

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley™



Resident HANDBOOK

Fall 2017-Spring 2018

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WELCOME

On behalf of the Department of Housing and Residence Life staff we welcome you to Vaquero Country and are excited that you will join our community of residents. You are now a member of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) on-campus housing community where you will receive a rigorous and rewarding higher education. The Division of Finance and Administration, Campus Auxiliary Services, and Department of Housing and Residence Life are committed to maximizing your student success.

Living on campus is a great way for you to get connected, meet friends and be involved. UTRGV Housing and Residence Life offers a wide array of housing options designed to meet your needs and provide an environment that supports your academic growth. For residents that live it up on campus, we offer opportunities for leadership, civic and community engagement, and social and recreational involvement to further enhance your on-campus living experience.

In choosing to live on campus, you are investing in your academic success and benefiting from engaging in the full university experience. We encourage you to make the most of it by getting involved in and outside the classroom, embracing new challenges and ideas, and building working relationships with students, staff and faculty. This Resident Handbook is a guide for living in our community. We hope you use these guidelines to help you better understand your role at UTRGV, and as a resource throughout the academic year. Please review it and ask a Residence Life staff member if you have any questions. I wish you the best of luck on your academic journey and hope we can work together to provide you a successful experience.

Warmest Regards,
Sergio Martinez, M.B.A.
Director of Housing and Residence Life



Our Vision

To provide students a residential experience that is conducive to academic success and personal development.

Our Mission

To provide a safe and affordable residential community experience for students that supports and enhances mutual respect, student learning, personal growth and academic achievement.

Our Motto

Live.
Learn.
Grow.

UTRGV DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & RESIDENCE LIFE

We offer the following student housing options:

Residence Halls

Residence halls are facilities that provide an opportunity for you to meet people and get involved in a close-knit community that combines all the comforts of home with all the excitement of the traditional college experience.

At the UTRGV Edinburg Campus there are three residence halls – Unity, Heritage and Troxel– for you to choose from.

Apartments

Our apartments provide an opportunity for you to live a more autonomous lifestyle and still be involved in campus life, stay connected to campus resources and the apartment community while living only minutes from your classes.

Apartment-style living can be found in Brownsville at Casa Bella, and in Edinburg at The Village Apartments.

HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE STAFF

Lead Resident Assistants and Resident Assistants (LRAs & RAs)

LRAs and RAs are part-time, live-in, paraprofessional staff. RAs serve as the primary resource to the residents for information and assistance. They are responsible for facilitating community building for the residents of each area. They are responsible for monitoring all aspects of the buildings, including compliance with University and Housing and Residence Life policies. RAs work with residents and the Department of Housing and Residence Life to create and to maintain an environment conducive to academic, personal, and social growth. RAs are selected on the basis of academic achievement, leadership ability, and commitment to the benefits of on-campus living.

Student Assistants (SAs)

SAs staff the service desk of each residence hall. They are responsible for assisting visitors and guests; issuing equipment, and other supplies available for residents' use; forwarding emergency maintenance requests; and other administrative tasks that may arise.

Housing Coordinator (HC)

The Housing Coordinator is a full-time, live-in professional responsible for the smooth operation of each residential facility. The HC supervises the building staff members, coordinates hall functions, provides counseling and disciplinary referrals when necessary, and performs administrative functions.



Director of Housing and Residence Life (Chief Housing Officer)

The Chief Housing Officer oversees the administrative, personnel, business and facility management of the Department of Housing and Residence Life (HRL).

Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life

The Assistant Director oversees the Resident Assistant Program and provides structure for events hosted by the Housing and Residence Life. Assists the director with administrative, personnel, business and facility management. Serves as co-advisor for the Residence Hall Association (RHA).

Residence Hall Association (RHA)

RHA is a governing body comprised of elected, appointed, and general members from within our university. The main goal set forth by RHA is to enhance campus life and build strong communities through energetic programming. RHA is designed to assist the Director of Housing and Residence Life in the promotion of issues and concerns related to the department. RHA welcomes all students to gain valuable leadership experience through their participation within the organization.

Facilities Management

Facilities Management is responsible for maintenance, servicing equipment, and the cleaning of common areas and the grounds. During maintenance request/repairs staff will enter the resident's room without their presence. For more information, Review the Housing Policies- Room Search and Seizure Section on pg. 25.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Facility	Location	Hours of Operation
Housing and Residence Life Main Office • (956) 665-3439	University Center, 305 Edinburg, Texas	8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (CST) (Closed during university and national holidays)
Housing and Residence Life Main Office • (956) 882-7191	Clubhouse, Casa Bella 2651 FJRM Ave., Brownsville, Texas	8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (CST) (Closed during university and national holidays)
Clubhouse Recreations Fitness Center Hours Pool	Casa Bella, Brownsville, Texas Casa Bella, Brownsville, Texas Casa Bella, Brownsville, Texas	8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Daily - 8:00 a.m.-1:00 a.m. Daily - 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT ON-CALL HOURS & PHONE NUMBERS

For emergencies, call University Police at:

Brownsville, Texas • (956) 882-2222
Edinburg, Texas • (956) 665-7151

Facility	RA On Call Phone Number	Time
Casa Bella, Brownsville, Texas	(956) 551-3859	Monday-Friday • 5:00 p.m.-8:00 a.m. Saturday-Sunday • 8:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.
Heritage & Troxel Hall	(956) 537-4185	Daily - 24 Hours
Unity Hall	(956) 537-4198	Daily - 24 Hours
The Village Apartments	(956) 537-4843	Daily - 24 Hours

Vaquero Honor Code

WE ARE HONEST.

We do our own work and are honest with one another in all matters. We understand how any act of dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving unauthorized assistance, conflicts as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

WE HAVE INTEGRITY.

We do not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do. We will make personal and academic integrity fundamental in all of our endeavors.

WE ARE RESPECTFUL.

We act civilly and cooperate with one another for the common good. We will strive to create an environment and a culture in which people respect and listen to one another. We recognize a university is, above all, a place for the exchange of ideas, popular and unpopular. It is the one institution in society that encourages challenges to conventional wisdom. Consequently, we pledge to encourage the exchange of ideas and to allow others to participate and express their views openly.

THE VAQUERO STUDENT HONOR STATEMENT:

I pledge I will not cheat, plagiarize, falsify data or give or receive unauthorized assistance on academic work in accordance with The Vaquero Honor Code. I further pledge to support a culture of academic integrity.



COMMUNITY LIVING EXPECTATIONS

The Department of Housing and Residence Life is committed to providing a high quality residence hall experience where you will have many opportunities to become involved in numerous activities and organizations, meet and become friends with people from diverse backgrounds, and enrich your academic pursuits at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. One of the most rewarding facets of living on campus is the ability to live with people who are different from you. Every person comes from a different background and brings a different set of experiences and expectations for living here in on-campus housing. Our policies are intended to give you, your roommate(s), and your neighbors a common set of guidelines by which you can all live and learn together in order to achieve academic success, develop lasting friendships, and continue to build your skills so you are well prepared for your career after graduation. Living with others in close proximity is not always easy. To live cooperatively, it is critical residents and staff members develop a mutual respect for each other and are committed to specific expectations of behavior. University policies and the conduct process are based on respect for self, others, the community and taking responsibility for one's behavior. UTRGV faculty, staff, administrators and students have an obligation to maintain conditions under which the work of the university can proceed freely. It is the responsibility of each student to know and abide by university policies, ensuring we are all in accordance with the highest expectations of quality, institutional integrity and freedom of expression. Each member of our community shares the responsibility of maintaining an environment conducive to the achievement of the university's mission.



RESIDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

As a member living in our diverse community, you are afforded certain individual rights that you and your roommate(s), as well as those living around you, should respect. In addition, these rights carry with them a reciprocal responsibility for you and every member in our community. Responsibilities ensure that roommate(s), suite/apartment mates, floor mates, and other community members are afforded the same rights regardless of their gender, race, creed, religion, sexual orientation, cultural background, or other identity group(s) to which they belong; as well as any beliefs, values or attitudes that may be different from our own. When you uphold your responsibilities, you will be making the university and residential communities a great place to live where all students can be successful.

To a significant extent, success at the UTRGV will depend on your ability to understand and balance the rights and

responsibilities you assume while attending college. Staff and faculty members do not assume the role of campus parent, and you will seldom be told what to do or what not to do with regard to your personal behavior. The obvious exception, as with society at large, is when individual behavior threatens the health and safety of you, others or the community, or begins to disrupt the legitimate pursuits of others within our residential communities.

The Housing and Residence Life staff members do not, nor cannot, guarantee you will retain each of these rights at all times. You share the responsibility. You can help ensure that these rights will be honored through thoughtful discussion and open communication with roommates, suite/apartment mates, floor mates, and other community members. Our staff is committed to offering you an inclusive environment where we will support you in taking healthy risks, and while you have the choice to passively exist, we will challenge you to take full advantage of your living environment by participating in activities, standing up for yourself and others, and speaking up for what you believe has value



RESIDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is a listing of your “rights” (things to which you are entitled as a student living in one of our housing communities), as well as your “responsibilities” (what is expected of you as a member of a residential community):

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT

To a safe and secure living environment.

YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY

To keep your living space secured, and to not prop doors open or allow strangers in. You also have a responsibility to uphold all security policies and procedures. Violations of policies and procedures put you and others at risk.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT

To a reasonably peaceful and quiet space in which you can sleep and study.

YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY

To observe quiet hours, to keep your stereo, television, computer and your voice at a reasonable volume in your living environment, and to remind your guests and others that you expect the same of them.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT

To privacy and to the fair use of your room, both in terms of space and time, and the right to be free of unwanted guests in your room.

YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY

To let your roommate know of your wishes and preference for hours of sleep, study and visitation, and to work through any difference you may have in a peaceful manner. You also have a responsibility to make sure your guests do not violate your roommate’s rights or interfere with his/her use of your living space.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT

To confront another person’s behavior when it infringes on your rights.

YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY

To examine your own behavior when confronted by another and to work toward resolving conflicts.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT

To the assistance of a resident assistant, residence life coordinator, assistant director, or other Housing and Residence Life staff members when you need help with a problem.

YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY

To notify a staff person of your problem and request assistance in a timely manner and to cooperate with those involved as they work with you as you solve your problem.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT

To know what is acceptable and/or inappropriate behavior in your living environment.

YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY

To read the information provided for you by UTRGV. This includes, but is not limited to your Housing and Residence Life Service Agreement, Resident Handbook and Student Code of Conduct.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT

To report any alleged violation, whether or not you were personally affected by it.

ON CAMPUS HOUSING CONTRACT: TERMS & CONDITIONS

Student Housing Contract

The student contract is the “On-Campus Housing Contract” you agreed to in order to reserve space in the residence halls or apartments. It is a legally binding contract containing important information, and you are expected to be familiar with all of the contract provisions. A copy of the On-Campus Housing Contract is available online via the Housing Application Portal through my.utrgv.edu.

The On-Campus Housing Contract is offered on the condition you are admitted to the university. The contract does not guarantee you have been admitted to the university. Only the Office of Admissions can grant admission to the university. You must be a student actively pursuing a degree at the university to be eligible to live on campus. Registered Sex Offenders are prohibited from working or living in Housing and Residence Life at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue parts of the Handbook, or the Handbook in its entirety, at any time without prior notice. University Housing will not be provided to, or required of, any Registered sex offenders. Registered sex offenders are prohibited from being within the living areas of university housing, including the university’s apartments.

