

# Hilltopics Handbook for Residence Hall Living

## **Abandoned Property**

Any personal items abandoned after the student moves out, left in common spaces, or confiscated by HRL staff will be disposed of after 10 business days or by the hall closing date of each semester.

## **Adhesives**

Adhesives, including but not limited to, double sided tape, contact paper, carpet tape, duct tape, L.E.D. strip lighting, etc. may not be used on University walls, furniture, windows or floors. Students will be charged for any damage caused by adhesives or residue.

## **Alcohol Beverages**

The University prohibits the possession, furnishing, or use of alcoholic beverages by residents or guests in the residence halls. Residents must comply with all federal, state, and local laws governing the use and possession of alcoholic beverages.

## **Alcohol Containers**

Alcoholic containers, items, and paraphernalia used for consumption (i.e. wine glasses, shot glasses, martini shakers, etc.) are not permitted in the residence halls, and this includes items used as decoration or displayed. Items in violation will be confiscated by hall staff and disposed of unless the student makes arrangements to collect the items and remove them from the hall within 72 hours upon notification of violation.

## **Appliances**

Appliances used in the residence halls must be UL (Underwriters Laboratories) listed. UL indicates that a product has been tested and meets UL's safety and sustainability standards. No cooking is permitted in a resident's room apart from approved microwave ovens (cannot exceed 1 cubic foot and 1000 watts) and coffee pots.

Halogen lamps, sun lamps, lava lamps, space heaters, and gas appliances are not permitted for safety reasons.

Irons and steamers should not be left unattended. Ironing boards need to be used for all ironing. Ironing mattresses, carpets, or university furniture may result in a charge for damage.

Dehumidifiers are permitted if they have an auto-off feature.

### **Bicycles/Bicycle Racks**

Bicycle racks are located around the residence halls. You may choose to store your bicycle in your room if it does not interfere with the entrance or exit to your room and does not inconvenience your roommate. Care should be taken to not cause damage when entering or exiting the residence hall with a bicycle. Bicycles may not be stored in hallways, stairwells, kitchens, or any other common area.

Gas powered vehicles cannot be stored in the residence halls. Electronically powered/assisted bikes cannot be stored in the residence halls, nor can the battery packs. Please refer to the Motorized/Electronic Vehicles policy.

### **Bomb Threat**

If a bomb threat is announced in your residence hall, follow the directions provided by your hall staff and/or the Police. It is important that you remain calm and that you cooperate fully.

### **Bulletin Boards/Postings**

There is a public bulletin board in the lobby of each residence hall, which can be used for posting information by WKU associated students or organizations. Staff members will utilize other designated bulletin boards throughout the hall for programming and informational purposes.

### **Ceilings**

Items should not be hung from or attached to ceilings. Ceiling tiles should not be tampered with or moved for any reason including running cables or data cords, hanging objects or decorations, or storing items. At no time should a sprinkler head be blocked, tampered with, or have items surrounding the sprinkler head.

### **Circuit Breaker-Fuses**

Contact your residence hall staff if you experience a power loss in your room due to a tripped circuit breaker. Under no circumstances are students permitted to reset circuit breakers. Upon determining the problem, you may be asked to make adjustments in the use of appliances or electrical equipment.

### **Cohabitation**

The Department of Housing & Residence Life prohibits cohabitation of guests within a residence hall room. Cohabitation exists when a person who is not assigned to a space uses that room as if they were living there. Cohabitation is defined as:

- Any stay of more than three consecutive overnights (Between 12 AM - 8 AM)
- Any stay of four or more overnights in any seven-day period
- 30 or more hours checked into a building during any seven-day period
- Any combination or number of visits that is deemed excessive by a professional staff member of WKU Housing & Residence Life

Residents should always work out an agreement with a roommate for overnight guests. Guests must remain with the residents at all times.

### **Confiscated Property**

Items in violation will be confiscated by hall staff and disposed of unless the student makes arrangements to collect the items and remove them from the hall within 10 business days.

