

## RESIDENTIAL LIFE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As a four-year residential college, Converse strives to create a living environment that is safe, secure, and clean where students are best able to work, study and sleep in one's assigned residence. It is expected that students live in community with minimal interference from excessive noise, disrespect, or negative behaviors by peers and/or guests. It is believed that residents have the right to free expression but that expression does not include the right to harass, threaten, injure or silence others. As such, by living in the Converse community, students are expected to abide by the following residential policies:

### RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

Converse College is a residential college and views on-campus living as an integral part of the educational experience. All undergraduate students, under the age of 24, must reside in college residence halls unless they make their home with their parents/legal guardian in their permanent residence within a 35 mile radius of the college. Also, students with custodial children residing with them and/or students who are married may reside off-campus, and must submit in writing to the Dean for Community Life a request for a waiver from this policy. Students who are married may continue to reside in Converse College residence halls; however, marital status does not change the visitation policy and spouses are subject to the standard visitation policy requirements. If Converse students marry each other, they may not reside together in on-campus housing. Students living in college residence halls must be full-time students. Infractions of the residency requirement policy will be handled by the Dean for Community Life. Students found in violation of this policy may be charged College room and board fees.

### Housing Assignments

A nonrefundable annual deposit of \$300 must be paid to the College before a student will be assigned a room. This fee applies to new, entering students, as well as to students currently enrolled who plan to return the next year. The fee is due in the Spring of each year. Reminders are sent to all students via email.

- a) *Room Selection*—New students are assigned to College housing prior to their arrival on campus. New students receive notification of housing assignments and roommates as soon as that information is available. Room selection for returning students takes place in the spring of each year through a lottery system. Students may not participate in room selection until their annual deposit is paid. Each student's priority number for choosing a room is determined by social and class standing utilizing a computer generated lottery number program. Traditional undergraduate students will participate in Spring Room Selection. Housing for graduate students and Converse II students is based upon availability.
- b) *Private Rooms*—Any student occupying a double room by herself will be assessed \$1000 per academic year in addition to room and board. This includes any student whose roommate moves out or who is otherwise left in a room alone and who does not make arrangements to find another roommate. Students will be permitted 2 weeks to find a roommate before super-single fines are assessed. The student is responsible for finding another roommate. If the student occupies a room alone for less than a full academic year, the fee will be charged on a pro-rated basis. Exceptions are made when extenuating circumstances exist such as when an uneven number of students makes no roommate available. Double rooms used as singles (super singles) are allowed only in designated areas and cannot be guaranteed for any length of time. First year students are not eligible for private rooms.
- c) *Consolidation*— The Office of Residential Life reserves the right to require occupants of rooms not filled to capacity. Any vacant room or suite space may be filled at the discretion of the Director of Residential Life.
- d) *Keys*— All room keys will be issued by the Director of Residential Life. If a room key is lost or missing, the student must report this to her Resident Director *immediately*. To obtain another

room key, the student must meet with the Director of Residential Life. The charge for losing a KABA lock room key and having the core changed is \$150; all other types of keys are \$50. Any lost key card will be deactivated and replaced with a fee of \$25.

- e) *Lockouts*—Students are reminded to lock their doors and carry their room keys at all times. If a student is locked out of her room, she will need to call Campus Safety to unlock her door. This may occur twice without charge. Beginning with the third time, any student who is locked out of her room will be assessed a \$5.00 fee on her Business Office account. Students who repeatedly lock themselves out of their rooms may be referred to Director of Residential Life for further sanction. At no time will a Residential Life Staff member or Campus Safety grant a student access to another student's room without that student's permission.
- f) *Arrival Registration*—Students participate in arrival registration each time they return to school from a break (Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break). This registration lets the Resident Director know that residents have arrived safely. If a student does not plan to arrive on the date scheduled for students to return, the student should call her Resident Director, Student Development and Success, or the Director of Residential Life. Parents may be contacted if a student does not arrive by the expected time.
- g) *College Furniture*—College residence hall rooms are furnished with beds, desks, desk chairs, dressers, and MicroFridges. Apartments are fully furnished with beds, desks, chairs, dressers, couch, end table, coffee table, tv stand, dining room tables, bar stools, and basic kitchen appliances. Students are responsible for the condition of the furniture originally assigned to the room or apartment, and may be billed for damages incurred during the year. Furniture assigned to a room must remain in that room for the duration of the year. Facilities is not authorized to remove furniture and will not do so if asked by a student.
- h) *Community Areas*—Community areas in the residence halls and apartments (lobbies, study rooms, bathrooms, elevators, kitchens, hallways, laundry rooms, etc.) are the joint responsibility of all students living in that building. Residents should treat community areas as they would their own homes. Damages incurred in community areas will be divided and charged to each resident of a hall or building unless the specific students responsible are identified.
- i) *Room Check In/Out*—Students are required to check in with the residence hall staff before moving into their rooms. At this time, a student is required to sign the Room Inventory Form and the Key Log. When checking out of rooms, students must also meet with the residence hall staff who will inspect the room and have the student sign the Room Inventory Form. The charge for losing a room key and having the lock changed is \$50.00 in Dexter and Williams, and \$150 in Belk, Andrews, Cudd, Pell, and the Heath. Students accept responsibility for their room and furnishings as of the date of occupancy and are responsible for any damages subsequent to that date. A Room Damage Form will be completed if there is damage upon check-out. Charges will be placed on a student's account and must be paid prior to the release of grades, transcripts, or registration for the next term. The College will not be responsible for any items a student leaves in a residence hall room when the student checks out, withdraws, leaves for college-scheduled breaks, or takes a leave of absence from the College. A student who is not enrolled in classes as a result of a Leave of Absence, Withdrawal or Academic Disqualification must check out of her room upon the official date of the Leave of Absence, Withdrawal or Disqualification.

