt to the University including, but not limited to, past due accounts and future installment payments. (See REFUND POLICY)

**DEPOSIT REFUND.** To be sure to get their room deposit back or keep their current reservation on file, students must fulfill the following conditions when they check out of their residence hall:

1. Clean the room thoroughly.
2. Remove all personal belongings.



3. Pay for any damages in the room.
4. Check out properly with the RA and return the key(s).
5. Leave a forwarding address.
6. If at mid-year (winter break), make cancellation in writing by December 1, 2007, and follow other instructions detailed in the fall closing information given to residents by hall staff.

Students not returning to on-campus housing after the end of the academic year who wish to receive their \$200 deposit after spring check-out must also complete steps 1-5 above. If there are no damages, the central office will process the student's records and request that a check be processed by the University. The check will be processed by the business office and will be distributed according to the instructions on the student's Bearkat OneCard. This process usually takes three to four weeks. If there are outstanding debts or damages at the time of check-out, the charges may be deducted from the deposit if there is no future reservation.

**Academic Year 2008-2009 Cancellation Deadlines:**

- Cancel by July 1, 2008 and receive \$190.00 refund (less \$10.00).
- Cancel by August 14, 2008 receive a refund of \$100 (less \$100.00).
- Any cancellations received after August 14, 2008 will forfeit the entire \$200 deposit.

**REFUND POLICY.** All refunds to a student, including deposits, will first be applied to any outstanding debt to the University including, but not limited to, past due accounts and future installment payments. Any refund that is more than these types of payments will be refunded to the student and will be mailed to the permanent address on the student's records when processed by the Accounting Department.

**ROOM ENTRY.** According to the room entry section of the Academic Year and Freshman Housing Contracts: "The University reserves the right to enter a student's room for the following reasons: (a) during regular business hours (and at other times with advance notice, if possible, to the student) to conduct periodic maintenance, custodial, and safety checks; (b) to perform necessary maintenance during regular business hours (and at other times with advance notice, if possible, to the student); (c) when the University reasonably believes any person(s) occupying the room may be physically harmed or in danger; and (d) when the University reasonably believes University rules, regulations, and/or policies are being violated in the room." Except in emergency situations or for maintenance, room entry will not be made by University personnel unless accompanied by the student, his/her authorized representative, or another authorized representative of the University. Under no circumstances will residence life staff open a door to a resident's room for another person without written consent from the resident or clearance from the Residence Life Office. The written consent must be surrendered to the RM, and the person entering the room must be accompanied by a staff member while in the room.

**PERSONAL PROPERTY.** Students are responsible for the security of their own property. The University is not liable for theft or damages. **It is highly recommended that you insure your personal property.** (See SAFETY AND AWARENESS ON CAMPUS – SECURITY.)



the SHSU campus postal service), it is important to complete a change of address form when moving rooms. These forms are available in the hall office and at the post offices in Huntsville.

Oversize Packages (SHV and RAV) – Oversize packages will not be left at the residences by the US Post Office. They may be picked up at the Huntsville Post Office at 3190 Hwy 30 W, or you may call the US Post Office at 295-4362 and ask that your package be redelivered to the SHSU mailroom for pickup. To make arrangements for a package to be sent directly to the SHSU mailroom, students may call the SHSU mailroom at 294-1936 and instruct the sender to address your package as follows:

Resident Name (Sam ID #)  
Attn: Mailroom Manager-Hold for pickup  
Sam Houston State University  
General Delivery  
Huntsville, Texas 77341-2000

**TELEPHONES.** Telephones are not provided to residences, except in Sam Houston Village and Raven Village. However, phone lines are provided in each room. In most halls and all houses, there is one phone number issued to each suite. Estill and Jackson-Shaver Halls have private phone lines in each room and White Hall has two lines per suite. Each resident will be issued a separate phone number. While residents will continue to share a phone line (primary number), each will have their own personal phone number and voice mail box. Your personal phone number will be assigned to you when you are first assigned to your room. Even if you change rooms or residence halls in the future, you will be able to keep your same personal phone number.

Any on-campus number may be called from a campus phone by dialing only the last five numbers; persons calling from off-campus must dial the 294 or 496 prefix. To call off campus, students should dial 9 to connect with an off-campus phone line and then proceed with their call.

All campus telephones now have the capability to dial, toll free, telephone numbers within the Houston local calling area. From any campus telephone, a student may dial many of the numbers within the 713, 832, and 281 area codes. There are exceptions. (It doesn't extend to The Woodlands or Spring, for instance.) If a prefix is not included, the student will receive a busy signal before s/he finishes dialing. To use, the student needs to dial 9 and then the ten-digit number. (713 or 832 or 281)-yyy-xxxx. It is not necessary to dial 1 for this long distance service.

Students can also now RECEIVE incoming calls from Houston, and the caller won't have to pay long distance. The student's friends or family just dial 281.657.6416. Then they just have to enter the student's five-digit telephone extension when prompted.

**Voice Mail:** All personal telephone numbers are equipped with a voice mail system. Your personal phone calls will not have a different ring from your suitemates. All calls to the one line will sound the same. A call is answered by voice mail when you do not answer your phone after four rings, or when you are already on the phone. Instructions on how to set up your voice mailbox will be distributed at check-in. If you are experiencing problems using your voice mail,

please call Telephone Services at extension 43777 for help.

When you arrive at the beginning of the semester, you must set up your voice mail system. You are responsible for all messages left on your voice mail by the university. Our department will only return calls to your campus phone number, we will not return calls to your long distance cell phone number.

**Sam Houston Village and Raven Village:** Two telephones and telephone lines are provided in each suite. Please be aware that the telephones are hooked up directly to Computer Services. Do not unplug your telephones. If the telephone is unplugged for any reason, Computer Services considers it removed from the premises, and a replacement fee of \$200 may be assessed. If you experience problems while using your telephone, please contact extension 43777 for help. Damage to University-owned telephones will result in a fine of \$200 (to replace telephone).

(See COMMUNICATIONS)

**TELEVISION ROOMS/CABLE.** Television rooms or lounges are provided in all halls. Since cable is required for TV reception, all public area televisions have cable service. In addition, all residence halls and houses on campus have basic cable service in student rooms, the cost of which is included in the resident's rent. Residents may purchase premium channels on an individual basis from Sudden Link Cable Company. Tampering with the cable or theft of cable service is prohibited by the Texas Penal Code. Any problems with the cable service or the televisions in the public TV rooms should be reported to the RA or RM. Cable service problems in student rooms should be reported directly to the cable company by the student.

Due to federal copyright laws and court cases concerning video tape rentals, the Department of Residence Life does not permit the showing of videotapes/DVD's in lounges or public areas without specific authorization from the owner of the copyright. However, you may view videotapes in the privacy of your room. Students who refuse to comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

### **HOUSING MAINTENANCE:**

**MAINTENANCE.** Students are encouraged to promptly report any maintenance problems or damage so that it can be repaired by the University. Students should advise their RA or RM of problems as soon as possible. Certain times during the year, maintenance and safety checks will be conducted by the Residence Life staff. In conducting these checks, hall staff will go through residents' rooms and note any maintenance problems or safety concerns. When possible, the staff will notify students in advance that they will perform these maintenance and safety checks. If residents are not home, the staff will leave a notice of entry. (See ROOM ENTRY)

Residents causing damage or vandalism to university property will be charged at a labor rate of \$23.00 per hour during normal business hours and at a rate of \$34.50 per hour (minimum of two hours) for all calls after 4:30 pm on weekdays and weekends and holidays. Student labor rate is \$8.00 per hour. In addition, material needed to replace or repair damaged property will also be billed.

A few examples of damages or vandalism would include: damaged window blinds, furniture, flooring, doors, or stopped up toilets caused by flushing anything other than toilet paper.

