

2022-2023 Housing Policy

Denison University

As a four-year residential campus, Denison University is committed to the learning that takes place inside and outside the classroom. Staff members in the Office of Residential Communities and Student Housing Operations and Planning provide students with a reasonably safe, comfortable, and well-maintained living space. Residents and their guests are expected to treat community members and residential spaces with respect. The following policies and regulations that govern residential spaces at Denison are established to support this expectation.

The Student Residence Agreement, signed by students who reside on campus, sets forth the conditions for fulfilling the Denison University residency requirement as outlined in the Student Handbook. This is a binding agreement stating that students are responsible for knowing and complying with local, state, and federal laws, and University policies including but not limited to the Code of Student Conduct, Housing Policy, and room selection policies and procedures.

COVID-19 and Public Health-Informed Policies

Denison aims to deliver its mission while protecting the health of our students and minimizing the potential spread of disease within our community. As a resident within Denison housing, the 2019 Novel Coronavirus or similar public health crisis (“COVID”) will impact your housing experience as Denison continues to make public health-informed decisions. The below provisions and guidelines are incorporated into the housing agreement and are applicable to all residential students. As always, we will endeavor to update you with timely information about specific health guidance important for residential living.

1. Health and Risk Mitigation. We expect that all members of the Denison community—residents, staff, and visitors—act in a manner that demonstrates respect and consideration for those around them, including respect and consideration for the health and safety of all community members. All residential students are prohibited from creating a health or safety hazard within Denison housing and the University may request or require a resident to leave Denison housing if their continued presence in the housing community poses a health or safety risk for community members. Students are required to comply with health and safety laws, orders, ordinances, regulations and health and safety guidance adopted by Denison as it relates to public health matters, including COVID-19. This guidance may evolve as the COVID-19 situation evolves and may include, but is not limited to, social distancing, limitations on mass gatherings, face covering requirements, COVID-19 testing, vaccination, contact tracing, disinfection protocols, limitations or restrictions on guests in rooms and residence halls, and quarantine / isolation requirements. Adhering to these requirements is mandatory as to all residents, staff and visitors, and extends to all aspects of residential life, including bedrooms, bathrooms, community spaces (e.g., kitchens, lounges, computer rooms, courtyards and other common spaces).

2. Quarantine / Isolation / Separation. At any time, the University may request or require a resident to leave Denison housing when that resident’s continued presence in the housing community poses a health or safety risk for community members. Students are required to comply with requests from Denison to leave their assigned space due to COVID or any other public health emergency – including, but not limited to quarantine or isolation needs – and failure to do so is a violation of the housing agreement and may subject a student to emergency removal from their assigned space. If a residential rooms or hall is not appropriate for self-quarantine or self-isolation, and a student is advised or directed to self-quarantine or self-isolate, students might not be permitted to continue residing in their residential space and will be provided alternative housing arrangements as needed; in certain circumstances, students may be directed to quarantine or isolate off campus. Relocation or removal from a student’s assigned housing to isolate or quarantine does not constitute a termination of a residential student’s housing contract.

3. Other Health or De-Densifying Efforts. Residential students are required to comply with any other health or de-densifying efforts needed on campus due to COVID or another public health emergency, including, but not limited to, the relocation of all or some residential students to alternative housing. Relocation does not constitute a termination of a residential student’s housing contract.

4. Dining Services. Dining service, including where and how it will be offered to residential students, is subject to the discretion of the University and to modification to address public health concerns. Due to health and safety guidance adopted by the University, Denison may limit the occupancy of dining halls, limit the amount of time students may spend within dining halls or make other operational adjustments needed to address health and safety concerns.

5. Cleaning. Denison will continue to update its cleaning protocols to address COVID or another public health emergency to minimize the transmission of infection. Denison will educate and inform residential students on appropriate cleaning protocols within their assigned spaces to reduce the spread of COVID-19 within residence halls. Students are required to adhere to these cleaning protocols.

