

Residence Life

Our residence halls are an integral and essential part of the College experience. By living with peers in the residential setting, you will have the opportunity to be a responsible community member, learn from others, and expand your educational and social experience through the many interactions and friendships you will have. Stephens commitment to the residential nature of the campus specifies that all students must live in residence halls while enrolled at the College unless they are married or commute from the home of their parent or guardian. Room assignments or changes are not made on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation or national origin. Students who have a physical disability which requires special housing accommodations should contact the Director of Residence Life for room assignments which best meet their needs and notify the Student Services Office.

Residence Hall Staff

The residence life staff consists of a professional staff member, graduate residents (GRs), Resident Directors (RDs), resident assistants (RAs) and a number of desk receptionists. The professional staff, along with the assistance of the GRs, RDs, and RAs, are responsible for creating and maintaining a sense of community in the residence halls. These staff members are trained in counseling, programming, and administrative procedures, and are available to help students in a variety of ways.

Professional Staff

The Director of Residence Life supervises all aspects of the residence life program at the College. The House Plan Coordinator works directly with the Honors Program to develop and maintain a living/learning environment. The coordinator serves as an adviser for students in these programs and provides individual counseling for students. The director, along with the graduate residents, provides evening and weekend coverage so that a residence life professional staff person is on call and available via a paging system at all times. The graduate residents may be graduate students from the University of Missouri who are professional staff members living on campus and supervising RDs, RAs and desk staff as well as advising hall councils and serving as role models for students living in the residential hall community. In addition, they assist the Director of Residence Life and the House Plan Coordinator with administrative duties for all the residence halls.

Resident Directors

All residence halls have resident directors (RDs) working part-time while finishing their undergraduate education. They have received extensive training. Along with their graduate resident, they handle responsibilities such as supervision of the hall and hall desk staff, advising hall councils, and the creating and maintenance of a sense of community in the residence hall. RDs provide information and assistance in both academic and personal concerns. They have been carefully selected and continue training throughout the year to provide the best assistance possible.

Resident Assistants

The resident assistants (RAs) are undergraduate students who live on each hall floor and act as peer-support persons. They have ongoing training in a variety of skill and informational areas to provide you with good resources, information and referrals to help with classes, relationships and the continuing adjustment to college life and its demands.

Custodial Staff

Each residence hall has a facilities staff member who cleans community bathrooms, hallways and common spaces (i.e. study lounges, lobby and recreation room). They also provide you with cleaning equipment and supplies. Custodial staff do not clean individual student rooms and bathrooms.

Smoking Floors

No smoking is allowed anywhere in the residence halls.

Residence Hall Rights and Responsibilities

A central element to living successfully with others in the residence hall is respect for others and their safety, the building and furnishings, and for your own and others' academic pursuits. The policies established for residence hall life provide a framework for community living. It is your responsibility to become acquainted with all pertinent policies, as you are responsible for your behavior and that of your guests.

Each hall is self-governing. The hall council works on programs for the hall, provides a communication link with the SGA Senate and works to facilitate group living.

Quiet Hours

Each residence hall establishes quiet and/or courtesy hours. If none are established, it is still expected that you will be considerate of the needs of other residents at all times. (It should be quiet enough to study in student rooms at ALL times. As a general rule, if the noise you make can be heard outside your room, it is too loud.) **Violation of quiet hours or considerate noise levels may result in disciplinary action.**

Right to Privacy

Each student has the right to determine who should enter her room. There are, however, circumstances under which the College must reserve the right to enter a student's room. The following are those circumstances:

1. When there is reasonable information to believe a resident's health, welfare or life is endangered.
2. For special and/or routine maintenance.
3. When presented with a search or arrest warrant by a law enforcement official.
4. When there is suspicion of illegal activity.

We will not admit relatives, friends or outside service personnel to your room without student permission.