For damage or vandalism to life safety equipment, such as fire extinguishers, residents will be billed a minimum of \$50.00 plus the cost to repair or replace the item.

**MAINTENANCE – REFUSAL OF SERVICE.** Housing Maintenance employees must be allowed access to resident rooms in order to complete repairs and/or routine maintenance (ex. Replacing a/c filters, batteries, etc). Residents who refuse service between 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday thru Friday, will be charged \$50.00. Refusal of service after hours or during the weekends will result in a minimum charge of \$75.00.

**MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS (MSDS).** Information on MSDS can be located by using the “quick link” on the SHSU Homepage. Go to the “Physical Plant” quick link and then click on the “Safety Office” to access information concerning MSDS.

**DAMAGES.** At the beginning of the semester, students are given a room condition sheet upon check-in. This sheet should be reviewed carefully and any damages that are not noted should be added. When residents check out of their rooms, the rooms will be inspected for cleanliness and damages. Students are responsible for their assigned rooms and contents, and will be charged for any and all damages occurring during the term of occupancy. **Students may be held accountable for any abnormal wear, damages or cleaning in public areas of their residence hall. This would include a billing of damages to all members of the living unit if damages and/or vandalism is attributed to a specific floor, wing, or section therein.** Damage to University property may subject students to disciplinary and/or legal actions in addition to being charged for the damages. Students will not be liable for normal wear and tear. When charges are made, the said amount is due immediately in order for the room and board deposit to remain on file. If not paid within ten days, a late charge of \$10 will be added to the student’s account.

**DAMAGE APPEAL PROCESS.** From the date the billing statements are sent, students will have **30 days** in which to contest the damage/fine. If the discrepancy is with the amount of the charge, they must contact the Assistant Director for Facilities and Maintenance. If the discrepancy is with assessment of the charge, students must fill out a Damage Appeals form available from the Department of Residence Life. The Damage Appeals form can be turned in at the Residence Life Office. The form will be forwarded to the Student Discipline Coordinator.

The Damage Appeal, along with the room condition sheet and the damage sheet, will be

reviewed by the Coordinator and Resident Manager to determine if the request will be approved or denied. The student will be notified by mail of the status of his/her appeal. If the appeal is not approved, the decision may be appealed to the Assistant Director for Staff Development or his/her designated representative within **10 days** by submitting a letter to the Assistant Director for Staff Development indicating the reason for the appeal. The decision of the Assistant Director for Staff Development will be final. All information obtained by the Student Discipline Coordinator will be placed in the student's file so that it may be reviewed by the Assistant Director for Staff Development if the decision is appealed. Group vandalism charges can NOT be appealed.

**PEST CONTROL.** Pest control service is provided by our department through a contract with a private firm. Rooms are inspected and treated at least once per semester. Since the time of this service varies from building to building, students will be notified by the hall staff so they will know when to expect pest control services. A thorough "clean-out" inspection and treatment is scheduled twice annually, once in August, just before halls open for the Fall semester, and again in May after check-out. You will be given instructions for preparing your room so that this service can be completed. If you do not complete all items on the instruction list or you turn down the service, you will be billed \$50.00. If you have medical reasons as to why your room cannot be treated, you must provide a written statement from your physician to your RM prior to the treatment date.

**REPAIRS.** Sam Houston State University, Department of Residence Life, and Housing Maintenance are committed to improving the quality of life for our residents. Occasionally, Housing Maintenance personnel will need to enter your room to make needed repairs that you, your hall staff or Housing Maintenance personnel have requested. You will need to allow access to your room for these personnel. Due to the large number of maintenance requests, you will usually not be notified in advance of these repairs. If you turn down the Housing Maintenance personnel, you will be charged \$50.00 for the time spent to reschedule the work. Please be cooperative with these personnel to help us make your building a better place to live. (See ROOM ENTRY)

**VENDING MACHINES AND LAUNDRY EQUIPMENT.** Vending machines and laundry equipment are located throughout the residence halls. Problems with the machines should be reported promptly to the Vending Office. If a student should lose money in one of the machines, he/she should call and report the problem to the Vending Office at extension 41824 and then he/she should contact his/her RA/RM who will provide him/her with a refund slip. The refund slip may be sent to the Vending Department through campus mail. A cash refund will be processed and mailed from the Vending Department to the student promptly.

**RESIDENCE LIFE POLICIES:**

Sam Houston State University residence hall policies are guidelines for group living and are essential elements in forming a good community. In order to educate residents to develop a good community, it will be necessary to follow policies and procedures for health and safety, to learn how to care for facilities, and to obey all state and federal laws.

Residents are required to cooperate with staff and other residents at all times. Students will be expected to become familiar with and responsibly follow all published procedures, policies, rules and regulations, including those which are explained in this handbook. Residents will respect the rights of other residents, and each resident will be responsible and held accountable for his/her

behavior. Residents must comply with directions of University officials, which include Residence Life staff. Policies and procedures in all residence halls will be consistently and strictly enforced by University officials at all times. The following policies and procedures have been established by the Department of Residence Life and must be followed by residents at all times.

**ABANDONED PROPERTY.** Abandoned property is defined as items of value that are lost and found or left when residents check out of their rooms. This property will be inventoried and stored. A \$200.00 fee will be assessed to the responsible resident(s). If the student wishes to claim his/her abandoned property, he/she should contact their RM. All accounts with Sam Houston State University must be paid and up to date before any abandoned property may be claimed. If the student does not pay the charge and collect the abandoned property within 120 days of the date of abandonment, the items will become the property of Sam Houston State University and the owner will still be required to pay the \$200.00 fee.

**ADHESIVES.** Plastic adhesive putty, "Hold-it," may be used to attach decorative pictures, etc. to walls, except in Estill, Jackson-Shaver and White halls, where it may cause damage to the textured walls. **Double stick tape, masking tape, duct tape, nails, pins and tacks are not to be used.** Nail grooves are provided in most rooms for the convenience of hanging larger pictures. Estill and Jackson-Shaver have one wall which will allow students to use tacks; contact your hall staff for more information and instructions. Residents must assume full responsibility for correction or payment for any damage that results. See SUMMARY OF DAMAGE COSTS at the end of this section. *Rationale: Some types of tape almost always leave damages or marks that are difficult to remove. Pins, tacks, and nails leave holes in the walls. The student must choose to use only adhesives that do not cause damage, or be responsible for cleaning and/or paying for the damages that result.*

**ALCOHOL.** THE POSSESSION OR CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BY PERSONS UNDER THE LEGAL AGE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. The legal age for possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages in the State of Texas is 21. For those of legal age, the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages on any property owned and/or controlled by Sam Houston State University is limited to individual student residence hall rooms and areas specified in other published alcoholic beverage policies. Students of legal age who choose to consume alcohol in their rooms must keep their door closed. All private parties held in student rooms must be confined to the specific room with the door closed. Based on the Life Safety Code, the average residence hall room should hold no more than 8 people at any one time. Any public advertisement of private room parties is prohibited.

If both residents of a room are under 21 years of age, no alcohol may be consumed or possessed in that room. If both residents of a room are under 21 years of age, there can never be alcohol containers in the room, even if they are empty. At any given time, if there is a combination of 21(+) year old students (of which one must be an occupant of the room) and underage students in a room, there should only be one open alcohol container per 21(+) year old student. Each alcohol container must be disposed of before another is opened, otherwise, the minors in the room are in violation of the alcohol policy. The University Police Department will be called



during EVERY alcohol incident/violation.

Possession of alcoholic beverages in public areas will be permitted only in the process of transporting the beverages to and from the resident's room. While in transit, the beverage must be in a closed container and the beverage container must be in a sack or a sealed box. Kegs, party balls and alcoholic beverages in punch form are not permitted in residents' rooms. The use of alcoholic beverages in any public area or any area accessible to the public, including hallways or lounges, is prohibited.

