

Residence Life Policies, Procedures, and Services

The mission of the Office of Residence Living is to integrate living and learning, while supporting the educational goals of our students and the university. We are also committed to promoting a sense of PRIDE among the residence life staff and residents by:

- Providing safe, attractive, well-maintained living facilities that are responsive to the needs of the students
- Recognizing and respecting individual rights and differences and the value of diversity in the residential community
- Implementing policies and procedures that encourage residents to make responsible choices
- Developing an investment in the retention and personal success of each residential student both socially and academically
- Empowering residents to shape their community and gain leadership experience by providing quality programs and services and continuing to improve these offerings by conducting ongoing evaluations and assessments

Residence Life Policies

- Access Items Policy
 - Residents are given two access items for entering the residence hall: the CanesCard and their room key. Students are never permitted to let anyone else use, share, borrow, or trade these items under any circumstance.
 - Residents are responsible for carrying their CanesCard and room key at all times.
 - A resident who loses or damages his/her room key may be allowed to purchase a replacement for \$25.
 - If a Residence Life or Public Safety staff member asks a student to present their CanesCard, students must comply or face disciplinary action.
 - Residents may not change any locks for their room or apartment.
- Alcohol Policy
 - The possession, sale, manufacturing, distribution, or consumption of alcohol by persons under the age of 21 is prohibited and illegal under state and federal laws. Violators are subject to disciplinary action, criminal prosecution, and imprisonment. It is unlawful to sell, furnish, or provide alcohol to a person under the age of 21.
 - Alcoholic beverages may be consumed by residents and guests of legal drinking age (21 years of age or older) in his/her own apartment with the door closed. Residents may not possess or consume alcoholic beverages in hallways, lounges, courtyards, parking lots, stairways, or any other public areas within the residence halls. All alcohol that is transported through public areas must be unopened and not be in plain sight.
 - Students under the age of 21 found in possession of alcoholic beverages or in the presence of alcoholic beverages, even if they are empty, will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include disposing of alcohol under the supervision of housing staff.
 - Common source containers such as kegs, punch bowls, funnels, trash cans, or any other large volume containers are not allowed in the residence halls and apartments.
- Controlled Substances/Drugs Policy
 - The possession, use, manufacturing, and/or distribution of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia is prohibited in the residence halls.

- All medication prescribed or purchased over the counter is designated for a specific purpose, and any misuse, illegal use, or sale of this type of medication is strictly prohibited.
- Disorderly Conduct Policy
 - Behavior that interferes with the normal functioning of a residence hall or unnecessarily impedes on the rights of students and/or staff is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: behavior where the safety of students or property is compromised, hall sports, water fights, pranks, running in the hall, student demonstrations or displays that create a disruptive environment, or lewd or indecent behavior.
- Failure to Comply Policy
 - Failure to comply with reasonable directions and requests of a Residence Life or University staff member (including residential leaders and security personnel) or failure to heed an official summons of any university official acting in the performance of his or her duties and/or failure to identify oneself to these persons could result in a disciplinary referral.
- Fire Safety Policy
 - All residents and guests are to immediately vacate a residence hall building via designated emergency routes whenever a fire alarm sounds. Once outside, residents and guests should remain no less than 500 feet away from the building and should avoid re-entry into the facility until given permission by a Public Safety or Residence Life staff member. Fire Evacuation meet-up sites for each building are:
 - Oaks 1: End of parking lot by the outdoor basketball court
 - Oaks 2: End of parking lot by the tree line
 - Magnolia 1: Grassy area past the parking lot
 - Magnolia 2: Education building parking lot
 - Pines: Grassy area in front of Tennis courts
 - Tampering with smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, or fire alarms when there is no emergency is prohibited.
 - Residents may not hang items from fire sprinklers or other related fire equipment.
 - Residents should not prop open or exit from emergency exit doors at the end of each hallway of the residence hall or apartments unless the fire alarm is sounding, there is an active emergency or threat to life, or unless directed to do so by a Residence Life Staff member. The following fines are associated with each offense of this policy:
 - 1st offense: \$50
 - 2nd offense: \$100
 - 3rd offense: \$150
 - 4th offense: removal from housing
- Gambling Policy
 - Gambling is prohibited by Georgia State Law, and is therefore not permitted anywhere in the residence halls. Gambling is defined as any game or wager where money exchanges hands, be it before, during, or after the actual game/wager takes place.
- Guests and Cohabitation Policy
 - A guest is defined as any individual who has not executed a contract for the residential space they are visiting. Guests must abide by all policies of the residence halls, and hosts are responsible for the conduct of their guests.
 - Guests must enter and exit the residence hall through lobby door(s) and must be escorted by their host at all times, including in the bedroom.