Conditions of Contract

The On-Campus Housing Contract is a binding agreement for university housing and meals. A security deposit is required in accordance with that agreement, and must accompany the application in order for the reservation to be complete. Upon successful checkout following the last semester living on campus, students will be eligible to receive the refundable portion of their deposit. University housing is available for current UTRGV students, faculty and staff only. Possible exceptions to this policy include spouse, and/or dependents of those above. Requests for exceptions must be submitted in writing and approved by the director of Housing and Residence Life with appropriate documentation. Reservation Agreement can be completed online through my.utrgv.edu and by clicking on the housing icon which takes you to the Housing and Residence Life application portal.

Contract Periods

All Contract periods are based on the university academic calendar. The university schedules courses by term and by contract periods are based on these terms. Students may apply for housing for the following contract periods. Please note that if you apply for the fall term you will be required to also stay with us for the spring term.

Fall and Spring Term (two term lease)	Spring Term
Mini May Term (if available)	Summer I Term
Summer II Term	Summer III Term
	(if available)

Students are expected to complete contract periods.

Cancellation of Contract

Requests for termination of the contract must be received in writing via email at home@utrgv.edu by the following deadlines for a full refund of the security deposit. Students who submit a cancellation request after the deadline will face a housing termination fee.

Academic Year, July 1 • Summer I, May 1 • Summer II, June 1

Fall and Spring Term – Deadline: July 1

Spring Term – Deadline: December 15

Mini May Term (if Available) – Deadline: 30 days before first class day

Summer I Term – Deadline: May 1

Summer II Term – Deadline: June 1

Summer III Term (if Available) – Deadline: May 1

Holidays and Breaks

Select holidays and breaks are not included in the agreement, as the residence halls officially close and meal plans are inactive. Residence halls are officially closed during Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks. Students requesting to stay on campus during these breaks must fill out a Break Housing Request and will be charged for the duration of the break.



ON-CAMPUS HOUSING CONTRACT: TERMS & CONDITIONS

Security Deposit

A \$150 security deposit is required for students applying for the first time to UTRGV on-campus housing. Housing Applications without it will not be processed. This \$100 partially refundable and is used to replace any broken items or pay for excessive cleaning after your stay. Once a staff member has inspected your room, they will determine whether or not you will be charged. Deposits stay on file the entire time you live on campus and rollover from year to year. The refundable portion of the deposit will be returned after your last semester living on campus. Following the end of the contract period, if you have complied with the contract, paid all sums you owed to university, surrender your room in good conditions (excepting only ordinary wear and tear), provided a writing forwarding address to the university for refund of your deposit, and submitted an online deposit request form. The university will refund any balance of your deposit to you on or before the 30th day after you check-out as required by Section VII.

**The university grants student a license to use the room the university assigns to the student's temporary residence during the contract period, subject to the following terms and conditions:*

**\$50 is applied as a Housing Application Fee*

**The refund may be forfeited for a number of reasons including, but not limited to; violation of checkout procedures; improper checkout; damage to facilities; or need for additional room/apartment cleaning.*

University Housing Eligibility

To be eligible to live on campus, residents are required to be enrolled for a minimum of 12 hours each fall and spring semester at UTRGV. For the summer session, enrollment is required if you are not enrolled for the immediate long semester. Residents enrolled for less than the minimum number of hours must request a waiver in writing and receive approval from the Department of Housing and Residence Life. Failure to attend classes regularly may be grounds for removal from the residence hall/apartment.

Criminal Background Check Policy

Cases of students who self-disclose criminal histories will be turned over to a Housing and Residence Life Admissions Committee (HRLAC) composed of student affairs and police department professionals for investigation. HRLAC then decides whether to recommend students for admission or removal to housing. Additional Criminal Background Checks may be requested as the discretion of the committee.

Questions that may be asked on housing application include:

- Have you ever been charged with or convicted of a felony?
- The student checks yes or no.

If yes, please explain.

- In the past 10 years and including any pending charges, have you been the subject of any criminal proceeding other than a minor traffic violation?

The student checks yes or no. If yes, please explain

A charge or conviction may not necessarily disqualify for Housing, however a false statement may.

Texas Code

An institution of higher education is entitled to obtain from the department a criminal history record information maintained by the department that relates to a student, or to an applicant for admission as a student, who applies to reside in on-campus housing at the institution. Criminal history record information obtained by an institution of higher education under subsection (b) may be used by the chief of police of the institution or by the institution's housing office only for the purpose of evaluating current students or applicants for enrollment who apply to reside in on-campus housing at the institution. The institution shall notify a student who is the subject of the criminal history record information of any use of the information to deny the student the opportunity to reside in on-campus housing at the institution. (Texas Government Code, 411.0945).

The Village Apartments at Edinburg Housing Eligibility

Housing at The Village Apartments is available for full-time enrolled UTRGV students who are at least 19 years of age and turn 20 years of age during the academic school year, and current faculty and staff. The only exception to this policy relates to children and spouses of current UTRGV students, faculty, or staff. Individuals seeking housing accommodations at Village Apartments must sign a reservation agreement identifying either a 9-month fall/spring lease period or a 3-month summer lease period.

**Appropriate documentation must be presented in the case of married or family housing if the spouse and/or children are not current UTRGV students, or faculty or staff members.*

** During mini and any summer session students must be 18 years of age or older.*

E-mail

E-mail is a mechanism for official UTRGV communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send e-mail communications to all students, and will expect that e-mail communications will be received and read in a timely manner. The student's official e-mail address is the destination to which the University will send official e-mail communications.

Payment Information

Students are to complete the payment of all room and meal fees according to the payment schedule they selected on their application.

- Residents may choose either “Payment in Full” or “Installment Plan”.
- Selection of “Payment in Full” requires the room and meal balance to be paid in full prior to moving in.
- The “Payment plan” divides room and board costs into four equal payments, with the first payment due prior to moving in and the remaining payments due on or before the 15th of each following month for residents of the residence halls.

Payment plan will incur a nonrefundable \$10 setup and handling fee per payment for a total of \$40.

- The payment plan is not available for summer terms and full payment must be made before checking in. Students should sign a Title IV waiver in financial aid, such that any financial aid award funds remaining after tuition and fees have been paid shall be automatically applied to any outstanding room and meal balance. Accounts that are more than 1 days past due will incur a late fee of \$50 monthly until current. When two or more payments are missed, the payment plan will be canceled and all charges will be due immediately and set up as pay in full.

**Failure to make payments by the specified due dates, regardless of financial aid status could lead to removal from Housing and Residence Life.*

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment Choices

Assignment of a room does not guarantee, nor signify, university admittance. Assignments are based on room availability. The Department of Housing and Residence Life cannot guarantee your first choice of room assignment or roommate, but requests will be honored when possible. In the event that the first choice is not available, an assignment will be made according to the second choice. If all selected choices are unavailable due to facility capacity, residents will be placed on a waiting list in the order that they are received. Students not occupying their assigned spaces by the first day of classes will still be bound by this agreement. However, they may lose their assigned space and be reassigned to other accommodations. While every effort will be made to accommodate the student’s preference, the university reserves the right to make all room assignments. The university assigns same gendered roommates without regard to any protected bias.

Roommate Conflict

The Department of Housing and Residence Life is committed to making residence hall living an enjoyable and growth-filled experience. All student residents who share a room or living quarters (roommates) will complete a roommate agreement in order to ensure a positive and respectful interaction between roommates. When conflict between roommates occurs, the Housing and Residence Life staff may be asked to intervene and help roommates come to an agreement. Roommates may be asked to update their “roommate agreement” to address specific concerns. This agreement between roommates becomes binding and will be used to resolve future conflicts that may occur.

When dealing with conflicts between roommates that become difficult to resolve, or when dealing with an aggressive roommate, it is the prerogative of the hall coordinator to move one or both residents from the room. An aggressive roommate is one whose acts or communication are intended to harass, intimidate or humiliate. One or both roommates may be moved under the following circumstances:

- One of the roommates is an aggressive party and the person(s) being harassed refuse(s) to pursue appropriate action.
- Both roommates are violating each other’s rights.
- One or both roommate(s) refuse(s) to complete a roommate agreement, or adhere to agreements contained within the roommate agreement.
- A violation of Housing and Residence Life procedure/s has occurred.

Housing and Residence Life may recommend sending a case to the Office of the Dean of Students and may elect to cancel a resident’s contract should the resident be involved in similar circumstances after a move has occurred. If a resident harasses another resident in the course of a roommate conflict, the resident is subject to disciplinary action.

Roommate Agreement

The Roommate Agreement Forms should be filled out by all roommates by the twelfth Class Day of each term.

Room Consolidation

This procedure will be instituted by Housing and Residence Life based on need for space or a reduction of utility costs. Students in units without roommates, or in underpopulated buildings, will be notified of the consolidation process. The consolidation can take place any time during the academic or full year if occupancy of a specific unit falls below an acceptable number. A student may be consolidated

to another same style unit as well as another building. Students will be notified of their new room assignment and required to move within 24 hours of the notification. HRL will attempt to accommodate roommate requests and building requests wherever possible.

In the event that a roommate decides to check out of their room or apartments during any semester, we will give the student(s) remaining in the room or apartment two options:

1. Obtain a list of students in the same situation from the Housing and Residence Life office and try to locate compatible roommates on your own.
2. Housing and Residence Life can work to find the most compatible roommate situation for the remaining resident(s). You may be required to move to a new room assignment as a result of this process.

Residents in Heritage/Troxel or Unity Halls have a third option: the student can keep the room as a private room if they pay the prorated private room rate. Consolidation will begin as early as the 12th class day. Students who are consolidated will not be charged the \$50 transfer fee if they coordinate their move through the Housing and Residence Life.

**Failure to adhere to the Housing and Residence Life request, student will be responsible for full Single Room Rate.*

Room Changes

Each student living in the residence halls is expected to respect individual rights and follow community living standards. The behavior of students who choose to disregard residence hall community standards and roommate contracts agreed upon by both roommates will be addressed through the disciplinary system. If warranted, the student may be required to change rooms, be removed from university housing or be barred from contracting for future premises and services.

The Department of Housing and Residence Life is responsible for approving all assignments and reserves the right to reassign individuals to other rooms or residence halls in event of roommate conflict, pending disciplinary action and noncompliance with university regulations. Unauthorized room changes are subject to improper checkout charges and cancellation of the move.

Your RA is available to discuss room assignment problems and future room change requests. Room change requests during the semester must be submitted in writing using the room change form to be approved by your Hall Coordinator. The room change form can be found online. Room changes must be completed within 48 hours after receiving approval or move may be canceled or resident will be charged for both rooms. Except for extenuating circumstances, no room

changes are made during the first 12 days of a new session or the last two weeks of a session.

**Roommate/Suite Mediation is mandatory prior to room change(s).*

Check-Out Process

Residents are encouraged to vacate within 24 hours of their last exams or by 9 a.m. the day following the last final examination scheduled during the general university exam period, whichever is earlier.

