

Rensselaer Student Living and Learning Policies

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the policies that will apply to the provision of housing to students and others at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. The policies are intended to help ensure that Rensselaer student housing is managed and operated as an integral part of Rensselaer's core mission by offering students a comprehensive residential student experience through Clustered Learning, Advocacy, and Support for Students (CLASS), which builds upon both residential and time-based clustering to promote optimal personal growth, social and academic excellence, and leadership development for our students.

All rules, regulations, or procedures related to the Rensselaer residential experience are to be consistent with, and follow the priorities outlined in, this document.

Table of Contents

1. Authority and Responsibility for Managing Rensselaer Student Living and Learning Policies (pg. 2)
2. On-Campus Housing Eligibility (pg. 2)
 - A. Housing Eligibility for Rensselaer Students and Student Programs (pg. 2)
 - B. Use of Residence Halls by Other Persons and Groups (pg. 4)
 - C. Housing as a Privilege (pg. 4)
3. Residency Requirements (pg. 4)
 - A. Freshman, Sophomores, Transfer Students, and Summer Arch Students (pg. 4)
 - B. Residency Requirement Exceptions (pg. 4)
4. Procedures Related to Housing Applications, Rates, Payments, Cancellations and Refunds (pg. 5)
5. Housing Assignment Process (pg. 5)
6. Occupancy Dates and Extended Housing (pg. 5)
 - A. Authorization for Granting Extended Housing Privileges (pg. 5)
 - B. Extended Housing Process and Charges (pg. 5)
 - C. Housing During Breaks (pg. 6)
 - D. Checkout and Fees for Holding Over (pg. 7)
 - E. Keys and Card Access (pg. 7)
7. Community Standards and Rules and Regulations for Student Learning and Living (pg. 8)
 - A. Alcohol and Others Drugs (pg. 9)
 - B. Damages (pg. 10)
 - C. Emergency Reassignment (pg. 11)
 - D. Fire Alarms (pg. 11)
 - E. False Alarms (pg. 11)
 - F. Grills (pg. 11)

- G. Judicial Process (pg. 11)
 - H. Loiterers (pg. 12)
 - I. Personal Property Insurance (pg. 12)
 - J. Prohibited or Restricted Items and Activities (pg. 12)
 - K. Public Areas (pg. 16)
 - L. Quiet Hours (pg. 16)
 - M. Reasonable Request (pg. 17)
 - N. Removal from Residence (pg. 17)
 - O. Reservation of Residence Lounges (pg. 17)
 - P. Roof Access Prohibited (pg. 18)
 - Q. Room Changes (pg. 18)
 - R. Room Changes that Increase or Decrease Occupancy (pg. 19)
 - S. Safety Compliance (pg. 19)
 - T. Signs and Advertising (pg. 20)
 - U. Smoke-Free Housing (pg. 22)
 - V. Special Housing Assignments/Housing Waivers (pg. 22)
 - W. Students with Special Needs (pg. 23)
 - X. Visitor Policy (pg. 23)
- 8. Non-Discrimination (pg. 24)
 - 9. Room Entry, Inspection and Search (pg. 25)
 - 10. Financial Responsibility (pg. 25)

1. Authority and Responsibility for Managing Rensselaer Student Living and Learning Policies

The Rensselaer Division of Student Life has a core responsibility to implement and foster CLASS as the framework from which we offer the student experience. Therefore, the Vice President of Student Life, through the Campus Experience Portfolio of the Division and the Office of Student Living and Learning, shall have the authority and responsibility for managing residential policies and arrangements on the Rensselaer campus, and for Rensselaer students. No Rensselaer portfolio, department, faculty member or employee is authorized to make commitments regarding on-campus housing, or provide access to campus housing facilities for residential use (including short-term stays) without express approval of the Office of Student Living and Learning. Student Living and Learning is responsible for maintaining and enforcing all policies, procedures and rules related to residency and use of campus housing facilities.

2. On-Campus Housing Eligibility

A. Housing Eligibility for Rensselaer Students and Student Programs

Only academically registered, full-time matriculated students who maintain satisfactory academic progress toward a degree are eligible to reside in Institute housing. A student who is not academically registered as full-time and wishes to apply for housing must receive approval from the Assistant Vice President and Dean of Students, which will ordinarily be considered only for the residency during the summer if there is sufficient room after higher priority residencies. The following are parameters that shall be followed in considering requests:

1. Housing Priority for Students. Priority for students receiving Rensselaer housing in any academic term (including summer) shall be as follows:

- a. Highest Priority: Full-matriculated Freshmen, Sophomores, Summer Arch participants, Upper Class Transfer Students (for their first year at Rensselaer (subject to availability), and Student Life residential staff;
- b. Next Priority: Other full-time, matriculated students, including upper class and co-terminal students, provided they do not fall into the third priority described below;
- c. Third Priority: Juniors, seniors and co-terminal students who are members of an Institute-recognized fraternity or sorority (“Greek House”) and where the student’s Greek House has live-in vacancies available for the student.

2. Priority for Additional Summer Residencies. To the extent additional residential space is available in the summer after the priorities specified in 1(a) and (b) are met, Student Living and Learning may approve the following additional residencies in accordance with the following priority:

- a. Participants (students and supervisors/staff) in Rensselaer-sponsored incoming student programs (e.g., Student Orientation, Bridge).
- b. Participants (students and supervisors/staff) in Rensselaer strategic pre-college “pipeline” and enrichment programs (e.g., Summer@Rensselaer Academic Enrichment Programs).
- c. Rensselaer students enrolled part-time for classes (not participating in Summer Arch), and;
- d. Students not taking classes, but engaged in faculty-led research projects (requires documentation by faculty-sponsor, and academic registration for zero-credit, zero tuition).

3. Minors. For programs that involve participants who are primarily minors (e.g., programs for high school students, or younger), the participants shall be either:

- a) housed separately from Rensselaer students and other residents who are not participating in the program— either in separate buildings, or in wings or areas of buildings that are access-controlled against entry by others, or
- b) if the minor is 16 years old or older, he/she may be hosted by students as part of an Institute-approved program for prospective students, following rules and protocols required by such program for student hosting.