- A resident may host up to two guests at any given time. The residents of a suite or an apartment may not host more than four guests at any given time. Guests are permitted to stay no more than two consecutive nights and four nights in total in a calendar month.
- All guests must be signed in by the desk assistant. Guests will be required to present a photo ID to the Desk Assistant. Valid forms of photo ID must be currently issued, and include GSW ID cards, driver's license, passport, or any other government issued IDs.
- Cohabitation is strictly prohibited in the residence halls. Cohabitation is defined as a person who has not been assigned by the Office of Residence Life spending an excessive amount of time in a residence hall room or apartment or storing an excessive amount of belongings in a room or apartment.
- Guests under the age of 18 are not permitted to visit or remain in any areas of a residence hall including a resident's room, between the hours of 11:00 PM – 10:00 AM without the permission of a Residence Life Coordinator or Assistant Director of Residence Life. Guests under the age of 12 are only permitted to visit residents between 2:00 PM – 8:00 PM and must be supervised by a parent or guardian.
- **Pets Policy**
 - Fish in a 10-gallon aquarium or smaller are the only animals that are permitted in the residence halls and apartments. It is the resident's responsibility to ensure they are cared for and their tank is clean and free from leaks.
 - A \$250 fee will be assessed to a student's account who possesses or has evidence to suggest possession of an unauthorized pet in the residence hall
- **Photo Disclosure Policy**
 - Residence Life has the right to reproduce, use, exhibit, display, broadcast, distribute, and create derivative works of university related photographs or videotaped images taken in public spaces of on-campus housing for use in connection with the activities of the university for promotion, publicizing, or explaining the university and Residence Life. This includes, without limitation, the right to publish such images in the university's student newspaper, on Residence Life social media, alumni publications, on the university's website, and public relations/promotional materials, such as marketing and admissions publications. These images may appear in any way of the wide variety of formats and media available now and in the future to the university and Residence Life, including, but not limited to print, broadcast, videotape, and electronic/online media. All photos are taken without compensation to the resident.
- **Prohibited Items**
 - Bicycles, motorcycles, scooters, segways, skates, and skateboards cannot be ridden or used within the hall, but students are encouraged to store these items in their room/apartment, exterior bike rack, or other area designated by Residence Life staff members.
 - Hoverboards, including self-balancing scooters, battery-operated scooters, and hands-free segways are prohibited in the residence halls and on campus.
 - Flammable items, such as candles, incense, live coals, etc. are prohibited in the residence halls.
 - Certain cooking equipment, such as electric grills, electric skillets, hot plates, toaster ovens, toasters, and any appliances with an open flame
 - Air conditioners
 - Waterbeds or personal mattresses
 - Electric blankets