In order to check out properly, residents should first remove all personal belongings. Nothing is to be left in the room. All areas assigned to the resident which may include bathroom, bedroom, kitchen, and living room should be cleaned thoroughly as per the reservation agreement. Contact your RA and they will inventory the room, collect keys, and report any damages (RAs do not determine charges, they only note damages). A copy of your RCR is available upon request. The room is subject to final inspection by staff members and additional charges may be added following student check-out.

If you do not wish to schedule a time for your RA to complete a checkout of your room, you may complete an Express Check-Out. Follow all instructions on the Express Check-Out envelope to complete that process properly. Residents choosing Express Check-Out may not contest damage charges assessed after departure. If you are not returning to on campus housing for the next semester, have completed all of the terms of your agreement, If you are checking-out outside the contracted times, you must visit the Housing and Residence Life office to receive a Withdraw Slip.

Student have up to 30 days from Checkout Day to submit a Deposit Refund Request Form to receive \$100 Security Deposit (link available online)

**Residents who fail to check out properly will forfeit their deposit, and additionally will be responsible for any damage, cleaning, and/or missing university property in their assigned residence.*

**Residents not returning to Housing and Residence Life, must complete the Deposit Refund Request Form (available online) to process their \$100 refund.*

Damages or improper check-out may result in decrease of refund amount.

**The refund may be forfeited for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, violation of checkout procedures; improper checkout; damage to facilities; or need for additional room/apartment cleaning.*

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Rights of the University

The Department of Housing and Residence Life reserves the right to inspect rooms for damages and infractions of housing, university, or UT System policies, or state and federal regulations; consolidate or close entire or partial quads, rooms, suites, and apartments due to safety considerations, renovation, energy conservation or economic purposes; refuse admission or readmission to university housing or to cancel the housing agreement during the term based on the resident's failure to meet university requirements, policies, or regulations. It is the resident's responsibility to be familiar with university policy, including the Resident Handbook and the Handbook of Operating Procedures.

Personal Responsibility

Each student shares responsibility for policy violations that occur in his or her room or apartment, whether or not those violations occur with the resident's knowledge. You will be held responsible for any activities or damages that occur in your assigned room. You are also responsible for your guest's behavior as outlined in the Guest Procedures. You also have the right and responsibility to confront others, in a polite manner, who are violating residence hall procedure or university policy, especially if the individuals are not residents. The Department of Housing and Residence Life and/or the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities will meet with all residents to determine appropriate course of action. It is also your responsibility to report violations of university or residence hall regulation. Residence Responsibility includes:

- Reporting damages to your RA, immediately
- Treating residence hall property with as much respect as you would your own home.
- Speaking up and discouraging other from behaving irresponsible in your hall.
- Encouraging a positive floor that builds community, emphasizing concern and respect for others.

Compliance with a University Official

The Housing and Residence Life staff members (HCs, RAs, and SAs) are Campus Security Authorities (CSA) and university official. Residents or guests must comply with directives from any University official and CSAs. All residents must identify themselves by providing a student identification card or valid picture ID. Any verbal or physical abuse focused toward staff members by residents or guests will not be tolerated and violations will result in disciplinary action. Written documentation of each incident will be submitted to the proper authorities.

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

Due to federal law, many employees including resident assistants and housing coordinators are considered responsible employees of the university. Depending on the amount of detail you share with a 'responsible employee,' such as the name of the accused, if the accused is an employee or student, and/or the location of an incident, you may provide enough information that they are mandated/required to report it to the Title IX coordinator. The only university employees that have the privilege of private and confidential support on campus are:

- Licensed mental health practitioners (i.e. licensed clinical social workers, licensed counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists) at the Counseling Services.
- Licensed medical staff (i.e. nurses and doctors) at University Health Services (UHS)

If you are not sure or not ready to report to the University, please consider speaking with a counselor or student health employee to discuss your options in a private and confidential setting.

Cleanliness of Rooms

All residents are required to maintain a maximum level of health standards in their rooms. Open food containers must be properly stored or disposed of in order to avoid attracting roaches or other pests. Residents are responsible for maintaining a reasonably neat and clean room at all times. Good housekeeping practices are expected of each resident. Residents are required to maintain their unit to the following minimum standards:

- All appliances are to be maintained in a reasonably clean condition at all times.
- Floors and walls are to be maintained in a reasonably clean condition at all times.
- Food should be properly stored. All areas in your living quarters must be maintained in a reasonably clean and sanitary condition.
- Trash should be emptied regularly. Daily disposal of trash in the exterior common trash dumpsters will help maintain health and safety standards and a desirable environment in your living unit. Fire and health regulations prohibit leaving trash in the hall.
- Submit maintenance work order requests for damaged items in their rooms.

If your roommate should depart, you may be assigned a new roommate with little or no notice. Therefore, you should make sure that common areas are clean and maintained as outlined above to accommodate any newly assigned resident(s). If your unit is not cleaned in an acceptable manner prior to a new roommate's arrival, we reserve the right to have the room or apartment cleaned, and the cost will be billed to the current resident(s) of the unit.



Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

Students who require accommodations in their on-campus living environment due to a disability should contact HRL and Student Accessibility Service as soon as they complete their housing application. Students may be required to submit documentation to support their accommodation request. HRL works closely with Student Accessibility Services to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to housing.

Service and Emotional Support Animals

All service or emotional support animal requests must be submitted to SAS in Edinburg (University Center 108) or Brownsville (Cortez 129). Students must follow the SAS registration process. After SAS approves the accommodation of a service or emotional support animal, the student is responsible for submitting the approval to HRL along with any other required documentation. HRL will meet with the student and review their request and may add additional housekeeping requirements and guidelines on care and boarding for animal.

Service Animals

Please contact HRL and SAS to discuss your request for a service animal. Per the Americans with Disabilities Act, the University allows a person with a disability to be accompanied by a service animal which is by definition limited to dogs (or miniature horses). Service animals are defined as dogs (or miniature horses) that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, and alerting/protecting a person who is having

a seizure. The provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship does not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of defining a service animal. The work or task a dog (or miniature horse) has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. A student with a service animal(s) is permitted to bring it in all areas of a place of public accommodation. This includes any university housing assigned to the student.

Emotional Support (or Assistance) Animals

Per the Fair Housing Act, the university provides reasonable accommodations for an emotional support (or assistance) animal in university housing. An emotional support (or assistance) animal is an animal that is necessary to afford a person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling when there is an identifiable relationship or nexus between the person's disability and the assistance the animal provides. Typically, an emotional support (or assistance) animal is prescribed to an individual with a disability by a health care or mental health professional and is an integral part of a person's treatment process. An emotional support (or assistance) animal is not necessarily a service animal, although in some instances a Service animal could qualify as one. Emotional support (or assistance) animals are allowed in all areas of the premises where persons are normally allowed to go, unless doing so would impose an undue financial and administrative burden or would fundamentally alter the nature of the university housing services. Please contact Student Accessibility Services for information regarding any accommodation needs.

Campus Auxiliary Services

Dining Services

Weekly meals are not transferable to future weeks or student. The weekly meal cycle runs from Friday through Thursday. All meal plans and Dining Dollars associated with a meal plan expire at the end of each semester and will not carry over to the following semester. Participants must present their VOneCard at each food location in order to use meal swipes or dining dollars.

Under the direction of the Auxiliary Services Office, Sodexo is the designated campus food service provider and helps meet the needs of those who eat in the dining hall and elsewhere on campus. Residents with dietary restriction need to make arrangements for meal accommodations with the Food Service Manager. All students residing in the residence halls are required to select one of the available meal plans for each semester to be used for on campus dining. Each plan outlines a specific number of meals to be used per week at the Dining Hall. In addition, each plan includes a declining balance amount of Dining Dollars that can be used at any Food Service Locations. Residents of The Village Apartments must purchase the minimum meal plan of \$300.00 in Dining Dollars for each fall and spring semester. Changes to meal plans are allowed prior to the official 12th class day of each semester. Residents have the choice of the following options:

Available to all Residents

Meal Plans	Dining Dollars/ Semester	Board Rates/ Semester
17 Meals/Week	\$50	\$1,249
14 Meals/Week	\$75	\$1,211
10 Meals/Week	\$100	\$1,141
Unlimited Meal Plan*	\$25	\$1,510
*The Unlimited Meal Plan will allow students to have 19 Meals/week.		

Upperclassman Only

Meal Plans	Dining Dollars/ Semester	Board Rates/ Semester
7 Meals/ Week	\$100 Dining	\$1,128
145 Block	\$200 Dining	\$1,583
125 Block	\$100 Dining	\$1,281
115 Block	\$150 Dining	\$1,237
90 Block	\$200 Dining	\$1,165
Additional Block		\$67.87/each
*The Unlimited Meal Plan will allow students to have 19 Meals/week.		

The 7, 10, 14, or 17 weekly meals associated with the plan selected will expire at the end of each week and are not transferable to another week or to another student. The block plans offer more flexibility and unused meals do not expire until the end of the semester. Dining Dollar values associated with the meal plan selected can be used at any food service venue located on campus throughout the semester. Unused Dining Dollars expire at the end of the semester and will not carry over to the following semester.

Dining Dollars cannot be used at non-food service locations, such as University Bookstore and vending machines.

Food Service Locations (Edinburg):

Dining Hall: All you care to eat dining

Student Union Food Court:

- Slice of Life Pizza
- Mein Bowl
- AFC Sushi
- Chick-fil-A
- Mi Taco Ponchos

Student Union Convenience Store C-Store/Su Café:

SU Café located next to the C-Store serves Starbucks and delicious pastries.

The C-Store offers:

Krispy Kreme, snacks and grab and go meals.

Student Union Sub Connection:

Offers made-to-order subs and is located in the C-Store.

Food Kiosks in the Edinburg Campus:

- Simply-to-Go (Engineering Bldg.)
- Jazzman's Café and Bakery (Library)
- Sandella's Flatbread Café (Science Bldg)

On the Brownsville Campus, located in the Student Union, you can find The Grille and Sub Connection. Inside the Library is The Grid.

For operating hours and daily menus, please visit online at utrgvdining.sodexomyway.com/dining-plans/index.html.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Campus Shuttle Services

UTRGV provides FREE shuttle services from remote parking areas on campus to convenient stops in the heart of the campus. Campus routes are available online at utrgv.edu/pts. Contact Office of Auxiliary Services with any questions.

Valley Metro Transit System

Valley Metro offers FREE public transportation to UTRGV students. Present your VOneCard to travel to and from UTRGV from supporting cities of the Rio Grande Valley. For specific route information, contact Valley Metro at 1-800-574-8322 or visit online at lrgvdc.org/valleymetro/.

B Metro

B Metro offers FREE public transportation to UTRGV students on any of their routes in the City of Brownsville. Present your VOneCard to travel. For specific route information, contact Valley Metro at 1-800-574-8322 or visit online at bmetro.cob.us.

VBUCKS

Students have the option of purchasing VBucks which can be used for numerous campus services including the University Bookstore, Student Union Game Room, all food service locations, and vending copiers. Financial aid awards can also be used to purchase VBucks. Contact the Office of Auxiliary Services with any questions. VBucks can be purchased made at the Academic Services Building (ASB), Room 1.102, and Library terminals (1st floor).