For Rensselaer sponsored programs involving minors, Rensselaer’s policies and procedures regarding minors Involved in Institute-Sponsored Events or Programs on Campus must be followed. Authorized Adult and/or Program Staff must remain overnight in rooms in close proximity to the minors in residence, and must appropriately supervise throughout the night. The residential area shall never be left unattended by an Authorized Adult or Program Staff

when minors are in residence, including for medical attention of a participant (in such case, the adult supervisor should contact Public Safety or an ambulance to attend to the student.)

4. Graduate Student Housing. Graduate students are encouraged to live in the Graduate Student Community at City Station, which is reserved for graduate students. Graduate students will not be housed on campus. Co-terminal students, as they are coded as undergraduate students, are still eligible for on-campus housing. Children, spouses and other family members of students are not permitted to live with students in on-campus housing.

B. Use of Residence Halls by Other Persons and Groups

Residential space for persons outside the categories described above, if available at all, would only be available during the summer for limited duration under exceptional circumstances. The Vice President of Student Life and Vice President of Administration must approve any requests, and any such housing will be physically separate and independent from student residential housing.

C. Housing as a Privilege

On-campus housing at Rensselaer is a privilege and not a right. Rensselaer may, at its sole discretion, refuse to assign campus housing to any student, regardless of any previous housing relationship a student may have had.

3. Residency Requirements

A. Freshmen, Sophomores, Summer Arch Students, and Transfer Students

As part of CLASS, all students are required to live in Rensselaer residence halls (and participate in a dining plan) during the freshman and sophomore years, and while participating in The Arch summer session. Sophomore students may be granted a housing waiver allowing them to live in approved Greek Commons housing by completing the Greek Commons Waiver before the sophomore lottery begins, provided that the applicable fraternity or sorority organization is in good standing and has signed the current Greek Commons Agreement (which may be modified from time-to-time) and is operating in compliance with that agreement. All other Rensselaer students, including graduate students, seniors, and juniors (while not participating in The Arch summer term), may choose to live off-campus provided they are not living in the residence of a fraternity or sorority whose recognition has been revoked or suspended by the Institute, or is not formally recognized by the Institute. Except where the Institute has determined that an ongoing health or safety situation exists, upperclassmen and graduate students living in the Greek organization residence at the time the revocation or suspension takes effect may remain in residence until the end of the then-current academic semester.

Undergraduate students transferring to Rensselaer after their sophomore year are required to live in Rensselaer housing for at least one year (unless space is not available) to facilitate the transition, develop a strong connection to the campus and the multitude of available resources.

B. Residency Requirement Exceptions

Exceptions to Residency Requirements will only be granted for extraordinary circumstances. Exceptions for married students and students who are custodial parents will be granted as a matter

of course upon showing of eligibility. Exceptions for other reasons (such as special physical or health needs) may be granted on a case-by-case basis. The Division of Student Life will establish procedures related to applications and approvals for exceptions.

4. Procedures Related to Housing Applications, Rates, Payments, Cancellations and Refunds

The Division of Student Life shall publish and implement procedures for applying for housing, and shall publish housing and dining plan rates as established by the Institute consistent with the Rensselaer Cost of Attendance plan. In coordination with the Division of Finance, the Division of Student Life shall also publish and implement policies for cancellations and refunds, and shall administer agreements for housing and dining plans.

5. Housing Assignment Process

The Division of Student Life shall establish and maintain procedures for assignment of campus housing. Such procedures shall be consistent with CLASS and the housing priorities outlined in this policy.

6. Occupancy Dates and Extended Housing

In conjunction with the Academic Calendar, the Division of Student Life shall specify and publish dates for check-in and check-out of the Residential Commons for each academic semester or session. The calendar shall also specify when the residence halls must be vacated for Winter Break, and at the end of the spring semester and summer sessions. Check-In and check-out dates, as well as plans for allowing Extended Housing described below, shall be coordinated with the Administration Division and take into account the time required between sessions to prepare the Residence Commons for re-occupancy.

The following policies will be followed in permitting students to move in prior to the established check-in date or remain in the residence halls after the established Closing Date ("Extended Housing").

A. Authorization for Granting Extended Housing Privileges

Only the Division of Student Life may authorize Extended Housing. Students may not rely on any commitments regarding Extended Housing made by any Rensselaer faculty, staff or departments, and must obtain written confirmation from Student Living and Learning of the specific dates authorized for Extended Housing.

B. Extended Housing Process and Charges

Extended Housing requests will be consistent with the room availability plan coordinated with the Administration Division, and shall be considered on an "as available" basis as follows:

1. Freshmen students attending the final Student Orientation session of the summer will be authorized to early check-in upon a schedule established by Student Living and Learning.
2. Graduating students generally will be authorized to remain in their rooms until Commencement irrespective of the Closing Date for their residence hall, but this is subject to the summer housing needs of the Institute on a year-by-year basis.

3. Extended Housing may be authorized for students who, in accordance with procedures and timelines, submit signed documentation from a Rensselaer faculty or staff member demonstrating a need for Extended Housing as part of a formal program or event, and provided their room will be available. Examples include intercollegiate athletic team practice, ROTC training, resident assistant training and preparation, and leaders for Student Orientation and Navigating Rensselaer and Beyond activities. Authorized early check-in typically will be 24 hours prior to the event or activity, depending on room availability; late check-out will typically be within 24 hours after the activity or event concludes. Due to Summer Arch occupancy, certain residential facilities will not be available for early check-in before the Fall semester. Students will not be authorized to move in early unless the room to which they are assigned for the upcoming term will be available for early move in; if it is not, the student needing to be on campus early will be responsible for arranging alternative accommodation.
4. Rensselaer shall charge students a daily fee for Extended Housing in accordance with the annual housing rates applicable to that term. The student shall be financially responsible to Rensselaer for the fee regardless of particular program or the source of the funding. Extended Housing fees will be waived for the following categories of students, provided required procedures are followed to authorize them for Extended Housing:
 - a. Graduating students staying through Commencement;
 - b. Freshmen attending Student Orientation;
 - c. Intercollegiate Athletes, for purposes of authorized practice or required training;
 - d. Authorized student staff or volunteers for STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING-sponsored activities and programs;
 - e. ROTC students, for purposes of required training or meetings.