All University regulations, including the Code of Student Conduct and Department of Residence Life policies, and local and state laws with respect or application to the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages will be strictly enforced, and the individuals in violation will be subject to University discipline, fines, and/or civil charges. Illegal alcohol will be destroyed immediately. For the first alcohol violation, students will be required to attend the Sam Houston Alcohol Referral Program, also known as SHARP. There is a \$55.00 charge to enroll in this (seven) hour program. A \$25.00 fine will be assessed in addition to the SHARP enrollment fee for the first violation. Failure to complete this program will result in a fine of \$200.00. In addition to the fine, your housing contract will be terminated and you will be referred to the Office of Student Life for disciplinary action. A second violation will result in a \$75.00 fine and disciplinary action. Any additional offense will result in a \$200.00 fine and immediate referral to the next disciplinary level. In addition, your housing contract will be terminated. Students should be aware that an amendment to the Family Rights and Privacy Act (Warner Amendment) allows University officials the option to contact parents of students who are under 21 and are found to be in violation of SHSU policies and/or laws of the State of Texas concerning the consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages.

**ALCOHOL CONTAINERS.** Bottles, cans and any other container packaged as an alcoholic beverage container may not be displayed in student rooms. Alcoholic beverage containers will be destroyed immediately. Empty alcohol containers should not be displayed or used as a decorative item at any time. Residents 21 years or older who are found in violation of this policy are issued a warning for their first offense. Residents 21 and older who display open alcohol containers after their first offense are required to complete the SHARP program and are subject to further disciplinary action. (See ALCOHOL) *Rationale: University officials can not determine when alcohol has been consumed when there are empty "open" containers in a room. Any minor that is present while there are open container(s) present is in violation of the university alcohol policy and can be found in violation of state law. Any occupant of the room that is 21 years of age or older can be issued a ticket for "contributing to a minor" if there are open containers present while minors are in the room.*

**AQUARIUMS.** Students are allowed to have an aquarium of 10 gallon maximum capacity. Only one aquarium (with fish only) is allowed per room. Students assume responsibility for the aquarium and its contents at all times. (See PETS) *Rationale: The weight of larger tanks creates concerns for our maintenance staff.*

**BABY-SITTING.** Baby-sitting is not allowed in residence halls because it may create a

disturbance. University facilities are not designed for this purpose. Students who have children may have them as visitors in the hall during regular visitation hours providing other students are not disturbed. (See CONCESSIONS) *Rationale: Guests must be 16 years of age or older to visit the residence halls. In addition, a resident's room is not to be used for commercial purposes of any kind. Our facilities are not designed for small children, and baby-sitting in a resident's room can create a disturbance in the suite and on the floor of the hall.*

**BARBECUE PITS AND GRILLS.** Some halls provide barbecue pits/grills for residents' use. These pits/grills as well as personal pits/grills are not to be used in areas such as walkways, stairwells, or porches. The area used should be cleaned by the responsible parties after the meal is completed. Ashes should be disposed of in this manner: let the coals cool until they can safely be disposed, or extinguish them with water; put the coals in a sack and place in the dumpster. Combustible fluids (lighter fluid, gasoline etc...) may not be stored in your room. There is a \$50.00 fine (per item) not to exceed \$250.00 for the 1<sup>st</sup> violation. A second violation will result in your housing contract being terminated and a \$250.00 fine. Additional disciplinary action may be taken. *Rationale: The State Fire Marshal considers any combustible fluid a fire hazard if stored in resident rooms and has mandated that they not be permitted in the halls.*

**BATHROOMS.** Any student who knowingly locks another student in a suite bathroom will be referred to the Dean of Students' Office for appropriate disciplinary action.

**BATHROOM CLEANING.** Custodial staff will clean suite and private bathrooms during the Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, and Spring Break. Items to be cleaned in bathrooms are sinks, counter top, floors, toilet and shower. Students will be responsible for removing personal items from the sink, shower, and floor/toilet areas prior to cleaning. Custodial staff will clean the area on schedule, to the best of their ability, whether personal items are removed or not. If personal items are left in these areas, custodial staff will clean around these items and will be careful not to disturb or get cleaning solutions on any personal items. However, if any accidental damage occurs, the custodial staff will not be held responsible. Students staying over the breaks who refuse bathroom cleaning will be billed \$50.00 (each incident). Students are responsible for cleaning their own bathrooms at all other times during the school year.

**BICYCLES AND MOTORCYCLES.** Bicycles may be stored in individual student rooms, but may not be ridden in residence halls. Bicycles or motorcycles **MAY NOT BE STORED** or chained in the following locations: student rooms (motorcycles only), hallways, outside walkways, stairwells, or any other location in the residence hall. Storage of bicycles and motorcycles in these areas will block fire exits and create other problems. **BICYCLES STORED IN AN UNAUTHORIZED MANNER WILL BE IMPOUNDED AND A STORAGE FEE OF \$25.00 WILL BE ASSESSED.** If a student stores his/her bicycle in an unauthorized manner and discovers that it is missing, he/she should contact the RM before calling UPD. Bicycles may also be stored in bicycle racks which are available near residence halls. Motorcycles and mopeds require a University Vehicle Parking Permit that can be purchased at the University Police Department. Motorcycles should be parked in University parking lots because they are motorized vehicles. Mopeds may be parked in University parking lots or chained to bicycle racks.

Stationary exercise bicycles are permitted in students' rooms. They are considered furniture, since they are not movable and need not be placed against walls or room furnishings. They provide a means of quiet exercise.

### **BUILDING SPECIFIC INFORMATION.**

**Jackson-Shaver Hall.** **Thermostats:** Residents with individual room thermostats are not allowed to set the temperature below 68 degrees. Setting the temperature below 68 degrees results in condensation and mildew. **Security Cameras:** Non-monitored security cameras are located throughout the building.

**Spivey House.** The stove in Spivey house is for general use by all Spivey residents during the academic year. Please keep the kitchen area clean. Do not leave the stove unattended while cooking. Disposing of food or grease down the sinks or toilet will result in clogs and you will be billed for Housing Maintenance to come out and de-clog your pipes.

**White Hall.** **Furniture:** If you choose to rearrange your furniture, please do not drag furniture across the carpet. There are no glides on the furniture, so you must pick it up in order to move the furniture. To clean stains on upholstery, please see your hall staff for instructions.

**Kitchenette:** Disposing of food or grease down the sinks or toilet will result in clogs and you will be billed for Housing Maintenance to come out and de-clog your pipes. **Microfridge:** As with any microwave, metal or aluminum should not be used. Be sure to keep the inside clean and free of food particles. Do not leave microwave unattended while cooking. Do not over cook. In addition to the microfridge, you may have an additional refrigerator in your suite, as long as the total cubic feet does not exceed 10.0 (including the microfridge). **Walls:** You may hang items on the walls by using the attached nail boards with fishing line, "S" hooks or nails (nails should not be any larger than a finishing nail). **DO NOT USE ANY TYPE OF ADHESIVE** (ticky tack or tape of any sort) **TO HANG ITEMS ON THE WALLS.** The adhesive will damage the walls and you will be billed.

**Sam Houston Village and Raven Village** **Furniture:** If you choose to rearrange your furniture, please do not drag furniture across the carpet. There are no glides on the furniture, so you must pick it up in order to move the furniture. To clean stains on upholstery, please see your hall staff for instructions. **Kitchenette:** Disposing of food or grease down the sinks or toilet will result in clogs and you will be billed for Housing Maintenance to come out and de-clog your pipes.