VONECARD OFFICE

Student Identification cards are available at the VOne Card Office, located in the Academic Services building, Room 1.101. These IDs are to be used in the residence halls, library, dining hall, and at all campus activities. The first ID is issued free of charge to the student during their first semester on campus. Replacement cost for an ID is \$12, and must be paid at the VOneCard Office or at Payments and Collections. Students are prohibited from altering or tampering with IDs.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

University Police

The University Police Department (PD) provides full police service 24 hours per day, 365 days a year, for all for the main campus and off site UTRGV locations. The UTRGV PD employs various commissioned/non-commissioned officers and community service officers (student patrol). Provided services include emergency assistance, routine campus patrol, building security, crime prevention, public assistance, crime investigation and traffic/parking enforcement.

Police Department – Brownsville Campus • 24 hours

(956) 882-8232 – Non Emergency

(956) 882-2222 – Emergency

Police Department – Edinburg Campus • 24 hours

(956) 665-7151

Fire Safety

Fire drills are held periodically and residents must follow the emergency procedures and evacuation plan as posted around the facilities. According to State and Federal law, residents must participate and evacuate in the event of a fire drill. Failure to evacuate residential facilities during a fire drill or once a fire alarm has sounded may result in disciplinary action and a fine. Residents are required to practice safe exit procedures during all fire drills and fire emergencies. Residents must clear the building within three minutes and assemble in a location 150 feet from the building upwind of the building.

- For Heritage/Troxel Residents evacuate toward and under the Bronc Trail.
- For Unity residents evacuate to the Village Apartments parking lot or the Police Department parking lot behind the building.
- For the Village Apartments residents evacuate to the intramural fields or the Unity Hall parking lot.
- For Casa Bella residents evacuate to the volleyball courts, stay away roads within building parking lot(s) as emergency vehicles will need to access these during emergencies.

Health and Safety Inspections

Preventative safety inspections for each resident's room and/or apartment will take place during the semester. The emphasis of these inspections is the verification that students are not actively contributing to any condition that would put their health or safety at risk.

Health & Safety inspections will be scheduled near the mid-semester*. During these inspections, Housing and Residence Life staff will enter a residence and look for items or conditions that might possibly pose a health or safety hazard to students or to resident housing. Areas to be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- Water Leaks/Mold/Mildew
- Sanitary Conditions/Cleanliness Standards
- Alcohol/Illegal Weapons/Drugs
- A/C Filters/Vents
- Smoke Detectors
- Candles/Open Flames/Overloaded Electrical Outlets
- Guest/Pet/Lease Violations
- Other policy issues

**The Department of Housing and Residence Life reserves the right to conduct multiple Health and Safety inspections within a semester.*

Hurricane Evacuation Plan

Hurricane Season: June 1 - November 30

In the event of a hurricane or other disaster, UTRGV has developed a plan for the evacuation of on-campus residents. During check-in, each resident provides information regarding their evacuation plans by selecting one of three evacuation options. Selections made become the official notice of decision on record with the University and are not available for change. Those who requested to be part of the University led evacuation must adhere to ALL requirements listed below. Disregard of these rules will affect your status as a resident and student with UTRGV.

- Only the named resident will be allowed to travel and must be ready to evacuate on the university's timeline.
- Transportation provided by the university will be the only permissible form of travel.
- Residents will only be able to bring one (1) sleeping bag, (1) pillow, and (1) standard aircraft carry-on suitcase. No pets will be allowed.
- Resident must abide by all instructions given by University officials and remain under their direction until the time they arrive back on campus.
- All UTRGV standards of conduct are applicable

When a "Hurricane Watch" is issued:

- Residents will be notified that they will be required to evacuate all university residential facilities if the "Watch" is upgraded to a "Warning". Residents should begin to make arrangements that coincide with their selected evacuation method, whether it is returning to their permanent home, to a friend or relatives home, or participating in the UTRGV-led evacuation.
- Residents should identify and begin packing valuables, emergency equipment, and all necessary/prescribed medications.
- Residents that selected to be participants of the university led evacuation need to look for updates around their residential area regarding specific instructions, meeting times/locations in the event that a warning is issued.

When a “Hurricane Warning” is issued:

- Residents will be alerted to evacuate all residential facilities.
- Residents must follow all directed precautions prior to exiting their respective rooms or apartments.
- Residents will be expected to keep in touch for further updates and instructions on when it is safe to return to campus: either by emergency channel, television, radio, or website.
- Residents should contact their family prior to the storm to advise them of their location and then again shortly after the storm to inform them of their status. It will be easier for students to contact their family than for family to locate them.

Illness or Injury

If student is ill or sustains an injury, they are encouraged to contact the Student Health Center or a member of the Housing and Residence Life staff for assistance. The Housing and Residence Life staff members will contact the proper officials to assist in taking care of their particular need.

Safety Guidelines

The university, and by extension, the Department of Housing and Residence Life, does not assume any liability or responsibility for the loss, theft, or damage to any student’s personal property while in our residential facilities.

The following are mandatory:

- Keep your doors and windows locked at all times. Removal of the window screen or damage to it will result in University sanctions.
- Report lost keys and broken locks to your RA and/or the Housing and Residence Life Office immediately. Lost ID cards should be reported to the VOne Card Office.
- Immediately report persons who behave in a suspicious manner to the UTRGV Police Department:
Brownsville Campus at **956-882-2222** and
Edinburg Campus at **956-665-7151**.
- Thefts, assaults, and health emergencies must be reported to the University Police Department as well as the Housing and Residence Life staff.

The following are suggested:

- We encourage purchasing Renter’s Insurance on all valuables.
- Mark all personal property with your name. This includes your books. Bicycle registration is required through the UTRGV Police Department.

Renter’s Insurance

The cost of attending college can become even more expensive if a student has to replace valuables lost as a result of burglary or natural disasters like hurricanes,

tornadoes, lightning storms and or floods. While no one expects to be burglarized, the risk of personal property loss is real. In residence halls, burglaries are often the result of a student room left unlocked or valuables left unattended, even for a short period of time. To minimize risk, students should always lock room doors and not leave rooms or valuables unattended. The University does not provide insurance for personal property. Students can minimize the financial impact of theft by insuring their personal property. Many homeowner policies cover student belongings, or parents may purchase a rider on their homeowners insurance to insure a student’s belongings while away at school. Check with your insurance provider to see what types of coverage are available.

The Department of Housing and Residence Life encourages each resident to carry renter’s insurance or be covered under a parent’s homeowner insurance policy.

HOUSING & RESIDENCE LIFE JUDICIAL PROCESS

All policies are created and enforced for the safety and respect of the residence life community as a whole. Failure to abide any and all University policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action by the Department of Housing and Residence Life or by Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Student Code of Conduct

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley expects its students to exhibit and maintain a high standard of conduct given the educational nature of our institution. While the Resident Handbook contains information about policies and procedures at UTRGV Residential Halls, the Student Code of Conduct specifically covers information related to appropriate conduct and the process of what happens when students allegedly violate university policies and procedures. For more details about the Student Code of Conduct, including how residents or staff may file an incident report, please visit the Student Rights and Responsibilities web page at **UTRGV.edu/srr**. Residence Life standard of proof in any hearing decision will be preponderance of the evidence.

Student Discipline

The Dean of Students has primary authority and responsibility for the administration of student discipline. The dean works cooperatively with faculty members in the disposition of scholastic violations, with appropriate staff members in the Department of Housing and Residence Life in the disposition of Resident Handbook violations, and with other appropriate staff members in the disposition of other types of violations. All residents are expected to abide by all city, state, and federal laws/statutes, all regulations of the University and University of Texas System, as well as all specific housing policies articulated in the Resident

Handbook. Failure to abide by such laws and rules subjects the student to possible disciplinary action by the University and/or criminal prosecution if warranted. In some situations, a specific act (such as underage consumption of alcohol) could be a violation of state law, University rules, and housing policy.

In the context of suspected rule violations occurring in campus residence halls and apartments, alleged misconduct will be documented and referred to the housing coordinator of that area. Depending on the nature of the allegation and the totality of the circumstances, the housing coordinator may refer the allegation to the assistant director or director, Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and dean of students for resolution or adjudicate the matter through the housing judicial process.

Housing Judicial Process

The Housing Judicial Process involves the student victim and/or alleged misconduct holding an administrative conference with the housing coordinator. In cases that remain in housing for adjudication, the housing coordinator will send the resident an e-mail message that gives the date, time and location, and reason of an administrative conference. The process is designed to provide residents with due process and are considered equivalent methods of resolution for judicial cases. The hall coordinator retain the right to refer a case to assistant director, director or Student Rights and Responsibilities. Failure to attend the scheduled conference or reschedule in advance may result in the case being adjudicated in absentia, or may result in a hold being placed on the student's record through the Office of the Dean of Students. Failure to complete required sanctions may also result in a hold being placed on the student's record. The Department of Housing and Residence Life standard of proof in any conference decision will be preponderance of the evidence.

Administrative Summons

An administrative summons, whether oral or written, is an official request for a student to report to a university official's office. Failure to respond to such request is a violation of the Student Conduct Code and may result in a hold on your records and further disciplinary action.

Administrative Conference

At an administrative conference, the Housing Coordinator or other designee appointed by the Director of Housing Residence Life (hereinafter Judicial Administrator) meets personally with the student accused of misconduct and provides the opportunity for the student to respond to the allegations under consideration. The judicial administrator maintains the right to consider all relevant evidence including, but not limited to, documents, victim, witness statements and/or interviews, as well as hearsay evidence. After completing the investigation, the Judicial Administrator will determine whether the evidence supports

a finding that the student violated the rule(s) under consideration and, if so, what sanction(s) are appropriate. With an administrative conference, the accused student does not retain the right to personally hear all testimony or call witnesses as with the Student Rights and Responsibilities Hearings. If a student fails to attend an administrative conference or disputes the judicial administrator's finding, the judicial administrator will send the student written notice of findings and sanctions when they are issued. A resident has the right to appeal the decision. The Department of Housing and Residence Life standard of proof in any administrative decision will be preponderance of the evidence. All residents are innocent until proven guilty.

Appeal Process

A resident has the right to appeal the decision issued by the judicial administrator. Resident appeals must be submitted in writing to the assistant director of Housing and Residence Life within 48 hours of the decision. If the original judicial administrator was the assistant director of Housing and Residence Life, the appeal should be submitted to the director of Housing and Residence Life. The Director of Housing and Residence Life is the final arbiter in the appeal process for cases resolved by the judicial administrator.

Written appeals should include:

- A short summary of the alleged violation and resulting disciplinary sanction.
- Whether you are appealing the violation, the sanction, or both.
- A short, clear explanation of why you feel you are not responsible for the violation and/or why you feel that the sanction is not appropriate.
- A brief explanation of your desired course of action.

Sanctions

A sanction is an educational measure implemented by the judicial administrator designed to affect a change in behavior and to help the student understand how their behavior impacted others in the community. In addition to the loss of privileges, educational sanctions may be assigned that are reasonably designed to positively impact the student's understanding of the rule under consideration and/or responsibility as a member of the community. Examples of educational sanctions include, but are not limited to, online educational modules, meetings with University staff members, educational/reflection papers, poster assignments, or presentations at hall meetings.

Sample standards for completing an assigned sanction include the following.