C. Housing During Breaks

Residence halls remain open during Thanksgiving, spring, and summer breaks, but are closed during recesses between sessions (winter recess; the recess between end of spring semester and beginning of summer session; and the recess following the summer sessions prior to fall semester). Campus apartments are open for the winter recess. Unless otherwise instructed by the Office of Student Living and Learning, for any recess, students may retain keys and leave personal belongings in their rooms during the recess closing only if they have a housing contract for the same room for the academic session that immediately follows the recess; otherwise they must fully vacate their room and follow the required Student Living and Learning check-out procedures.

Residents who require housing during a recess closing may apply to Student Living and Learning for recess housing, if available. A number of residential facilities will remain open over winter break only. The facilities are identified during the fall semester each year so that students requiring housing over winter break can apply to live in those units. Students who remain in housing during recess closings will be charged a flat rate against their student account in an amount consistent with current applicable rates. The Community Standards and Rules and Regulations for Student Living and Learning are the same in recess housing as they are during the school year.

Participants of The Arch will be notified regarding assignment procedures for summer housing. Housing for The Arch summer session will be prioritized over all other housing for students during the summer. Each year, certain areas are designated for summer housing for other students. Non-Arch students who need summer housing should contact Student Living and Learning for information and applications and approval.

D. Checkout and Fees for Holding Over

Students must vacate campus residences in accordance with closings established and published by the Institute. Students who vacate campus residences must follow the check-out procedures designated by checking-out with their RA. Student Living and Learning provides extensive information about check-out procedures. However, it is the student's responsibility to become aware of check-out dates and procedures, and make sure they follow them. **Failure to do so will result in a \$50 Improper Check-Out charge, or a \$150 Late Check-Out Fee.** Continued failure to properly check out and remove personal belongings from a residence without authorization for Extended Housing will also result in a per-night charge that is double the Extended Housing rate. Rensselaer reserves the right to remove and dispose of any personal belongings left in rooms that have been vacated.

E. Keys and Card Access

Students are furnished with the keys necessary to access their rooms, suites, buildings or apartments at the time they check-in, along with an encoded identification card which allows access to their building. Because these keys and cards represent the security of residential facilities, it is essential that they be treated with care and discretion.

At no time should keys be left unattended or lent out to others. If keys are lost, the loss must be reported at once to the Student Living and Learning Office.

Replacement keys are available, and students are encouraged to request one as soon as possible, with safety being an issue. If it is necessary for a lock or core replacement there will be charges added to the student's SIS account.

In no case is a key to be duplicated or transferred to another student. All keys must be returned to Student Living and Learning when a room is vacated - even if students are returning to the same housing assignment for the following year. Keys which are not returned will be considered lost or stolen, and will require the lock(s) to which they are made for to be replaced. A charge will be imposed as previously described.

If a student loses their identification card, it should be immediately reported to the Department of Public Safety so the lost card can be deactivated and a temporary identification card can be issued until the student can obtain a new card.

In the event a student leaves key(s) and/or ID card in another location, for example when home on break, or visiting elsewhere and not necessarily considered lost, the same procedures should be set in motion to ensure the safety of the student.

Duplicating a key, providing a key out to others, or failing to promptly report a lost or stolen key or access card are considered serious security violations, and shall be considered grounds for disciplinary action.

For residents' protection, the outside doors of all Rensselaer residence facilities are to remain locked on a 24-hour basis. Students are to use keys or the card access system to enter their buildings. Students are not to open doors for anyone other than themselves and their guests.

Call phones have on-campus access and a direct emergency line to the Department of Public Safety. Residents are asked to use call phones and to meet visitors at the outside door. Call phones are located at:

- The main entrances to Barton, Bray, Cary, Crockett, Hall, Nason, Warren, and Sharp Halls
- The north entrances to Nugent and Davison
- The BARH A-Building entrance
- North Hall on Sage Avenue
- Hirai on Sage Avenue (E-Complex)
- The Quad archway
- The Quad near the '87 Gym stairway
- Stacwyck at McGiffert, Thompson, and Rousseau
- Colonie Apartments
- Near the ATMs at the Union

7. Community Standards and Rules and Regulations for Student Living and Learning

Participation in community living and individual responsibility are of vital importance in creating and maintaining both an environment and an atmosphere which is safe and conducive to high level learning. Therefore, in addition to residence hall specific community expectations, which may be developed at the beginning of a term, students must assume the responsibilities outlined here, as well as abide by all local, state, and federal laws.

The following are expectations of each student living in Institute residences:

- adherence to all Institute regulations
- consideration and cooperation
- responsibility for the protection of Institute and private property
- respect for each individual's right to privacy and quiet
- respect for each person's right to undisturbed hours of study and sleep

- understanding of and respect for differences in personal identity, cultural practices, beliefs and/or personality
- development and maintenance of positive community relationships
- maintenance of suitable conduct
- cooperation in keeping the residence hall or apartment and surrounding areas neat and clean at all times

Support of the residence community is the joint responsibility of all residents. Only by conscious effort on the part of all residents will self-governance be effective. The Institute reserves the right and responsibility to limit behavior that affects the rights and safety of persons and property.

To that end, the following rules and regulations, together with those outlined in *The Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities* (URL: <https://info.rpi.edu/dean-students/student-rights-responsibilities-and-judicial-affairs>), the Residence Agreement, and other Student Living and Learning publications, are conditions of occupancy for all residence hall and apartment residents.

It is each resident's obligation to be familiar with these policies. Violators are subject to disciplinary action.

All rules and regulations are administered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, disability, military status, veteran status, genetic information, genetic predisposition, domestic violence victim status, familial status or any other basis prohibited by law.

A. Alcohol and Other Drugs

Alcohol

New York State law states that individuals under the age of 21 may not possess or consume alcohol. In addition, Institute policy mandates that possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited at all Institute owned, controlled, or affiliated residential facilities that house undergraduate students, which includes the residential facilities of any recognized or affiliated student organizations, or groups, including but not limited to fraternities and sororities.

Further, in keeping with general Institute policy, displays of alcohol-related items or materials, including but not limited to beverage containers (empty or full), banners, or signs, visible to the public, are not allowed in any residence facility.

