

# SORORITY & FRATERNITY LIFE

## Sorority and Fraternity Housing Policies

*Last Updated January 2025*

### **I. Purpose**

In order to ensure a safe and healthy living environment for all residents of fraternity and sorority facilities, the following policies have been created. The policies outlined below are consistent with all University of Tennessee, Knoxville and [University Housing policies and regulations](#). Review of policies and timelines will occur annually in collaboration with University administration.

### **II. Eligibility for Residency in Sorority and Fraternity Housing**

Students applying for resident status within an identified sorority or fraternity facility must be a fully admitted undergraduate student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Students admitted into a pathway program and/or other University of Tennessee campus satellite programs are not considered eligible for residency status. Residents must be actively enrolled in classes and/or practicum or internship programs at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Students wishing to reside in a sorority or fraternity facility must be an active member considered in good-standing of the identified organization and local chapter. First year students are not eligible for resident status within any sorority or fraternity facility. Transfer students that are already identified as active members of a sorority or fraternity may be considered for residency status by contacting the [Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life](#).

Breach of this policy, housing contract, and/or violation of any University of Tennessee, Knoxville regulation may result in eviction upon five (5) days' notice except where the University determines that continued residence by the student would pose a danger to the life, limb, or health of themselves or other residents, in which case the student may be evicted immediately.

### **III. Housing Contracts**

All facilities that are defined as on-campus, University property are required to have each resident complete a [University of Tennessee, Knoxville Fraternity Park/Sorority Village Housing Contract](#) available online through StarRez in addition to any individual organizational housing contracts. Contracts for the upcoming academic year must be completed in full by the last day of exams each

spring semester. New contracts for the academic spring semester will be due by a date consistent with the Bursar's spring billing date. No edits to an existing contract will be permitted. If edits are necessary, completion of a new contract is required. No changes will be made to any signed University contract without the permission of both the resident and the Housing Corporation Board.

#### **IV. Meal Plans**

Any fraternity or sorority wishing to offer food services to their residents in place of a University meal plan must seek prior approval of their meal plan from the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life. All meal plans must meet a minimum of \$300 a semester in order to be considered an adequate replacement for the University Flex Plan. Organizations are not required to have a meal plan and/or may have a meal plan in addition to a University Meal Plan. Any organization wishing to charge their organizational meal plans through the University must provide the Office of Sorority & Fraternity Life with evidence of contract stating meal plan requirements. Language in member contract must include the following;

- *Contract must note the price to be charged and that the charges for the meal plan will be "billed through the University of Tennessee, Knoxville."*
- *Contract must include that the full fall semester meal plan is charged against the student's account in July/August and the spring semester meal plan is charged in December/January.*

Any resident that does not have a required sorority/fraternity meal plan and has not signed up for a different University Meal Plan will receive a \$300 charge for the University Flex Plan. Reimbursement for any unused Flex Plan amount can be requested by the student at the end of each semester. OSFL does not maintain the authorization to remove and/or add Flex Plan charges.

If a House Corporation Board wishes to assess meal plan charges to a student's account after the Flex Plan billing deadline, written permission from the student to assess an additional meal plan charge or to change the existing meal plan charge must be obtained.

#### **V. Summer Residency**

Organizations wishing to offer summer residency options may do so under the following conditions;

- Student must be enrolled and registered with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville for the adjoining Spring and Fall academic terms or be seeking graduation at the end of the identified Summer term;

- A University Summer Housing Contract must be completed and submitted to the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life via StarRez, even if housing corporation is not charging a summer rent;
- An identified House Director must be living within the facility during the summer months.
- All University regulations and expectations remain applicable to sorority and fraternity facilities and residents during the summer months. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action and/or eviction.