Educational paper standard requirements

1. Topic, completion date, and length will be included in the Notice of Sanction e-mail sent by Housing Coordinator.
2. All papers should be in 12 point, Times New Roman font.
3. All papers should have 1 inch margins.
4. All papers should be double-spaced.
5. All papers should be of university caliber (meeting all university standards for a paper).
6. Quality comparable to that of an academic assignment.
7. To university academic honesty standards regarding plagiarism and citing sources.
8. Work should be returned by e-mail as an MS Word document to the contact person identified in Notice of Sanction e-mail.

Poster Assignment

1. Topic and completion date will be included in the Notice of Sanction.
2. Size should be 11" x 8.5".
3. Coordinate with RA for approval and location to be displayed.
4. The Housing Coordinator identified in the Notice of Sanction e-mail must be notified by upon completion.

The student should include the name of their RA in the correspondence. The sanction will not be complete until this is done.

Failure to complete sanctions by due date

- Failure to complete required sanctions may also result in a hold being placed on the student's record.
- Holds will restrict access to university services including libraries and registration.

Additional possible administrative sanctions are outlined below:

- **Reprimand**
 - Verbal or written notice that resident was found in violation of policy/procedure
- **Conditional Probation Status**
 - In effect until sanctions are completed
- **Residence Hall Probation Status**
 - Extends for set period of time and may involve loss of a privilege
- **Forced Room Change**
 - Used in conjunction with Residence Hall Probation and involves relocating resident to another living area
- **Fine/Restitution**
 - Requires resident to pay a pr-established fine for a particular violation and/or repay the amount (including labor costs) of actual damages to university or personal property. The hold on a student's record remains in effect until the student resolves the disciplinary matter.

HOUSING POLICIES

All policies are created and enforced for the safety and respect of the residence life community as a whole. Failure to abide any and all university policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action by the Department of Housing and Residence Life or by Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Abandoned Property

Personal effects and other property of value that has been abandoned and not claimed within 30 days shall be considered abandoned property and may be retained by the department as its property or may be disposed of through sales, donations, or in such a manner as the department in its sole discretion may determine.

Alcohol Policy

At all university residence hall and apartments the possession and/or consumption of alcohol in residence halls, suites, rooms, apartments in which any of the assigned residents are under the legal drinking age is prohibited.

The possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages in university residence halls and apartments will be permitted only in the assigned residence hall rooms or apartment of an assigned resident who is 21 years of age or older under the following conditions:

- All residents of the suite/apartment must be at least 21 years of age or older. Minors, whether residents or nonresidents, are not allowed in rooms when alcoholic beverages are available or consumed.
- Apartments/suites in which an underage individual resides are considered "dry". Alcohol is prohibited in all dry apartments and suites.
- For Residence Halls (Heritage, Troxel and Unity Hall) possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages are limited to the resident's suite, and no more than four 4 guests total may be present.
- For Apartments (The Village and Casa Bella) possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages are limited to the resident's suite/apartment, and no more than five 5 guests total may be present.
- If any minor is found consuming and/or possessing alcohol in the room of legal age residents, ALL alcohol in that room will be disposed of.
- Any alcohol belonging to individuals of legal age that may have been confiscated may be claimed from the housing coordinator once the student conduct proceedings have been completed unless it is determined that the alcohol was being distributed by the legal age resident(s) to minors. In the latter case, disposal of the alcohol will occur.
- Alcohol found in a room where alcohol consumption is prohibited will be disposed of, and ALL persons present

in the room will be subject to disciplinary action. If alcohol bottles or containers appear empty but contain small amounts or alcohol residue, they will be treated as a violation of the alcohol policy.

- Open access to alcohol may be considered to have occurred when bulk or common source alcohol containers are available or when more open containers exist than legal age persons present.
- Alcoholic beverages in transport through public areas must be unopened and bagged while in transit.
- Alcoholic beverages may not be sold or manufactured by anyone in any residential facility, regardless of the individual's age.
- Beer kegs, cases of beer or other alcoholic beverages, or other similar bulk quantities of alcoholic beverages of any type are prohibited and are subject to confiscation. Total amount of alcohol is limited to either 144 oz. of beer, 750 ML of wine OR one liter of 40% alcohol by volume (80 proof) per room/apartment.
- Residents must not participate in drinking habits (including but not limited to drinking games) which are hazardous to the health or education of an individual or those around them.
- Binge drinking is prohibited. The Center for Disease Control reports that binge drinking as the most common pattern of excessive alcohol use in the United States. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking that brings a person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 grams percent or above. This typically happens when men consume 5 or more drinks, and when women consume 4 or more drinks, in about 2 hours.
- The assigned students to the suite/apartment must be present and shall be responsible for ensuring that persons consuming alcoholic beverages are 21 years of age or older, that no one becomes intoxicated, and all present abide by all Housing and Residence Life requirements referencing behavior.
- Alcohol-related conduct that infringes upon the rights of others to a quiet, orderly living environment is not acceptable or permitted.
- Empty alcohol containers will be viewed as evidence of consumption and may subject residents to department disciplinary procedures.
- Empty cartons are not allowed inside a minor's room nor can they be used as storage or moving equipment.

Care of Facilities

Students are responsible for maintaining their rooms in a neat and orderly fashion at all times. "Neat and orderly" includes maintaining an acceptable level of cleanliness and a room free of mold, mildew, trash and debris. Housing and Residence Life, Environmental Health and Safety, and Facilities Services staff may conduct health, fire and

life safety room inspections twice each semester, or more as necessary. Students found in violation will be given a specified amount of time to remedy the situation. Failure to take corrective actions will result in disciplinary action, including a room cleaning fee of \$50 for each resident. Cleaning of private or connecting bathrooms is subject to an additional fee of \$120 (divided by the number of residents using the bathroom).

Entrance Gates Casa Bella (Brownsville, Texas)

Pedestrian Gates – There are three pedestrian gates that allow residents 24-hour access through the use of their key. Please do not allow persons not known to you to enter behind you as you enter the property. Contact University Police or the RA on call if you see someone suspicious entering the property.

Front Drive In Gate – The front drive in gate may be entered by residents by swiping their V1 Card into the entry device. Do not lend your ID out to anyone else! If you lose or forget your ID, you may call the Office of Residential Life. When entering or exiting the gate with your vehicle, please remember to allow the gate to fully open to avoid damaging your vehicle. If you do accidentally strike the gate with your vehicle, please notify the Office of Residential Life and soon as possible.

Cooking Policy

Residents are permitted to use the following in their rooms: heat controlled hot pots, auto shut-off coffee makers without hot plates, refrigerators no larger than 3.1 cubic feet. Heritage and Troxel Hall residents may bring their own refrigerator; Unity Hall residents are provided with a unit. All appliances must be UL Certified (Underwriters Laboratories) and must exhibit the UL Listed tag.

The following appliances, included but not limited to, are not permitted in the residence halls:

- George Foreman Grills, blenders, rice cookers, crock pots, toasters, toaster ovens, hot plates, electric skillets, electric skillet/griddles/wok, or any other appliance with an open heating element, moving sharp edges, deep fryers or other moving/electric parts.

All cooking in apartments must be done in kitchen area. All apartment kitchen appliances must be used as manufacturer intended. Residents are responsible for restitution for any damage done to appliances. No cooking is not allowed in rooms in apartments and it is considered a fire hazard.

**These items will be removed from the student's room without prior consultation with the owner if see/found by the Housing and Residence Life Staff. See Health and Safety Inspections*

**Charcoal may not be kept inside a sleeping room, restroom or apartment.*

Outdoor Cooking Areas

A large barbecue pit is available for use by all students who reside in university-owned housing, but charcoal is not provided. Students are expected to dispose of all trash generated by outdoor cooking activities and assist in keeping areas clean.

- Do not store lighting fluid in your residence hall room or apartment.
- All cooking must be done in the barbecue pit located at student housing.
- The grill must be reserved ahead of time in the front office.
- There is no charge for the use of the barbecue grill.
- Small pits/smokers and any flammable material that you may own cannot be stored in your room or in your vehicle while it is on university property.

Damages and Cleaning

Any damage to common areas, i.e., lounges, lobbies, restrooms, kitchens, living rooms, hallways, elevators, stairwells, lighting units, etc., will be charged to the individual(s) responsible for the damage. If the party responsible is not determined or reported, the charges will be assessed to each resident of the suite, apartment, floor, wing, or the entire complex, whichever is appropriate. Residents are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and are responsible to ensure that their activities do not result in dirty, untidy, or dangerous public areas. Custodians are not required to clean up any mess that is the result of resident negligence. Residents may be assessed the cost of any extra cleaning.

Personal Trash

Students are required to tend to all personal trash in a timely manner. All personal trash is to be taken to the appropriate designated disposal site and not left in undesignated areas. Trash and left over food should not be left in the rooms, hallways, or bathrooms or outside your front door. Charges may be incurred.

Door Propping

Doors should never be propped. This includes room doors, locked doors to hallways, bathroom doors and exterior doors. A disabled lock or the door held open for an unknown person creates a safety risk to all residents. Doing so is a violation of residence hall policy and subject to disciplinary action.

Lock your door! To help maintain the security of your room, students are encouraged to remember to always lock their

room/apartment/suite doors, even if just visiting down the hallway, at all times. Doors found unlock will be locked by housing and residence life staff. Lockout fees may apply if resident needs a lockout.

Propped doors - To insure the safety and security of the buildings and residents, exterior, and room doors are not to be propped open. Students found responsible for propping doors open will be subject to disciplinary action.

Drugs and Paraphernalia

Housing and Residence Life has a zero-tolerance policy towards illicit drugs. Students are prohibited from possessing, consuming, transporting, dealing, being in the presence of, or exhibiting disruptive behavior influenced by the use of such substances. Students are also prohibited from possessing paraphernalia such as bong, hookah pipes, deseeding trays, roach clips, one-hitters, pipes, papers, etc. Anyone found in violation of this policy will be suspended from housing and will be subject to university disciplinary action and possible arrest, imprisonment, or fine according to state and federal laws. If a suspicion of illegal drug use or possession exists, the university reserves the right to enter and search a student's room with or without the student being present; as long as the following condition exists: There is reasonable suspicion, and permission has been granted to do so by the chief housing officer.

**Illegal use, possession, and/or sale of a drug, narcotic, or paraphernalia on the campus of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is prohibited. If a student is found guilty of the illegal use, possession, and/or sale of a drug, narcotic, or paraphernalia on campus, the minimum penalty shall be suspension from the institution for a specified period of time and/or suspension of rights and privileges.*

False Alarm & Fire extinguisher Misuse

Students are prohibited from activating a false fire alarm. Residents will be subject to a \$1,000 pass-through fee for activating a false fire alarm. Additionally, residents shall not disconnect or intentionally damage any smoke detector, water sprinkler, or any other firefighting equipment in the residential facilities. Residents will be subject to damage costs, civil penalties, and attorney's fees under Section 92.611 of The Texas Property Code for failure to comply with the foregoing notice.

Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors are located in each resident's room. Do not cover or hang items from them. Smoke detector malfunctions should be reported immediately. Submit a Maintenance Request if unit need to be serviced. Tampering, deactivating, or covering a smoke detector will result in a \$100 fine per resident and referral through judicial process.