- Extension cords without a surge protector
- Halogen lamps and lava lamps
- Appliances requiring 220 volts or more than 1500 watts, or appliances that pose an electrical-overload hazard
- Outside antennas and satellite dishes
- Outdoor grills or the storage of materials for grilling, such as charcoal, lighter fluid, etc.
- Weapons such as firearms, knives larger than two inches, clubs, explosives, fireworks, bows and arrows, as well as any ammunition, are prohibited in the residence halls.
- Quiet Hours/Courtesy Hours Policy
 - Quiet hours are in effect daily in all residence halls and apartments from 11:00 PM – 9:00 AM. During final exam periods at the end of each semester, quiet hours are in effect 24 hours a day.
 - Courtesy hours are in effect 24 hours a day. At any time, a resident may ask other residents to lower their volume, and those residents should comply with that request.
 - Music players, video games, televisions, and voices should be kept at a level that cannot be heard outside the bedroom, suite, and/or apartment. This includes rooms, hallways, and stairwells.
 - The enforcement of quiet hours is the responsibility of each resident in the community. Any action that interferes with a student’s right to study is a violation of this standard and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Residency Requirement
 - All full-time, first-year and second-year students are required to live on campus and to purchase a meal plan unless they meet one of the following criteria:
 - Student will be 21 years of age prior to August 31.
 - Student is married.
 - Student has a child who lives with them.
 - Student will be living with their parents and commuting from within a 50-mile radius of the University.
 - Student who meet one or more of these criteria are required to submit an exemption request form to the housing office. The university reserves the right to deny exemption requests when students are unable to furnish appropriate documentation which demonstrates their eligibility to be exempt from the residence requirement.
- Resident Responsibility/Cleanliness Policy
 - Each resident is responsible for the condition of their bedroom, suite, or apartment. If damage occurs in the residence hall or apartment, the Residence Life staff will assess charges to the individual or group directly responsible for the damage.
 - To avoid charges for damage for which you are not responsible, be aware of what is going on where you live and report damage immediately to the Residence Life staff.
 - Residents are responsible for managing the cleanliness of their apartment, which includes regularly vacuuming the carpet, mopping the floor tiles, and cleaning their shower.
- Roofs, Windows, and Ledges
 - Residents are not permitted on roof areas nor window ledges. The university is not responsible for injuries that result on a roof area or window ledge nor from falls which might occur from either.
 - Students are not permitted to use a window to enter or exit any part of a residence hall nor to remove the screens from the exterior of residence hall windows. Removal of the

screen may result in a re-installation charge to repair/replace damaged screens. Additional disciplinary action may also be taken.

- Room Entry Policy
 - The University reserves the right to enter a room at any time to ensure compliance with safety and health regulations, to provide pest control, to conduct routine maintenance checks, to complete cleaning or maintenance, to maintain a secure and quiet environment, or conduct an inventory of university property. A room may also be entered by Residence Life staff if danger to life, health, or property, or if illegal activity and/or violation of University rules and regulations are suspected. Student rooms and apartments may be searched for legal cause by civil authorities in compliance with state and federal guidelines.
 - At least once per semester, Residence Life staff will conduct health and safety inspections for safety, health, maintenance, cleanliness, and inventory purposes. Residence Life staff will post a notice at least 24 hours in advance of entry of student spaces. If conditions are found to be unacceptable during the inspections, residents will be notified and given the opportunity to correct the problems. Residents who do not correct health and safety concerns addressed by the Residence Life staff will be referred to the University student conduct process.
 - Illegal materials or other items in plain view will be documented or removed if they are noticed in the course of a maintenance repair, inspection, or in response to a violation of university or departmental policy will be confiscated. The resident will receive written notification of this action if confiscation/documentation of property is required when the student is absent.
- Solicitation Policy
 - As a protection to residents, Residence Life does not permit salespersons, peddlers, or agents in the residences. Please notify a Residence Life or Public Safety staff member immediately should you encounter any individual soliciting in the building. Solicitation in the residence hall also includes the unapproved distribution of flyers in the building.
 - Residents are prohibited from providing any services in exchange for monetary payment or other rewards from any area within the residence halls.
 - Students that wish to promote events within the residence halls may provide Residence Life with a maximum of 40 posters or fliers at least 10 days in advance of the event. Residence Life staff will distribute and post all materials. Residence Life staff will not distribute any external materials to all students or to every door. Materials posted that do not adhere to this policy will be immediately removed and destroyed. Designated posting areas are available in each hall. Postings are not allowed in stairwells, entrances, exits, exterior walls, main entrance doors, or fire doors.
- Smoking Policy
 - The use of all forms of tobacco products on property owned, leased, rented, in the possession of, or in any way used Georgia Southwestern State University is expressly prohibited.
 - “Tobacco Products” are defined as cigarettes, cigars, pipes, all forms of smokeless tobacco, clove cigarettes, other smoke devices that use tobacco such as hookahs, and devices that simulate the use of tobacco, such as electronic cigarettes and vapor devices.
 - Any individual found violating this policy may face disciplinary action and be charged to remove the odor or other damages caused.
- Vandalism and Decorations Policy