Certain items including but not limited to alcohol, alcohol containers, tobacco or nicotine products or delivery devices, and fake IDs may be disposed of and not returned to the student.

### **Consolidation**

Students are assigned accommodations assuming double occupancy of rooms unless alternative arrangements are made. If a vacancy occurs in a room due to the withdrawal of one of the residents the remaining resident has the following options:

- Pay the additional fee necessary to occupy the room for the remainder of the semester as a private
- Request a room change with someone who currently has no roommate
- Allow the hall director to assign a new resident to the room or agree to move to another room that has only one occupant.

If a student refuses/fails to comply with consolidation procedures, they may be automatically charged for the fee for a private room.

### **Darts and Dart Boards**

Darts and Dart Boards are not permitted in the residence halls.

### **Drones**

Drones are prohibited from being used, stored, and/or charged in all university-managed residence halls, apartments, and on-campus.

[University Drone Policy](#)

## **Drugs**

Use, possession, or distribution of drugs, controlled substances or drug paraphernalia may be cause for dismissal from the residence hall, as well as other disciplinary and police action.

## **Electrical Outlets**

The following policies concerning the use of electrical outlets must be followed:

- In each duplex electrical wall outlet, no more than four appliances can be plugged in at any one time.
- All major appliances must be either plugged directly into the wall outlet or into a heavy-duty extension cord plugged directly into the wall outlet. Multi-outlet extension cords and daisy chaining are prohibited.
- Six-way adapters, power taps, and electrical bars are prohibited and will be removed by the HRL staff.
- Use of surge protectors for computer equipment, TVs, game consoles, and sound equipment is permitted. Surge protectors must be UL (Underwriters Laboratories) listed to qualify. UL indicates that a product has been tested and meets UL's safety and sustainability standards.

Students are encouraged to remove appliances from the outlets when finished (eg: hair dryers and curling irons). All appliances draw energy even if not on, and this will protect your appliances in the event of a surge.

## **Elevator Safety**

Elevators are provided for your convenience. Anyone found tampering with or vandalizing elevators may be subject to restitution, disciplinary sanctions, and/or criminal prosecution.

Misuse or abuse of the elevators will be considered criminal mischief.

Only authorized personnel are allowed in the elevator shaft.

Students who drop keys, IDs, or other items down in the elevator shaft may be billed for their retrieval.

## **Extended Living**

The Extended Living option allows students to live in their rooms [when other halls close](#) throughout the Thanksgiving, semester, and spring break periods.

Students needing extended living but not residing in an extended living hall may be moved permanently to an extended living hall to ensure availability

### **Fighting/Unruly Conduct**

Fighting or any physical altercations are prohibited in the residence halls.

### **Fire Alarm**

All fire alarms should be regarded as actual fires. The university and state law requires all residents and their guests to adhere to the fire safety regulations of the campus. Failure to evacuate is not only a safety hazard but is a violation of university policy and state law and may result in legal or disciplinary action. When the alarm, shouted warning, or the sensation of smoke or fire has alerted you, adhere to the following:

- If there is smoke in the room, keep low to the floor.
- Before passing through any door, feel the doorknob. If it is hot, do not open the door. Before opening a door, brace yourself against the door and open it slightly. If heat and smoke are present, close the door and stay in the room.
- If you cannot leave the room, open the window. If trapped, attract the fire department by hanging an object out the window. If there is a phone in your room, call WKU Police 270-745-2548 or 911 and give the room number and specific location.
- If you can leave a room, close the door behind you.
- Go to the nearest exit or stairwell. Do not use the elevator.
- If the nearest exit is blocked by fire, heat, or smoke, go to an alternate exit.
- If all exits are blocked, go back to your room, open the windows, and attract the fire department.

After evacuating the building, move to the designated meeting location. Emergency personnel and equipment will be maneuvered around the building. Follow the directions of fire, police, and hall personnel. You may reenter the building only after the fire, and police officials have given their approval.