Fire and Life Safety Violations

Tampering with fire life safety equipment is considered a Class A misdemeanor subject to fines and imprisonment. At a minimum, students found responsible for tampering with fire and life safety equipment or students found in violation of fire and life safety policies are subject to the penalties listed in the table below. This includes legal action as well as disciplinary action by the University. Residents who receive a fine for a first-time fire safety violation may have the fine waived if they attend a fire safety course through Environmental Health and Safety. This option is not available in cases of tampering or vandalism to fire safety equipment, arson, setting off a false alarm, or discharging of fireworks (including poppers) or explosives. Subsequent violations of policies beyond the first violation will result in the resident being referred for University

disciplinary action, including possible removal from the halls or apartments. Tenant shall not disconnect or intentionally damage a smoke detector or remove the battery from a smoke detector without immediately replacing it with a working battery. Tenant may be subject to damages, civil penalties, and attorneys' fees under Section 92.2611 of the Texas Property Code for not complying with the foregoing notice.

NOTE: State laws, amended in 2001, upgrade the penalty for discharging fireworks and explosives within educational facilities, assemblies and residence hall occupancies from a misdemeanor to a state jail felony offense. Any student found discharging fireworks or explosives is subject to university disciplinary action, fines, and criminal prosecution (including jail time).

VIOLATION (This list does not include damage costs, which will be additional.)	PENALTY
Setting off a false alarm	Minimum of \$1,000
Discharging fireworks, explosives, weapons or other devices that could inflict harm, damage physical property and/or result in disturbance	\$500
Obstruction of fire sprinkler system. Includes hanging items from sprinkler head or obstructing proper operation of sprinkler system. Examples include placing or storing items within 18 inches of sprinkler head (including sprinkler heads in closet), and covering or hanging items from sprinkler	\$100 plus damage costs
Or hanging items from soffit (sprinkler pipe covering) or placing items on top of soffit.	\$25
Tampering with fire safety and sprinkler equipment (including but not limited to smoke detectors, sprinkler system valves, fire extinguishers, fire hoses, alarm horns, fire doors, door closers, exit and safety-related signage or activating sprinkler head).	\$100 plus damage costs
Having an open flame or use of open flame devices within the residence hall or within immediate surroundings outside any residence hall (except outdoor smoking and grilling).	Minimum of \$100 plus damage costs
Failure to evacuate during a fire alarm	\$50
Possession of banned objects including prohibited appliances, candles, incense, electrical extensions, explosives, fireworks (including poppers), weapons, halogen lamps in excess of 120 watts, neon lights and other prohibited lighting under lighting policy. Toasters and toaster ovens, which are permitted for professional live-in staff, are prohibited for resident use.	\$50 per item
Smoking indoors or in other designated no-smoking areas	\$50
Obstructing a route of fire egress including trash, debris and other physical barriers to egress from room, hallway or stairwell	\$50
Covering evacuation diagram or excessive wall coverings (more than 20% of wall space)	Verbal warning first offense; \$25 for each subsequent offense.

HOUSING POLICIES

Firearms & Prohibited Weapons

The possession of a firearm: Except for license holders who may carry a concealed handgun or store their handguns in personal vehicles in compliance with this policy and applicable state and federal law, the possession of a weapon by an individual anywhere on any UTRGV campus is strictly prohibited. All persons, including license holders, are prohibited from openly carrying a handgun or other firearm on any UTRGV campus. The prohibition on weapons and the open carry of firearms includes any public driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area on any UTRGV campus.

The Possession of Illegal knife or prohibited weapon on the grounds of an educational institution is a third-degree felony in Texas. You should always follow safety protocols if you see an armed individual. The following weapons are prohibited: firearms, explosive weapons, machine guns, short-barreled firearms, firearm silencer, switchblade knives, knuckles, armor-piercing ammunition, chemical dispensing devices (an item considered other than Oleoresin Capsicum), zip gun, club or night stick, and illegal knives. In addition to state law, The University of Texas institutional rules prohibit the possession, display, or use of facsimile/fake firearms on the campus without the written permission of the Office of Dean of Students.

**The possession of commercially available and legally allowed pepper spray must be 10% and lower, for defensive purposes option, of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) in our facilities. The unlawful use of OC spray for offensive purposes would be considered an Assault under Texas Law.*

Residential Facilities, Exclusion Zones, and Storage of Handguns

1. Concealed handguns are prohibited in areas of UTRGV residential facilities that do not provide sufficient space solely under a resident's control to permit the safe storage of a handgun (such as dormitories designed for shared living in the same room), including Unity Hall, Heritage Hall, and Troxell Hall in Edinburg; and double-occupancy rooms designed for shared living at the Casa Bella Apartments in Brownsville.
2. Concealed handguns are permitted in areas of UTRGV residential facilities that allow for sufficient space solely under a resident's control to permit the safe storage of handguns, including single private rooms at the Casa Bella Apartments in Brownsville and at the Village Apartments in Edinburg.
3. A license holder who resides in a UTRGV residential facility may carry a concealed handgun into the facility and may store the weapon in his or her private residential room, except when the facility hosts summer camps attended by minors. A license holder who brings a concealed handgun into a UTRGV residential facility

pursuant to this policy must carry the handgun on his or her person at all times or store the handgun in his or her private residential room.

4. A license holder who is a resident in a UTRGV residential facility may not intentionally or knowingly display a handgun in plain view of another person in campus housing except as necessary to properly store the handgun in his or her private residential room.
5. Residents in residential facilities permitting concealed handguns are required to provide their own handgun safe meeting or exceeding UTRGV specifications at their own expense, and to abide by any other safety requirements established as a condition of living in UTRGV residential facilities. License holders who reside in residential facilities where safe storage is allowed or who are staff whose employment responsibilities require them to reside in university housing must store their handguns either in a locked, privately owned or leased motor vehicle or in a gun safe that meets the requirements determined by UTRGV. Resident license holders are also responsible for ensuring that their guests comply with all rules and regulations.

For more information visit utrgv.edu/campuscarry.

Flammable Materials & Explosives

Residents are prohibited from possession or use of fireworks, gasoline, explosives, or any other flammable or hazardous materials, including charcoal. The possession or use of such materials is contrary to state law and University policies. Clothing irons, curling irons, and hair straighteners may only be used in rooms if they have an automatic shutoff.

Furniture

No University property, including room and lounge furnishings, may be moved from its original space within the building.

**Furniture is not allowed in any walkway/hallway.*

Hazing

Hazing is strictly prohibited! Hazing is "any intentional knowing or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed at a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of the student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization whose members are or include students at an educational institution." (Texas Education Code, Sections 51.936 through 4.50).

Hoverboard

Motorized scooters or motorized personal transportation devices, including hoverboards, are prohibited from being stored and/or charged inside any University Housing due to a potential fire hazard.

Identification

Student must carry their VOneCard (student ID) at all times. Students may not loan their VOneCard to any other person. All persons, including residents, must identify themselves when asked to do so by the Housing and Residence Life staff or other University officials. For residents, your UTRGV VOneCard is required. For nonresident guests and students, the only acceptable forms of ID are: VOneCard, a photo ID issued by a U.S. state, the U.S. federal government, or an international government.

Interim Suspension

The University reserves the right to issue an Interim Suspension to students who pose a risk to the health, safety, or welfare of any student, employee, or guest or for violations of the Resident Handbook or Student Code of Conduct. Interim Suspensions would temporarily remove, for a specified period of time, a resident's access to their room, apartment, lobbies and Housing and Residence Life facilities. Interim suspension may be issued by the Chief Housing Officer at their discretion. When a notice of Interim Suspension is given, room keys and mailbox keys will be immediately confiscated by the Housing and Residence Life Staff. Students may not return to Housing and Residence Life facilities or their room without the permission of Housing and Residence Life or Student Rights and Responsibilities during the interim suspension period.

Keys

All residents are issued keys for their room and mailbox. Under no circumstances should residents loan out or give their keys to others. Residents will be held responsible for any and all losses and/or actions resulting from misuse of their keys. Students CANNOT have university keys duplicated or locks altered. Any evidence of such will result in immediate disciplinary action. Residents must immediately report the loss of keys to the RA on duty. The resident losing the key must fill out a key replacement form and pay the replacement fee of \$50 per key. Once a lock or key change request has been initiated and approved, it cannot be rescinded. All residents, when checking out permanently, must turn keys into the Housing and Residence Life office or be assessed a penalty.

Damaged keys, broken keys, or key reprogramming (Casa Bella)

NO CHARGE WILL BE INCURRED to the student as long as the damaged, broken or non-valid key is presented at the time of request. A \$30 charge will be assessed for all defaced or otherwise unusable keys.

Loitering

Definition: Loitering is the act of remaining in a particular public place for a protracted time without an apparent purpose. Under certain circumstances, it is illegal in various jurisdictions.

Loitering is not permitted. Failure to comply with a request to leave will result in the staff calling the UTRGV Police Department.

Mandatory Meetings

Several times throughout the course of the academic year, important meetings are called by the RA, housing coordinator, or director of Housing and Residence Life and held to collect or to disseminate vital information. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory. Failure to attend these meetings can result in disciplinary actions.

Missing Students & Students of Concern

The purpose of this policy is to create a protocol for reporting and the subsequent procedures for responding to a report that a residential student at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is missing and to comply with the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

All residents, RAs, and OAs are required to report to Residence Life staff if they have not seen their roommate(s) and/or student in 24 hours. All residents are required to designate a person to contact in the event they are classified as missing. This contact will be kept confidential and only accessible to authorized campus officials and will only be disclosed to law enforcement personnel for investigative or notification purposes. Custodial parents or guardians will be contacted within 24 hours of a student being classified as missing, if the student is an un-emancipated minor.

Many missing person reports in the university environment result from someone changing their normal routine and failing to inform others of this change. Students can take a proactive role in supporting the Missing Persons Notification Procedure by:

- Keeping emergency contact information up to date on a semester basis with your institution
- Updating friends and family members with changes to email, cell and other contact information
- Making sure that a roommate, designated friend, and/or family member knows how to reach you and what your routine is
- Establishing a habit of "checking in" with family and friends on a regular basis

**If you are concerned for the wellbeing of a resident/student you can also complete a report under VAQUERO CARE – Report It page.*

Network Connection Misuse

The following are violations of the rules and guidelines governing the use of network connections and will result in University disciplinary action as well as criminal charges:

- The use of any network port for monetary gain, to run or promote a business, or to otherwise profit
- Modifying or tampering with network services, wiring, or ports.
- The use of peer-to-peer or other file-sharing programs to download copyrighted music, TV programs, movies, other video, or software is in violation of software copyright laws and is considered stealing.
- Participation in other copyright infringement through the network. Copyrighted materials including, but not limited to, computer software, audio and video recordings, photographs, and written material.
- Extending the network beyond the single network outlet by using a router, bridge, hub, remote access server, tunneling NETBIOS, or proxy, and/or engaging in file sharing activities
- Attempting to access restricted data or breach any security measures in place on any computer system.
- Use of network ports by nonresidents in rooms, apartments, or common areas.
- Sending harassing messages through email, social networking sites, instant messaging services, or other messaging services, on or off campus.
- Use of network to engage in any other criminal activity.

Parking

All residents get a resident parking pass that allows you to park at residents parking lots. If students wish to park at student parking lots, they need to purchase an additional student parking permit.