### **Visitation**

The residence hall visitation policy includes but is not limited to hours designated for guest visitation; excessive stays; disruptive behavior by guests; cohabitation and children in the halls. The visitation policy is a privilege. If it is abused, the student, floor, or building may have this privilege suspended or revoked.

#### *General guidelines -*

1. Specific days and times when visitation will be allowed will be approved by the College and distributed to all students and posted in the residence halls and the Heath at the beginning of each term. Students are responsible for the conduct of their guests and must escort guests at all times.
2. All guests male and female must be properly registered. Guests must be signed in and out in the notebooks posted in each residence hall regardless of time. Given the autonomous nature of the apartments, residents in the Heath do not have to sign in guests.

3. Use of visitation hours should be by mutual agreement between roommates in the roommate contract. The roommate contract will always take precedence. It is the right of every student to have privacy in her assigned room, and no student should feel obligated to give up that right at any time. In the interest of preserving respect for privacy, a roommate may ask a guest to leave her room and this request should be honored.
4. Students are responsible for accompanying guests in the residence hall at all times and is responsible for the guest's actions
5. Students may not have more than two guests at the same time
6. Male guests must use only the designated restrooms provided for them.
7. Guests may be asked to leave the College campus at any time should their behavior be disruptive or be in violation of College regulations and policies.
8. Guests may not be given the use of Access Cards or room keys at any time.

### **Guest Visitation Policy**

1. Students may have guests (male or female) in their residence hall rooms as designated for their living area. Guests may stay for no more than three consecutive nights at three different times during a term or no more than 9 nights during any term, unless specific permission has been granted by the Director of Residential Life for a longer visit.
2. Guests must be signed in and out at the lobby desk regardless of time. The Converse student will write all names legibly on the sign-in sheet for security purposes. Any student signing a guest in with a fake name will be sanctioned by their Resident Director or sent to Civitas.
3. Guests may not be given the use of Access Cards or room keys at any time.
4. Visitation may take place in the lobbies of the residence halls at any time. Sleeping overnight in lobbies is not permitted.
5. Members of the opposite sex may assist students in moving into or out of residence halls only during the specified visitation hours or during the time immediately before or after a college holiday. Outside the specified hours, permission for such assistance must be obtained from a CA or RD/AD.
6. Visitation may take place in the student's room in the residence hall according to the following regulations:
  - (i) Visitation in Dexter, Pell, and Williams freshman communities will be:
    - (a) 10:00 am - 12:00 am Sunday through Thursday
    - (b) 10:00 am - 2:00 am Friday through Saturday
    - (c) Extended visitation may be granted on the Friday and/or Saturday nights of Fall Weekend, 1889 Weekend, and Peppermint Ball weekends with a 2/3 majority hall vote, Community Advisor facilitated discussion and contract, and approval from the Dean for Community Life.
    - (d) During the spring semester, freshmen will be allowed one weekend per month for extended visitation. A 2/3 majority hall vote will determine which weekend. The weekend must be approved by the Dean for Community Life.
    - (e) Students with a guest on extended visit weekends must complete a roommate contract with their Community Advisor. The contract must be completed at least 7 days prior to the extended visit. The roommate contract will always take precedence in any conflict between residents.
  - (ii) Visitation in Belk and apartment style residential buildings will be:
    - (a) Extended male visitation regulated between suitemates, set within the first 48 hours of move in and must be documented through a roommate contract witnessed by a building Residential Life Staff member. The contract may be edited at any time during the year but all changes must be witnessed by a building Residential Life Staff member.
  - (iii) Visitation in Cudd, Andrews, and Williams upperclassmen community will be allowed only between the hours of:
    - (a) 10:00 am - 12:00 am Sunday through Thursday
    - (b) 12:00 pm Friday - 10:00 am Sunday