6. Termination. Upon notice, Denison reserves the right to terminate housing contracts due to public health emergency needs, including COVID.

7. Risks Associated with Communal Living: Your Housing Contract is the basic document that states the contractual obligations between you and Denison and it incorporates this and other policies that govern residential living and student life on campus. You are responsible for complying with the rules, policies and guidelines contained here, including the above COVID-19 and public-health guidelines, as you are for those directly printed in the housing contract. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this document. Updates and corrections are made as they become necessary and will be posted to this [page](#). By entering into the housing contract and occupying University housing, you are agreeing to release the University, its agents, and employees from any and all damages, liability, claims, expenses, or loss (collectively, "Claims") resulting from or arising out of your use of space within University housing, including those related to the potential exposure to contagious viruses like the coronavirus, and to indemnify and hold harmless the University, its agents, and employees from any Claims resulting from or arising out of your breach of the terms and conditions of your housing contract. You understand that by residing in Denison housing, you are assuming the risks associated with communal living and, as in any shared living environment, those risks include potential exposure to contagious viruses, including COVID-19.

Residence Hall Access

To provide reasonable security for residents, residence hall entrances remain locked twenty-four hours a day. Students can access their residence hall at any time by using their Denison University Identification Card.

Students are expected to enter and exit facilities only through marked entrances and exits and adhere to signage about traffic direction, including one-way passages. Except in an emergency, such as fire, students are prohibited from entering or exiting through any room or apartment windows, fire escapes, or other unapproved points of egress.

Rights of Entry and Search

Students are advised that university officials have the right to enter any room to ensure student safety and compliance with all university regulations. The University reserves the right to search student rooms in University owned or operated properties. University personnel designated by the Vice President for Student Life shall authorize such searches.

A health and safety check of all student housing assignments is conducted at designated times, generally when residence halls officially close (e.g., holiday, winter, and spring breaks) but also at other intervals as determined by Residential Communities & Housing. University personnel enter all student housing assignments for these checks. Students can view the status of their health and safety checks via the My Housing portal.

Policy Violations and Conflict Resolution Process

Students who violate University policies, including the Housing Policy, may be subject to action under the Code of Student Conduct. Outcomes that result from a finding of responsibility through this action may result in educational requirements, loss of housing selection status, or separation from the University.

Room Changes

All students are expected to inhabit their assigned rooms. A room freeze is in effect for all rooms during the first two weeks of each semester. If a student seeks a room change because of a roommate conflict, the student will be referred first to Residential Communities staff to attempt resolution of the conflict before a room change will be considered. After a student receives authorization to change rooms via a Residential Communities professional staff member, they must follow the request process through the Residential Communities & Housing main office in Curtis Community Center. Upon approval and issuance of new key(s), the student must complete the move into the new living space within 48 hours. Moving assistance is not provided.

The University reserves the right to reassign rooms, consolidate assignments, or remove students from residence halls as necessary. Consolidation may require students to relocate or require that occupants fill empty spaces by having other friends or peers move into those vacancies. Any student who may be singly occupying double-occupancy rooms, or students residing in triples, quads or apartments who may have space available, may be subject to administrative consolidation. Students with unassigned adjacent room spaces may not occupy those spaces and are advised to seek a roommate or be prepared for occupancy assigned to another student by the University at any time.

At any time, the University may request or require a resident to relocate or leave housing when that resident's presence poses a health or safety risk for community members. Students are required to comply with requests from University personnel to leave their assigned space due to public health, safety, or other emergency needs, and failure to do so is a violation of the residence hall policies and may subject a student to emergency removal from their assigned space. Not all University housing spaces are appropriate for self-quarantine or self-isolation, for example, and in those situations where a student is recommended to self-quarantine or self-isolate, students may not be permitted to continue residing in their residential space and will be provided alternative housing arrangements as needed. Requirement to isolate or quarantine does not constitute breach or termination of a student's housing contract.

