



FALL 2020 RECOMMENDED FRATERNITY GUIDELINES

These guidelines were developed for fraternity housing for our FarmHouse chapters and associations. Students who move, and associations that manage properties, should follow current health recommendations and mandates as they evolve. Those recommendations may come from the university, local government, federal government or Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Please be mindful and informed of the guidance and direction given by your institution as it relates to housing operations.

These guidelines/suggestions are based on the current societal conditions that exist as of July 20, 2020. As public health protocols change with the re-opening phases in your state, the protocols contained herein may be modified to adapt to the evolving circumstances.

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LEASE AGREEMENTS

As you might expect, many institutions are changing or modifying their semester start, end, and/or in-person academic dates. This means they will also change the language, terms and costs within their residential lease agreements. We recommend you stay informed of the changes being made by your university (maybe ask for a copy) and revise your association's lease with the chapter and/or students accordingly.

A few factors to consider:

- When is the start date and when is the end date? Do you have a staggered move-in? How do each reflect the term of the lease?
- Has the university announced the term to end by Thanksgiving? Do exams continue afterwards? Do you modify the term of your lease?
- Will the amount you assess students be the same/less/more than prior years as a result of early move in, late move out, etc.?
- What language have you included in your lease to address an outbreak in your house, violation of your rules that result in an outbreak, etc.?

Be prepared for students not to return to your facilities after Thanksgiving. Adjustments may be made to meet these timelines. Additionally, keep in mind an outbreak in your facility or campus could require all members to be sent home to keep COVID-19 from spreading.

MOVE-IN AND COMING BACK TO YOUR CAMPUS

Step 1: Identify where tenants are coming from

- *Current Hot Spot Areas*: Subject to 14-day self-isolation regardless of whether symptomatic.
- *Out-of-State*: Subject to five-day self-isolation if no symptoms. Subject to 14-day self-isolation if symptoms present or have been exposed to COVID-19 positive persons.
- *In-State*: No isolation necessary if no symptoms and not in a hot spot area. Subject to 14-day self-isolation if symptoms present or have been exposed to COVID-19 positive persons.

Step 2: Schedule staggered time frames for move-in

- You should consider up-to-date occupancy requirements to manage move-in time frames.
- Minimize the masses for move-in by scheduling three-to-five-day move-in increments so that maximum occupancy and gatherings requirements can be achieved without significant delays for ingress and egress protocols. (For example, no more than 10 people on one floor, monitored by a “one comes out/one goes in technique” once capacity is achieved. This is currently implemented by local grocery stores, retail, restaurants, etc.)
- Students who are required to self-isolate may want to come first so they can isolate in a designated room or space before others arrive. For example, hot spots first, out-of-state second, in-state third. In-state students should not be at a “bed choice” disadvantage by moving in last.
- Housing Corporation/Associations and property managers should make every attempt to turn properties as soon as they are vacant to allow for early and staggered move-in when possible.

Step 3- Implement safety precautions

- These should be consistent with current recommendations from your local county health department.
- Occupancy requirements---no more than 5/10 in a gathering, given the city/county/state guidelines at the time of move-in.
- Temperature readers to verify no fever before entering the building. Stamps or bracelets can be placed on hands wrists to affirm temperature has been taken and is normal. Check with your campus health center for additional health precautions.
- Masks should be required to be worn before entering buildings.
- Property managers should provide hand sanitizer, bleach solution, and paper towels at end/entry of hallways and in common areas.
- One roommate moves in at a time in individual units with minimal assistance from others.
- Hallways and stairwells designated “One-Way In” and “One-Way Out” to avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Only family members in confined spaces at one time or limit the total number to three at a time.
- Limit number of family member “helpers” permitted in building (two helpers maximum)
- Parking lot/driveways and other unloading concerns:
 - If possible, parking lots and driveways should be one way.

- Unloading areas should be limited to require unloading of only what can be carried in one load, and drivers must leave the loading area to pull around again for another unloading round. If students have no other helpers, they must park and unload from a parking space.
- The Housing Corporation shall identify what high-touch areas in facilities have been wiped by cleaning crews with sanitizing solutions (doorknobs, refrigerator handles, cabinet pulls, toilet handles, etc.). Do NOT make the claim that an area has been “sanitized.” That term implies a sense of security from the virus that cannot be guaranteed. We recommend using the term “cleaned with a sanitizing solution.”
- Consider a **“Three-Day Certification”** to verify the facility has been sealed off from any contact between cleaning/sanitizing and the actual move-in date as a “dormancy period” for any possible virus to die. Entry doors could be tagged or taped off with the date of cleaning and sanitizing noted on tag/tape.