### **Fire Safety**

- The sounding of false fire alarms and tampering with firefighting or safety equipment including extinguishers, smoke detectors, sprinklers, exit signs, extinguishing powder, door and fire alarms is prohibited.
- Tampering with or removal of posted fire evacuation signs will result in disciplinary procedures as well as restitution for the replacement signs.

- The use of open-coil, open plate devices, open-flame devices, oil lamps, and incense are prohibited.
- Candles and candle warmers are not permitted in residence halls.
- Hallways should be clear of obstructions including, but not limited to, welcome mats, decorations, moving boxes, etc.

### **Furniture**

The following policies concerning the WKU Housing and Residence Life furniture must be followed:

- All furniture present within WKU Housing and Residence Life halls are to remain in the assigned spaces and should not be removed, replaced, or tampered with. There will be charges assessed for any items that are damaged or missing upon checkout.
- Furniture within common spaces should remain within designated locations. If it is found that common space furniture is removed, replaced, or tampered with restitution, charges may be assessed.
- Some bedroom furniture can be locked. One of the dresser drawers has a clasp on it, and students can supply their own lock to secure personal possessions. The student is responsible for keeping up with the key or combination. If a lock needs to be removed by maintenance, there will be a charge assessed, and proof of contents will be required.
- Beds cannot be bunked in residence hall rooms.
- Bed risers are prohibited.
- Students with adjustable height beds capable of being raised more than 36 inches off the ground have been provided with one guardrail. Guardrails have been installed by Western Kentucky University Housing and Residence Life at no cost to the student and are required to remain installed when beds are raised more than 36 inches (from the bottom of the frame) off the ground.
- Concrete blocks are not permitted in the residence halls.
- Homemade lofts are not permitted in the residence halls. Most residence halls have beds that can be lofted safely using the furniture provided. If a student opts to raise or lower their bed, the student should submit a maintenance request.
- Waterbeds are not allowed in residence halls.

### **Gambling**

Gambling, in any form, is prohibited on campus.

### **HVAC Usage**

Each room comes equipped with its own Heating and Air Conditioning (HVAC) unit. To ensure the units operate properly, residents are prohibited from placing any items/furniture directly in front of the unit that would block the air intake.

Additionally, residents are also prohibited from placing anything inside of the unit, including the vents, as this may block air coming from the unit.

### **Identification/ID Card Policy**

Students are expected to always carry their valid student identification card and to present it upon request by university officials including, but not limited to University Police, faculty, Housing & Residence Life staff, and other staff of the institution.

- The University may confiscate any ID card that has been misused, duplicated, or altered.
- Cards may be retained temporarily while their validity is checked.
- A student may possess only one ID card.
- Use of the ID card by any person other than the person to whom it was issued or use of the card under false pretenses is a violation of the Code of Conduct.

Possession of false identification (fake ID) is prohibited. False identification cards may be confiscated by WKU staff. In addition, the misrepresentation of any person in any WKU residence hall through false identification may be referred to the WKU Police Department for investigation and possible criminal charges.

WKU ID Center: [www.wku.edu/idcenter](http://www.wku.edu/idcenter)

### **Internet/WiFi Usage**

Each residence hall room is equipped with both hard wired and wireless internet. For more information or for troubleshooting, call the ITS Helpdesk at (270) 745-7000 between the hours of 8AM-4:30PM Monday through Friday.

Most devices can get access to the internet by just connecting to **WKU-WIRELESS** or by plugging in an ethernet cable into the device and wall port.

The ITS Service Desk provides instructions for common devices on campus in the Knowledge Base.

If you are unable to find instructions for your device, or get it connected to the internet, please contact the ITS Service Desk online.

WKU ITS: [wku.edu/its/service-desk/](http://wku.edu/its/service-desk/)

## **Kitchens**

Kitchens are provided on each floor of the residence halls. For safety and sanitation reasons, food cannot be left unattended when cooking; personal trash is not to be left in the kitchens, and dishes and cooking supplies cannot be left or stored in the kitchens. Items left for an extended period may be discarded by HRL staff per the abandoned property policy.