Room Damages and Charges

Residential Communities and Student Housing utilize Room Condition Reports (RCRs) to document the condition of each student room at the start and conclusion of the academic year. Students are responsible for signing off on their RCR via the MyHousing Portal within 48 hours of move-in (or time period designated by Student Housing). At the end of the academic year, the RCR accounts for room condition when students depart campus.

These forms, which are completed by Residential Communities staff, allow the office to determine if there are any issues that need to be remedied. Issues may include damage to the room/property, missing furniture, or cleanliness concerns, and these issues can often result in a student being charged for damages.

At various times, students may move in and out of spaces other than at the start and close of the full academic year. In those instances, student staff will enter the vacated space and close out the RCR to account for the condition of space. Then, a new RCR will be opened for any new occupants to the space. This new RCR will account for existing damage. Existing damage will be charged to the student who vacated the space. Damage not present when the new student entered the space will be charged to the new resident.

Community & Common Area Damages and Charges

Residential Communities and Housing, in partnership with Facilities Services, may assess charges to entire communities when damage or cleanliness exceeds normal wear and tear. These charges will be divided equally among all residents of a floor, wing or residence hall. There will not be an appeal process for these charges, but Residential Communities & Housing encourages residents to be upstanders and encourage responsible parties to step forward to accept charges for which they are responsible.

Vacating Residential Space

Students who withdraw or who are otherwise dismissed from housing or campus have no more than 48 hours from the date of their disenrollment to vacate the campus. Students will be held financially responsible for room and board charges. Refunds will be based upon the date the student vacates campus and in accordance with the schedule outlined in the Student Handbook. Failure to vacate a housing assignment within the specified time frame shall be considered voluntarily abandoned and may be disposed of or donated to a charitable organization by Denison unless Denison has agreed in writing to make alternative arrangements. Neither the Offices of Residential Communities and Housing, nor their designees, are responsible for lost or damaged property from packing and storing belongings.

Withdraw, Dismissal

Students who withdraw or are dismissed from enrollment normally have no more than 48 hours from the date of their disenrollment to return their keys, student I.D., and vacate campus. Students will be held financially responsible for room and board charges. Students who withdraw or are dismissed from enrollment during the term of the contract will receive a refund of room charges based upon the date the student vacates campus and in accordance with the terms and refund schedule outlined in the Student Handbook. These refunds are contingent upon the resident having properly withdrawn from Denison and properly checked out of their assigned space. Failure to vacate a housing assignment within the specified time frame shall be considered voluntarily abandoned and may be disposed of or donated to a charitable organization by Denison unless Denison has agreed in writing to make alternative arrangements.

Because of fixed costs associated with room and board services, refunds or reimbursements will not be granted for suspension of housing or board services that result from an emergency or exigent circumstances, including public health needs and issues related to COVID-19. However, Denison in its discretion may issue partial reimbursements under such circumstances if feasible and appropriate.

Visitors and Overnight Guests

Guests from within and outside the University community must comply with all residence hall and University policies and regulations. Students hosting guests are responsible for informing their guests of University expectations and are responsible for the behavior of their guests. Students may have a guest(s) stay overnight in their residence hall room only when they have the consent of their roommate(s). Guests may stay overnight only for two nights within a seven-day period (this also applies to students who reside in a single room). No guests are permitted during break periods. The rights of roommate(s) and floor members must be respected. No more than fifteen (15) total guests may occupy a residential space, including a maximum of fifteen total guests in an entire campus apartment.

Because of COVID-19, Denison may impose additional restrictions on visitors (including other Denison students) in residence halls and individual rooms, and students will be expected to abide by these rules when they are announced.

Students may not prop open residence hall doors because it compromises the safety of residents and property. Students should never allow individuals without University identification into residence halls and should immediately report suspicious persons to Campus Safety.

Noise and Quiet Hours

Excessive noise in the residence halls can be disruptive to the community and infringe on the rights of community members to sleep and study. As such, residents and guests are expected to comply fully and

promptly with any request from community members to reduce noise levels or discontinue activities which the resident may find disruptive or disturbing.