## **V. House Directors**

All identified on-campus fraternity and sorority facilities are required to have a live-in House Director to oversee facility maintenance and ensure the general health and safety of its residents. House Directors must not be an undergraduate student and if a member of the same local chapter, must be removed from their undergraduate experience by a minimum of two (2) years. House Directors are to be hired and compensated through the local/national House Corporation Board. Assistance in recruiting eligible House Directors will be made available through the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life. Upon hiring a House Director, each local/national Housing Corporation will complete a background check and submit to the University to retain on file. Each local/national Housing Corporation is responsible for the overall training and supervision of their employed House Director, however it is required that all House Directors meet the following University expectations;

- If newly employed by House Corporation Board, meet with the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life for onboarding and completion of necessary administrative documents;
- Attend all mandatory OSFL House Director trainings and meetings. House Director trainings are held twice annually, one (1) each fall and spring semester. House Director meetings are held once a month during the academic term.
- Participate in and comply with all required health and safety inspections;
- Respond to all University official communication in a timely manner;
- Submit any health and safety documents identified as necessary by the University;
- Comply with all policies and/or procedures as set forth by the University or as deemed appropriate by the Sorority Village Association/Fraternity House Corporation Board;
- Physically reside within the identified facility on a full-time basis.

House Director presence is required any time residents are living within the facility, including but not limited to; summer break, fall/spring breaks, and holiday breaks. It is up to the discretion of the local/national House Corporation Boards whether to allow the facility to remain open to residents during these times.

Failure of the House Director to comply with any official University and/or Corporation Board policy or procedure will result in documented communication with the local/national housing corporation and inter/national headquarters. Continued failure to comply will result in house director contract being ineligible for renewal.

## **VI. House Director Vacancies**

It is expected that House Directors are present in the facility on a daily basis. For short-term vacancies in the form of a vacation or approved time off, it is the expectation that the House Corporation Board and House Director will arrange for temporary oversight. In the event that an organization finds itself without a permanent House Director, the following process must occur;

- Notification of vacancy to the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life within 24 hours;
- Immediate implementation of Interim Plan and plan information sent to the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life;
- Identify permanent House Director within 30 days of vacancy.

The Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life recognizes that circumstances arise where there may be an unexpected vacancy. In these situations, an Interim Plan may be implemented while a new House Director is identified. Interim Plans can be unique to meet the needs of each individual organization, however the following options are deemed appropriate through the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life;

- Daily walkthroughs by members of the Alumni Housing Board who also serves in an on-call role for emergencies and facility support;
- Arranging for daily walkthroughs to be done by another House Director who also serves in an on-call role for emergencies and facility support;
- Temporarily employing an alumni member or University graduate student or staff member to act in this capacity. Contact information for available graduate students or staff members is available through the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life.

If an interim plan fails to be enacted in the event of a vacancy or a permanent House Director that meets the expectations is not identified within the specified timeframe, University of Tennessee Police Department will be asked to patrol the facility with the fees assessed to the organization.

## **VII. House Corporation Boards**

Each fraternity or sorority that maintains residence in a facility must have an active alumni advisory board or national organization representative overseeing the facility operations. Decisions regarding a facility will only be conducted with an active member of a Housing Corporation Board, not with undergraduate chapter leadership.

In order to ensure accurate communication and compliance with University policies, it is required that each organization that oversees a facility be represented at meetings that are called together for the purpose of discussing facility matters. If attendance at stated meetings cannot be met, it is expected that a representative from the organization's House Corporation Board meet and/or

Speak individually with a staff member from Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life to ensure information is communicated. Continued lack of attendance and/or communication from the House Corporation Board with OSFL will result in a policy violation for the organization. After three (3) violations, a new representative must be appointed.

## **VIII. Rent Rates**

Individual rent rates are determined by the University in cooperation with the House Corporation. If an organization wishes to change their identified rates, the House Corporation Board must submit the identified purpose for the change along with the price they wish to charge to the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life. Rent rates will be reviewed annually by the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life in collaboration with the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Life and any necessary recommendations will be made to the local/national House Corporation Board.

It is recommended that House Corporation Boards create their rent rates and budgets to operate at less than 100% resident capacity to allow for unexpected vacancies, such as internship opportunities or transfers.