Misuse of a parking pass (loaning it to a nonresident, selling it, transferring it to another person, etc.) is not permitted and will result in university disciplinary proceedings against the person to whom the pass was initially issued. Parking for residents is available in spaces marked with “resident” or “tenant” in parking lots. It is the resident’s responsibility to acquire a parking permit from the University Police Department and to display that permit properly before using these parking spaces. The parking pass must be returned when the resident checks out of the residence hall or apartments.

Housing and Residence Life reserves the right to remove at the owner’s expense any public nuisance vehicle or one that is not parked in accordance with the regulations. The University assumes no responsibility for the care and/or protection of any vehicle or its contents while the vehicle is operated or parked on campus. Every effort will be made by the police department to protect all vehicles and property. All residents must adhere to all traffic signs, speed limits and

speed bumps within Resident parking lots.

Visitor’s and overnight visitors must go to Parking Services to receive a temporary permit. Failure to get a temporary permit may result in the visitor’s vehicle receiving a ticket.

Bicycles

All bicycles parked on campus must display a UTRGV bicycle parking permit. Any permit that becomes illegible must be replaced. Damaged bicycle permits will be replaced at no charge. You can register your bicycle at the University Police Parking Services Office or online: All bicycles must be parked, locked and stored in the designated Bicycle racks areas ONLY. Bicycles parked in a manner that creates a safety hazard or are secured to trees and landscaping, sign posts, parking meter posts or light poles will be immobilized or impounded. Bicycle security devices may be removed by whatever means necessary to impound the bicycle.

Personal and Disorderly Conduct

Each student is considered an adult and is expected to behave in a civil and responsible manner. Students must comply with all rules and regulations as set forth in this handbook, Reservation/Lease Agreement, Student Housing Contract and the UTRGV Student Code of Conduct, the University Catalog and UTRGV Handbook of Operating Procedures, as well as all local, state, and federal laws.

Residents and their guests should conduct themselves in such a fashion as is fitting of community living and show due consideration and respect to neighbors. Inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior is defined as any behavior, verbal or physical, which disrupts or is detrimental to the environment and/or its occupants. Such behavior may include, but is not limited to, lewd or offensive comments and/or behavior, use of profanity, shouting or loud noise, pranks, damage or destruction of personal or university property, creation and/or contribution to situations which may be harmful or otherwise detrimental to others, and/or aggressive behavior. Residents are obligated to remove themselves from any situation where a violation is occurring. Residents present during a violation of Resident Handbook and/or the Student Code of Conduct could be held responsible for that violation.

Conduct which is disorderly, lewd, indecent, or a disturbance of the peace on university premises or at university-sponsored activities will be confronted by the Housing and Residence Life staff and may be addressed through the student conduct process.

Pets

No pets are allowed. In addition to sanctions for policy violations, additional charges for cleaning and damages may be assessed. Fish are the only pets permitted in university housing and are limited to a 10-gallon maximum tank.

Quiet Hours

Students are required to abide by all Quiet Hours. It is important to maintain a living and learning environment conducive to sleep and study. In order to facilitate this, Quiet Hours have been designated during which stereos, televisions, other sound-making devices and residents themselves should not be loud enough to disturb other residents.

All Facilities Sunday – Thursday 10:00 p.m – 10:00 a.m.

Quiet Hours for all residential facilities:

Facility Name	Days	Times
Casa Bella Apartments	Friday and Saturday	12:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Heritage & Troxel Hall	Friday and Saturday	12:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Unity Hall	Friday and Saturday	12:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
The Village Apartments	Friday and Saturday	12:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Quiet Hour violations, resulting from excessive noise, and may result in disciplinary action.

Pranks

Pranks are considered a serious offense to community living. Individuals/group activities that result in disturbances or distress to other, or that cause damage or destruction to property are prohibited. Residents who participate in pranks are subject to disciplinary action.

Students are expected to respect “Courtesy Hours” 24 hours a day. Residents should show courtesy to all residents and maintain appropriate levels of noise at all times throughout the day. During Finals Week all residence halls and apartments maintain 24 hour Quiet Hours. Items used for the sole purpose of making noise such as musical instruments, air horns, whistles, other items shall not be used within the residential community.

Recycling

In an effort to be more environmentally responsible the university has placed blue recycle bins around campus. These bins can take paper, plastic, cans, and cardboard. All students are encouraged to do their part and place items in the appropriate recycle bins. Misused of recycle bins may result in disciplinary actions.

Removal Policy (Administrative Removal Policy)

Vacate and Removal from campus housing may occur due to, but not limited to, failure to pay housing or other charges when due, incomplete contract, lack of deposit, failure to be enrolled, violations of any university policy, and/or academic or disciplinary suspension from the university. Students removed due to a disciplinary matter or failure to pay one’s university account will receive no refund or reduction of housing or meal charges and will forfeit the housing deposit, and will also still be responsible for termination fee for breach of contract.

The following is a partial list of violations for which exclusion or removal may result. This list is not all inclusive, but rather is intended to give some examples of serious violations:

- Possession or use of dangerous weapons/substances including guns, knives, explosives or flammable materials.
- Possession or use of illegal drugs or bulk alcohol.
- Tampering with fire safety equipment.
- Physical abuse of others or self, including assault, sexual assault, or suicide attempts.
- Threats of violence to others or self, including physical threats, sexual harassment, or suicide threats.
- Throwing or dropping objects from or at a building.
- Repeated violation of policies or regulations.

Room Search and Seizure

The university understands a student’s desire for privacy and will do all it can to protect this privacy. It is, however, occasionally necessary for the university to exercise its contractual right to room entry. Established procedures are designed to ensure reasonable, restrained use of the right of entry. Reasons rooms may be entered include but are not limited to:

- When a known emergency exists.
- When there is evidence that a possible emergency or violation of university regulations exists.
- For non-routine or routine maintenance.
- For fire and safety check.

A member of the Housing and Residence Life will first knock and announce who is to be entering. When residents are present, they must open the door after staff members have

identified themselves. The room will usually be searched by a housing coordinator and/or resident assistant. Only items which are specifically prohibited or which pose immediate danger to the health and safety of the residents will be removed from the student's room without prior consultation with the owner.

******All door(s) will be locked after each entry.***

Room & Apartment Decorations

All decorations should be of a temporary nature so as not to permanently deface or damage the rooms finish.

- No nails, tacks, or screws may be used in rooms.
- No items may be taped outside the front Doors of The Village Apartment and Casa Bella Apartments.
- All room decorations must be placed on the walls at least 18" from the ceiling.
- New draperies, curtains, and other similar loosely hanging furnishings and decorations shall be flame resistant as demonstrated by testing in accordance with NFPA 701, Standard Methods of Fire Tests for Flame Propagation of Textiles and Films. (NFPA 101 LSC, 2012, Chapter 28.7.6.1)
- Residents are not allowed to paint rooms.
- Students are prohibited from removing or altering portions of any university furnishing assigned to a room, such as bed frames, desks, shelves, bulletin boards, mini- blinds, etc.
- Banners, flags, and aluminum foil are not permitted on any window(s). Window coverings are provided for each room and they are the only window coverings to be visible from the exterior of the building.
- Doors/windows can only have 25% of its surface areas decorated.
- Obscene material, including but not limited to pornographic literature, drawings, print, or photographic materials, X-rated movies, and displays of profanity or other offensive language, as well as references to drugs or drug paraphernalia may not be displayed.
- Candles, potpourri burners, and incense are fire hazards and are prohibited. The lighting and burning of flame-producing mixtures is also prohibited.
- Halogen lamps and string lights are not allowed.
- Appliances with exposed heating elements, electrical cords without surge protection.
- Water furniture is not permitted.
- Carpet may be placed on the floor, but carpet tape or other adhesives cannot be used to hold the carpet down.

- Residents possessing street signs or other public signs are considered to be in possession of stolen property. These and similar items are not permitted in university housing, and if found will be confiscated.
- Rubber backed carpet is not allowed due to the toxic fumes emitted in the event of a fire.
- Homemade or purchased loft systems are not permitted in the residence halls. Residents in double rooms may bunk their beds with the approved hardware supplied by Residential Life. No objects may be hung across the doorway or window openings.

Students are encouraged to use good judgment in attaching materials to walls as they assume full responsibility for cleaning, removing, and repairing all marks on walls or surfaces. Payment for repairs caused by damage from room decorating will come from the room deposit and may result in additional fees.

******The Housing and Residence Life Staff will confiscate any of the following items.***

******Damages caused to the room/apartment by decorations will be billed to the student's account at their expense.***

Vacate Procedures

- Housing and Residence Life staff will contact the resident in an attempt to resolve the difficulties. If not contact or no mutuality agreeable arrangement can be reached within 24 hours, an administrator will prepare an issue notice to vacate.
- If at the end of this period the resident has not responded, the administrator prepares a, "notice to vacate for breach agreement and demand for possession." A residence hall staff person will deliver the notice (delivery will be attempted in person, but failing that, placement upon the resident's bed will serve to effect notice). The resident will be given 12 hours from the date of delivery to vacate. Residents removed from the halls pursuant to a notice to vacate will be charged a \$1000 contract termination fee. After the notice to vacate has been served, should the resident's behavior disrupt community standards, the resident's departure may be accelerated.
- If at the end of 12 hours the resident has not complied, he or she will be locked out of the space and charged expenses incurred by the university.
- If the former resident's personal belongings are not claimed during normal business hours within 3 days after the lock out, the items will be removed and stored for 30 days at the former residence expense so that the space may be reassigned. If the space requires cleaning, additional charges will be assessed.

- The former resident is given the opportunity to claim his or her personal belongings within a 30-day period during normal business hours. After 30 days, these items are considered abandoned and will result in disposal. This process does not limit Housing and Residence Life from implementing an interim suspension, which will result in the immediate removal of a resident who is considered to be an imminent threat to him-self or her-self or others, pending an expedited hearing.

Residents are required to make room and board payments on time and in the appropriate amounts, according to their contract and their choice of room and board payment plans as indicated in the contract. Failure to make the appropriate payments by the due dates will subject students to having their meal plan cancelled and/or being evicted from the residence hall/apartment. Locks may also be changed to prevent a student who is delinquent in payments from reentering the room. If such a lock change is made on a double occupancy, room the roommate of the delinquent resident should see the hall coordinator for a new key. The roommate should not cooperate with the delinquent resident in allowing him/her to continue to reside in the residence hall/apartment. Any resident aiding a student who has been locked out or evicted by the university will be subject to disciplinary actions and possibly eviction.

Sports in the Halls

Sports should be played in designed recreational areas and facilities. Residents may not engage in sports or sports-related activities within residence hall rooms, lounges or other public areas.

Sports include, but are not limited to, playing Frisbee, rollerblading, skateboarding, tossing balls and/or wrestling. Playing sports in confined areas such as rooms and hallways can lead to student injury, activation of sprinkler system, and/or damage to personal and university property. Residents who play sports inside the residence halls are subject to disciplinary action.

Smoking (& Tobacco Products) *Smoke Free Campus*

All forms of tobacco including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks and electronic cigarettes, in all residential facilities (including Village Apartments) is prohibited and includes lobbies, courtyards, offices, rooms, bathrooms, hallways, stairwells, and balconies.