Residence Hall Bill of Rights

Each person, as a resident of the residence halls, possesses certain individual rights and responsibilities which must be held in high regard. This document is intended to define minimal expectations and freedoms of residents that they may exercise without placing constraints upon the rights of other residents. Each individual has the right to engage in those physical, educational and social pursuits that are a necessary part of her college life.

1. ***Primary Rights*** of the resident include:

- a) **The right to read and study free from undue interference in one's room.** One of the basic purposes of the College is the dissemination and application of knowledge. Unreasonable noise and other distractions inhibit the exercise of this right. (It should be quiet enough to study in student rooms at all times. As a general rule, if the noise you make can be heard outside your room, it is too loud.)
- b) **The right to sleep, the right to one's personal belongings, the right to free access to one's room and suite facilities, the right to a clean environment in which to live.** Optimal physical conditions are essential as they support, reinforce and provide for positive conditions in which to learn and live.
- c) **The right for redress of grievances.** If the academic and residence communities are to function in the most educationally profitable manner, the right to initiate actions and referrals for impartial and fair adjudication of grievances is held paramount. In exercising this right, the student further holds the right to be free from fear of intimidation, harassment, hazing, physical and/or emotional harm, and free from the imposition of sanctions without due process.

2. ***Subordinate Rights***, of the resident are those which should be protected, but should not infringe upon the reasonable exercise of the primary rights defined above. The subordinate rights include:

- a) **The right to personal privacy.** All persons should have freedom from interference with their personal activities and should be able to maintain privacy for other than academic reasons.
- b) **The right to host guests.** All students should have the opportunity to maintain personal contacts and friendships with other persons. Guests are to respect the above stated rights of the hostess' roommate and of other residents. All residents are responsible for the actions of their guests at all times in the residence hall.
- c) **The right to hold events.** Events, either of a group or individual nature which generate noise, must take into account "time, place and manner." The planning,

scheduling and holding of the events should reflect sensitivity to the rights of others.

Any abuse of these rights is subject to review and action according to College discipline procedures. However, processes of mediation involving students and staff are considered an important method of resolving conflict among members of the same community.

Residence Hall Policies

Access to Halls

Your front door key must be used to admit you into the hall at all times. When you move into a hall, you are issued keys to your room and the front door. Proper use and care of these keys are an integral part of maintaining the security of each residence hall. Before you receive your key, you must attend a safety program. The key must be used by you only and cannot be used to allow other people entrance to the hall. **IF YOU LOSE YOUR KEY, REPORT IT IMMEDIATELY TO THE DIRECTOR OF RESIDENCE LIFE SO YOUR KEY CAN BE DEACTIVATED TO MAINTAIN THE SECURITY OF THE HALL.** A lost front door key will result in a \$15 charge. A lost room or closet key will result in a charge of \$10 for each key lost. Your security and that of other residents depends on responsible adherence to these rules. Repeated offenses will be subject to disciplinary actions.



Alcoholic Beverages

The following policy is in effect for all students and their guests in the residence halls:

- a) No one under the age of 21 is allowed to consume or possess alcoholic beverages.
- b) No alcohol is allowed in a room where a minor is present, even if that person is not consuming the alcohol.
- c) It is unlawful for **anyone** to have an open container of alcohol in a public place, including the hallways, lobbies or lounges and outside the residence hall itself.
- d) The youngest person's age takes on the age of the entire room.
- e) The possession of empty or full kegs, pony kegs, "party balls", or other common source containers of alcohol is strictly prohibited in all residence halls.

Failure to comply with the alcoholic beverage policies will result in disciplinary action and/or non-academic disciplinary probation.

Assault

Acts, verbal threats or written threats of physical violence will not be tolerated in the residential community. Students involved in such behavior will face severe disciplinary action which may result in removal from the College residence halls.

Bicycles

There are designated parking areas for bicycles and they should be locked at all times. Bicycles found in the hallways, stairwells, and public areas of residence halls will be subject to impound.