**Microwaves:** As with any microwave, metal or aluminum should not be used. Be sure to keep the inside clean and free of food particles. Do not leave microwave unattended while cooking. Do not over cook. In addition to the refrigerator, you may have an additional refrigerator in your suite, as long as the total cubic feet does not exceed 10.0 (including the microfridge). **Walls:** Alterations, changes, repairs or remodeling of the premises and equipment are not permitted. Residents of Sam Houston Village may use small picture hanging kits to hang pictures to walls. However, be aware that holes of any kind will result in a damage charge unless repair is made by the resident (subject to department approval). There is no painting allowed in the apartments.

**Mailbox:** see MAIL . **Security Cameras:** Non-monitored security cameras are located throughout the building.

**King Hall: Security Cameras:** Non monitored security cameras are located throughout the building.

**BUNK BEDS.** Bunk beds and lofts may be built provided that students follow the established construction policy. These are to be freestanding and must not be stacked on the furniture. Bolts, nails, etc. are not to be attached to the walls, ceilings, floors, or furniture to support the bunk bed or loft. All plans must be presented to the RM and approved by the Assistant Director for Facilities and Maintenance before construction can begin. Water beds are not allowed. All built-in furniture, including closets, beds, dressers, desks and bookcases, must not be moved. University owned beds must be reconfigured at the end of the fall semester before 24 hour quiet hours begin only if the student is not returning to the room. Removal of non-University bunk beds and lofts must be completed before 24 hour quiet hours begin at the end of the spring semester. Failure to do so will result in a \$50.00 charge to the occupants of the room. A \$25.00 fee will be charged for each piece of University furniture not returned from storage to the resident's room.

**CANDLES AND INCENSE.** Candles, wax sculptures, potpourri pots, paraffin baths, incense, and any open flame are prohibited in residence halls for fire safety reasons. Candles should not be used during power outages or in holiday season decorations such as jack-o-lanterns, Christmas wreaths or menorahs. Possession of candles or incense will result in a fine of \$50.00 (for each candle or item) not to exceed \$250.00 for the 1<sup>st</sup> violation. Candles/Incense that are unused, have the wick removed or still in their original packaging (unopened) are considered illegal and will be subject to the fine. The student must remove the candle or incense from the building immediately. Subsequent violations will result in a \$250.00 fine and disciplinary action which may include your housing contract being terminated. *Rationale: Candles/Incense are considered extreme fire hazards and have been banned by the State Fire Marshal for all residence halls.*

**COMMUNICATION.** The staff at the Department of Residence Life will communicate with students via their campus email address, their campus mail address, and their campus telephone number. When you arrive at the beginning of the semester, you must set up your voice mail system. Our department will only return calls to your campus phone number, we will not return calls to your long distance cell phone number.

(See TELEPHONES, MAIL)

**CONCESSIONS.** State law prohibits using state property for private enterprise. No concessions or business of any type may be operated by the resident, or other person, from the residence hall. This applies to baby-sitting, Avon, Tupperware and other similar businesses typically run from the home.

**COOKING AND COOKING APPLIANCES.** Cooking and cooking appliances are not allowed in student rooms. Open-coil heating devices (for heating liquids, cooking, etc.) are not allowed in residence halls. Hot-air popcorn poppers, drip coffee and tea makers and blenders are

allowed when used for their intended purpose only. The use of microwave ovens is also prohibited in all residence hall rooms. Electric potpourri simmering pots are not allowed. When an illegal cooking appliance is found, the student will be charged \$25.00 (for each appliance). The student must remove the appliance from the building immediately. *Rationale: A large number of appliances could overload electrical circuits in the hall. Cooking in student rooms may create fire hazards, problems with waste disposal and may contribute to pest problems.*

**COOPERATION WITH UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS.** Resident Advisors and Resident Managers are University officials. Residents must immediately comply with directions from any University official. Verbal and/or physical abuse directed toward any University staff member will not be tolerated, and shall subject the student(s) responsible to disciplinary action.

**CRAFT APPLIANCES.** Wood burners are not permitted in the residence halls. Other craft appliances, such as glue guns, are permitted in the residence halls.

**CURTAINS AND CURTAIN RODS.** Portable tension rods may be used to hang curtains. Curtain rods that must be installed by attachment to the walls are not allowed. Curtains must have a white backing.

**DELIVERIES.** Delivery of anything other than U.S. mail will be the responsibility of the delivery person. Residence Life staff will not accept responsibility for delivery. Uniformed persons and/or those with proper identification will be allowed to make deliveries in the residence halls during normal visitation hours. Deliveries to student rooms should be facilitated by calling the student room from hall/house exterior phone after visitation hours are over.

**DOORS (EXTERIOR).** Propping of exterior doors, as well as interior stairwell doors, laundry doors, etc. is prohibited for safety reasons. Residents who prop any door will be fined \$250.00 and may be subject to disciplinary action. If you are caught propping the door with an object (including any foreign objects impeding the crash bar), you will be fined \$250.00. *The rationale for this policy stems from security issues, air conditioning issues, and consistent enforcement of policies. If your building has card access security, an alarm will sound if the doors are propped.* Residents are not to allow non-residents into the exterior doors of the residence facilities. Damages sustained to the card access devices will result in a charge of \$80.00 - \$400.00 (vandalism/tampering).

**DOORS (ROOM).** Materials hung from "grip-a-strips" can hang no further than 18 inches from the grip-a-strip and must remain within the width of the grip-a-strip. No materials can be posted on the outside surface of the room entry door or door frame.

**DRUGS.** A student who, by a preponderance of the evidence, under these RULES AND REGULATIONS, is found to have illegally possessed, used, sold or distributed any drug, narcotic, or controlled substance, whether the infraction is found to have occurred on or off campus, shall be suspended for a period of not less than the remainder of the semester in which the infraction occurred plus the following long semester. Possession of drug paraphernalia will result in the termination of your housing contract and referral to the Office of Student Life for

disciplinary action. Students should be aware that an amendment to the Family Rights and Privacy Act (Warner Amendment) allows University officials the option to contact parents of students who are under 21 and are found to be in violation of SHSU policies and/or laws of the State of Texas concerning the possession, use, sale or distribution of any drug, narcotic or controlled substance. Any resident found in violation of the DRUG policy will have his/her housing contract terminated as well as other University disciplinary action. Students that make a conscience decision to remain present during illegal activities (being present during the presence or consumption of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia) will be disciplined accordingly which will include your housing contract being terminated and referral to the Office of Student Life for disciplinary action.

**ELECTRICAL POWER STRIPS.** Only one power strip per outlet should be used. All power strips should be UL approved and have a grounded plug. It is recommended that students purchase power strips with circuit breakers for additional safety. (See EXTENSION CORDS)

**EXERCISE EQUIPMENT.** Exercise equipment such as ankle weights, stationary bikes, plastic aerobic hand weights up to 5 lbs. and stationary exercise equipment utilizing bands or hydraulics are permitted. Weight stacks, plates, dumbbells or barbells are NOT allowed due to excessive weight which may cause damage to floors and/or disturb other residents. If weights over 5 lbs. are found in a student's residence hall room, the student will be billed \$25.00 (not to exceed \$250.00) per incident and the student must remove the weights immediately. *Rationale: Exercise equipment utilizing heavy metal plates can damage floors, tile, or carpet. Hydraulic or band-type exercise equipment is lighter in weight and is stationary; therefore, it should not cause damage or disturbances.*

**EXTENSION CORDS.** Use of extension cords is prohibited in the halls by order of the State Fire Marshal. Power strips are to be used as an alternative. (See ELECTRICAL POWER STRIPS)

**EXTERIOR DOORS.** Exterior doors to the residence halls are locked to promote safety and limit access to the buildings by non-residents. These doors should not be propped open at any time. Any person found to be responsible for propping open a door will be assessed a fine of \$250.00 and further disciplinary action. (See DOORS, EXTERIOR)

**FALSE FIRE ALARMS.** False fire alarms will result in a minimum damage charge of \$250.00. If this damage charge cannot be assessed to the guilty person(s), it will be added to the vandalism charge for the residence hall and could be part of the group bill for damages. Also, any person found to be responsible for activating a false fire alarm will be assessed a \$250.00 fine and referred to the Dean of Students' Office for additional disciplinary action. (See GROUP BILLING FOR DAMAGES/VANDALISM)

**FIGHTING.** Successful communities respect differences of opinion and confront appropriately when necessary. Physical fighting, attempting or causing injury to an individual or threat of bodily harm, is not an acceptable form of problem resolution and will not be tolerated in the residence halls.

