

## **HOUSING & RESIDENCE LIFE**

### **Mission Statement**

The Department of Housing and Residence Life at Methodist University supports the mission of the University and the philosophy that a university education facilitates the development of the whole person. Our staff recognizes that residence hall living is an integral part of the educational process. We recognize that our students must have a healthy, clean, and safe environment. Residence hall living cherishes diversity and celebrates similarities as well as promotes moral and ethical decision making, emphasizes the value of active citizenship, and encourages the development of positive self-image. We build relationships with students, facilitate community, and help students gain an appreciation for their community.

### **Three Year Residency**

Methodist University believes that it is in the best interest for students to live on campus. It is therefore a policy of the University that, space permitting, all students who have not achieved 21 years of age prior to the start of the academic year and earned 93 hours or less must live in university-operated residence halls unless they commute from the local home of a parent or legal guardian. A local resident is defined as a person residing within 60 miles of the University. All requests for waivers of the policy must be directed in writing to the Director of Housing and Residence Life. We hope that you will feel at home on campus, however living on campus is not the same as renting an apartment, and students may not be given the same latitude as a lease or rental agreement. Should the student not live on campus for the required three (3) years, the student may be charged for a room and associated meal plan as well as lose financial aid.

### **Age limits**

Residential students may not be older than 24 years of age at the start of the fall semester.

## **RESIDENCE HALL EXPECTATIONS**

### **Housing & Residence Life Staff**

The University employs the Director of Housing and Residence Life, Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life, Residential Coordinators, and Resident Assistants in the residence halls. These highly trained staff are available to provide information, counseling, and programming for residents. Their goal is to develop living-learning environments that promote close interpersonal relationships, individual growth and learning, and a strong sense of community responsibility and identity.

### **Housing Communities**

Cape Fear Commons

Apartments

Priority Given to Upper Class Coeducational

McLean Residential

Apartments

Priority Given to Upper Class Coeducational

Cumberland Hall All Rooms Freshmen Male

Garber Hall All Rooms Freshmen Female

Pearce Hall Priority Given to Upper Class Coeducational

Sanford Hall All Rooms Freshmen Male

Weaver Hall Priority Given to Upper Class Coeducational

West Hall Priority Given to Upper Class Coeducational

The Village Housing Priority Given to Upper Class Coeducational

North Hall Priority Given to Upper Class Coeducational

### **Residence Hall Housing Agreement**

Living in community is a hallmark of the residential experience. There are expectations and responsibilities everyone must understand to create a positive living-learning environment. Therefore, we ask all resident students sign a housing agreement, which can be found on the myMU Portal. Methodist University may change these guidelines from time to time. If students fall out of compliance with these expectations, they may be subject to the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Termination of Agreement by the student after the start of the Academic year**

Students may move off campus after the start of a semester only for the following reasons: graduation, withdrawal, marriage, or circumstances that are determined by the University to be beyond the student's control. Documentation may be requested for any of these circumstances. If a student moves off campus prior to the end of a semester, or before being granted permission they may be held responsible for any cleaning or damage charges required.

## **Residence Hall Occupancy**

Room assignments are made by the Department of Housing and Residence Life. We encourage new students to make their enrollment deposit as early as possible to reserve a space in Housing. Roommate preference may be given to new students when both parties request each other on the myMU Portal during the specified time prior to the beginning of the academic semester, however due to space constraints roommate selections are not guaranteed. Returning students who wish to reserve a room for the fall pay a room reservation fee during the spring reservation period. Priority is given to residential students, then transfer/graduate students, then commuters. A more specific reservation plan and schedule are announced by the Housing & Residence Life Office during the year. Only the student assigned to a room is authorized to occupy the room. The spaces assigned by the Department of Housing and Residence Life are non-transferable and cannot be given to another person, unless reassigned by the Department of Housing and Residence.

## **All About Roommates**

A roommate can be one with whom to share opinions, interests, and good times. However, sharing a room can sometimes result in a few problems. Moving away from home and sharing a space with another person can be stressful for both roommates. Experience shows that those roommates who get along well usually work at getting along well. Even those roommates who do not become lifetime friends contribute to each other's growth process and University education.