When any person is observed to be in possession of alcohol in a residence hall, the Student Living and Learning staff response will be to:

- Address the individual(s) by informing them of the policy (and law, if under 21 years of age), and how their actions are contrary to the policy;
- Require the individual(s) to dispose of the alcohol immediately;

- Document the incident immediately following the incident, and provide the Dean of Students Office with the documentation;
- Call Public Safety if the student is uncooperative or if otherwise deemed appropriate (e.g., large group gathered).

Drugs

Rensselaer has implemented a zero tolerance drug policy which strictly prohibits:

- Possession, use, or facilitation of use of any “Prohibited Substances” or “Drug Paraphernalia” as defined herein; and
- Attempted or actual sale, manufacture, marketing, trafficking, or transfer of any Prohibited Substance, or Drug Paraphernalia.

Prohibited Substances are any of the following for which the individual does not have a legal license or valid prescription: any illegal drug, controlled substance (as defined by State and Federal law), or substance, or manner of use, that is generally recognized as being detrimental or dangerous to the health, welfare or safety of individuals or the community, although not necessarily illegal (including but not limited to Molly, Spice, K-2, whippets, performance enhancing drugs, prescription drugs, and research drugs).

Drug Paraphernalia is equipment, products, or materials primarily used for the purpose of making, using, concealing, or distributing Prohibited Substances.

Students found responsible for any of the above behaviors are subject to the sanctions set forth in the Rensselaer Alcohol and Other Drug Policy for Students.

Additional details about Rensselaer’s Alcohol and Other Drug Policy for Students can be found in the full policy located at the following URL: <https://info.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/Revised-Alcohol-and-Other-Drugs-Policy-03-27-2019.pdf>

B. Damages

Damage Billing: Students are billed directly to the student's account for any damage or repair charges.

Damage to Common Areas: Common areas are those areas of your residence to which everyone has access (e.g., bathrooms, hallways, and lounges) and for which everyone is held responsible. It is important for everyone to be aware of their use and condition. If problems occur, residents should report them to the Resident Assistant or Resident Director.

When damage occurs in common areas, every attempt is made to identify those responsible. If the responsible individual(s) cannot be identified, residents of the floor, wing, or building—depending on where the damage took place—are billed collectively for the total. Common area billings are typically assessed at the end of each semester or in May, but may be assessed immediately at the discretion of Student Living and Learning. The charges appear on billings from the Bursar. Common area damage charges may not be appealed.

Damage to Rooms or Apartments: When a resident moves into a room, the resident shall verify the condition of the room or apartment with the Resident Assistant (RA) utilizing a Room/Apartment Condition Report Form, which becomes the basis for any future billing of damages.

When damage occurs, the person who actually did the damage is billed whenever possible. If it is not possible to identify the responsible individual, the residents of the room or apartment are charged collectively. Billing for damage to rooms or apartments can be initiated at any time during the school year.

Most billings occur at the end of the semesters or whenever students vacate their rooms. At those times, the room or apartment is checked by an RA and any variance with the Room/Apartment Condition Report is noted. If that variance is due to damage - as opposed to general wear-and-tear, it is assessed and the cost of repair is added to the students' account.

C. Emergency Reassignment

Rensselaer reserves the right to assign or reassign students to other housing as it deems is appropriate. Situations include, but are not limited to enrollment fluctuation, governmental regulation or order, acts of nature, or other conditions deemed an emergency by those with authority to make such decisions. Situations requiring removal or reassignment mandate the full cooperation of all residents. Should resident students be required to vacate a room, or building, reassignment to other available residence units or to increase-occupancy rooms remains the right of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

D. Fire Alarms

Drills: The Institute will conduct fire drills **throughout the year**. A fire alarm is an Institute order to vacate the building. You should familiarize yourself with evacuation procedures and follow directions of staff and fire safety officers. **Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action including probation and a fine of \$100.**

E. False Alarms

Any student who activates a false fire alarm is subject to a fine of up to \$200 and disciplinary action for any of the following circumstances:

- Knowingly reporting a false alarm
- Malicious intent to set off the alarm
- Avoidable accident
- Second occurrence of carelessness

Notify your RA or the Office of Public Safety (276-6611) immediately if you observe anyone creating an unsafe situation through use of fire, tampering with fire safety equipment or activating a false alarm.

F. Grills

Grills must be stored outside of buildings, and need to be at least 20 feet away from the building when in use or hot. Propane is not allowed to be stored in or near any residential buildings. Fire pits are not permitted.

G. Judicial Process

Rensselaer's judicial process, including the Grounds for Disciplinary Action, is explained in *The Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities*, available from the Dean of Students Office. (URL: <https://info.rpi.edu/dean-students/student-rights-responsibilities-and-judicial-affairs>)

H. Loiterers

Residents should never let anyone into the building that they do not know and are not hosting. If someone the resident is not hosting is standing by the door waiting to be let in, the resident should ask that they use the call box to contact the person they wish to visit.

Residents must take responsibility for their guests and visitors, realizing they will be considered strangers by others. Nonresidents who wish to visit should not expect people who don't know them to let them into a building.

Residents who become aware of the presence of an outsider in their area who is not an invited guest should contact Public Safety at 276-6611.

I. Personal Property Insurance

Rensselaer is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage to personal property at any time. Rensselaer recommends that each student obtain an insurance policy to cover such losses. If a resident's family has a homeowner's policy, a rider to cover the resident's property may be available. Otherwise, a renter's policy, usually available at minimal cost, should be obtained.

Many of the possessions that students bring to college (phones, cameras, calculators, computers, etc.) tend to be compact and expensive, making them attractive to thieves. Appropriate precautions are advised.

Residents are cautioned against keeping valuable or fragile materials not essential to studies in their rooms. During vacation periods, students are strongly urged to take portable expensive belongings home with them if at all possible.

This [insurance company](#) offers coverage to Rensselaer students. Other insurance companies may do so as well. This information is provided for your convenience and assistance but are not endorsed or promoted by Rensselaer. Consider any contract carefully before signing.