**FINES.** Residence Life policies and procedures not followed by a resident may include an administrative fine. Administrative fines will not be assessed until after the first mandatory floor, hall, or house meeting in the Fall semester. For the Spring semester, only new students will not be billed for administrative fines until after the first mandatory floor, hall, or house meeting. All other students may be billed administrative fines for non-compliance of policies and procedures immediately upon return to campus for the Spring semester.

**FIRE ALARMS.** If a fire alarm is sounded due to actions and/or student's negligence and the student can be identified, then that student will be billed \$250.00 for the fire alarm plus the student will be billed for any damage the fire caused to University property.

**FIRE DOORS.** Fire doors are intended to limit the spread of fire and smoke from one area to another. Propping these doors open adds to potential fire damage. Individuals responsible for propping fire doors may be subject to disciplinary action.

**FIRE DRILLS.** Fire drills are conducted to educate residents with the sound of the fire alarm, the emergency exits that are available and the procedure for evacuating the building. During a fire drill, every room will be checked by a RA to ascertain that all areas have been evacuated. Failure to evacuate during a drill or alarm in an immediate and cooperative manner will result in a \$50.00 fine and further disciplinary action.

**FIRE EXTINGUISHERS.** Fire extinguishers are provided throughout each residence hall. They should be used for their intended purpose only, and residence hall staff must be notified within 24 hours should an extinguisher be used to put out a fire. Failure to notify staff within 24 hours will result in a recharge fee of \$50.00. If a fire extinguisher is discharged falsely, the responsible student(s) will be billed the recharge fee of \$50.00. Tampering with any part of a fire extinguisher including the safety protection strap, the pull pin, removing the extinguisher from its bracket, and/or removing the bracket from the wall, will result in a fine of \$250.00.

**FURNITURE.** Students may wish to bring furniture from home. This can include small end tables, bookends, a stereo, throw rugs, curtains, a wastepaper basket, and a refrigerator. Furniture in public areas is intended for use by all students. It must remain in its designated space and must not be relocated to an individual student's room and/or to other areas of the hall. Furniture in individual rooms may not be stacked unless it is specifically designed for that purpose. See PUBLIC AREAS policy for additional information on furniture. No furniture items may be placed in such a manner as to block emergency escape from room windows. *Rationale: Damage is always possible when furniture is moved. In addition, consistency is necessary to maintain an adequate knowledge of hall inventory. Public area furniture is for the use of all and use in individual rooms deprives others of its use.*

Storage of university furniture is very limited and on a first come, first served basis. It is the responsibility of the resident to ensure stored items are returned before vacating the room.

**GAMBLING.** Gambling is illegal in residence halls or on any state property.

**GRIP-A-STRIP.** (See DOORS, ROOM)

**GROUP BILLING FOR DAMAGES/VANDALISM.** As stated in your residence hall contract, students may be held accountable for any abnormal wear, damages or cleaning in public areas of their residence hall to include billing all members of living unit groups. Residents will receive warnings in the form of floor/house meetings and letters before billing will occur. The total amount of the damage/vandalism to date will be addressed at each warning. If those responsible come forward or information is given that leads to the identification of those responsible then the billing will be addressed to those individuals rather than to the living unit group. Group billing charges may not be appealed. Some examples of items that are group billed: trash in public areas, propped exterior doors, and damage to public areas.

**GUESTS.** Overnight guests of the same sex may visit residents when arranged in advance with roommates, suite mates, and the RM. Guests must be sixteen years of age or older, and may stay a maximum of 2 nights and 3 days. Keys will not be issued to guests; no guest fee will be charged. The resident student is responsible for his/her guest, and guests will be expected to follow all policies of the University. Actions of the guest may subject the resident student to disciplinary action. Guests must be accompanied by the resident student at all times. Based on a Life Safety Code, the average residence hall room should hold no more than 8 people at any one time.

Residents that are visiting in halls/houses they do not reside in must be escorted “at all times”. A third violation of this policy will result in a \$25.00 fine. Subsequent violations will result in a \$50.00 fine and further disciplinary action. *Rationale: Unauthorized persons can present security problems. Our facilities are not equipped for young adolescents or children, nor for long-term guests. When not accompanied by a host/hostess, a guest, unfamiliar with Residence Life policies, may violate policies and/or create problems for other residents.*

**HALOGEN LAMPS.** Halogen lamps are prohibited in the residence halls. Use of these lamps is also against the National Electrical Code and the Life Safety Code. Several universities have experienced residence hall fires due to the amount of heat these lamps produce. These lamps may also put a strain on the building electrical wiring due to the amount of amps they require. Possession of a halogen lamp will result in a fine of \$25.00. The student must remove the lamp from the building immediately.

**HEATERS.** Space heaters and radiators, whether electric or kerosene powered, are not allowed in residence halls. Possession of a space heater or radiator will result in a fine of \$25.00. The student must remove the heater from the building immediately. *Rationale: Space heaters and radiators become very hot and therefore can cause damage or fires.*

**HOLIDAY DECORATIONS.** No live trees or greenery are allowed in residence halls, however, artificial trees may be used. Lights and other decorations should be used with safety in mind. Ornamental/seasonal lights, typically displayed in a strand of lights, may be approved for use in student rooms. Approval from the RM must be received prior to use. Keep flammable



materials away from lights. Extension cords should not cross under carpeting, nor should electrical outlets be overloaded. Excessive decorations and improper use of lights may cause extreme fire hazards, and the safety of residents must be considered at all times.

**HORSEPLAY AND PRANKS.** Water fights, water guns, water balloons, water balloon launchers, toy guns, darts and any other horseplay including wrestling and running in the halls, with water or other substances (i.e., shaving cream, whipping cream, toothpaste, SuperGlue, Vaseline, etc.) are prohibited. Residents will be subject to disciplinary action and/or held responsible for any damages associated with this behavior.

**KEYS.** Lost room keys will be replaced at a cost of \$25.00 per key. If it is necessary to change the locks, the fee is \$75.00 (which includes the cost of new keys). Mailbox keys may be replaced for a fee of \$10.00. No refund will be given for a lock change. All keys are considered state property and **MUST** always be returned to the Department of Residence Life. Loaner keys may be checked out from the apartment office, but must be promptly returned. **Duplication of keys as well as loaning keys to others is strictly prohibited.** See also "LOCK-OUTS".

Students will be charged \$10.00 each time they require entrance to their rooms, including use of a loaner key. Loaner keys are intended for temporary use and must be promptly returned; failure to do so will result in a \$75.00 charge for a recore of the door. Lost keys must be reported to the hall staff as they may compromise security to the building and other residents. Broken keys, due to the negligence of the student, will be charged \$25.00 for replacement. *Rationale: The intent of this policy is to promote safety of the residents by keeping the hall/house safe at all times. Consistency in assessing charges for lost keys is also an objective.*

**KITCHENS IN PUBLIC AREAS.** Belvin-Buchanan and Elliott Halls are equipped with kitchens in public areas. Residents of these halls may request kitchen use privileges for special occasions. The kitchen may not be used as a substitute for a meal plan. Contact hall staff for more information.