Here are a few hints for becoming a good roommate:

- 1. Communicate**—Roommates should discuss habits, preferences, moods, and values at the beginning of the semester. Even "best friend" roommates may be surprised at how many things they can learn about their roommate. It is wise not to let frustrations build if conflicts arise. Examples of such conflicts include different study habits, different tastes in music (including volume), and different attitudes toward cleanliness and neatness. Talking about concerns can lead to a mutual understanding. Initial awkwardness may save future hurt feelings.
- 2. Establish Room Rules**—Roommates should establish ground rules regarding the use of each other's belongings, room cleaning, entertaining visitors, and all-night typing. Asking first and discussing before going ahead with an action can result in greater trust and respect.
- 3. Know When To Talk and When Not To**—Sharing ideas and discussing situations is an integral part of residence life. Individuals should be aware, however, that excessive interruptions in studies can sometimes result in irritations and frustrations. Once again, roommates should talk before frustrations build and anger can occur. Roommates are individuals with individual interests, goals, likes and dislikes. It is not necessary to share every aspect of university life with one's roommate. If conflicts do arise, it is best to talk through a problem before it becomes a major conflict. If this step is not successful, students should consult the Resident Assistant. Each residence hall staff is experienced in dealing with these problems and should be able to offer sound, helpful suggestions. Students should always bear in mind that it is basic courtesy to speak with one's roommate first. In the case of unresolvable situations, the person who brought the original complaint will be asked to move.

## **THE ROOMMATES' BILL OF RIGHTS**

### **Each roommate has:**

1. The right to read and study without interference, unreasonable disruption, and other distractions.
2. The right to sleep without undue disturbances.
3. The right to have personal privacy in one's room
4. The right to live in a clean environment.
5. The right to host guests, during appropriate visitation hours, with the understanding that visitors will honor other residents' rights.
6. The right to have free access to one's room and hall facilities.
7. The right to be free from intimidation, physical harm, emotional harm, and illegal substances.
8. The right to assume that there will be reasonable cooperation in telephone, computer, and television use; and
9. The right to expect respect for one's belongings and personal property.

## **RESIDENCE HALL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Appliances and Fire Hazards Policy**

Large electrical appliances are not permitted in any residence hall except for Cape Fear Commons and McLean Apartments, where the appliances are university issued. The following small appliances are permitted: computers, dorm size refrigerators, televisions, stereos, gaming systems, microwaves, coffee pots, rice cookers, "instant pots" or other enclosed cooking devices, hair dryers, fans, and surge protectors. When plugging in your appliances and/or

computers spread them throughout your room so that that you do not overload the unit breaker. Students should not attempt to make repairs to any university property or appliance, for their safety and the safety of others. Altering of equipment and repairs will be completed by Methodist University Maintenance Department personnel or a licensed contractor. If a university appliance is not functioning in the way it was intended, please submit a work order found at [support.methodist.edu](http://support.methodist.edu). The following appliances are not permitted in the Residence Halls, University apartments, or the Village: halogen lamps, ceiling fans, toasters, toaster ovens, space heaters, and any other appliance with an open coil. For fire safety gas, electrical, and charcoal grills as well as the construction of a fire pit are strictly prohibited. Sparklers, fireworks, and any explosive devices are prohibited for the safety of all community members. This is not an exhaustive list so please direct questions regarding other appliances to your Resident Assistant or Residential Coordinator. Failure to follow this policy may result in a Code of Conduct violation.

### **Candles & Incense Policy**

To promote the safety of our residence halls, candles, candle warmers, and incense are not permitted in residence hall rooms. If students are found to have these materials, they may be subject to a Code of Conduct violation. If a fire or rescue squad is called to campus and the reason for the call is determined to be student negligence, the residents of the room or apartment may face Code of Conduct violations and be assessed a fee to cover the cost of the Rescue Squad's visit to campus.

### **Check-in Procedure**

Your check-in information will be emailed to your MU email address or may be available to you on the MU website and/or myMU Portal. Once you have secured keys and your MU Identification Card, your Resident Assistant (RA) will walk you through your room to check for any pre-existing damage. All damages should be noted with the Residence Life staff in our database. If students find other damages after the initial check in, they should communicate those within 24 hours to a member of the Residence Life staff. Please contact the Housing Office or the staff in the area if you need to make other arrival arrangements outside of the stated check in period. Arrival after the stated check in period may result in longer wait times due to staffing, so student patience is appreciated.

### **Early Arrivals Policy**

Because the university works on a tight schedule to ensure rooms are fully ready for student move in, we ask that students abide by the posted check in dates and time. To request to arrive to campus students must be with a university sponsored group that requires the student to arrive to campus prior to their official move-in date. Requests may or may not be granted and are at the discretion of the Director of Housing and Residence Life. There is a \$50.00 per night cost to arrive to campus early, if not associated with a University sponsored group. If you are approved for an Early Arrival, your check in instructions will be emailed to you. While we try to accommodate all our students, we cannot guarantee immediate assistance if you arrive early, without prior notice. Those students who are not approved to move in early but show up without prior permission will be charged a per night housing rate of \$50.00. In many instances Residence Hall staff members are in training on these dates, so normal service levels may be limited. Students who arrive early will still be responsible to Methodist University and Housing & Residence Life Policies; violations of these policies and procedures will be handled through the Methodist University Code of Conduct system. Bear in mind that Dining Services may not be available.