## **IX. Subleases**

In the event of a chapter suspension or organizational vacancy with a lease holding organization, the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life will work with the corporation president in the establishment of a sublease if an opportunity is available. Any group looking to engage in this process should reach out to the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life for guidance on the process. All subleases must be reviewed by the University and signed in accordance with the University's contracts policy in order to be fully executed and applied. Subleases will not extend beyond one calendar year. University consideration will first be given to recognized fraternities and sororities who have a relationship with the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life and receive education around health and safety issues in the sorority and fraternity community. Subleasing organizations will be required to have a house corporation to manage the facility separate from the leadership of the student organization.

## **X. Annual Timeline of Required Documents and Reports**

The Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life will provide timely information and dates at bi-annual corporation meetings, and through office communications. Compliance with deadlines and documentation is expected in order to ensure accuracy with financial information as well as health and safety requirements. Concerns or questions about deadlines or documentation needed can be discussed on an individual basis.

The Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life will provide an End of Year Report to all organizations with a University lease each fall. If there is a surplus, a check will be mailed to the appropriate authority for the corporation. If money is owed, the organization will be asked to pay the balance within 30 days or develop a financial plan to repay the amount owed. Any group who fails to maintain their financial accountability with the University may jeopardize their lease.

## **XI. Compliance with University and State Building and Fiscal Policies**

As outlined in each organization's lease with the University, the organization has entered into a long-term lease (50 years) with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. In this lease, organizations are given equity interest and there is a shared management model between the institution and the house corporation and thus all house corporations must follow all University and State Building and Fiscal Policies. Specific State policies can be found at the following websites:

- [State Architect Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Procurement Procedures Manual](#)

Any improvements or upgrades to the facility that require modifications to the actual construction or internal utilities that are in excess of \$10,000 must be approved by the University. This includes, but is not limited to, modifications such as removing or modifying walls, installing wiring and/or new lighting structures, paintings on walls, regardless of whether funds being used are held in an outside account or in a centrally held account.

Examples of purchases not needing prior University include décor items being purchased through non-university held funds and routine maintenance. Routine maintenance is defined as landscaping, replacing HVAC filters, inspecting or replacing equipment, etc.

House Corporations are responsible for understanding and being aware of all relevant policies and procedures before initiating any work on the facility. Failure to comply may stall and/or halt the progression of the project(s).

## **XII. Use of Maintenance and Reserve Funds for Maintenance and Repairs**

Organizations wishing to make purchases using funds held in a University Account must follow the process outlined below:

### **1. Purchases under \$10,000:**

- Notification of intent to purchase with use of funds in a University account should be sent to the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life using the [OSFL Request Form](#). This office will verify that appropriate funds are available and will then respond with notification that the request is approved.

- Following approval, a representative of the sorority or fraternity (purchaser) will contact the selected vendor to place the order.
  - The purchaser should request that the order be billed to: *Fraternity or Sorority Name and Address*. NOTE: Invoices that list the vendor as the purchaser cannot be processed.
  - NOTE: The purchaser cannot obtain similar goods from the same vendor that total more than \$10,000. For example, a purchase of \$5,000 for wall hangings from the same vendor on three consecutive days totals \$15,000 which exceeds the \$10,000 limit and these invoices will not be paid.
2. Purchases of \$10,000 or more: Purchases greater than \$10,000 to be charged to a University account, must be bid through the University Purchasing Department. All costs relative to the purchase (i.e. item cost, shipping, set-up, etc.) must be included when determining if the purchase is \$10,000 or more. Contact the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life to initiate a request for a bid process through Purchasing.

Failure to follow the outlined process/obtain approval from OSFL for use of these funds may severely limit our ability to fulfill the request.

### **XIII. Parking for Fraternity Park and Sorority Village**

Any student who is an active member of a fraternity or sorority that wishes to park within Fraternity Park or Sorority Village must purchase the appropriate parking pass through [Parking Services](#). Available permits include options for cars, motorcycles, and bicycles. All forms of transportation must have a permit and be registered with Parking Services.

General Sorority (GS) passes are *only* made available to residents within Sorority Village. General Fraternity (GF) passes are made available to any fraternity member that is an active member of an organization that has a designation of being an on-campus fraternity facility, excluding Kappa Sigma. All other students must park according to their individual Parking Pass or utilize the university transit system.