## **Laundry**

Laundry facilities with washers and dryers are available in all residence halls. Laundry machines are available to use at any time, with no additional cost. Clothing or laundry supplies including, but not limited to detergent, fabric softener, hampers, and baskets that are left unattended for an extended period may be discarded by HRL staff as abandoned property. Additionally, WKU is not responsible for clothes left unattended.

[www.wku.edu/housing/resources/laundry.php](http://www.wku.edu/housing/resources/laundry.php)

## **Lobbies**

The lobby area is available to the residents and their guests 24 hours a day when the building is open. If residents or guests in the lobby become loud and unruly, they will be asked to leave the building. No furniture in the lobby should be removed from the lobby.

## **Mail**

USPS and campus mail are picked up and delivered to the halls daily except for Sundays and holidays. Campus mail may be used for University business and does not require postage. Mailboxes for the residents are located on the first floor of each hall.

## **Maintenance**

### *General Maintenance*

Maintenance requests may be reported by students and staff at any time.

### *Pest Control*

The residence halls are treated for most pests and insects on a regular basis, but if your room needs to be sprayed, submit a maintenance request and it will be taken care of on an individual basis. To minimize the chance of pests, keep your room and kitchens clean and store food in closed containers.

[WKU Housing Maintenance Requests](#)

### **Motorized/Electronic Vehicles**

Motorized vehicles and personal electric vehicles, including but not limited to hover boards, self-balancing scooters, and other similar equipment are prohibited from being used, assembled, stored and/or charged in all university-managed residence halls and apartments.

### **Official Withdrawal**

To properly and officially check-out/withdraw from the residence hall, residents must:

- Remove personal property from their side of the room
- Remove trash and/or unwanted materials (i.e. coat hangers, cardboard boxes, etc.)
- Sweep, vacuum, and/or mop floor and wipe furniture off, on their side of the room
- Place furniture in the location it was in when you moved in
- Turn in the room key to the front desk
- Sign the Express Checkout Envelope

Residents who do not officially check-out/withdraw will be charged \$150.

### **Part-Time Students**

Residents, who may need to drop to part-time status, must get approval from HRL to remain in residence halls. Residents who are only enrolled part-time may be asked to leave the halls at any time if they are involved in violations of University Policy. At WKU, part-time status is considered for any course load that falls below 12 attempted credit hours during the academic semesters.

### **Pets**

Pets, with the exception of fish, are not allowed in residence halls. All aggressive and poisonous fish are prohibited. Each resident may have one fish tank under 10 gallons.

Touching, harassing, injuring or killing any wildlife on campus is prohibited.

Cleaning and damage fees will be added after the space is reviewed by Housing/Facilities Operations staff. Professionally trained service dogs and emotional support animals are not considered pets.

Failure to comply with the pet policy and guidelines will result in referral through the conduct process. HRL is authorized to enter spaces to verify the presence of an unauthorized animal.

The prohibition of pets in residential communities does not apply to the use of an assistive animal. If you require the use of an assistive animal, you must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center (SARC) to ensure your compliance with the proper registration and approval procedures. HRL will communicate final approval prior to the assistive animal moving into the residential space.

<https://www.wku.edu/sarc/>

### **Quiet Hours**

24 Hour Courtesy Hours - courtesy hours are always in effect. If someone asks you to decrease the noise level in your room, you should comply with that request.

Quiet Hours are observed from 10:00pm to 8:00am Sunday-Thursday and Midnight-8:00am Friday-Saturday. Quiet hours mean that there should be no noise heard outside your room with the door closed.

During finals week, 24-hour quiet hours are in effect.

Unruly guests may be asked to leave the building by hall staff if they refuse to comply with the request of staff or residents to decrease the noise level.

Stereo equipment, amplifiers, and/or speakers may be required to be removed from a room as a conduct outcome.