- Vandalizing or damaging residential facilities including, but not limited to misuse of individual or common area furnishings, removal of signs, putting large holes in walls/doors, and excessive messes is prohibited. Furniture cannot be removed or relocated from lounges or common areas.
- Students are encouraged to decorate their rooms in a manner that prevents damage beyond normal wear and tear and that ensures fire safety. Any damage to the ceilings, walls, doors, or fixtures as a result of nails, screws, mounts, adhesives, tape, or stickers will result in a repair fee assessment to the student. Students are not permitted to place any adhesives or stickers on doors or glass.
- Residents are not permitted to alter, repair, remodel, and/or paint the premises or equipment. No ceiling fans, light fixtures, or similar equipment may be affixed to ceilings or walls.
- Residents shall not obstruct the entry or exit path of a bedroom, unit, breezeway, or stairwell.
- Georgia law prohibits the removal of traffic and/or street signs. Therefore, traffic or street signs regardless of how it has been obtained are not permitted in the residence halls.
- Pictures and other materials that be considered obscene should not be displayed in areas that may be visible from the hallway and/or building.
- Alcoholic beverage signs or containers are not allowed in window displays.

Residence Life Procedures

- Abandoned Property
 - Items left by a resident at the end of their contract period or when they leave an assigned space will be considered abandoned. These items will be inventoried and stored for a period of 30 days, during which Residence Life staff will make attempts to contact the owner. A \$100 charge for abandoned property will be added to the student's account. If the property is not claimed and collected by the owner, items may be disposed of immediately and re-usable items may be donated to charitable organizations at the discretion of Residence Life staff members. Property left in hallways, stairwells, lounges, and other common areas will also be considered abandoned.
- Check-In
 - Upon moving in at the beginning of the contract term, residents will be given their access items. This includes a residential key and access to the building and hallway through programming their CanesCard.
 - Residents are required to complete a Room Condition Report and are strongly encouraged to comment on any major discrepancies between their perception of the condition of the rooms and furnishings and those noted on the form by a Residence Life staff member. Reporting any pre-existing damage is the only way to avoid being held financially responsible for damage found at the end of occupancy. Charges for residence hall room damages may not be appealed if residents do not submit Room Condition Reports at the beginning of occupancy.
- Check-Out
 - Check out takes place each time you change rooms/apartments or when you move out of the hall. To check out, you must schedule an appointment with a Residential Leader (RL), Senior Residential Leader, or Residence Life Coordinator (RLC).