J. Prohibited or Restricted Items and Activities

In addition to items and activities prohibited or restricted by other sections of this Policy, the following items and activities are prohibited, or restricted as outlined, within the residence halls. A [comprehensive list](#) of prohibited items is maintained on the Student Living and Learning website and is updated regularly:

- Cooking

Cooking, is allowed only in designated kitchens and is prohibited in student rooms for reasons of fire safety and sanitation. Appliances are not allowed in student rooms, except for coffee makers with automatic shut-offs. Per New York State Fire Code, this includes induction cooktops.

- Decorations

Residents are free to decorate their rooms or apartments. Such decorations must not present a fire or safety hazard. Because of the wide variety of possible decorations, it is impossible to detail regulations to cover every situation. However, the following examples should provide a guide to what is and is not acceptable.

No more than 10% of wall space can be covered per New York State Fire Code. Posters, photographs, etc., are acceptable. Large or bulky paper or fabric decorations hanging from the ceiling or wall are not acceptable (e.g., fish nets, tapestries, parachutes, sheets, etc.), nor are constructions such as room dividers, as they add significantly to the combustibility of the room and its contents. Room murals are not acceptable, nor are any decorations or appliances that require wiring into the electrical system (e.g., ceiling fans).

Some residents may wish to use the room for storage or display of possessions including tennis racquets, bikes, small kites, etc. As long as they are securely attached, do not damage walls or ceiling, or interfere with moving around the room, they are allowed. Objects not permitted in the residence areas for use or storage are also not permitted for display.

The use of strings of lights is prohibited in compliance with New York State fire safety regulations.

- Electrical Outlet Safety Guidelines

- Extension cords are not allowed.
- Multi-plug adapters are not allowed.
- Power strips are allowed. Power strips can be purchased with cords of varying lengths.
- Appliances like mini-fridges should be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and should not be plugged into a power strip.
- Desks in some of the Residence Halls have outlets on the desk shelf near the light. Power strips should not be plugged into this outlet. However, you may plug the cord from the desk into a power strip.

- Endangering Behavior

Residents may not engage in any activities that may cause harm to themselves or others. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, tampering with fire safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, exit signs, etc.; hall sports; water fights; use of roller blades; climbing the exterior of halls; sitting outside a hall window, etc.

- Exercise Equipment

Light exercise equipment (small dumbbells, etc.) may be kept in the residence hall. Heavy equipment or machines such as rowers, ellipse exercisers, barbells, etc., are not permitted. Staff may place limitations on use or storage of any equipment judged to be a nuisance.

- **Fireworks and Flammable Liquids**

Fireworks: Any and all fireworks and explosives are prohibited in all residence areas.

Flammable Liquids: The use or storage of any equipment requiring flammable liquids, such as gas grills, motorcycles, or other gas-engine vehicles, is not allowed in residence halls or apartments.

- **Furnishings in Student Rooms**

Each student room is furnished with a bed, dresser, closet, desk, and desk chair for each resident. Furnishings are not to be removed from the rooms to which they were assigned. Students furnish their own linen, blankets, desk lamps, and wastebaskets. Residents may decorate and personalize their living areas as they wish (see Decorations). However, each room must be returned to its original condition before the residents vacate at the end of the school year. No permanent changes may be made to the room or its contents.

Items that require wiring into electrical systems are not allowed, nor are items that use large amounts of electricity (i.e., air conditioners).

Any style of torchiere lamps are not permitted in the residence halls and apartments, including those that have incandescent light bulbs. In addition, any style of halogen lamps are not permitted, including desk lamps or any other lamp that may require a halogen bulb. Fabric or paper that comes in contact with these high-intensity bulbs can ignite in seconds and has caused serious fires on some campuses.

Large quantities of radio or stereo equipment will be allowed only with the permission of the RD, RA, or Student Living and Learning Safety Committee. Any equipment must be removed immediately if it is distracting to study conditions or is judged by the Student Living and Learning Safety Committee to be a hazard. Radio and television aerials or other articles are not to be strung outside the windows or attached to the building or balconies (this includes satellite dishes). Institute officials are authorized to confiscate such equipment found in rooms or public areas.

- **Lofts**

Homemade bed lofts are not permitted in Residence Halls on campus.

Rensselaer is partnering with collegiateconcepts.net to offer lofts to increase floor space in residence halls. Students living in Blitman, Bray, Cary, Crockett, Davison, E-Complex, Hall, Nason, North, Nugent, RAHP, Stacwyck, Sharp, and Warren, can order a loft at collegiateconcepts.net. There are ordering deadlines in order to receive in room delivery

and assembly of their loft prior to arrival on campus. If you have any questions, visit loftconcepts.com.

- **Noxious Odors**
Activities producing odors considered offensive to other residents must be curtailed on request. Residence staff may check common areas and individual rooms for the source of such odors.
- **Open Flames**
The use of any open flame is not permitted in residence halls. This includes, but is not limited to, incense, candles, and lanterns.
- **Operating a Business**
Residents are not permitted to use any Rensselaer facilities or services for business or personal profit activities. This includes, but is not limited to buildings, telephone system, and computer network, hardware, or software, etc.
- **Solicitation and Distribution**
Only recognized student organizations, Institute administrative units or departments, with expressed permission from the Dean for Student Living and Learning, may conduct fundraising or solicitation activities in the residence halls, or distribute any form of materials in the residence halls. Such activities may not include door-to-door solicitation. No outside organization or person may solicit or distribute materials in residence halls or apartments.
- **Painting**
Student painting of rooms or common spaces is prohibited.
A resident who feels that a room or common space needs painting should contact the Resident Assistant and discuss the recommendation. If painting is indicated, they will submit a maintenance request to have the painting done by Physical Plant staff.

Any student who undertakes painting personally will bear full financial and disciplinary liability for damages incurred in the process and for repainting if deemed necessary by Student Living and Learning or Physical Plant staff. If damage charges result, the room residents will be charged collectively unless an individual is determined to be specifically responsible.
- **Pets**
For health and hygiene reasons, pets (except for fish-limited to 10-gallon tanks or smaller) are prohibited from all residence areas. If this policy is violated, the student will be required to remove the pet from Rensselaer premises within a specified period of time.
- **Refrigerators**
Small refrigerators (up to 6 cubic feet) are permitted. A vendor will be on campus in August to rent allowable refrigerators on an academic yearly basis.