Solicitation & Postings

Soliciting in and around all residential facilities is prohibited. This includes pyramid or joint marketing operations. Residents are restricted from using the assigned space for commercial use. Postings must be approved by the Housing Coordinator, are limited to designated areas, and must be posted by the Housing and Residence Life staff members

only. Campaign posters for offices in campus organizations are limited in size to one 24"x36" poster per candidate to be posted by the Housing and Residence Life staff members after approval from the HC for the building. Similarly, organizations wishing to chalk sidewalks must obtain HC approval and limit their chalking to the HC designated area.

Unauthorized Entry

Certain areas around or within residential facilities are off limits to residents. Restricted areas include mechanical rooms, custodial closets, roofs, and locked areas. Other prohibited entry points include balconies and ledges as well as exiting/entering through emergency exits during non-emergencies. All ADA entrances into the residence halls are for approved resident use only. All guests of residents approved to use ADA entrances must be registered at the front desk prior to entry. Any students climbing over exterior fencing or using emergency exits during non-emergency situations will be referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

The balconies at Casa Bella Apartments are a great amenity and can allow for a unique interaction among residents. No personal items or university owned furniture may be stored on the balconies at any time. Cooking and horseplay on the balconies is strictly prohibited. Students are also reminded that the balcony may not be used as an entrance/exit from the room. No smoking in balconies.

Use of University Resources & Vandalism

Use of University resources for profit, crime, harassment, illegal or unethical activity is prohibited. Students who engage in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action. Vandalism of any UTRGV property is prohibited. Students who vandalize property by damage or defacement must pay for the repairs and will be subject to further disciplinary action.

Windows and Screens

For reasons of safety and security, windows in buildings are not to be opened unless authorized by a resident assistant or hall coordinator. The heating and air conditioning is designed to operate at efficient levels with all windows closed. Window screens may not be removed. Removal and replacement of screens is often dangerous, and a charge will be assessed for reinstallation or replacement. Throwing things out of windows or using your window for an entry or exit from your room will result in referral through the disciplinary process with possible removal from the residence halls and apartments. Opening windows is a safety and security risk. A \$50 fine will be assessed for windows opened in violation of this policy. Residents found in violation of the window and screens procedure are subject to disciplinary action.

VISITATION POLICIES

Guest Defined

A “guest” is any person, including another student, who is visiting a room to which they are not assigned. Guests include family members such as parents and siblings.

Residential Facilities Day Guests -The host is responsible for informing their guest(s) of the university’s rules and regulations, and the resident host is held accountable for the actions and conduct of the guest(s).

For the safety of our residents, all outside guest(s) must be registered per the producers established by each facility.

The Village at Edinburg Apartments

Call RA on Call to register guest(s).

Casa Bella Apartments

Guest register at Clubhouse

Heritage, Troxel and Unity Hall

Guest register at Front Desk of Buildings

NO EXCEPTIONS, NO EXCUSES WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR NOT FOLLOWING THIS PROCEDURE.

Your guest must be escorted at all times. You must be with your guest at all times, including the pool area. Guests cannot remain in your room without assigned resident being present.

The following apply to Heritage/Troxel, Unity, and The Village Apartments:

- Guest can only visit during visiting hours from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 a.m. daily.
- No more than 4 guests per resident are permitted (up to a max. of 8 total guests per suite/apartment at a time).
- Guests under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

The following apply to Casa Bella Apartments:

- Guest can only visit during visiting hours from Sunday-Saturday from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 a.m.
- No more than 3 guests per resident are permitted (up to a max. of 10 total guests per suite/apartment at a time).
- Guests under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

The following apply to Heritage/Troxel and Unity Hall:

- Guests will enter and exit through the main building entrance.
- Resident host must register their guest at the lobby office.
- Each guest must leave a government issued photo ID (or a VOne card) that conforms to the Identification Policy with the OA/RA on duty at the lobby office.
- The host is required to accompany their guest at all times.

- At 1 a.m., guests must be accompanied by their host to the residence hall lobby, where continued visitation may occur. Guests must remain in the lobby during their visit with their host at all times. Guests will be asked to leave the building if not accompanied with their host and/or attempting to leave the lobby area.
- During visitation, guests and/or residents are not permitted to sleep in the lobby area. Loitering is not permitted

Overnight Guests: Residential Facilities

(Heritage/Troxel, Unity & Village Apartments, Casa Bella)

- All overnight guests must be of the same gender as the resident host.
- All overnight guests must be over the age of 18.
- Roommate consent must be obtained.
- Residents requesting to have an overnight guest stay within the residence halls and apartments must fill out an overnight guest request form.
- Completed forms must be submitted to the front desk by 1 AM of the night of the requested stay.
- The cost for a nonresident overnight guest is \$11/night.
- All overnight guests must check-out by noon the following day or incur an additional nights charge.
- Residents are limited to one guest per night for no more than three nights in a 30 day span of calendar days.
- Repeated violations of the overnight guest policy could result in loss of visitation privileges.

Cohabitation Prohibited

Cohabitation is not allowed in the residence halls. Cohabitation is defined as a person using a residence hall room as if that person were living in the room but not actually being assigned as a resident of that room/suite. Examples of this may include, but are not limited to, being in the space when the resident host is absent, keeping clothing and other personal belongings in the room/suite, and sleeping overnight in the room/suite on a regular basis and using the bathroom and shower facilities as if they lived in that room/suite. Violating a roommate’s right of entry into their room or hindering a roommate’s ability to study and/or sleep within their room because of a guest’s continual presence, is considered a violation of this rule. Disciplinary action will be taken against any resident and guest.



HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE SERVICES

Cable Services

On-campus housing has cable service provided by Direct TV in Edinburg, Texas and Time Warner in Brownsville, Texas. Residents will need to provide the cable wire from the wall to the TV and students are not allowed to install any additional television equipment including but not limited to personal satellite dishes.

Guest Housing

Guest Housing is available for short-term stays with 48 hours' notice based on availability. Requests for Guest Housing must be in writing. Guest and must be paid in advance. Guests are required to provide their own bedding and toiletries. For room rates and availability, contact Housing and Residence Life at (956) 665-3439.

Internet

Wireless internet and Ethernet connections can be found in all residential areas. Students using the wireless network must have their laptops/computers configured by the IT Department to obtain access to the network. Routers and bridges are not permitted.

Laundry service & Vending Machines

Laundry facilities and vending machines are provided for the convenience of the residents. If any of the equipment is inoperable, please report to RA on-call our building coordinator.

****Abuse or misuse of equipment may result in disciplinary actions.*

Lockouts

A resident locked out of his or her room/apartment should contact the RA on duty for their respective building at the time of the lockout. A lock out fee will be assessed, and a Room Lockout form must be completed. All residents will get their first lockout fee for the year waived (free), each additional lockout following is \$20. Photo ID must be presented to the Housing and Residence Life staff at the time of the lockout.

**All door(s) will be locked after each room entry.*

Mail

Mail service is provided directly to each residential facility. Campus mail comes from the U.S. Postal Service, and is suspended during extended breaks. Please do not keep anything of value inside your mailbox (i.e., room key, jewelry, etc.). The university will not be responsible for any lost or damaged items. To ensure proper and timely delivery use the following format:

Resident's Name

Heritage Hall
Rm # _____
410 N. Sugar Rd.
Edinburg, TX 78541

Resident's Name

Troxell Hall
Rm # _____
424 N. Sugar Rd.
Edinburg, TX 78541

Resident's Name

Unity Hall
Rm # _____
509 N. Sugar Rd.
Edinburg, TX 78541

Resident's Name

Village Apartments
Rm # _____
603 N. Sugar Rd.
Edinburg, TX 78541

Resident's Name

Casa Bella Apartments
2651 FJRM Ave Apt. # _____
Brownsville, TX 78520

Packages

Residents have the opportunity to receive packages to their facility throughout the academic year. Residential halls do not receive packages during summer or holiday closing. When a package is received, it must be addressed to the resident's name if not it will be returned to sender.

At our Village Apartments, the resident must be present when packages are delivered to their apartment door. Housing and Residence Life does not accept packages in the halls for residents who live in the apartments. For Casa Bella Residents, all mail must be picked up at Clubhouse during office hours.

Packages not picked up within five 5 business days will be returned to sender.



DAMAGE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY OR INJURIES

University Liability & Resident Responsibility

In the event of a theft, HRL should be contacted immediately and the incident also reported to your resident assistant. HRL will not consider any claims resulting from theft. You should work with UTRGV Police Department for resolution.

The university and Residence Life are not responsible for loss or damages to personal property by theft, fire, or other casualty, whether such losses occur in your room, public areas, or elsewhere in the residence hall. The University and Residence Life do not assume any liability for personal injury or personal property damage resulting from mechanical failure of the water, gas or electrical system; or for negligence by building occupants.

The university and Residence Life are not responsible for loss or damage to personal property as a result of fumigation or pest control. If you wish to protect yourself from the possibility of such losses or injury, it is your responsibility to secure an insurance policy that will meet your individual needs.

Communicable Diseases

Students living in the residence halls who are diagnosed with a communicable disease such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, mononucleosis, Ebola, SARS or any other communicable disease which prove to be a health threat to other residents may be relocated to an alternate room on campus until such a time when it is determined the student is no longer be contagious. The HRL staff will maintain the privacy of any student who has knowledge of testing positive for any communicable diseases. To make arrangements to temporarily relocate due to having a communicable disease, contact your HRL staff.

DISCLAIMER

The Resident Handbook is not all encompassing and may not account for all situations or changes in laws that may arise in the course of operations during the academic year. The Department of Housing and Residence Life reserves the right to amend or add to the Resident Handbook at their discretion. The chief housing officer will interpret and make administrative decisions as needed to this handbook to continue residential operations and services to students.

MAINTENANCE

If there is a regular maintenance issue in your room/suite/apartment, you must submit a work order request online. Before submitting your request, please check with your roommates/suitemates to determine if they have already submitted the issue, and further check the submissions to see if another person has submitted the request.

Enter as much information as you can into the form to ensure timely and accurate repairs. For example, if the overhead room light is out in your room, do not simply enter "light out". Be as specific as possible regarding the issue. This submission form is for regular maintenance issues only, such as a light out, temperature control issue, minor pest issues, leaky faucets, etc.

Any maintenance issue that constitutes an immediate threat to property or persons (broken water pipe, live exposed wiring, major pest infestation), please contact your RA immediately to have them institute emergency maintenance procedures.

If your maintenance request issues are not addressed within 24 hours, please do not hesitate to contact your housing coordinator, RA on-call or the main administrative offices via email at home@utrgv.edu.

HOUSING & RESIDENCE LIFE OFFICES

Edinburg Campus:

University Center, Rm. 305

Phone: (956) 665-3439 | Fax: (956) 665-5055

Email: home@utrgv.edu

Mailing: The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

ATTN: Housing and Residence Life

University Center, Rm. 305

1201 W. University Drive

Edinburg, TX 78539

Brownsville Campus:

Casa Bella, Clubhouse

Phone: (956) 882-7191 | Fax: (956) 882-6809

Email: home@utrgv.edu

Mailing: The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

ATTN: Housing and Residence Life

2651 FJRM Ave

Brownsville, TX 78520

Residence LIFE

UTRGV™

 /housing |  @utrgvhousing |  utrgvhousing