- Residents are required to complete the following tasks before they check out:
 - Remove all belongings from the living area
 - Clean and vacuum assigned room
 - Remove decorations, tacks, and command strips from walls
 - Clean a share of the common areas
 - Return all keys and access cards
 - Review and sign room condition report with the RL at a set appointment time
- Failure to follow established check-out procedures may result in an improper check out charge of \$150.
- Emotional Support and Service Animals
 - Students who wish to have an emotional support animal (ESA) in their residence hall or apartment must first register with the Office of Disability to obtain approval for the animal before the animal is ever brought into the residence hall or apartment. The Office of Disability Services is located on the third floor of Sanford Hall. This approval is limited to one ESA and is granted for only one year at a time.
 - Residents accompanied by service animals must notify the Assistant Director of Residence Life via email at housing@gsw.edu and sign the appropriate service animal verification form prior to the animal residing in the residence hall or apartment.
- Lock-Out Procedure
 - If a resident is locked out of their room, they should call one of the following phone numbers according to the time of day:
 - Monday-Friday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM: 229-931-2375
 - All other times depends on the building:
 - Oaks 1: 229-942-5421
 - Oaks 2: 229-942-7232
 - Magnolia: 229-942-7052
 - Pines: 229-942-9839
 - The first three lockouts are free. The resident will be charged \$10 for each additional lockout, and will be placed on the student's account.
- Room Change Procedure
 - Residents who are having issues or a conflict with their roommate should work with their RL or Residence Life Coordinator. The process is as follows:
 - The resident should first attempt to talk to their roommate about the issue and resolve it on their own first. The RL can provide tips to navigate this conversation if needed.
 - Students should then contact their RL to have a roommate mediation. In this process, the RL sits down with the students to talk through the issues of the apartment with the roommate agreement.
 - If the roommate mediation is still unsuccessful, the students will meet with the RLC of their building. The RLC will then determine if a room change is appropriate.
 - Room changes are not permitted during the first two weeks of the semester.
 - The residents seeking the room change should complete a Room Change Request through Canes Connect to initiate the room change process.
 - Residents will receive a notification if the change is approved. Residents are not moved until they are notified that the change is approved. If they move without prior approval

from their RLC, they may be assessed a charge, required to return to their original location, and/or face disciplinary action.

- Roommate Agreements
 - All residents are required to complete a roommate agreement within their first month of living on campus. Once signed, the roommate agreement will become a binding contract between the residents.
 - Roommates will establish a roommate agreement each time there is a new roommate in the room.
 - This roommate agreement will be kept on file with the RL of the hall.
 - Failure to comply with the written roommate agreement may result in judicial action.
- Severe Weather
 - In case of severe weather such as thunderstorms or tornadoes, students will be instructed to move to the interior of the building and on lower floors. If evacuation is necessary, instructions will be issued through a university staff member and/or ConnectEd. In all severe weather situations, be sure to stay in contact with and follow the instructions of Residence Life staff members and Public Safety.
- United States Census Surveys
 - Residents in University Housing may be selected by the U.S. Census to participate in a variety of surveys, such as the American Community Living Survey, Current Population Survey, National Crime Victimization Survey, and others. If selected to participate, residents will be provided with a letter outlining the details of the specific survey. This letter is often delivered directly by a U.S. Census worker prior to conducting the survey. Some of these surveys are mandatory – required by law to be completed – while others are voluntary. Residents are encouraged to comply with all U.S. Census requests as required by law.

Residence Life Services

- Cable Television
 - Cable service is included in individual rooms and living rooms in the apartments. Residents are responsible for connecting the incoming cable to their electronic devices. To ensure all channels are received, a channel scan should be completed on the television. To report problems with cable TV, put in a maintenance request on the Residence Life website.
- Common Area Computers
 - The common area computers are for the use of the residents in the hall and have been set up to meet the general needs of the residents. To ensure continued access to the computers, students are to refrain from activities, including but not limited to the following:
 - Do not save anything onto the computer hard drive. Residents should save their work on removable storage media.
 - Do not change the configuration of the computers. They have been set up for general computer activities: word processing, spreadsheets, email, etc.