In support of the University's academic mission, residence halls maintain quiet hours at the following times during the academic year: Sunday through Thursday, 11:00 pm to 9:00 am; Friday and Saturday, 1:00 am to 10:00 am. During these designated periods, noise of any kind that can be heard inside or outside the residence hall constitutes a violation of quiet hours. During examination periods, strict quiet hours will be maintained twenty-four hours a day, beginning at the end of the regular quiet hour period on the last day of classes and through the date and time of residence hall closing.

Obstruction of Common Areas and Posting of Materials

Posting of materials on windows, doors, and ceilings can impede, disorient, or obstruct people as they access or exit buildings. In accordance with the Code of Student Conduct, there shall be no posting of signs or other materials on lobby doors, windows and window frames, inside stairwells or on stairwell doors, or in other locations that may impair visibility or egress.

To avoid hazards in access areas, such as lobbies, doorways, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas of the residence halls, these must be kept free of obstruction. Items such as trash bags, bicycles, furniture, personal effects, or other items should not be left in places where they might block or hinder egress. Items found in these areas may be confiscated or discarded by staff if deemed hazardous to proper egress. Bicycle racks are available on campus.

Responsibilities for Waste Disposal and Cleaning

Students are responsible for gathering their landfill waste and recycling items and depositing them in the dumpsters provided outside of the residence halls for this purpose. Trash cans within the halls are meant to receive small amounts of trash, not to transport bags from each resident. Students are expected to maintain their spaces to a standard of safety and cleanliness suitable for comfortable human habitation. The University will continue to implement and modify its cleaning protocols to address public health needs. The University will educate and inform students on appropriate cleaning protocols within their assigned spaces to reduce the spread of disease within the residence halls. Students will be responsible for upholding cleanliness standards and staff members will complete regular health and safety checks.

Access to Roofs and Ledges

Students are strictly prohibited from access to all roofs, balconies, ledges, and fire escapes. Students may not lean, hang on, or place any part of their body out of residence hall windows. Items may not be thrown from, placed outside of or hung from roofs, balconies, ledges, fire escapes, or windows.

Room Decoration and Prohibited Items

Room decorations must not compromise the safety of the residence halls or cause damage to facilities and must comply with all fire safety regulations; they must be flameproof, fire resistant or noncombustible.

Room decorations must adhere to the following criteria:

- Nails, hooks or other materials that damage walls may not be used. Posters and pictures should be affixed to walls with adhesives that do not damage the walls.
- Tapestries, posters, curtains and other items shall not be hung from or affixed to ceilings.
- Drapes, tapestries, beads, or other items that block egress from the room into the hallway are not permitted, as these pose a significant hazard in the event of a fire.
- Decorations may not interfere with safe passage or evacuation from any room or common area. Interior and exterior doors may not be covered to the edges with paper or other flammable materials (e.g., fabric).
- Electrical lights must be UL-approved (Underwriters Laboratories) and the UL sticker must be intact. Additionally, only lights of the small-bulb or rope variety may be used. Large-bulb strand

lighting is prohibited due to their high fire risk. Holiday lighting or any other item shall not be attached near or around fire- or other life-safety fixtures, including (but not limited to) fire sprinkler heads and smoke detectors. Lighting may be inspected by the University at any time, and may be removed if deemed inappropriate, excessive, or improperly installed.

- Neither live nor cut trees are permitted in any campus building, including the residence halls. This includes the use of wreaths or garland that is constructed from live tree material. Any such item will be confiscated and discarded. The University defines a “tree” as any tree, limb, or branch thereof or any device, however constructed, that is intended to imitate or simulate any such tree used for decoration purposes. Students may use and decorate artificial trees in residence hall rooms, provided they are certified as fire resistant. Metallic trees may be lighted only by indirect spot lighting.