### **Check-out Policy**

In order to ensure an orderly exit from each semester, the Department of Housing and Residence Life will publish specific guidelines regarding checking out at the end of a semester. All residents are asked to vacate the residence halls within 24 hours of their last final exam or by 5:00 pm on the day of Commencement. Graduating seniors are permitted to stay until 12 noon on the day after Commencement. In the winter, if a student is returning for the spring, the student need not move fully out of their room but should abide by the guidelines issued by the Department of Housing and Residence Life.

Each spring, all residents must move fully out of their room. Students may contact the Department of Housing and Residence Life to discuss extenuating circumstances for which they may need to stay past the closing deadline. Students checking out of a residence hall during or at the end of a semester are asked to follow the procedures published by the Department of Housing and Residence Life. This procedure usually involves an in-person room check with a Resident Assistant or Residential Coordinator. During that time, the staff member determines the condition of the room, assesses any damage or cleaning fees, and makes other arrangements for the student's withdrawal from the hall. Damage fees are reported to the Office of Student Accounts. Rooms not found to be clean may be assessed a cleaning fee to allow the Custodial Department to clean the space. Similarly, if trash is not fully removed from the room or the hall students may be assessed a trash removal fee as these tasks take away from the normal duties of staff. Students checking out due to an emergency such as weather closure or health related closure should remove all perishable items and trash from rooms. Take care to shut off appliances and lights, turn thermostats to a neutral setting and lock doors before leaving. In all cases, staff will do inspections once students

have departed, with fees assessed as appropriate. Photos are taken for documentation purposes and the staff may dispose of unclaimed items left past the checkout dates.

### **Late Departure Policy**

Students who desire to reside on campus over the Winter Break, contact the Housing and Residence Life office as soon as possible in the fall semester. Despite the University being closed during the winter holidays, the residence halls may remain open however dining services will likely be closed. Requests for spring departures later than the dates for which the room contract provides should be made with the Office of Housing and Residence Life. Residence Life may deny any request based on circumstances of which they are aware. If a request can be granted, fees for the additional night(s) housing may be charged at a minimum of \$100.00. Students are urged to have an exit strategy in case of natural or health emergency.

### **Improper Check-out Policy**

To promote open and transparent communication, we hope all students will check out of the residence halls properly so that the hall staff may discuss irregularities in person. Students who do not choose to follow the checkout procedures may be assessed fines starting at \$50.00 for early and improper check out as well as damage and cleaning that could have been remedied in person. Students wishing to appeal room damage fees may contact the Department of Housing and Residence Life in a timely fashion. If a student moves off campus or to another residence hall, personal unclaimed items left in the residence hall room will be disposed of.

### **Abandoned Personal Property Policy**

Any personal property left in or near a residence hall room or apartment by students who depart housing will be determined to be abandoned after 30 days. The Department of Housing and Residence Life makes two attempts via Methodist University email to contact students regarding their property, however, to promote cleanliness and an orderly residence hall system, the Department of Housing and Residence Life may dispose of the unclaimed items after 30 days of the second email.

### **Community Billing Policy**

Living with others can be a rewarding experience. There are times when activities may get out of control and damage to the shared areas of a residence hall. When an act of vandalism or damage occurs in a shared space such as a lobby or hallway, the hall staff will attempt to determine the responsible person through interviews, camera footage and eyewitness accounts. If one responsible party cannot be determined all the residents on the floor or building must bear the cost for the repair. These costs are usually determined by evenly splitting the cost of repair and time as billed by the MU Maintenance Department or an outside vendor. In the case of major damage (flood, fire, etc.) that can be determined was caused by student neglect or malicious intent, the responsible student(s) may be charged for all damages, repairs and replacements associated with the event.