- Do not try to fix computer problems. If you are experiencing difficulty with a computer, contact Residence Life staff immediately. They will contact GSW IIT to begin the repair process.
 - Failure to follow these and other GSW Information and Instructional Technology policies will result in possible disciplinary action and/or removal of all common area computers within a residence hall. For more information about GSW IIT policies visit <https://www.gsw.edu/resources/facultyandstaff/iit/abuseandpolicydocuments/index>
- Internet Access
 - Wireless internet connectivity is available in the residence halls. Users connecting to Canes will be required to login with their CanesNet credentials on phones, laptops, and tablets/iPads.
 - Video game systems, Smart TVs, Roku, and FireSticks should be registered in ClearPass at <http://gsw-portal.gsw.edu/guest> before connecting to GSW-Device.
 - There are no wired network connections in dorm rooms.
 - Wireless printers and wireless digital media players such as ChromeCast, Google Home, and Amazon Alexa/Echo Dot are **NOT** supported by the residence hall network.
 - Residents are prohibited from connecting personal hubs, switches, routers, and/or wireless access points in the residence halls.
 - For internet connectivity issues, contact technical support by emailing techsupp@gsw.edu with your name, phone number, room number, and a brief description of the problem.
- Kitchen
 - Residence Halls (Oaks and Magnolia)
 - Each residence hall provides a full kitchen in the common area for students to use at any time. Each kitchen is equipped with a stove, oven, and microwave.
 - It is the responsibility of the resident to clean up after using the kitchen.
 - Do not pour cooking grease down the kitchen sink.
 - No food or dishes should be left on countertops or sinks.
 - Residents will be held responsible for damages or excessive clean-up charges as a result of misuse of the kitchens.
 - Apartments (Pines)
 - Each apartment in Southwestern Pines provides a full kitchen equipped with a stove, oven, refrigerator, and a microwave.
 - At the start of each semester and each time a new roommate moves in, residents should complete a roommate agreement to set ground rules for keeping the kitchen clean and able to use and store items for all residents of the apartment.
 - Do not pour cooking grease down the kitchen sink.
- Laundry Facilities
 - Each residence hall is equipped with laundry facilities for use by the residents.
 - Residents are responsible for their own laundry items and for following the proper procedure for washing and drying.
 - For safety reasons, always check and clean the lint filter on the dryer prior to and following each use.
 - Use of the laundry facilities is restricted to residents only.
 - Residents are able to purchase new/replacement or reload laundry cards from the card machine located in each area. These machines are located on the first floor laundry room of each building. These machines take cash bills only in denominations up to \$20.

- All laundry machines are maintained by our outside contractor, CSC ServicesWorks. If a machine is not working properly, please report the problem by utilizing the CSC ServiceWorks Service App and information located on each machine.
- Lofted Bed Safety Rails
 - For safety reasons, residents who choose to utilize a loft bed provided by Georgia Southwestern State University are strongly encouraged to use the provided safety rail and keep beds away from exterior windows.
 - Homemade bed lofts, purchased bed lofts, or other bed modifications are not permitted.
 - Residents who request a loft kit will be provided with instructions for proper installation. The university is not responsible for injuries from improper installation.
- Lounges and Common Areas
 - Each residence hall and apartment building have common areas and lounges for students to socialize in.
 - These spaces are for all students, and thus no resident should be denied entry into one of these spaces by another resident.
 - Public area furniture is provided for the use of all residents and may not be moved from those spaces.
- Lost and Found
 - Residents should turn in all found items to the front desk of their building, the housing office in the Student Success Center, or their Residential Leader.
 - Lost items will be held for 30 days.
 - Unclaimed items will be either turned over to Public Safety or donated. Items such as electronics or identification will be turned into Public Safety.
- Parking
 - Residents are required to register their vehicles, display a GSW parking permit on their vehicles, and follow all university parking regulations when on university property.
 - Students can register their vehicles at the Office of Public Safety. Most of the process can be done ahead of time online by visiting: <https://www.permitsales.net/GeorgiaSWU>
- Trash Disposal
 - Residents are to dispose of their personal trash in the dumpsters located in the parking lots of each residence hall or apartment building. It is not the responsibility of the custodial staff to remove personal trash.
 - All trash should be bagged before disposal.
 - Residents should not dispose of personal trash in receptacles inside of the building or at the entryways of the buildings. Doing so may result in a charge on the student account or face disciplinary action.