Bulletin Boards

All posters and flyers must be approved through the Leadership and Programming Office before hung anywhere in the residence halls.

Candles and Incense

Candles and incense are fire hazards. Insurance requirements and safety standards strictly prohibit their use in student rooms. Violating this policy will lead to disciplinary action and/or fines. Decorative candles will be permitted without wicks.

Care of Your Room

In addition to keeping your room clean, do not use tacks, screws, nails, tape, decals, felt pens or paint on woodwork, furniture or walls. Pictures and bulletin boards may be hung using approved hangers. If your room has to be repainted because of damage to walls, you will be charged for each wall.

Computer Lounges

Students living in College-owned residence halls have access to special computer facilities located in each hall. Use of the facility may be limited to residence hall desk hours.

Electrical Appliances

To decrease the danger of fire and damage from overloading the electrical circuits, the College limits the use of electrical appliances in student rooms to electric irons, stereos, fans, TV sets, VCRs, DVD players, electric clocks, electric blankets, heating pads, radios, portable hair dryers, coffee makers without a hot plate and small refrigerators. Other appliances such as corn poppers, coffee pots with a hot plate heating device, hot plates and hot pots may be used only in the hall kitchens. No other appliances, including toaster ovens, microwaves or air conditioners should be brought to campus. Never use "octopus" plugs or extension cords with multiple plug-ins. These are fire hazards.

End of the Year Check Out

At the end of the academic year, all students must move out of the residence **halls within 24 hours** of their last exam. Students participating in Commencement exercises may stay until 10:00 a.m. on the day following graduation. At the end of the school year, your room must be left completely empty, including closets. Over the summer, Facilities personnel either paint or wash all walls and trim, as well as wax the floors. This cannot be accomplished if personal items are left in the rooms. Stephens College is not responsible for anything left in your room.

Energy Conservation

Please assist the College in keeping the energy bill under control by paying attention to the following:

- a) Do not open the window when the heat is on.
- b) Turn off all appliances and lights when not in use.
- c) Wash and dry full loads.

- d) Take shorter showers (under 10 minutes).
- e) Wear warmer clothes during cold weather.
- f) Open blinds and curtains during cold days to take advantage of the sun; close them at night.
- g) If your room is too hot or too cold, report it to your hall staff.

Food Orders Delivered to Halls

Any food ordered from the outside to be delivered to the residence halls must be received by the person who placed the order, with appropriate payment available. Students must come to the outside door to receive orders at all times.

Guests

All nonresident guests are permitted under the following conditions: the student host must have permission of roommate to have a guest and must be responsible for the conduct of this guest; all guests must comply with College rules and regulations; and overnight guests are limited to no more than two consecutive nights and three consecutive days in a seven-day period starting the first day/ night your guest arrives. **All guests are permitted 24 hours a day while escorted by a resident!**

- a) All guests must be signed in and out by the host resident at the residence hall front desk. The must be signed in my first and last name on the guest log at the front desk.
- b) All guests must be escorted by the host resident at all times.
- c) The student host must have permission of the roommate to house a guest.
- d) If you leave the hall for any reason your guest must leave the hall as well.
- e) Residents are responsible for the behavior of their guests at all times.
- f) If you have a male guest you must yell, “Man in the hall!”
- g) If you are a male and have a female guest over you must yell, “Women in the hall!”
- h) Any person who does not have a secure key needs to be signed into the guest log.

Lobby/Lounge Furnishings

Furnishings provided in the lobbies and lounges are there for the use of hall residents. Any student who removes furniture from these areas to a student room or other location is subject to a \$10 charge per item of furniture.

Overnight Absences

You are encouraged to leave information with your Resident Assistant as to your whereabouts when away from the hall overnight or for an extended period of time. This information is confidential, to be used only by the hall staff to contact you in case of emergency. You should also leave similar information with your roommate, suitemate or a close friend. You should notify the Vice President for Student Services, ext. 4212, if you will have a prolonged absence from campus.