**LAMPS (HALOGEN).** See HALOGEN LAMPS

**LIGHT BULBS.** The use of light bulbs must be in accordance with the rating of the light fixture. Ornamental/seasonal lights, typically displayed in a strand of lights, may be approved for use in student rooms. Approval from the RM must be received prior to use. *Rationale: Use of light bulbs of a higher wattage than the rating of the fixture can result in overheating and therefore, constitute a potential fire hazard.*

**LIGHT FIXTURES.** The use of acetate, cellophane, tissue paper, or other combustible materials over or in the light fixture is forbidden by fire safety regulations. *Rationale: There are risks of personal injury or fire. Acetate may get too hot and melt onto the fixture. Even when the acetate does not melt, it holds heat rather than allowing it to diffuse, resulting in a possible short that could cause a personal injury or a fire.*

**LOCKOUTS.** Residents will be charged \$10.00 each time a staff member is required to assist

them in gaining entrance to their room (ex. unlock the door). If a loaner key is provided, and is not returned in the specified amount of time, a charge of \$75.00 will be made to cover the cost of re-keying the door. Residents may also be billed the \$10.00 fee if they lock their suitemates out of the bathroom, requiring assistance from a staff member to assist them in gaining entrance to the shared facilities. For the Spring semester, only new students will not be charged for lockouts until after the first mandatory floor, hall, or house meeting. All other students will be charged for lockouts immediately upon return to campus for the Spring semester.

**MICROWAVE OVENS.** Microwave ovens are not allowed in individual residence hall rooms (except for the microwaves provided in White Hall, Sam Houston Village and Raven Village). There is a \$25.00 fine for each illegal microwave found in student rooms. Microwave ovens have been purchased by some hall/house councils and are available for residents' use. Each hall/house with a microwave oven should have guidelines concerning usage and cleanliness posted near the oven; these should be carefully followed at all times. Microwave ovens are not intended for residents' constant use as a substitute for a meal plan, but are available for snacks and special occasions. Microwave ovens found to be unsanitary or improperly used by residents are subject to removal by the Department of Residence Life. *Rationale: Most of the residence halls are not wired to handle the use of microwaves in residence hall rooms and would create power outages as well as possible fire hazards.*

**NEWSPAPERS.** Any newspaper found after 2 p.m. in the hallways of the large halls (or on the porch of the small houses) will be disposed of by the hall staff daily.

**NOISE CONCERNS.** Residents should remember that courtesy and good judgment must be observed at all times regarding the noise policy. Radios, stereos and musical equipment, or sound from any source must be contained within the resident's room. Acceptable sound levels are determined by staff in each building based on building structure (common air vents, hollow doors, etc.) Noise that can be heard two or more (room doors) down from your room is considered a violation of the noise policy. Residents are to attempt to resolve noise issues with each other first before going to the staff. Residence Life reserves the right to have students remove stereos and other items that have contributed to a pattern of noise violations from one area. There will be a \$25.00 fine for a third noise policy violation. Subsequent violations will be \$50.00 for each violation and will be subject to additional disciplinary action. No warnings for noise violations will be given after the halls open each semester. *Rationale: The noise policy is the most common policy violation. It is difficult to determine a standard for noise across campus. All residents should have the right to sleep, study and enjoy a peaceful atmosphere.*

- ◆ Quiet hours. Quiet hours have been established by the Department of Residence Life for all halls from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday nights; 1:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday nights. These are minimum hours, and any hall, house or floor within a hall, may vote to increase these hours if desired.
- ◆ Campus-wide 24 hour quiet hours. These extra hours of quiet have been established by the department to allow students a quiet place to study during final exams. Notification of the 24 hour quiet hours will be posted in each residence hall.

**OFFENSIVE/OBSCENE MATERIALS.** Students who hang/place items in their room that are in public view (windows, doors, bathrooms etc.) that the University determines to be offensive and/or obscene will be asked to remove the items immediately and may be subject to disciplinary action. The University reserves the right to enter a student's room to remove items that are found offensive and/or obscene if the student is not present during the discovery.

**PARTIES.** Because of the small size of residence hall rooms, there should be no more than 8 people in a room or 12 people in a suite at one time. A smaller number of people may be asked to disperse if they are excessively loud or unruly.

**PETS.** Pets, including but not limited to, mammals, reptiles and birds, are not allowed anywhere in the residence halls at any time. There is no grace period for the removal of a pet. If an "illegal pet" is found, a \$25.00 fee (per animal) will be assessed. Subsequent violations will be a \$50.00 fine per pet. It is permissible for residents to maintain an aquarium of ten gallons or less. Fish of legal species may be kept and the owner assumes responsibility for the aquarium and its contents at all times. Only one aquarium is allowed per room. *Rationale: It is impossible for residents living in a confined area to take proper care of a pet. Health, damages, and nuisance factors affect other residents of the hall.*

**PICTURES AND POSTERS.** Students are encouraged to use light-weight pictures and posters to decorate their rooms. In hanging these items, students should not use pins, tacks or nails as they leave holes in the walls. Students must use only adhesives that do not cause damage, or be responsible for cleaning and/or paying for the damage that may result. Approved adhesives such as plastic putty, "HandiTack" or "Hold It" may be used in all buildings except Estill, Jackson-Shaver and White halls, where it may cause damage to the textured walls.

**PLANTS.** Having a variety of plants adds to the decor of a room. Students may want to bring a freestanding plant stand since hanging plants are not allowed.

**POSTING GUIDELINES.** Unauthorized posting is prohibited in all public areas. The RM will designate bulletin boards in his/her building/complex as campus information boards where recognized campus organization materials will be posted. This person or his/her appointee is responsible for monitoring the building's bulletin boards. University and departmental materials will be posted in these locations.

Student organizations or non-University entities must adhere to the following procedures. Materials should be stamped with approval of the Office of Student Activities and meet all criteria specified in Guidelines. These should be delivered to the Residence Life Office at least one week before the event. The fliers will be distributed to the halls, initialed by the hall staff and posted on the designated bulletin boards not less than 3 days before the event. Fliers will be removed by the hall staff after the event is over. Organizations that post without going through this distribution channel will have their fliers removed from bulletin boards and will be referred to the Office of Student Life.

Door-to-door posting or solicitation is prohibited. Organizations wishing to distribute information to each residence hall student will need to send materials through the mail, addressed to each student/room.

**PROPPING DOORS.** (See DOORS, EXTERIOR DOORS)

**PUBLIC AREAS.** It is the responsibility of the students living in the building to maintain the public areas. Public areas may not be used by outside organizations or groups and are for resident use only.

- ◆ Furniture and floor mats. All furniture and floor mats in public areas should remain in those areas at all times. These items are not to be taken to student rooms for personal use. If a resident moves public area property into the resident's room, the resident(s) in that room will be charged \$25.00 per item. The resident could also face disciplinary actions and/or criminal charges for theft of state property.
- ◆ Garbage. All personal garbage must be removed to the dumpster by each student. Garbage accumulated in residents' rooms should NOT be placed in the garbage cans in public areas at any time. Residents found responsible for excessive trash (ex. bags, boxes) will be charged a minimum of \$25.00.
- ◆ Cleanliness. Residents are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and their guests, should they choose to utilize the public areas in their buildings.
- ◆ Outside rails. Residents of White Hall may not use outside rails for hanging items such as signs, banners or laundry.

**REFRIGERATORS.** Students may bring small personal refrigerators. The maximum allowable size for any refrigerator unit is 5.0 cubic feet capacity. Each student in a room may have a unit so long as the combined total capacity of both units in a room is no more than 10 cubic feet.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR DAMAGE.** Residents shall hold the University harmless and otherwise be responsible for their own acts and omissions and those of their guests that directly or indirectly cause personal injury, death, or damage to University property or the property of third parties. In such cases, Residence Life reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including but not necessarily limited to, initiation of disciplinary proceedings, restitution, and/or termination of residence hall or apartment contract.