- **Subletting**
All living accommodations for students are arranged between Rensselaer and individual students. Only Rensselaer has the right to permit occupancy of a residence by a student. Therefore, subletting is not permitted.
- **Waterbeds**
Because of safety and structural concerns, waterbeds are not permitted in any Rensselaer residence.
- **Weapons**
The Institute Grounds for Disciplinary Action prohibits "use or possession of dangerous weapons, explosive devices or materials, including but not limited to firearms, dangerous knives, BB and pellet guns, air rifles, slingshots, ammunition, firecrackers, bombs, whips, and martial arts weapons." Possession of weapons or firearms of any sort is strictly prohibited in all residence areas. Any weapons found will be confiscated by Public Safety and the owners will be subject to disciplinary action and may be referred to law enforcement authorities for possible criminal charges.

K. Public Areas

Public areas, including but not limited to lounges, hallways, and kitchens, are for the use of all residents of that particular area. Users are reminded to exercise courtesy and responsibility for their behavior and to clean up after themselves.

Furnishings in common areas are for the use of all residents and are not to be moved to individual rooms. Appropriation of such furniture will be regarded as theft.

Because of the potential for offense, displaying pornography in public areas is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, written, photographic, videotaped, or recorded material.

Because of the potential for property damage or personal injury, residence hall lounges, basements, rooms, and hallways are not to be used for athletic practice. Athletic equipment is allowed in residence facilities only if it is kept clean and out of use in public areas.

See Reservation of residence lounges for guidance on reserving public areas for meetings or other functions.

L. Quiet Hours

It is the policy of the Institute that its residential facilities be reasonably quiet at all times. Further, it is expected that the halls and apartments will be especially quiet during "quiet hours." The designated quiet hour schedule in all residence areas is from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., Sunday through Thursday, and midnight to 9 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. These hours represent a minimum requirement to ensure residents quiet time to sleep and study. Residents of individual halls and areas are free to develop an extended schedule to accommodate additional quiet time for study.

Courtesy with regard to noise level is expected 24 hours each day.

The use of stereos or other audio equipment shall be governed by the premise that personal enjoyment may not be pursued so as to infringe on the rights of others in or around the residence halls or in neighboring homes. At no time is it permissible for a resident to place speakers in open windows or play music to listen to outside the student's room, apartment, or building. Not only is this a violation of the Troy Noise Ordinance, it is also inconsiderate to those who are sleeping, studying, in class, or do not share your taste in music.

Persons affected by noise have the right as well as the responsibility to approach the person(s) responsible and request that the volume be lowered. Residence hall staffs are available to assist in resolving these situations. In mediating noise-related conflicts between residents, staff gives top priority to the activities of study and sleep. Particular emphasis shall be placed on maintaining quiet during quiet hours.

M. Reasonable Request

Rensselaer staff members often make requests of residents to maintain community standards, ensure safety, and provide a comfortable living environment for all members of the Rensselaer community. Residents are expected to comply with reasonable requests from Division of Student Life or other Rensselaer staff member.

N. Removal from Residence

Students who officially leave the Institute must vacate their rooms within seven days and, if applicable, discontinue their board plan on the date of departure. Residents whose continued presence is determined by appropriate Institute authorities to be a threat to property, their own safety, or that of others, or disruptive of others' rights, may be required to vacate their assigned room in fewer than seven days. The refund schedule published by Student Living and Learning applies in such cases of removal from residence facilities.

O. Reservation of Residence Lounges

Public areas in residence halls, including but not limited to lounges, hallways, and kitchens are for the use of all residents of that particular area. No individual or group may infringe upon a resident's right of access to residence hall facilities. However, outside groups (from the Rensselaer community) who wish to reserve a lounge or kitchen for a particular meeting or function may do so provided they meet the following guidelines:

1. The group must obtain permission from the Resident Director of the hall at least 24 hours in advance of the desired date.
2. A group wishing to reserve a lounge or kitchen must have at least one member of the group who is a current resident of the hall to act as host. As host, it is this resident's responsibility to see that the meeting or event is not disruptive and that the lounge is left clean and undamaged. (It would be in the host's best interest to contact the duty RA or other staff member to check out the lounge when finished. This, however, is not required.)

3. No lounge may be reserved for use by outside groups more than twice in a seven day period.
4. The lounge may be reserved for only two hours at a time. Extensions may be approved on a case-by-case basis.
5. The Resident Director, in conjunction with the RA staff, may determine times during which reservations will not be allowed (e.g. dinner hours in lounges with kitchens, where residents may usually be eating dinner).
6. Once approval is obtained, the group must take responsibility for posting notices informing residents of when and what time their group will be in the lounge. This notification does not mean you have the right to exclude anyone from using the lounge while your group is present. "Reserving" an area simply means your group has priority over another group to use the space.
7. Student Living and Learning events take priority over any other activity. If a dispute over a date occurs, the outside group requesting the reservation will be asked to select another date or time.
8. All groups must adhere to all Institute policies when using the reserved space. If violations of policy occur, the duty RA or another staff member will ask the group to leave the area. Failure to comply with a staff request, violation of Institute policy, or leaving the reserved area in an unacceptable condition will result in the group's right to reserve a lounge being suspended for a minimum of one semester.

P. Roof Access Prohibited

It is the policy of the Institute that student access to roofs of any building, including residence halls and apartments, is not permitted at any time. The only exceptions are the Jonsson Rowland Science Center Observatory roof area during scheduled hours, and on a case-by-case basis with written permission from the Office of Environmental Health & Safety.

Q. Room Changes

Room changes may not take place until the Student Living and Learning staff in each area has completed occupancy checks. After that time (no later than the third week of the semester), room changes will be allowed on a priority basis. Students in increased-occupancy rooms (double rooms made into triple rooms, etc.) will receive first priority for reassignment as new spaces become available.

This is the procedure for room changes:

1. Students wishing a room change discuss it with their roommate(s).
2. Students desiring a room change must meet with their RA, who will explore their reasons for wanting a room change. If the reason is basic incompatibility, it is likely that the RA will offer suggestions for avoiding the room change. Issues of communication, compromise, and

consideration will be discussed. The RA may offer to mediate differences between two roommates.