### **Radio Transmissions**

Radio transmission is not permitted in the residence halls.

### **Residential Room Access**

#### *Electronic Access (Southwest)*

Students can access their individual residence hall room by utilizing their WKU student ID.

If a student loses their ID, the student should visit the ID center and purchase a new ID within three business days. Students can temporarily check out a physical key at the front desk to access their room. The physical key should be returned upon obtaining a new ID. Failure to return the physical key is considered a lost key, and the student will be charged \$40.

*Physical Room Keys (Bates-Runner, Gilbert, Kentucky Street, McCormack, Meredith, Minton, McLean, Munday, Normal, Pearce Ford Tower, Regents, Rodes Harlin, Zacharias)*

Each student is issued one key at check-in. Keys are to be returned at the end of the academic year, and/or when the student moves out. Failure to return the key is considered a lost key, and the student will be charged \$40.

If a student loses their key, they should immediately report the lost key to the front desk. One spare key to each room is immediately available for checkout, and a student has three days to return the spare key if the original key is found.

For security, if a key is permanently lost or a key is stolen, a key core change can be requested immediately. A charge of \$40 will be billed to the student through Housing. Payment is due at the time of billing, and failure to pay will incur a transcript hold.

WKU Apartment keys will be billed at actual cost to the student.

### **Roommate Agreements**

The Roommate Lifestyle Agreement is a contract drafted by and agreed to by a roommate pair. Roommate Lifestyle Agreements outline the standards roommates will work to uphold throughout the duration of their roommate relationship. Roommate Lifestyle Agreements help roommates determine their expectations of one another, encourage communication between roommate pairs, and can help resolve conflicts through a process called mediation. Roommate Lifestyle Agreements are introduced to roommate pairs during the first-floor meeting of the semester.

Roommate pairs who experience conflict are encouraged to try to resolve the conflict by openly and calmly communicating. Roommate Lifestyle Agreements can be renegotiated and updated at any time by roommate pairs. Roommate pairs unable to negotiate conflict on their own are encouraged to seek out the assistance of their Resident Assistants and/or Residence Hall Directors.

### **Safety Checks**

Safety checks are to ensure the safety and sanitation conditions of each room. They are conducted by members of the residence hall staff and take place on the first Wednesday of every month, except for December and January\*. Safety check inspections take place between the hours of 10:00 am and 10:00 pm on the scheduled days. It is not necessary for you to be present during these checks. Any policy violations or confiscated items will be documented, and students will be provided with a notice for corrective action. HRL Staff will conduct follow-up of the space within 2-3 business days

*\*Rooms are checked during the week of winter break closedown in December. Occupied extended living spaces will be checked on the first Wednesday that the university is open during January.*

## **Security**

Each residence hall desk is staffed 24 hours a day, and closed-circuit cameras are used to monitor entrances and exits to each building. Any attempt to circumvent the security measures is a violation of policy and may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from the residence halls.

The Kentucky Street Apartments has a service desk that is open Monday - Thursday 7 AM to 9 PM and Fridays 7 AM to 6 PM. During the weekends the desk is closed. If there is ever a time the desk is closed, and you need assistance, there is a posted on-call number that will connect you with staff.

## **Smoking Policy**

Western Kentucky University is a 100% smoke & tobacco-free campus. [WKU Policy # 0.2110](#)

WKU Housing and Residence Life prohibits the possession, furnishing, or use of tobacco/alternative nicotine products in the residence halls. Tobacco/alternative nicotine products include, but are not limited to, cigarettes (traditional, e-cigarettes and vaping mechanisms) chew, nicotine pouches, pipes, cigars, hookah and water pipes. Residents must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and University policies governing the use and possession of these products.

## **Solicitation/Commercial Activity**

Commercial solicitation is prohibited. It is prohibited for vendors and organizations seeking funds, services, or memberships to solicit or attempt to sell products in the halls. However, solicitation for certain worthy causes or those in the best interest of the university community may be authorized to take place in the main lobby area with approval.