**ROOF TOPS.** Residents are prohibited from the roofs of all buildings. If articles need to be retrieved from a roof, residents should contact their RA or RM.

**ROOM CLEANLINESS AND PERSONAL HYGIENE.** It is each individual resident's responsibility to keep his/her room clean and free of garbage. All garbage should be taken outside to the dumpsters. Custodians are not expected to take out personal garbage accumulated in a resident's room. Residents who do not comply with requests to clean their room/bathroom may be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

Personal hygiene is the responsibility of each resident. If there are complaints about a resident's personal hygiene, the resident must, in good faith, help to alleviate the complaint by complying

with suggestions to improve the situation.

**ROOM PAINTING.** University personnel will do all painting of student rooms. If you feel your room needs to be painted, please notify your RA or RM. That individual will examine the room and determine if the room does need painting. If the RA or the RM agrees that the room needs to be painted, that individual will give you further information as to when your room may be scheduled to be painted.

**SAFETY EQUIPMENT.** Any student found to be responsible for the misuse of safety equipment, which includes but is not limited to: fire hoses and valves, emergency lights, exit signs, smoke/heat detectors, fire panels, security cameras, electrical panels, fire extinguishers, and public area lighting, will be assessed a \$250.00 fine and be subject to further disciplinary action. **NOTE: Tampering, pulling, disabling, disconnecting, and/or dismantling a fire alarm system for any reason is both a federal and state criminal offense. Anyone found in violation of the above criminal offense will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.**

**SHARPS CONTAINERS.** Students who require a container for the disposal of syringes or other sharps may obtain a Bio-Hazard sharps container for this purpose. Students needing an empty container or wishing to dispose of a full container must call the Health Center at extension 41849 to make these arrangements. The containers will be disposed of by the approved waste disposal company. Containers that are for disposal must meet the following criteria:

They must be properly capped, open containers will not be accepted.

The container can not be leaking or contaminated on the exterior.

The Bio-Hazard containers must be labeled to indicate they are from Residence Life.

**SIGNS AND BANNERS.** Signs, banners, posters, etc. may be displayed on the exterior of Sam Houston State University residence halls provided the following guidelines are followed: signs should be made in good taste, should be hung near the main entrance of the building, should be attached to the brick portion of the building with tape, and the organization responsible for the sign should remove it within 24 hours after the event has occurred. Signs to promote campus or residence hall spirit and seasonal signs of general interest will be allowed. All signs/banners should be approved by the RM prior to posting.

**SMOKE DETECTORS.** Smoke detectors should be operational at all times. Staff will perform routine checks to determine that all smoke detectors are functioning. **Report all problems (beeping sounds, etc.) to the staff immediately so they can replace the battery or report the problem to maintenance for repair.** Tampering with a smoke detector (detaching, removing batteries, unplugging, or covering up the smoke detector with an item) is a safety violation and is subject to a fine of \$250.00 plus the cost to replace the damaged item(s).

**SMOKING.** Smoking is prohibited in all halls and houses. Smoking outside of halls is restricted to approved areas. Smoking in non-smoking areas will result in a \$100.00 fine for the first violation. Subsequent violations will result in an additional \$100.00 fine and disciplinary action which may include your housing contract terminated. Residents will be held responsible for the actions of their guests.

**SOLICITATION.** Soliciting is defined as asking for something, pleading with someone or appealing to someone. This includes, but is not limited to, the sale or the offer for sale of goods or services, whether for immediate or future delivery, receipt of or request for any gift or contribution. Solicitation is not allowed in residence halls at Sam Houston State University. Students and/or outside agencies are prohibited from using residence hall rooms or public areas for solicitation. "Door-to-door" selling, distribution and recruitment are not allowed. People loitering in public areas, parking lots, or in the hallways who do not reside in the building should be reported to the building staff or UPD. If a solicitor approaches you, get a description of the person and notify your building staff immediately. Do not attempt to confront the solicitor yourself. Solicitors wishing to distribute information to each residence hall student will need to send materials through the mail, addressed to each student's post office box or attend Bearkat Mania (contact the Office of Student Activities for information on Bearkat Mania). *Rationale: Uncontrolled solicitation is an affront to many students. It is costly to the university in terms of maintenance and clean-up and it can create significant visual pollution. Guidelines for reducing these concerns have been established to ensure an orderly process and to provide a free atmosphere for the pursuit of education.*

**SPORTING EQUIPMENT.** Sporting equipment is not to be used in residence halls. Residents will be held responsible for any damages occurring due to the use of sporting equipment.

**SUITE BATHROOMS.** (See BATHROOMS)

**TELEPHONE POLICY.** Collect calls and other charges must not be accepted by students in residence halls. If charges are accepted by residents, the responsible person will be charged for the phone calls plus a \$15 processing fee per call. If the responsible party cannot be identified, the charges will be divided among all of the residents with access to the telephone that was charged.

**TELEVISION ANTENNAS.** Television antennas and additional wiring are allowed inside individual rooms only and may not extend outside the room, since appearance of the buildings, as well as safety, are important considerations.

**TOBACCO.** The use of tobacco (snuff, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, etc.) is prohibited in all residence life buildings. Dip or "spit" cups or other sources of saliva and tobacco are also prohibited in all residence hall buildings. Use of tobacco products will result in a \$100.00 fine for the first violation. Subsequent violations will result in an additional \$100.00 fine and disciplinary action which may include your housing contract being terminated. Possession of dip or "spit" cups will also result in disciplinary action. Residents will be responsible for the actions of their guests. *Rationale: Banning tobacco products helps to establish a healthy and clean living environment in the residence halls by eliminating second hand smoke and bi-products of tobacco use (cigarette butts, dip/chewing residue).*

**TOILET FACILITIES.** All toilets in residence halls are to be used for their intended purpose

only. Students may not flush food, paper towels, sanitary hygiene products or any other foreign matter. Improper use of toilet facilities causes sewage blockage and creates damage. Students will be assessed damage charges for repairs resulting from flushing items not intended to be put in toilets. The toilets installed at Sam Houston Village and Raven Village are water conservation low volume toilets. Therefore, it is prudent to use a minimum amount of toilet paper products in order to avoid blockages.

**TRAFFIC SIGNS.** Traffic signs, as well as state and city directional or informational signs, are not allowed in student rooms since possession of these items is illegal. These signs will be turned over to the University Police Department for possible criminal prosecution of student(s) possessing them.

**TRASH.** It is the responsibility of every resident to ensure that all trash be removed from the buildings and placed in the dumpsters provided outside each hall area. Any trash found in the public areas will be removed by the hall staff and billed to each resident responsible. If trash found in public areas contain items with a student's name on it, that student will be billed for the removal of trash. (See GROUP BILLING FOR DAMAGES/VANDALISM)

**VANDALISM.** Campus vandalism ends up costing you. Damage and theft raise educational costs - and students are often the ones who pay for those increases. Be alert for vandalism.

- ◆ Destruction of property can interrupt your learning and social life. Report any instances of vandalism to Residence Life staff immediately.
- ◆ Remember: destroying property is not very smart - it is illegal and costly.
- ◆ Students may be held accountable for any abnormal wear, damages, or cleaning in public areas of their residence hall to include billing of damages or abnormal cleaning charges to all members of living unit groups. Residents will receive warnings in the form of floor/house meetings and/or letters before billing will occur. The total amount of the damage/vandalism to date will be addressed at each warning. If those responsible come forward or information is given that leads to the identification of those responsible then the billing will be addressed with those individuals rather than the living unit group. Group billing charges may not be appealed.
- ◆ If necessary, students, groups of students, or entire floors of students may be relocated/reassigned to another area in residence life due to damages.