Because of the fire and life-safety risks associated with these items in a community setting, **possession or use of the following items is strictly prohibited** in the residence halls:

- Candles, unless electronic (non-burning), or if the candle’s wick is unburned/in-tact or removed;
- Incense and potpourri burners;
- Extension cords of the non-power strip variety;
- Weapons, including all life-like and replica weapons, as well as all Airsoft type pistols/rifles, which are considered weapons for the purposes of this regulation;
- Waterbeds, hot tubs, pools, and other basins used to store water in quantities larger than ten gallons;
- Ceiling fans or other added electrical fixtures of any kind;
- Space heaters;
- Knives, except kitchen knives or ordinary pocket knives having a blade of three or fewer inches;
- Hazardous chemicals and flammable or combustible materials, including but not limited to: gasoline, charcoal fluid, lighter fluid, and propane gas tanks;
- Fireworks, including but not limited to sparklers, firecrackers, and smoke bombs, or other incendiary devices of any kind (see University’s Fire and Life Safety policies);
- Animals: no animals are permitted within University facilities except for fish in an aquarium of a maximum size of ten gallons, or service or Emotional Support Animals with advance written approval from the Academic Resource Center after completing the application process the semester prior. Violations of the ESA policy can result in revocation of privileges;
- Air conditioner units: neither window-installed or free-standing units are permitted unless an advance health exemption is granted through the Hoaglin Wellness Center, and approved units must be installed by University Physical Plant staff, with the student assuming the costs of installation and removal;
- Lofts: use of lofts or platforms in the residence halls is prohibited. Upon request, the University provides appropriate equipment to students who wish to elevate their beds in select halls.
- Kitchen appliances, as designated below.

Kitchens and Cooking Appliances

Students may not use appliances with an open heating coil, including microwave ovens, hot plates, electric skillets, electric grilling machines (e.g. George Foreman-style grills), toasters, toaster ovens, and rice or pressure cookers in residence hall rooms without a designated kitchen area. Students who reside in areas with community kitchens may use appliances in the community kitchen and may store personal kitchen items in their rooms when not in use. All students may possess and use electric coffee makers that include an automatic shut-off feature; coffee makers without this feature are not permitted. University personnel may grant or prohibit access to community spaces, including community kitchens, at any time.

University-Owned Furnishings

Students are responsible for all University-owned furnishings present in their room. Students will be billed for the repair or replacement of any furnishings that are missing or damaged. All furniture must remain in its assigned room; the University will not store furniture that has been removed from its space.

Because these items limit egress, pose fire safety issues and can introduce pests and allergens to our facilities, furnishings from outside the institution (e.g personal mattresses and beds, sofas, futons, soft furnishings) may not be placed in residence halls or shipped to campus.

Common area furnishings may not be moved into student rooms. The cost of repair or replacement of common area furnishings beyond normal wear and tear may be shared by members of a residential community (e.g., hallway).

Window screens may not be removed from residence hall windows for any reason. Security screens shall remain closed unless removed to exit a space in an emergency (e.g., fire).

Additional Responsibilities for First-Year, Quiet, Substance-Free Communities

First-Year Communities: First-year students are required to live in designated First-Year Residence Halls, which are alcohol-free.

Quiet Housing: By securing housing in a Quiet Building, students agree to the following:

- To abide by established quiet hours, which are in effect at all times except Sunday-Thursday 6-10pm and Friday-Saturday 6pm-1am (specified hours are still courtesy hours).
- To ensure that guests abide by and uphold the quiet and courtesy hours established for the community.
- To confront persons violating community norms and report incidents to Residential Communities staff members.

Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco-Free Housing: By securing housing in a Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco-Free Building, students agree to the following:

- To not bring alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs into the Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco-Free environment.
- To not be involved in any alcohol, tobacco or other drug-related disruption in the Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco-Free environment.
- To not enter the Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco-Free environment under the influence of alcohol or any substance.
- To not allow guests to bring alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs into the Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco-Free environment.
- To confront persons violating community norms and report incidents to Residential Communities staff members.