- (c) Extended male guest visitation may be extended to a special event night with a 2/3 majority vote of the hall in which every member must vote, with final approval by the Dean for Community Life.
- (d) All buildings with community bathroom facilities must designate one bathroom per visitation weekend for male guest use only.

### **Children in the Residence Halls**

Residents may not have children living with them in the residence halls. This includes overnight stays and lengthy visits (defined as more than 1 hour) during the day. If a child will be present in the residence halls for a lengthy visit, the resident must obtain permission from the RD/AD.

### **Babysitting in the Residence Halls**

Babysitting in the Residence Halls is not permitted. Babysitting is defined as caring for a child while a parent or guardian is otherwise occupied. If a child will be present in the residence halls for a lengthy visit (defined as more than 1 hour), the resident must obtain permission from the RD/AD for that living area. The Visitation Policy, which applies to males and females above age 6, is explained in this Student Handbook.

### **Residence Hall Security**

All students will be issued an access card which allows them to gain access to the College residence halls. Of major concern to the College is the safety and welfare of all students and the protection of property. In order to address these concerns, certain procedures regarding the use of access cards have been established.

- a) *Residence Hall Access*—In order to ensure safety on campus, a student is responsible for her own access card. Each student should use the card assigned to her. Cards are not to be loaned to other students or non-students. Students must report a lost card to Campus Safety immediately so the card can be deactivated. New cards will be issued at replacement cost.
- b) *Entering the Residence Hall*—A student is able to enter her residence hall when the residence halls are open for each academic session. If a student forgets her access card, the RD/AD on-call must confirm to Campus Safety that she is the resident student. If she is unable to confirm this and Campus Safety is unable to locate your CA or RD/AD, you will not be permitted entry in to the residence hall.
- c) *Guests and Day Students*—Guests or Day Students must abide by the same rules governing their hostesses. The guest must be accompanied by her hostess or another Converse student with an access card. Violations of residence hall access policy will be under the jurisdiction of Civitas Council and may result in fines or other sanctions. All Day Students must sign in at the front desk.
- d) *Breach of Security*—Behaviors that jeopardize the safety and security of the campus community are prohibited. Violations include but are not limited to key/access card misuse; tampering with locked doors; unauthorized access to areas such as campus roofs or window sills; damage to lighting/exit signs; and propping of doors.

### **Fire Safety**

Violations of fire safety policies create undo hazards in the residential community. Violations include but are not limited to setting off a fire alarm; failure to evacuate a building; failure to comply with safety inspections or to correct hazards noted during inspections; tampering with fire equipment; and causing a fire alarm. Specific guidelines are listed below:

1. Evacuation of a residence hall when alarms sound is required;
2. DO NOT reenter the building until firefighters or Campus Safety inform you it is safe to do so;
3. No one is allowed on fire escapes except in an emergency. Never place anything on these escapes or near the windows that lead to them;
4. No furniture, shoes, clothes racks, bicycles, suitcases or other items may be left in the halls or stairwells;
5. Overloaded electrical outlets are not permitted; no extension cords.

6. No objects are to be hung from the sprinklers;
7. No candles, incense, oil lamps, halogen lamps, hot plates or other types of open flames or heating elements are allowed in the residence halls or the Heath;
8. No space heaters or ceiling fans are permitted in any residence. Items will be confiscated by the Campus Safety Department, residential life staff, the Dean for Community Life or her designee.
9. Nothing can be hung within 18 inches of the ceiling in Belk, Cudd, Dexter, Howard, Kate, or Pell. Nothing can be hung within 24 inches of the ceiling in Andrews or Williams. This includes fire rate fairy lights.

*Cooking*—Fire safety regulations require that cooking equipment with exposed heating elements, such as popcorn poppers, hot plates, or electric grills (George Forman) may not be used in student rooms, but may be used only in the kitchen areas or The Heath kitchens. Coffee Pots with an automatic shut off are permitted.