**VISITATION.** Visitation in residence hall rooms by members of the opposite sex is a privilege provided to residents by the University. Violation of maximum hours of visitation is considered a violation of University policy and is handled accordingly. There is a \$25.00 fine for residents that are found in violation of the visitation policy three times. Subsequent violations will result in a \$50.00 fine and additional disciplinary action. Residents of any building may vote to alter visitation hours for their building as long as the adjusted hours fall within the maximum hours set by the University. Students interested in this should speak to their RM.

During the break periods, all University and Residence Life rules and policies apply. However,

24 hour visitation in the lobby areas of the residence halls is prohibited during the break periods and holidays.

Visitation hours are:

7:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. Sunday - Thursday

7:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m. Friday & Saturday

- ◆ Responsibilities of the host/hostess. The host/hostess must see that all visitors enter and leave the building in the approved manner, using the entrances specified for use by visitors. The host is responsible for the conduct of his visitors and for informing them of all University, Residence Life and hall council policies. All visitors are subject to University, Residence Life and hall council policies, and residents are responsible for their guests who remain in their room if they leave for a short period of time. Guests are not to be left alone in the room longer than four hours.
- ◆ Single-sex halls. All visitors must enter through the main lobby or other entrances specified by hall staff unless escorted by a resident of that particular building. Visitors must be escorted by their host from public areas to resident rooms and from resident rooms to public areas. No visitors are allowed without a specific host.
- ◆ Coed halls. Visitation is allowed in public areas such as TV rooms, lobbies, study rooms, vending rooms, etc. Hallways and stairways are to be used by residents of the opposite sex as thoroughfares to public areas after visitation hours are over (congregation of the opposite sex is not allowed). Visitors must be escorted by their host from public areas to resident rooms and from resident rooms to public areas.
- ◆ White Hall. Visitors are allowed in rooms and on outside walkways during official visitation hours only. After visitation hours are over in outside entrance halls, no members of the opposite sex may visit on the "rails" (walkways). Visitors must be escorted by their host from public areas to resident rooms and from resident rooms to public areas.
- ◆ Small houses. Visitors must be escorted by their hosts from public areas to resident rooms and from resident rooms to public areas. Visitors may enter with their host from either back or front door.
- ◆ All hall main lobbies. Visitation is 24 hours a day provided visitors are accompanied at all times by a specific resident of that building and visitors and hosts/hostesses conduct themselves in a manner so as to preserve the rights of other residents to a quiet living environment. No parties or group activities will be allowed without prior scheduling and approval by the area coordinator. Disturbances will result in the withdrawal of visitation privileges of those involved and/or other disciplinary action.

**WASHING CARS.** Housing facilities and/or utilities are not to be used for washing cars.

**WATER BALLOONS, WATER FIGHTS, WATER GUNS.** See HORSEPLAY.

**WATER BEDS.** Water beds are not allowed since they may cause damage.

**WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES.** The University has the responsibility of promoting the



health, safety and welfare of students. State laws as well as institutional policies assist the University in accomplishing this. The State, as well as the University, has very firm policies on the possession of weapons. Students living in residence halls are strictly prohibited from keeping any weapons, explosives and projectiles of any kind, in their rooms, including: guns (which includes BB guns, paint and pellet guns, cap guns and starter pistols, air rifles), blow guns, stun guns, ammunition, bows, arrows, knives with blades of 5 1/2 inches or longer, "nunchucks," sling shots, and fireworks. Further, the Texas Penal code provides that it is illegal for a person to possess a firearm, weapon, explosive, or illegal knife on the premises of an educational institution. This includes weapons stored in vehicles which are located on University property. An offense under this section is a felony of the third degree and is punishable by two to ten years imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and/or a fine up to \$10,000. A student who violates this law will also be subject to disciplinary action by the Dean of Students' Office.

**WINDOWS.** Windows must remain closed in buildings with central air conditioning. Rooms with window units may open their windows if the a/c unit is turned off. No articles may be thrown or hung from windows. Residents may not sit on window sills or use windows as entrances/exits. Curtains, shades, etc. may only be hung from tension rods. No alteration to the walls or windows is allowed (drilling holes). Students who place items in windows that the University determines to be offensive and/or obscene will be asked to remove the items immediately and may be subject to disciplinary action. The University reserves the right to enter a student's room to remove items that are found offensive and/or obscene if the student is not present during the discovery. Foil or newspaper is not permitted in room windows unless a white backing is present and viewed from the outside of the building. Residents are responsible for any damage caused by the posting of items in windows (tape deposits, etc.). *Rationale: Screens are not intended for frequent opening and closing. Removal results in damage to screens and sometimes to the fixture into which it fits. The possibility is great that items thrown out of windows will cause personal injury or property damage.*

### **PHILOSOPHY CONCERNING DIVERSITY:**

The students that live in our residence halls and all those who attend Sam Houston State University come from diverse backgrounds and social groups. Therefore, we encourage acceptance and appreciation of individuals regardless of race, gender, age, ethnicity, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, gender preference, socioeconomic status, or religious affiliation.

All residents should feel that they are a welcomed and accepted part of their living environment. They should feel free to live in this environment without harassment and intimidation. All of our residents have something to contribute to their living environment and should be treated with dignity and respect. In a community that values diversity, acts of bigotry cannot and will not be tolerated.

The Department of Residence Life is committed to the idea that all residents will be afforded the same respect regardless of race, gender, age, ethnicity, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, gender preference, socioeconomic status, or religious affiliation by all members of

this department and all residents of University housing. The Department of Residence Life believes all students should feel free to live without harassment. Any student found harassing others will be in violation of department policy.

Any student who resides in a University residence hall and feels that their rights have been violated in regard to this policy should follow the following procedures to report the incident:

1. Any incident that involves another student should be reported immediately to a resident advisor or the resident manager.
2. Any incident that involves a resident advisor should be reported immediately to the resident manager or the area coordinator for that area. The area coordinator is located in the Residence Life Office.
3. Any incident illegal in nature such as assault should be reported to the University Police Department.
4. Any incident may also be reported to the Dean of Students' Office, located in the Lowman Student Center.
5. Students may also seek legal advice from the Students' Legal Advisor located in the North Annex of the Lee Drain Building.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCESS:**

All students are required to abide by the Student Code of Conduct and the Residence Hall Handbook. In a community of learning, disruption of the educational environment, destruction of property, and interference with the orderly process of the University or with the rights of other members of the University will not be tolerated. Every person present and/or participating in a policy violation will be documented and may be subject to disciplinary action.

In an effort to maintain an environment compatible with the University's function as an educational institution, Resident Managers have been granted authority to impose the following disciplinary action:

- ◆ Verbal or written warning (reprimand)
- ◆ Reassignment within residence hall or complex
- ◆ Restriction from area within residence hall or complex
- ◆ Suspension of hall rights and privileges

At any time, the Resident Manager may refer a discipline case to the Student Discipline Coordinator. The Discipline Coordinator or designee may impose the following disciplinary action:

- ◆ Verbal or written warning (reprimand)
- ◆ Educational / Administrative Sanction (project assignment)
- ◆ Reassignment within housing facilities
- ◆ Area restriction
- ◆ Suspension of hall rights and privileges
- ◆ Restitution
- ◆ Community Service
- ◆ Housing Contract Termination

- ◆ Block from future housing
- ◆ Refer to the Office of Student Life for additional disciplinary action.

The appeal process grants any party with a grievance the right to be heard. The appeal process is as follows:

- ◆ A Resident Manager's disciplinary action may be appealed to the Student Discipline Coordinator.
- ◆ The Student Discipline Coordinator's disciplinary action may be appealed to the Director of Residence Life. The Director's decision is final.
- ◆ Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Residence Life Office within 24 hours of the disciplinary decision.