### **Damage Deposits and Assessments**

We hope that all students will conduct themselves in a mature and responsible fashion. Knowing that accidents may happen and like many colleges and universities, Methodist University requires that a damage deposit of \$100.00 be charged to every resident student at the University, which will be held until graduation and may help offset any charges to the student account for damages. The damage deposit is refunded only when a student permanently leaves the residence halls, and the Housing and Residence Life office can be sure that there are no damages to the room or other University property for which the student is responsible. Students wishing to appeal room damage fees may contact the Department of Housing and Residence Life in a timely fashion. University furniture should be left in the room in which it was found and only used for the purposes for which it was designed. If damage has occurred in a student's room or to university furniture, the Department of Housing and Residence Life, along with the MU Maintenance department, will repair those damages and the student in that room will bear the cost. In some cases, repairs may be done by an outside vendor, and an invoice with cost and labor charges will be provided upon request from the student.

### **Disruptive Students**

To promote a conducive living-learning environment, if a student is deemed to be a threat to a floor community or residence hall, the Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of Students reserves the right to immediately remove the student from the floor or residence hall. If a student becomes violent or threatens to harm anyone, excessively damages university property, or refuses to abide by health and safety standards they may be removed from campus housing immediately and may face Code of Conduct sanctions.

### **Fire Evacuation Policy and Procedures**

In case of a fire, please follow the directions of residence hall and security staff. Two or more fire drills are held in each residence hall during each semester so that residents are more comfortable

with procedures during an actual fire. These drills may be announced or unannounced. A \$100.00 fine will be issued to anyone not vacating the residence halls during a fire or fire drill.

### **Furniture and Lofts**

Please do not remove any furniture from a residence hall lobby or room. Lofts are permitted and may be rented from a university approved vendor, found on the MU website. Students may not bring their own lofts from home. Students found to be misusing or misappropriating University furniture may face a fine of \$100.00

### **Maintenance Services**

The Maintenance Department at Methodist University strives to work with students to make day-to-day activities as comfortable as possible. Cooperation by students is helpful. Prompt reporting of maintenance needs by completing a work order will make a timely response possible. Any problems with heating, air-conditioning, or lighting in the residence hall should be reported. A work order system is in place, and more information can be found on the student section of the Methodist University website. Students who do not allow Maintenance personnel to enter their rooms will experience wait time in repairs.

### **Insurance**

University insurance does not cover the loss or damage of personal property, and the University assumes no liability for the security of student property. The Department of Housing and Residence Life encourages students to lock their rooms securely and to provide themselves with insurance to cover possible loss. In the case of major damage (flood, fire, etc.) that can be determined was caused by student neglect or malicious intent the responsible student(s) may be charged for all damages, repairs and replacements associated with the event.

### **Keys/ID Access Card**

Each student is issued keys and an ID access card to allow access to their residence hall. Students should always carry their student ID and key, even on trips to the restroom. Students who lose a key or do not return a key upon checking out of the residence hall may be assessed a replacement fee - \$60.00 traditional residence hall keys, \$120.00 for an apartment key due to the number of locks that must be changed. ID replacement is \$10.00.

### **Lockout Policy and Procedure**

Being locked out of one's room can be time consuming and concerning. We encourage students to always carry their key and ID, even when making short trips. A lockout is a time-consuming task for staff as well, so the following steps have been put in place to help residents gain access to their room, but also be reminded to carry their keys. When a resident is locked out of their room; the resident should contact a Resident Assistant (RA) as soon as possible to be keyed into their room. The staff member will escort the resident to their room, let them in and will ask for the resident to produce their key. If the resident is unable to produce the key, the resident may be charged the rate of a replacement key (as above). If the resident does produce their key, a lockout charge as listed below will be added to the resident's student account. If a member of the Resident Life staff is unavailable, the student may contact MU's Police and Public Safety to be let back into their room. MU Police and Public Safety does share lock out information with the Department of Housing and Residence Life.

Charges per lockout:

First lock out – No charge

Second lockout - \$25 charge

Third and all following lock outs - \$50 charge

Upon the fourth lock out, the student will meet with a member of the Residence Life staff to discuss personal key management issues.

### **Occupancy Over Breaks/Holidays**

The residence halls remain fully open during Fall Break, Thanksgiving, and Spring Break; students may be asked to complete a 'staying for break' survey for these breaks so that general numbers of students may be observed for staffing. Detailed information is distributed by the Department of Housing and Residence Life for each of summer and winter breaks, including costs and scheduling. During winter and summer breaks other offices such as the post office and dining may not be open.

### **Animals in the Residence Halls**

Assistance animals are required to be approved prior to coming to campus and should be registered with the University through the Office of Disability Services/Accessibility Resources. They can be reached at 910-630-7402. For health reasons and to protect humans as well as animals, no pets (except fish in one 10-gallon tank or less) are to be kept in any University housing by students. Other animals that may live in gallon tanks are not permitted (i.e., turtles, hermit crabs, frogs, snakes, lizards, etc.). If an unauthorized animal is discovered, the student will have 24

hours to remove the animal and will be fined \$100 for failure to follow University policies and procedure. Once the animal has been removed, inspections will take place to determine if the animal damaged any university property. Students may be assessed the cost of replacement or cleaning from the animal.