Each fraternity with an on-campus facility will receive one Courtesy Permit for their House Director if the House Director is not affiliated with the University. If the House Director is affiliated with the University, they must first purchase a GF permit. After that permit has been purchased, they will receive a special permit to accompany it. This permit must be displayed within the vehicle in order to park in the designated house director space. Each fraternity with an on-campus facility will also receive two Courtesy Permits for any "GF" area. This will allow an individual to park in Fraternity Park, but not in the reserved spaces.

Each sorority with an on-campus facility will receive two Courtesy Permits for Reserved Spaces. It is up to the chapter to decide to whom the permits are issued. Each sorority will also receive

two Courtesy Permits for any “GS” area for their house. This type of permit will allow an individual to park in the Sorority Village Area, but not in the reserved spaces.

If advisors, house corporations, or staff wish to purchase additional GF or GS passes, they must first contact the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life who will then communicate approval for the pass to Parking Services.

#### **XIV. Security**

The safety of all of our residents is paramount, therefore security services are provided to both Fraternity Park and Sorority Village. The University of Tennessee Police Department will routinely conduct drive-throughs to ensure safety and compliance with university, local, state, and federal law.

Should an organization feel the need to hire additional security for any reason, it is required that groups work with the University of Tennessee Police Department to provide those services. Non-university security agencies are not permitted.

#### **XV. Prohibited Items**

The following are considered prohibited items and are not allowed in University facilities. Violation will lead to disciplinary action which could include eviction with forfeiture of paid rent and deposit monies.

**Alcohol:** Alcoholic beverages are prohibited within fraternity and sorority housing unless the organization has registered and received approval to host an event with alcohol. Please see the [Event Registration Policy](#) for further information. This regulation pertains to any person, regardless of age, student status, or position within or outside of the university setting. To avoid any possible misunderstanding, alcoholic beverage containers or other alcohol paraphernalia (such as beer bong) are not allowed in fraternity or sorority housing outside of approved events.

**Animals:** Pets or animals of any kind are strictly prohibited on premises. Should a student wish to seek special accommodations in regards to their residency, they are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services at 865-974-6087 or <https://sds.utk.edu>.

**Drugs and Drug Paraphernalia:** Using, manufacturing, possessing, distributing, selling, dispensing, or being under the influence of drugs, if prohibited by federal, state or local law; using, manufacturing, possessing, distributing, or selling drug paraphernalia, if prohibited by federal, state or local law; using or possessing a prescription drug if the prescription was not issued to the student, or distributing or selling a prescription drug to a person to whom the prescription was not originally issued; is prohibited in university facilities.



**Flammable Items:** Items which require an open flame to operate or which produce heat are not allowed in residents' rooms. No materials, liquid or otherwise, of an explosive or combustible nature shall be kept on the premises. Examples of prohibited items include, but are not limited to, candles, propane, butane, kerosene, lighter fluid, fireworks/explosive devices, incense, lit cigarettes, open heating coils, halogen lamps, gasoline, and gasoline powered engines.

**Smoking:** The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is a smoke-free campus. Smoking is prohibited in and on all University Property. This prohibition includes smoking in private vehicles when parked or operated on University Property. "Smoking" means inhaling, exhaling, burning, or carrying any lighted cigar, cigarette (including an electronic cigarette or similar device), pipe, or other lighted tobacco product, in any manner or in any form. "University Property" means:

- All land, ground, buildings, structures, and any other physical property owned or operated by the University; and
- All motor vehicles owned, leased, or operated by the University.