No one is allowed to solicit door-to-door.

Residents are not permitted to operate any type of business out of their room.

## **Sprinklers**

Students are prohibited from touching the sprinkler system, including but not limited to being struck by an object, having items hung from the sprinkler, etc.

Additionally, no object should be placed near the sprinkler to prevent the effective function of the sprinkler system from suppressing a fire.

### **Tornado Procedures**

If a tornado warning or alarm is issued, it is important for you to move from your room to a designated safe area, away from the top floors of the residence halls and any areas having exterior windows or glass. Your hall staff will direct you to the designated safe area in your hall. Timeliness and cooperation are of utmost importance. Ask members of your hall staff for more information regarding tornado procedures.

<https://www.wku.edu/emergency/tornado.php>

### **Trash Removal**

You are responsible for the removal of all personal trash from the building. Trash liners may be obtained at your lobby desk. All halls have a compactor located outside. All room trash should be taken to the compactor. Dispose of carpets and other large items in the designated areas. Failure to properly dispose of trash will result in disciplinary sanctions and/or restitution.

### **Vandalism/Damage**

Anyone caught damaging university or residence hall property will be subject to disciplinary sanction, possible legal prosecution, restitution, and may be subject to removal from campus housing.

### **Video Surveillance**

Residents are not permitted to install any camera systems to capture activity inside or outside of their residence hall room. This includes cameras in your private or shared living space, as well as doorbell or peephole cameras placed to view activity outside your residence hall door. For questions, please see the [WKU ITS Video Surveillance Systems policy](#).

### **Visitation**

*WKU Residence Halls have 24-hour visitation.*

- All guests must check in at the desk with one of the following. WKU HRL will hold the ID until the guest's departure.
  - WKU ID
  - Driver's License

- Passport
- Government Issued ID
- Guests must be escorted by a resident when in the building and must use the designated restroom.
- Guests should not be left in the building while the resident is not there.
- Residents must check out each guest as they leave the building.
- Residents are responsible for the actions of their guests and are highly encouraged to talk to their roommates about guests and visitors.
- Unruly guests may be asked to leave the building by hall staff.

#### *Prospective Student Visitation*

- Student recruits (athletic, admissions, or other University programs) need to register with HRL ([housing@wku.edu](mailto:housing@wku.edu)) at least 48 hours prior to the visit.
- There is not a charge for a prospective student to stay overnight in WKU on-campus housing, so long as the prospective student (or someone on the behalf of the prospective student) has scheduled a WKU campus visit with HRL ahead of time.

#### *Underage Guests*

- No overnight guests under the age of 18 are allowed.
- No guests under the age of 18 will be checked in unless they are a WKU student with a valid WKU ID.
- Babysitting is not permitted.
- Infants and minor children must be accompanied by their parents/guardians and may visit for short periods of time.

#### *Unauthorized Guest*

- For any WKU student to be considered an authorized guest, they must adhere to all visitation procedures of the hall in which they are visiting including visitation hours, check-in/out procedures and being properly escorted.
- Residents are responsible for the actions of their guests.

#### **Weapons**

Possession or use of firearms, explosives (including fireworks), dangerous chemicals, ammunition, or other dangerous weapons or brandishing of any weapon or any other object in a menacing or threatening manner on institutionally controlled property is prohibited.

Weapons may be defined as any object or substance designed to inflict a wound, cause injury or incapacitate.

Weapons may include but are not limited to all firearms, pellet guns, dart guns, tasers, stun guns, paintball guns, splat guns, slingshots, martial arts devices, switchblades, swords, decorative weapons, or replicas.

Weapons will be confiscated by HRL staff and/or University Police.

### **Windows**

Objects are not to be thrown out of windows, and screens are not to be tampered with. Lights and other items should not be displayed in windows.

Tampering or removal of window safety equipment may result in disciplinary sanctions and a \$40.00 charge to replace the damaged equipment.