### **Private Rooms**

Health-related accommodation requests should be made first to the Office of Disability Services/Accessibility Resources, by calling 910-630-7402. Private rooms are only available if space permits, so students should submit their request for a private room in writing during registration for housing. Private room charges are listed on the MU website. If a student does not request a private room but does not register with a roommate, the student may be assigned a roommate by the Department of Housing and Residence Life as space needs arise.

### **Room Consolidation Policy**

We hope that all students will have the chance to experience on campus living at Methodist University. Because space is limited, any student not requesting a private room that ends up in a room by themselves may be required to move to consolidate rooms or allow another student to move in. If students wish to request private rooms while living in the residence hall, they should see the procedures above. If a student ends up in a room by themselves without requesting it, the beds must remain in their original position available for two persons to occupy. If, when a new roommate moves in the room is not conducive to that new person moving, the current occupant of the room may be assessed a private room charge.

### **Quiet Hours**

To promote a conducive living-learning environment, we encourage students to be respectful of each other in and around the residence halls, by maintaining a low disruption level. Each Residence Hall may set their own standards for noise violations and other disturbances. If frequent disturbances prevent study and sleep, residents should contact their Resident Assistant for assistance. Final exams are a particularly stressful time, so to support a successful environment 24-hour quiet hours will be in place during final exams. Repeat disturbances may be assessed a code of conduct violation.

### **Room Decorations**

We want residents to feel welcome to decorate their home-away-from home to reflect their style and tastes. We must also keep in mind that others may not share our same design preferences or choices. We hope that residents will refrain from derogatory or provocative décor in their rooms and to keep political postings away from the view of the public. Commercially produced alcohol containers or any materials that could be used in the consumption of alcohol are not permitted. To prevent excessive damage, be aware of the materials of the walls and post with the recommendations on the MU website. We do not recommend the use of tape in any room as it pulls the paint off the walls and may result in damages being assessed. Decorations on entry doors should be flat on the door and total décor may not exceed 10"x10", per fire code.

### **Health and Safety Inspections**

In order to maintain a healthy and sanitary living-learning environment regular inspections of residence hall rooms by the residence hall staff will be done. Pest extermination will also conduct routine spraying of the halls. Notice will be given before an inspection takes place, typically 48 hours prior to the inspection to allow students time to clean. Students whose rooms fail to pass inspection are given an opportunity to clean and tidy and are re-checked 24 hours later. During university breaks or in the case of a loss of power or natural disaster, prior notice may not be given for an inspection. During times of weather and health emergencies, more frequent inspections may take place. Any student found to repeatedly fail their health and safety checks will be placed on a personal plan for cleanliness, which may include more frequent room checks, however excessive unsanitary conditions may mean the student is removed from university housing.

- Set room/space temperature between 70-72 degrees during summer or periods of humid temperatures.

- Do not block heating/cooling unit with furnishings, clothing, or shoes at any time

- In Garber, Weaver, Cumberland, Sanford, Cape Fear Commons and McLean residence halls, keep the exterior room

door closed during the summer or humid temperatures. Hot air from the hall or breezeway mixed with cold air from the room results in buildup of moisture and causes mildew and/or mold.

- Leave the ceiling exhaust fan on in restroom/shower area to prevent moisture build-up.

- Remove moisture sources (damp clothing, towels, etc.) from the restroom/shower area. Allow them to dry by hanging

them on provided racks, or in the dryer. Do not pile any damp/wet clothing items.

- After shower – spray the shower walls with over-the-counter cleaners designated for showers to prevent build-up of mildew or mold.

- Empty dehumidifiers when full

- Keep area under beds, inside drawers, and closets tidy

### **Room Paint Policy**

Students may not paint their own rooms.

### **Room Selection Process**

The room selection process is designed to assist students in securing a residence hall room for the upcoming academic year. Each year the Department of Housing and Residence Life will announce the process for selection. Students will be notified in advance of the housing selection process. Priority is given for selection in the following order: current residential students, transfer /graduate students, and commuter students.