## **XVI. Fire Safety**

Tampering with, vandalizing, or misuse of fire safety equipment is prohibited and constitutes reason for eviction from the housing facility and possible suspension or expulsion from the University. Fire safety equipment includes, but is not limited to, alarms, extinguishers, smoke detectors, door closures, alarmed doors, and sprinklers. At minimum, two (2) safety exit drills are conducted each fall and spring academic semester and one (1) per summer session in accordance with state law. Failure to evacuate a building during a safety exit drill is grounds for disciplinary action.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are scheduled in accordance with state law and with guidance from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety Office and Facility Services. Two drills will be scheduled in each long semester, and one over the summer break. The first drill of each long semester must be completed within the first ten days of the semester. OSFL will notify the house corporations, organization presidents, and house directors of the upcoming fire drill. The notification will include a date range of when the drill may take place, typically a week. The exact fire drill date will not be specified to protect the integrity of the drill. Building inspections of the facility also will take place during the designated week, separate from the timed fire drill to ensure staff are able to adequately test equipment. Fire drills will take place during University business hours.

If equipment that directly impacts the health or safety of residents or guests is found to be broken, malfunctioning, or missing during a fire drill, then OSFL will immediately place a work order to correct the issue. The organization will be billed by Facilities Services for all work completed. Examples of issues that qualify for immediate work orders include, but are not

limited to: exit sign and/or exit light malfunction, fire panels displaying “Trouble,” and compromised exit and fire doors.

If equipment that does not directly impact the health or safety of residents is found to be broken, malfunctioning, or missing during a fire drill, then OSFL will notify the house corporation, house director, and organization president about the equipment issue. Some items may need to be addressed immediately while staff members are present. Organizations will be given a two-week deadline to fix any identified issues. OSFL reserves the right to re-inspect facilities to ensure repairs are completed. If the organization fails to fix identified issues by the deadline, they will then be subject to the Policy Violation Process through the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life.

Sorority & Fraternity Life will notify house corporations, organization presidents, and house directors of fire drill results with items needing repair or replacement, and notes.

If any other violation of Hilltopics or the *Student Code of Conduct* is found during a fire drill or actual emergency, then the resident and/or organization will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for disciplinary action.

#### **Fire Suppression System Tests:**

Twice a year, organization facilities must have an inspection and certification of their fire suppression systems. Rapid Fire inspects the fire suppression system and turns in a report to the Fire Marshal. Residents and/or organizations who refuse to cooperate with University officials in conducting fire suppression system tests will be subject to consequences, including termination of the privilege of living in the facility and referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for disciplinary action.

- OSFL will notify the house corporations, organization presidents, and house directors of test dates.
- A representative of OSFL will be available to address any issues that may arise during the test, but may not be on site at the time of the test.
- Access to the kitchen area will be required. The test will last approximately thirty minutes.
- During the summer test, the fire alarm will need to be set off. A staff representative from Facilities Services must attend the test to set off the alarm.
- Organizations will be billed by Facilities Services for all work completed to remedy issues discovered by fire suppression system tests.
- OSFL will notify the house corporations, organization presidents, and house directors of the results of fire suppression system tests.

## **XVII. Building Inspections**

At minimum of once every year, organization facilities must have a building inspection conducted by the Office of Environmental Health & Safety. Inspections may occur more frequently as deemed necessary.

- Sorority & Fraternity Life will notify house corporations, organization presidents, and house directors of inspection dates.
- An Office of Sorority & Fraternity Life staff member will accompany the Environmental Health & Safety staff member during the inspection.
- The Office of Environmental Health & Safety will send inspection reports prioritizing the maintenance of issues identified during the inspection, and due dates for the completion of maintenance, to Sorority & Fraternity Life.
- Sorority & Fraternity Life will notify house corporations, organization presidents, and house directors of inspection results.
- Sorority & Fraternity Life will return to each facility to ensure that items indicated on inspections have been completed by the due date. If any issues have not been completed, and the organization has not communicated with Sorority & Fraternity Life about any necessary delay in repair, Sorority & Fraternity Life will place a work order with Facilities Services. The organization will be billed by Facilities Services for any work completed.

## **XVIII. Security Cameras**

Facilities wishing to install security cameras on either the exterior or interior of the facility must do so in compliance with UTK Police Department's [Security Camera Policy](#).

After reviewing the Campus Procedure on the acceptable use of video surveillance equipment, you may submit a Camera Request to the UTK Police Department for approval from the Surveillance Oversight Committee.