3. If the room change is agreed by all to be the best solution, the RA gives the student a Room Change Form and the student sets up a meeting with a professional staff member. (Note: the RA alone cannot guarantee a room change; this must be approved by a professional staff member.)
4. The student requesting a room change meets with a professional staff member to discuss reasons for wanting a room change.
5. If the room change is approved, the student contacts the current and new RAs to arrange check-out and check-in times, and obtains final approval from the Assistant Dean. Only after this approval will keys be given out.

If a student moves from one room to another that has a higher or lower charge, The Bursar will be notified and the student's account will be charged or credited based on the date of the change.

Any unauthorized room change will result in a \$150 fee charged to each student involved. In addition, an unapproved room change may result in disciplinary action for any student involved.

Any student who makes an available space in their room inhospitable either through their unwelcoming actions, or makes the space physically unable to be occupied due to personal items or room set up, will be charged a \$150 fine. If the student continues to make the space unable to be occupied, the student will be charged for each space.

R. Room Changes that Increase or Decrease Occupancy

The Institute reserves the right to increase or decrease the occupancy of a residence hall or room.

Increased occupancy of rooms is based on student demand, which may result in a room changing to a double, triple or quad. For example, a triple room houses three students in a space normally occupied by two has a reduced charge per resident. In the event such a room returns to normal (double) occupancy, the room charges will be returned to normal for the remaining students for the rest of the year.

The Institute reserves the right to consolidate or assign students to spaces in under occupied rooms. If a student resides in an under occupied room, there is always the possibility of a new roommate being assigned during the year. If there is to be additional roommate, efforts will be made to contact the present resident of an under occupied room to provide for general room readiness and prevent undue hardship for both the current and new occupants. When assignment is imminent, the Resident Assistant will ensure the room is ready for occupancy, and the current occupant will be informed of the possibility of a new roommate assignment.

S. Safety Compliance

Health and Safety inspections are conducted once per month in all residence hall and single apartment areas by a member of the Student Living and Learning staff.

Should any condition exist in a room that violates the safety guidelines supplied by the Institute, the occupants must comply with the directions of the Resident Director or Resident Assistant to correct the situation. Failure to make necessary changes may result in disciplinary action.

Residents may not tamper with any fire safety equipment in the residence halls. This includes, but is not limited to, hanging items from sprinkler heads and protective cages, hanging on exposed sprinkler piping, improper use of fire extinguishers, tampering with exit signs, smoke detectors, emergency lighting, etc. Residents found in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action and a minimum fine of \$100. Additionally, Residents who tamper with the sprinkler system specifically will be subject to a minimum fine of \$250 and possible restitution for damaged belongings.

An annual fire safety inspection is done by the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) to all buildings and facilities operated by Rensselaer. This includes individual rooms in the Residence Halls and fraternities/sororities listed as property of Rensselaer. If a fire and/or safety violation is noted during this inspection, the resident will be contacted by an SSL staff member and given 24 hours to take corrective action to comply with New York State and Institute laws. Failure to take corrective action and/or comply with the violation notice will result in a fine assigned by the NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) at the time of re-inspection. The fine issued by OFPC to the resident(s) of the room found to be in violation of fire and safety codes will be billed to the resident(s) student accounts.

T. Signs and Advertising

Definitions

1. The term "sign" refers to nonpermanent written or graphic material on paper, cardboard, cloth, or other materials placed on public display for the purpose of advertising or information dissemination.
2. Only those advertising activities of the Institute or Russell Sage College and their departments will be considered official signs.

Style and Content

1. Signs must not contain anything that maligns any person or group as determined by the Institute.
2. Only signs advertising events or disseminating information will be allowed for posting. Signs advertising services or goods will be considered solicitation and violation of Institute policies.
3. The name of the group or person posting the sign must be on each sign.
4. All signs must include the date of the advertised event.

Posting Signs

1. Signs may not be posted on those bulletin boards clearly established for STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING staff use. STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING must be contacted if a person or group would like to have a sign posted on any STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING staff bulletin board.
2. Only one sign may be placed on a bulletin board.
3. Signs may not be placed on the exterior or interior walls of a residence hall (see exceptions for banners.)
4. Signs may not be placed on the entrance doors of the residence halls.
5. Properly posted signs must not be removed prior to the event(s) advertised unless the group that posted the signs authorizes such removal.
6. Signs must not be posted in such a way as to obscure or cover signs already on display.
7. Signs may not be hung in such a way as to damage the residence hall or other Institute property.
8. All signs must be dated with the month, day, and year the sign was posted.
9. Signs must be removed by the person or groups that posted them within 24 hours following the event or 10 days after the posting, whichever comes first.

Banners

1. A banner is defined as any sign that hangs on the outside of a residence hall.
2. All banners must be approved by STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING.
3. Banners may not be hung in such a way as to damage the residence hall or the outside environment around the residence hall.
4. A banner may be hung from room residents' windows only if those residents give their permission. Any undue pressure exerted on the resident to gain permission will be considered harassment and a violation of Institute policy.
5. No more than one banner may be displayed on a building at one time, except in the Quad. The Quad, which is considered one building, may have one banner displayed in the archway and one banner displayed on the outside of a building.
6. Space to hang a banner will be available on a "first-come, first-served" basis.
7. Banners may not be displayed more than five consecutive days.
8. No banners will be displayed during the Greek Recruitment periods.

Enforcement

1. Signs and banners in violation of this policy are subject to immediate removal by Institute staff.

2. Violators of this policy are subject to Institute disciplinary action.
3. This policy will be superseded for student political signs during campaigning for student elections by election rules duly approved by the Student Senate.

U. Smoke-Free/Tobacco-Free Housing

Smoking, including use of e-cigarettes and “vaping” devices, and use or sale of tobacco or smoking devices is prohibited on all Rensselaer property. This prohibition includes apartments and residence halls - public areas, including waiting rooms, waiting areas, lobbies, lounges, etc. See the Tobacco Use and Smoking Policy in the *Rensselaer Handbook of Students Rights and Responsibilities* for more detail.