Pets/Animals

For sanitation reasons, no pets/animals (except fish in tanks or aquariums) are allowed in the residence halls with the exception of the pet floors in Prunty, Searcy, and Tower halls. Violation of this policy will result in a \$20 charge for treatment of the room by an exterminator and removal of the pet, and you will be referred for disciplinary action. If there is aquarium-related damage, the cost to the student will be assessed at an hourly wage for clean-up and full cost of repairs. An exception to this policy can be made for “guide” and “hearing” dogs.

Do not feed stray or wild animals on campus. They may be infected with diseases and pose a health and safety hazard.

Room Assignments

Students planning to return for a new academic year select their rooms in the spring. New students are assigned rooms during the summer. Students who are entering or returning to school in January must contact the Office of Residence Life to be given a room assignment.

Room Changes

If you wish to make a room change, discuss your reasons and preferences with your resident assistant. **ALL ROOM CHANGES MUST BE AUTHORIZED BY THE DIRECTOR OF RESIDENCE LIFE**, before a student moves. Your hall staff can be especially helpful in sorting out your needs and the best responses to those needs.

Room changes are not made during the first week of the academic year in order to allow time for you to become adjusted to the academic and residential environment as well as those around you. The College reserves the right to make room changes when deemed necessary; however, room changes will not be made on the basis of race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disability.

Room Charges

A complete list of charges is available at the Residence Life Office.

Room Condition Form

When you check into your room, a Room Condition Report will be completed that you need to sign. Any time you change rooms or when you leave at the end of the year, the hall staff will check the room to be sure there is no damage. If items are missing or damaged, you will be charged for their replacement. If rooms require extra cleaning, the residents will be charged. You must check out properly as explained in information provided to you at check-out time. Failure to do so will result in an improper check-out charge of \$30.

Room Consolidation

If you are occupying a room that has been designated as a double without a roommate, there are two options available to you:

- a) Move together with another student who is also without a roommate
- b) Occupy the room as a single for the remainder of the semester and pay the additional charge for a single room

The Director of Residence Life will notify any student that this pertains to.

Room Furniture

Rooms will be set up according to the number of students assigned. (Example: Students signing up for single rooms will have one dresser, chair, desk, and bed) Each room must be maintained as originally furnished. The College will honor furniture requests when extra furniture is available. At no time may room furniture be placed in hallways or lounges. There is a \$10 fine per piece per day for furniture found in the hallways.

Sales/Solicitation

Sales and solicitations are prohibited unless authorized in writing by the Residence Life Office. **Door-to-door soliciting and advertising is prohibited.** If you find a solicitor in the residence halls, please contact Security (ext. 4299) immediately.

Trash

All trash must be taken to the designated trash rooms/trash cans. If you are found to be leaving trash outside your room in the hallway, you will be fined \$10 per occurrence.

Vacations

Residence halls are closed during winter vacations. Information on check-out will be provided. No housing in the residence halls is available during the break. Please sign out on your emergency locator card at the hall desk giving travel plans, dates and where you can be reached by the College in case of emergency. Routine inspections and repairs will be made during breaks, so maintenance personnel may enter your room.

Waterbeds

Waterbeds are prohibited.

Weapons/Explosives

Dangerous weapons, (including, but not limited to: firearms, fireworks, flammable liquids, knives, and other unauthorized dangerous objects) are not permitted in student rooms or in the residence halls. Residents having weapons or explosives in the residence halls will be subject to disciplinary action and/or removal from the residence halls.

Residence Hall Safety

It is each person's responsibility to be aware of safety precautions. Guard yourself and your belongings as well as watch out for your neighbors and their belongings. **Fire doors must be kept closed at all times. Do not hang anything from the fire sprinklers!**

Hallways

All hallways must be kept clear for safety reasons. No items may be placed in the hallways. Bicycles may not be stored in the residence halls. If your furniture or furniture from your room is left in a hallway, you will be fined \$10 for each piece per day.