## **XIV. Facility Lock and Key Installation and Maintenance**

Facilities wishing to install a new lock or update an existing lock must comply with the [Lock Policy](#) which states that any lock, exterior or interior, on an on-campus building must be furnished by Lock and Key Services and a master key available to Building Services and Safety Personnel. This policy is inclusive of physical key locks and coded locks.

## **XX. Unforeseen Crisis Situations**

In the event of a crisis situation such as a natural disaster, global pandemic, act of war or any other irresistible force, the University's decisions regarding housing and fraternity and sorority facilities will supersede those of the local and/or national housing corporations.

## **XXI. Insurance Coverage**

The State will insure the Building at its replacement cost for the term of the lease agreement with each individual organization. The individual organization may, at its sole option and expense, provide any additional property coverages it deems desirable through the purchase of commercial insurance. The organization shall provide a copy of any insurance policy purchased by the organization for this purpose to the University upon request.

Each organization shall maintain general liability insurance throughout the term of their individual lease agreement, and any renewal thereof, from an insurance company licensed to do business in Tennessee with limits equal to the State's liability under the Claims Commission Act. Additional insurance expectations and requirements will be outlined within the Lease Agreement.

Information and policies regarding insurance coverage can be found on the [Office of Risk Management's website](#).

## **XXII. Inspection and Search Policy**

Entry by University authorities into occupied rooms in fraternity or sorority houses on University-controlled property will be divided into three (3) categories: inspection, search, and emergency. Inspection is defined as the entry into an occupied room by University authorities in order to ascertain the health and safety conditions in the room, to check the physical condition of the room, to make repairs on facilities, or to perform cleaning and janitorial operations. Search is defined as the entry into an occupied room by on-campus authorities for the purpose of investigating suspected violations of campus regulations. An emergency situation exists when the delay necessary to obtain a search authorization constitutes an apparent danger to person, property, or the building itself.

(a) Inspection: Scheduled inspections by on-campus authorities with the exception of daily janitorial operations shall be preceded, if possible, by twenty-four (24) hours' notice to the residents. During the inspection there will be no search of drawers, closets, or personal belongings.

(b) Search: On-campus authorities will not enter a room for purposes of search without permission from the resident(s) or prior permission from Student Life Senior Leadership, unless in compliance with federal or state law.

(c) Procedure for Search in Fraternity or Sorority Houses: For purposes of search, the fraternity or sorority house will be divided into open and closed areas. The closed areas will be the resident room section and chapter room. University authorities may enter the open areas for purpose of inspection or search without permission, but there will be no search of personal belongings or closed areas of the house. University authorities will not enter the closed areas without the

written permission of the Student Life Senior Leadership, or their designees, or in compliance with federal or state laws.

(d) Resident Complaint: Should a resident believe that a University staff member has misused or abused his/her authority to inspect his/her room, the resident should file a complaint. He/she may prepare a written statement for review by the Vice Chancellor for Student Life or his/her designee. The complaint will then be investigated, appropriate action will be taken, and the student will be informed in writing of the results of the investigation.

### **XXIII. Standards of Conduct and Violations**

All students and organizations are responsible for complying with the University's [Standards of Conduct](#) which can be found within the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of the Standards of Conduct may result in disciplinary action. Dependent on severity or reoccurrence of violation(s), disciplinary action may include; written warning, OSFL issued sanctions, referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards and the student conduct process, probation for on-campus residency states, and/or termination of housing contract and eviction.

Violations of OSFL Housing and/or Office Policies will follow the OSFL policy violation process.

In particular, if the smell of marijuana is detected by an OSFL staff member while in the facility, OSFL staff will utilize the dual confirm procedure consistent with University Housing procedures. The original staff member will document when/where the smell is present and ask another University official to confirm. If there is a second confirmation of 1) the smell and 2) the location, OSFL staff will contact UTPD.

In the event that there is no one available for a dual confirmation OR if the secondary person is unable to confirm the smell AND the location, UTPD will not be called and the organization will receive a policy violation. This violation should be submitted using the OSFL Policy Violation Reporting form in Maxient. In the event that Code violations have allegedly occurred, these will be referred to Student Conduct & Community Standards.