### **Room Change Procedure**

Students requesting a room change must first email the Department of Housing and Residence Life, because individual students may not be aware of the needs or plans of the larger student body. The staff will give a thorough explanation of the procedure that must be followed to complete an authorized room change. Students must complete moves within 24 hours of being granted permission and students should leave the room in a condition suitable for another student to move in, or a cleaning fee may be assessed. If a student has been notified of a room change from one building to another prior to the winter break, the student should remove all their belongings at the end of the fall semester and check out with their RA. The student will return in the Spring semester to his/her new room and move in then. If a student is on a waiting list for a new room over the winter break, the student should remove all their belongings from the current room in preparation to move. During a health or weather-related emergency room changes may not be permitted.

### **Overflow Housing**

From time to time less than ideal room situations arise. These include but are not limited to being placed in a Resident Assistant room or being placed in a Triple-occupancy room. As space is made available, residents in either and/or both situations will be asked to move by the Residential Coordinator of the building to occupy a more comfortable and appropriate space for the remainder of the term.

### **Unapproved Room Changes**

Unapproved room changes that occur without properly following the room change procedure as stated above. Unapproved room changes are time consuming and not considerate of the Department of Housing and Residence Life's plans for other students. If an unapproved room change is discovered, the student who moved may be asked to return to their original room and may be responsible for any damages found in unapproved room.

### **Smoking Policy**

All residence halls at Methodist University are non-smoking, including exterior stairwells, balconies of apartments and patios to the front and rear of buildings. Students who choose to smoke outside the residence halls must do so in designated areas defined by the Department of Housing and Residence Life, typically fifty (50) feet away from any door or window. The use of smokeless tobacco, to include e-cigarettes, water vapor cigarettes, and hookahs are prohibited in the Residence Halls. If a fire or rescue squad is called to campus and the reason for the call is determined to be student negligence, the residents of the room or apartment may face Code of Conduct violations and be assessed a fee to cover the cost of the Rescue Squad's visit to campus.

### **Residence Hall Visitation**

It is our goal that residents feel comfortable welcoming visitors to their rooms, and they must remain vigilant to the needs and comfortability of others as they do so. Roommates are encouraged to talk with each other about the preferences for welcoming others to the room. Visitors are considered those who do not live in the assigned residence hall and are welcome to visit from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday nights and 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday nights. Each residence hall may change their own times within these hours should the needs of the residence hall warrant. For the safety of all residents, if a sign in book is present, we ask that residents sign in their visitors using full names, so that in case of an emergency the hall staff can locate visitors. The lobbies of each residence hall are considered part of the hall for visitation purposes and to assist with a supportive study environment, lobbies should be vacated at the end of visitation. In keeping with fire code and other occupancy concerns, please allow only two (2) visitors per person. For special permission regarding family members, residents may see the Residential Coordinator. Residents are asked to always escort their visitors and encourage visitors to abide by all Methodist University policies while on campus, because as a guest of a resident they are a representation of the resident, and the resident may be held responsible for their actions. Disruptions because of a guest visiting may include Code of Conduct violations. During a health or weather emergency visitation may be suspended or reduced to one visitor per resident.

### **Overnight Guest Policy**

We welcome visitors to stay overnight under certain parameters, for the safety and security of our residence hall. Overnight visitors should be of the same sex as the resident and be 18 years of age or older. The resident should seek permission from the Residential Coordinator in a timely fashion prior to the visit and receive approval from their roommates, suitemates, or apartment-mates as applicable. The maximum amount of time a student may apply to have a visitor is six times per month, but no more than three consecutive nights. All visitors should register with the Public Safety Office upon arriving to the campus. If an unapproved guest is discovered, the guest may be asked to leave the campus and the resident may face a Code of Conduct sanction. Overnight visitors should abide by all Visitation guideline as well to respect those around them. During a health or weather emergency overnight visitors are not permitted.

### **Wheeled Devices**

In keeping with fire escape concerns, bicycles may be stored only in designated areas outside the residence halls. They may not be stored in lobbies, hallways, or stairs. Skateboards, roller skates and other wheeled devices should be stored in the students' room in such a way as to not become a trip-hazard. Hoverboards may not be used or charged at Methodist University due to fire safety concerns.

### **Wellness Checks**

Parents and other family members should make regular contact with their MU student. However, if a student is sick or has not been heard from after a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours, family members are welcome to contact the university. When a call is received asking for a MU staff to verify the welfare of a student, the Residence Life staff member on duty will attempt to locate the student in person and request that he or she follow up with the family member who made contact. Residence Life staff will check the student's room and contact the student via any information on record. Staff may leave notes for the student and speak with the roommates, suitemates or apartment mates to determine the whereabouts of the student. The University will not follow up with the contacting family member but will put the responsibility on the student to make contact. If a student cannot be located within 48 hours by a Residence Life staff member, the staff member will contact the department of Public Safety and Campus Police. Due to privacy concerns, at no time may a university staff member relay information to the contacting parent regarding the student. Federal Law restricts the spread of information regarding a student's academic, personal life, housing situation, etc. If the contacting parent is requesting information about the student, it is up to the student and family member to make contact and exchange all necessary information. MU staff cannot force any student to contact the family member but can request that the student follow up in an appropriate time frame.