Personal Property Insurance

The College does not provide insurance coverage for your personal property. Check to see if you are covered under your family's or guardian's homeowner's policy and the conditions of that coverage. The College will assist you in verifying a loss for an insurance claim under your policy if you have filed a report. Information on optional fire/theft insurance can be obtained from the Residence Life office.

Theft

Guard against theft – keep your room locked and do not lend anyone your keys. If you believe something may have been stolen from you, report this information to your hall staff immediately. You should still fill out a theft report, which will be sent to the Office of Residence Life. You may also need to contact the Columbia police to complete a report so they may investigate the theft.

Fire Alarms and Drills

In order to ensure your knowledge of the proper procedures and exit routes from the halls, each hall has at least one fire drill each semester and tornado drills in the spring. Continuous ringing of the fire alarm bell means either there is a fire requiring residents to vacate the building or there is a drill. Don't second guess which it is. Follow the procedure. Quickly close your window, obtain a coat, towel and shoes, leave the room light on, shut your unlocked door and proceed out of the building as instructed. **Failure to leave the hall during a fire drill will result in a \$50 fine and possibly other disciplinary sanctions.**

Tampering with Fire Alarms/Equipment

Pulling a fire alarm under false circumstances or tampering in any way with fire safety equipment is a serious offense which could jeopardize the lives of people in your residence hall. This will result in a hefty fine and disciplinary sanctions from the local authorities and/or the College.

Tornado Alarms and Drills

In case of a tornado or a tornado drill, the fire alarm bell will ring and city sirens also will sound. Proceed to the lowest level of the building, away from windows and doors. If you cannot get to a basement, get to an inside corridor, shutting the door to your room. **Failure to participate in a tornado drill will result in a \$50 fine and possibly other disciplinary action.**

Students who are deaf, hearing impaired or visually impaired should notify the offices of Residence Life and Vice President for Student Services to make appropriate accommodations for warning systems to meet their needs

Hall Services

Desk Services

Each residence hall has a desk open each day during the hours the hall is open. The desk staff are student employees who handle procedures such as taking messages, signing guests in and out, and checking out kitchen equipment, cleaning equipment, tools, etc. They also are responsible for enforcing policies while they are on duty, handling emergencies which arise when the other hall staff members are not available, providing a variety of information and generally helping things run smoothly. Your hall desk is an excellent place to look for assistance. Residence hall front doors are locked at all times. The residence hall front desks will be open limited hours during the day and evenings to check out pots and pans and cleaning supplies as well as assist with maintaining the security in the halls.

Dry Erase Boards

Each residence hall has a dry erase board in the lobby area where information is posted on a daily basis. It is essential to read this frequently, even more than once a day, as items are added as they are received. The board will inform you of campus and community events, hall news, deadlines, the most up-to-date information, if the water is shut off for repairs, recognition of a resident's birthday, etc. If you have information you would like posted, check with your hall desk.

Laundry Facilities

Each residence hall is equipped with washers and dryers. Please be careful and considerate when using these facilities. Keep an eye on your laundry and take it out as soon as it is done to prevent loss of your belongings and so that others may use the machines. Check and clean lint traps on dryers before and after using them. Keep the doors to washing machines OPEN so they do not smell or start to mold.

Repairs

If you notice things in your room or the hall which need to be repaired, give this information to the residence life staff, and call or email Facilities. If you believe your problem is an emergency (e.g., the toilet is flooding), call Facilities, ext. 4171, immediately. For night time emergencies, call Security, ext. 4299. Each day, repairs are made by the Facilities staff, who prioritize the requests based on the type of problems involved, giving preference according to the degree of inconvenience caused by the problem. At times, they will need to order parts to make a repair, delaying the service. If you think your request has been overlooked or delayed too long, follow up on your request to determine the status of your request.