V. Special Housing Assignments/Housing Waivers

In instances when STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING is informed of extenuating circumstances that require a special housing requirement or waiver, a waiver request form may be used to request a waiver or specific facility needs or assignment to a particular part of campus. Forms are available by email from **STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING**. Needs may include, but are certainly not limited to:

Medical

Examples:

- Student has a temporary disability and no longer can live on the 4th floor of a building.
- A student has severe allergies and cannot live in a building with carpeted floors.

Mental Health

Examples:

- Student has recently experienced a personal trauma and is having trouble concentrating in a room with other students.
- Student has a documented diagnosis of depression or anxiety that makes it difficult to share a room.

Disability

Examples:

- Student uses a wheelchair and must have access to a building that provides appropriate accessibility.
- A student has a muscular disorder that requires support bars in bathroom facilities.

Religious

Examples:

- Student practices Kosher living and cannot use shared kitchen facilities with non-Kosher students.
- Student's religion requires single gender living environment.

Supporting documentation

All requests for special housing accommodations must be accompanied by supporting documentation to substantiate the request. All supporting documentation must be submitted at the time of the request in order for the request to be considered. Supporting documentation for medical and mental health requests must come from the physician treating the student and must be evaluated by Rensselaer's Medical Director located in the Student Health Center. Supporting documentation for religious requests should come from the leader of the student's religious community. Students requesting an accommodation for a disability must be registered with Rensselaer's Office of Student Disability Services.

Waiver/exemption requests

Students who wish to be released from a housing contract must demonstrate a change in financial circumstances, or have documentation of other extenuating circumstances that necessitate a release from housing. Supporting documentation from Financial Aid may be requested.

Release for open discussion

Please note that only the STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING Office can process a specific assignment based on a special need. If a student presents their situation to another Institute department, staff member or RA, that does not automatically qualify the student for a special housing assignment – the waiver form must be submitted to STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING. No other Institute department has the authority to place students based on special needs. STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING will work with other offices for recommendations based on documentation that the student provides. By signing the form upon submission, you are agreeing that STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING may speak with other offices as appropriate (Health/Counseling Center, Dean of Students Office, Advising-Learning Assistance Center, etc.) to determine appropriate accommodations based on the presented information.

Because the number of special housing requests can exceed the number of specific rooms available, the submission of this form does not automatically guarantee a special housing assignment will be granted. Applications will be reviewed, and a decision will be made by the Vice President for Student Life and/or appointed designees.

W. Students with Special Needs

Students with special housing needs due to impairment, disability, or illness must make this known to STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING if special accommodations are desired. Verification from Rensselaer's Medical Director or the student's family doctor is required. Rensselaer makes every effort to make reasonable modification to rooms or incorporate special devices as required by the

individual's condition. In some cases, modifications or devices may be required for students if the absence of such would constitute a threat to life safety.

X. Visitor Policy

Students are permitted to have visitors in their rooms with in the following general guidelines:

- Residents and their visitors are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations of the Institute
- A visitor is defined as any person not listed in current STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING records as living in the particular building or residential area. A visitor shall not remain in the residence for more than three consecutive days.
- A visitor must be hosted by a resident living in the same hall and accompanied by the resident; or the visitor must be accompanied by STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING staff, at all times. Resident keys or access cards may not be turned over to the possession of a visitor.
- The resident who is acting as host is responsible for the conduct of the visitor. Inappropriate guest conduct may result in disciplinary action against the host.
- Overnight visitors are permitted. However, in a shared bedroom (i.e., double or triple room), permission from all roommates must be gained before a guest may remain overnight. In the case of guests who are visiting but not remaining overnight, care must be taken to allow for the rights of all roommates to enjoy the "privacy" of their shared room. Students are expected to respect the rights of their roommates, suitemates, or apartment mates whenever guests are present, be it overnight or not.
- No minor under the age of 16 may be an overnight guest in a residence hall without obtaining a) written consent of the parent or legal guardian, and b) written permission granted by the Director, STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING. Visitors under the age of 12 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, and may not stay overnight.
- The host resident may be subject to disciplinary action if the visitor's presence interferes with the right of the host's roommate(s) to have access to the room or with maintaining their lifestyle in residence; if the visitor remains in residence for an extended period of time (continuously or intermittently); if the visitor violates Institute regulations or becomes a disturbing influence in the residence area; or if the visitor presents any health or legal problems by virtue of the guest's presence.
- A resident or residence area may lose the privilege of visitation if, in the opinion of STUDENT LIVING AND LEARNING or the Dean of Students Office, visitation becomes a detriment to the ability of a resident or group of residents to live in an atmosphere conducive to effective study.

8. Non-Discrimination

Rensselaer is committed to providing a living and learning environment free from discrimination, and does not discriminate in any manner on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, disability, military status, veteran status, genetic information, genetic predisposition, domestic violence victim status, familial status, or any other basis prohibited by law.

9. Room Entry, Inspection and Search

All residence hall rooms, and student apartments, are inspected to ensure that life safety systems are functional and residents are maintaining their residence in a manner that is not detrimental or hazardous to themselves or other students. Student rooms are inspected at least monthly, but may be inspected at other times to address specific concerns.

Room entry may be informal and result in an inspection that is nothing more than looking at whatever is plainly seen, unless further inspection is required for health or safety reasons. Examples of acceptable room entry include:

- Making repairs to previously reported damaged items
- At invitation or agreement by an occupant
- Sensing a fire or similar emergency
- Hearing unreasonably loud or continuing sound from a room with the occupants failing to respond
- A building emergency or concern for an individual student's health or well-being
- Periodic Fire, Health and Safety Inspections.

Except for extraordinary conditions, or where authorization is issued by the Vice President for Student Life or designee, Institute representatives will not enter without seeking permission.

If rooms or apartments are to be searched, authorization will be obtained through the Vice President for Student Life or designee in any case where property or material related to a violation of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action is sought in accordance with the procedures authorized in the Student Bill of Rights. A search may include looking into all items, in, on, or under which the items(s) sought may be located.

Entry will be requested first by staff knocking on the room door and announcing that they desire entry. Reasonable time will be given for occupants to respond before entry is made.

10. Financial Responsibility

A student is financially responsible for housing once an assignment is accepted.