## **RESIDENTIAL SERVICES & OPPORTUNITIES**

Methodist University offers a wide variety of services to the students who live in the residence halls. The services are intended to assist students in their everyday activities and to help create a quiet, comfortable, and safe atmosphere for studying, sleeping, and mature socializing.

### **Fire Protection**

The University has installed fire alarm systems in each residence hall for the protection of residential students. Fire extinguishers are available on each floor and smoke alarms have been installed in all living areas (including individual residence hall rooms). The University is served by the Fayetteville Fire Department, which has a station located on Stacy Weaver Drive (less than a mile away) as well as in other locations around the city. It is a serious violation of university standards and state laws for students to tamper with fire protection equipment.

If a Rescue Squad is called to campus and the reason for the call is determined to be student negligence (food left on the stove, smoking in a residence hall, etc.) the resident(s) of the room or apartment may face code of conduct proceedings, and/or a fine to cover the cost of the Rescue Squad's visit.

### **Laundry Services**

Washing machines and dryers are available in each residential area. These machines are owned, operated, and maintained by a private company on behalf of the University. Each machine operates coin-free for unlimited usage; however, the University is not responsible for damaged items due to lost or misuse of machines. Only residents of the building may use the laundry services of the building in which they reside.

### **National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH)**

This organization provides recognition for those students living in the residence halls who have exhibited exceptional leadership and service to the advancement of the residence hall system at Methodist University and to promote activities which encourage leadership qualities in residents. This national organization recognizes the top 2% of student leaders on campus and inducts students to their organization twice a year.

### **Residence Hall Association (RHA)**

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) is a collection of resident students who share a common goal to improve residential life. These students comprise their respective hall representatives, which are governed by an executive

board. The organization is committed to serving all resident students and providing them a means of communication with staff and administration. RHA serves as a catalyst for change and provides opportunities for leadership and fellowship through a variety of activities on and off campus. These activities include meetings, programs, retreats/conferences, committees, and hall council functions.

### **Vending Machines**

Vending machines for soft drinks and snacks are available in several residence halls and in various other locations around the campus.

### **Pest Control**

Pest control services will provide extermination for halls, rooms and common areas, routinely or by request. Please fill out a work order and contact your RA if you are experiencing pest issues.

## **RESIDENCE HALL ROOM ENTRY AND SEARCH PROCEDURES**

The following definitions pertain to students' residence hall rooms:

1. A room inspection involves a visual examination of furniture and other materials in plain view, typically in the case of a regularly scheduled Health and Safety Inspection.

Opening the closet, desk, or dresser drawers may be part of an inspection as long as the belongings in these areas are not disturbed. Any illegal items or items that violate the University Code of Conduct or residence hall regulations may be confiscated and/or turned over to law enforcement officials.

2. A room search involves a close physical examination of all areas, materials, and persons in the room and may involve going through an individual's personal belongings (i.e. refrigerators, suitcases, boxes, contents of desks and dressers, backpacks, clothing, pockets, etc.). Any illegal items or items that violate the University Code of Conduct or residence hall regulations may be confiscated and/or turned over to law enforcement officials.

### **Room Inspection**

1. A periodic check of conditions of furniture, safety, pest control, maintenance or cleanliness

a. Methodist University reserves the right to make periodic entry into and inspection of any residence hall room for reasons of establishing that University property within the room has not been abused or destroyed and that clean and safe conditions exist in the room. Failing room inspections will result in a 24-hour re-inspection. Failure to pass the reinspection could result in a \$25.00 fine and an additional re-inspection. Prior notice may not be given during break periods, power outages or in the case of natural disasters, emergency response or health related emergencies.

b. Residents need not be present for inspections.

2. Residence Hall Closings—Each residence hall room is inspected by the residence hall staff at the beginning of winter break, and at final check out in spring.

3. Emergency Situations—Room entry may be made when an emergency situation exists. Examples of emergency situations are evidence of a fire in the room, good reason to believe that a person is sick or injured in the room, or good reason to believe that a theft or unlawful entry is in progress. The Residential Coordinator or other appropriate University officials may determine other emergency situations.