Students found in violation of a fire safety policy will receive notice allowing them 24 hours to make necessary adjustments. Students may be required to meet with hall staff, to correct the situation, or they may face disciplinary action. In more serious cases, the individual will be referred immediately to Civitas Council or the Director of Residential Life.

### **Community Living**

Students are expected to care for the community space and abide by the values adopted by the campus community. Violations include but are not limited to hall conflicts which disrupt the education purpose; uncleanliness or damage to community property such as restrooms, hallways, kitchens, lobbies, and laundry rooms; creating excessive noise during courtesy/quiet hours; improper disposal of trash, instigating targeted and/or harmful pranks, and failure to abide by opening and closing guidelines.

*Responsibilities of Residents*—

- a) to engage in routine personal care activities that promotes a clean and healthy environment;
- b) to conduct oneself in such a manner that does not violate the rights of others;
- c) to treat all members of the community with dignity and respect;
- d) to discourage bigotry and discrimination of others;
- e) to refrain from unhealthy behavior that creates risk or danger for one's self or others;
- f) to refrain from lewd and indecent conduct;
- g) to take all reasonable means to protect from theft or damage of personal property
- h) to take all reasonable means to protect from theft or damage the property of others including that of the College;
- i) to be aware of and observe College regulations and to honor the legitimate requests of the College and its appointed agents;
- j) to be aware of, observe, and abide by South Carolina and Federal laws and regulations.

### **Smoking Policy**

Effective August 1, 2012, Converse College officially became a tobacco-free campus. Therefore, **smoking or vaping of any tobacco products is prohibited in all residence halls, common areas, porches and student rooms.** Please refer to the entire Tobacco Policy in the Handbook.

### **Residence Hall Closings**

All residence halls are closed during the Thanksgiving, Christmas, spring, and summer holidays. Students may not remain on campus during those times. Failure to meet the scheduled check in/out time or appointment will result in a \$100.00 minimum late check-out fee, with an additional \$50.00 per hour not to exceed \$300 per day. If a student is in the residence halls after the official closing time and before the official opening time of the residence halls the above fines will be applied. Specific opening and closing times for residence halls are listed on the College Calendar. Students should make plans accordingly.

Students permitting access to roommates or peers to gain entry to a residential space, prior to their college approved move in or move out date, will be assessed a fine of \$100 per day per person.

### **Room and Roommate Changes**

A student may only move during the designated room change period. The College reserves the right to change students' room assignments if considered in the best interest of the College and/or students involved. Every student involved in a room change must have a solution worked out that is suitable and agreeable for everyone concerned. The Resident Director or Community Advisor is available to assist students in working out a solution. The following procedures apply:

1. All requests to change rooms must be submitted to the Director of Residential Life for approval.
2. A student who wishes to change must speak to their CA. The Assistant Director of Residential Life or Director of Residential Life will not discuss a Room Change until an agreeable solution has been reached.
3. It is the responsibility of the student who initiates the move to tell her roommate she wants to move, will be the one who actually makes the move unless another mutually agreeable solution can be worked out and will make certain she (or her roommate, if the roommate chooses to make the move) sees the Resident Director..
4. All room keys must be turned in to the Resident Director after the change can take place.
5. The Community Advisor will also check the room for damage before the students move and the Room Inventory Form must be signed by the student who is moving.
6. After final approval, there is a 24 hour to one week period before the actual move can take place.

### **Quiet Hours**

General courtesy should be given 24 hours a day to respect the needs of all residents in the living community. Quiet hours will be established at the beginning of each year by each residential community with the help of the Community Advisor. The agreed upon hours will be documented and hours will be enforced by residential students and Community Advisors. If noise coming from a room can be heard through a closed door, the noise is considered too loud. Repeated quiet hour violations may be addressed by the Director of Residential Life. Quiet hours are in effect from the first reading day through final exam week for each term.

### **Responsibility of Personal Property**

The College does not assume any obligation or responsibility for the loss of damage to items of personal property of students which may occur in College buildings or on College property. Students and parents are encouraged to carry appropriate insurance to cover such loss or damage. The College is not responsible for any items left by student in College housing facilities after student checks out, withdraws, or takes a leave of absence from College. Such items will be considered abandoned property and may be retained or disposed of at the discretion of the College.

### **Pregnancy Policy**

The following policy concerns students who experience a pregnancy while living in campus housing. All students should be aware that confidential counseling is available both on and off-campus to support students who become pregnant.