4. Violation of Law or of University and Residence Hall Regulations—If there are reasonable grounds to believe that a violation of regulations or laws will take place, is taking place, or has taken place in the room, entry into and inspection of the room is acceptable.

a. If a staff member enters a room and makes an inspection, thus obtaining reasonable cause for a search, he/she may: 1) ask the occupants to leave the room and stay with a staff member while a petition to search form is being obtained, and 2) seal the room to prevent destruction of evidence.

b. Except in instances of extreme emergency, the person entering the room will knock on the door at least three times, identify himself/herself, and enter the room with a master key, as necessary, if the residents do not answer immediately.

### **Room Search**

Methodist University reserves the right to search any student's room at any time for any purpose that is a reasonable exercise of the University's duty to maintain discipline in an educational atmosphere.

1. Before a search takes place, the staff member must secure a petition to search form by stating his/her "reason to believe" that a search is necessary to a Residential Coordinator or his/her supervisor, who may issue a petition to search. The form should specify the place to be searched, the reason for the search, and the names of residents of the room.

2. There are several reasons for a search, including these:

a. Violation of Law or of University and Residence Hall Regulations—If a student or professional residence hall staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a violation of law or of University and residence hall regulations has taken place, he/she may seek authorization to search a residence hall room.

Some examples of situations that may be deemed as reasonable cause are:

i. If a staff member receives information that illegal articles (i.e., alcoholic beverages, guns, drugs, explosive devices,

etc.) may be present in a specific student's room.

ii. If a staff member smells the odor of burned marijuana in the hall and an inspection reveals that the odor comes from a specific room or apartment.

iii. If a staff member, upon entering the room for inspection or other purposes, sees illegal items in plain sight in the room.

b. Emergencies—In cases that constitute an immediate threat to life or property (e.g., possible fire, theft, assault, explosive devices), a room search may take place. In cases in which this type of reasonable cause exists, a petition to search form is not necessary.

c. Additional Reasons—there are always situations for which policy is not adequate. In these cases, a room search will be at the discretion of a Residential Coordinator or other senior staff member of the Student Affairs Division. Reasonable and prudent judgment is the guideline in these situations.

3. At least two staff members must always be present during a room search. At least one of these should be a professional staff member.

4. When a search takes place, it should be as complete as possible and may include the physical search of room occupants all persons present, and their vehicles. Staff members should be as courteous as possible and leave the room in the same condition as when the search began.

5. If residents of the room give verbal permission for a search, the petition to search form is not necessary. All room residents must give consent.

6. Any illegal materials or other materials that violate University or residence hall regulations may be seized and used as evidence in a Code of Conduct hearing, even if they are not the materials for which the petition was issued.

7. Residents of the room need not be present for a room search to take place.

8. The above statements dealing with the search of a student's room are also applicable to student vehicles and other areas used by the students, such as lockers or other storage areas. These statements are also true of areas such as offices used by student organizations.

**Items that are found during an inspection or search by Housing and Residence Life staff that should not be on the Methodist University campus will be confiscated, logged and destroyed at the discretion of the Senior Associate Dean of Students. The only exception to this will be illegal drugs and/or drug paraphernalia, which will be held by University Police until the code of conduct process is completed.**

Listed below, you will find the standard charges for damage assessments and replacement charges that commonly occur in the residence halls. This is not an exhaustive list.

- Mattress Replacement: At cost
- Replacing thermostatic bulb in AC Unit \$ 50.00
- Room Cleaning: As billed
- Apartment Cleaning: As billed
- Screen Replacement: \$ 50.00
- Painting of a single room: \$200.00
- Painting entire apartment: As billed
- Tampering with Heating/Cooling Units: \$ 50.00
- Repair of apartment appliance: As billed
- Broken windows: As billed
- Yanking or pulling open locked exterior doors: As billed
- Trash removal: As billed
- Misuse of fire extinguisher: consistent with North Carolina guidelines <https://ncleg.gov/Search/GeneralStatutes>
- Candles: \$50/candle
- Violating quiet hours: \$25.00

Similarly, below is a list of fines that typically occur during and after check-out or before check-in. This is not an exhaustive list.

- Removal of personal property, by staff \$50.00/per hour/Per staff
- Improper check-out/Room Damage fee \$100.00
- Replacement of Student ID cards \$ 10.00
- Replacement of traditional hall key \$ 60.00
- Replacement of apartment key \$120.00
- Misappropriation of University furniture \$100.00
- Failure to vacate by designated time \$100.00/day
- Failure to vacate for any safety concern \$100.00
- Early arrival \$ 50.00/day