Students who become pregnant should contact the Dean of Community Life before the end of their first trimester. The Student Development and Success staff will refer the student to the appropriate on/off-campus support to assure that the mother has a comprehensive prenatal care plan in place and the department has the most up-to-date contact and physician information in case of an emergency. It is Converse's goal is to help the pregnant student have a healthy, comfortable and supportive living environment at Converse throughout her pregnancy.

Pregnant students are welcome at Converse and may continue taking classes and engaging in all other community activities. If a student prefers to take a medical leave-of-absence with the intention of returning to campus after delivery of the baby, such leaves may be requested and coordinated through the Division of Student Development and Success.

### **Room Entry**

The College reserves the right to enter and/or search a student's room when there is reason to believe an emergency exists, a college or housing violation is occurring or has occurred, evidence suggests criminal activity, the health, safety or well-being of the occupant or other persons is at stake, or for purposes of maintenance. In the case of suspected criminal violations, searches may be conducted by law enforcement officials. Evidence produced during a room search may be used in college judicial proceedings. Student staff members may enter rooms without a full-time college official for the purpose of College inspections (to conduct a visual inspection), which includes opening closets, looking under beds and opening and removing items from refrigerators. A college staff member and/or campus safety officer may enter each room during any fire alarm or drill to make sure that the residents have evacuated the building.

### **Pets**

Out of consideration of those with allergies and because of damages and health hazards caused by many animals, only fish are allowed in the residence halls at any time. Specific details are outlined below:

1. Fish may be kept on campus not to exceed 1 10-gallon fresh water tank or 4 1-gallon or less fresh water bowls or containers. No other animals may be kept in or near campus housing for any length of time. Keeping a pet for a family member or friend or having a family member or friend visit with a pet for any length of time is prohibited.
2. Pet related items, including but not limited to, pet cages, pet food, water bowls, kitty litter, and leashes may be deemed as evidence of animals in campus housing and are prohibited.
3. Animals are permitted on campus property (outside buildings) only under the control of a leash.

A resident determined to be responsible for the presence of an animal is subject to a \$300 fine. The residents within an apartment or room where an animal is found are also each subject to a \$100 minimum fine for not reporting. Subsequent offenses will result in a doubling of the previous fine. In addition to the fine, the owner of the animal will be responsible for all damage and cleaning costs resulting from the animal. If there is a second violation of this nature, resident(s) will be subject to student conduct action. Animals must be removed immediately from the campus.

## **REPORTING A VIOLATION OF RESIDENTIAL LIFE POLICIES**

In order to preserve the health and well-being of the residential communities, reporting violations is the responsibility of the residents. Residential Life staff and students are expected to report probable violations, within a reasonable timeframe, to the appropriate individual(s).

- If a student or staff member believes a violation has occurred, he/she should document the concern and confront the student as soon as possible. The accusing person should request a private meeting with the accused student where the specific charge should be discussed. The accusing person will note the charge and ask the accused student to make contact with the Resident Director or Assistant Director of Residential Life in the living community. The accusing person will then notify the Resident Director or Assistant Director of Residential Life in the living community of the meeting and the charge.
- Documentation of the incident in question should be made by all parties. Details should include key information related to those involved, the nature of the incident with details on where, when and what. This information may be reported on an incident report form available through the residential life staff or in the Student Development and Success Office or by email to the Resident Director, Assistant Director of Residential Life, or Director of Residential Life. Additional documents or evidence should be given directly to the Resident Director, Assistant Director of Residential Life or Director of Residential Life.
- The Resident Director, Assistant Director of Residential Life or Director of Residential Life in the living community will review submitted documents and conduct an initial investigation to determine if there is sufficient evidence, by measure of preponderance of evidence, to meet with the accused student and determine whether a student is or is not responsible for the charges presented.

### **Hearing Process**

#### *First Offense*

A student who is involved in a first offense residential life violation will meet with the respective Resident Director, Assistant Director of Residential Life, or Director of Residential Life to discuss the alleged violations. If by measure of preponderance of evidence it is determined that a student is in violation of a residential life policy, the Resident Director, Assistant Director of Residential Life or Director of Residential Life will determine sanctions. Sanctions by staff utilize the sanctioning guidelines and options provided in the Civitas Council sanctioning process.

#### *Repeat Offense*

When a student is involved in a second or subsequent offense of a residential life policy, the case may be handled by the Resident Director, Assistant Director of Residential Life, or Director of Residential Life. If a student continues to be disruptive to the living community and in violation of the Residential Life Policies, the case may be sent to Civitas Council and will be handled according to the due process outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Appeals Process**

Appeals for a case handled within the residential life process will be heard by the Dean for Professional Development. Students must appeal in writing within five days of notification of the sanction.