STAYING INFORMED AND UP-TO-DATE ON PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS

As the fall semester approaches, new guidance and restrictions are likely to emerge from local, state, and federal governments. The health department may designate specific gathering requirements for your county in the future. **We are anticipating that there will be specific limits coming from your campus officials related to chapter housing and social gatherings.**

Please be sure to stay up-to-date with your local and campus officials and their requirements.

GUIDANCE CONCERNING OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

To more effectively restrict contamination/spreading of COVID-19, the following guidelines are strongly recommended for adoption by the Housing Corporation/Association:

- Building access is to be limited to those who are living in the facility. General members should not have access to the house. Chapters will be strongly encouraged to meet in other spaces if needed while still observing social distancing guidelines.
- Decontamination will be key for chapter facilities. Sanitizers and cleaning stations need to be made available to all chapters.

- Isolation/Containment measures to suspected cases need to follow recommendations provided by the CDC, your local health department and university.
- Isolation measures and reporting must come from the Housing Corporation/Association
- Chapter facilities should be provided with cleaning products for individual residents (hand sanitizers and surface cleaners).

STUDENT/TENANT CONSIDERATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Communication among roommates before move-in is key, whether they know each other or not.

- Students should talk to their roommates and should establish contact well in advance of the actual move-in date.
- Determine where all tenants are from and what safety protocols students will need to agree on. Is any tenant required to self-isolate? Adjust each individual tenant move-in dates accordingly.
- Tenants should wipe down and clean rooms to their own health and sanitizing comfort levels. **Tenants must take accountability** for sanitizing areas themselves in addition to what Housing Corporations have done. Students must be responsible for themselves and others around them during this time.

DINING AND MEALS IN FACILITY

We recommend you ask your meal service provider to give you their plan for proper sanitation before, during and after each meal. If you do not have a food service but have a chef for your facility you will need to provide instructions and cleaning solutions for them. Food service providers should be wearing a mask *at all times* on property.

We recommend the following items to limit the possibility of disease spread:

- Plexiglass near and around food preparation and fresh food storage (grab and go meal items, breakfast food, etc.).
- No buffet meals allowed. All meals should be served on plate by the meal service provider/chef.
- Staggered meal times based on size of chapter. Meal times rotate with cleaning between. Lunches for example, 11:15 a.m., 12 p.m. 12:45 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. This allows a 40-minute meal time and 5 minute cleaning period. You may have

chapter members sign-up for a designated meal time based on class schedule.
This may also assist if an individual tests positive and you need to contact trace.

- We encourage members to sit 6 feet apart or every other chair.
- Masks should be worn to and from meals.
- We discourage chapter meals all at one time such as “formal dinner.”

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND SCENARIOS FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

The key factor in navigating move-in is to **remember that each individual’s perception of what should or should not be exercised is not the LAW.** Exposure or risk of exposure to COVID-19 is not a crime or illegal. All tenants should be morally and socially accountable for their individual actions and should practice all recommended public health protocols.

Scenario #1

A student’s lease begins in August and the room is available for move-in. The student’s roommate has already moved in. The student discovers that his roommate is a summer intern at a hospital. The roommate’s duties at the hospital put the roommate in direct contact with potentially positive COVID-19 patients during the summer months. Roommate wears a protective suit while at the hospital and follows all guidelines for sanitizing and public interaction protocols. Student is not comfortable with his roommate’s internship and the possibility of creating a greater risk of exposure to the student. Student has not moved in yet and wants to know what legal options/choices are available.

Q: Can the student terminate the lease based on the concerns with the roommate’s summer internship at the hospital?

A: No. The lease cannot be terminated. COVID-19 is not a legal basis to terminate a lease contract. The student is responsible for paying the full term of the lease agreement.

Q: What choices/options does the student have?

A: The student can choose to delay move-in for a few weeks or months if the student feels that time will improve the public situation. However, the student must still pay the rent regardless of whether the student lives in the apartment or not. The student is paying for a space to be available. It is the student’s choice whether to actually utilize the space or not.

Scenario #2:

A roommate is assigned by Housing Corporation/Association/property administration to a “bedroom” in the chapter facility. During communications with the incoming roommate,

the student learns that a housemate/roommate has been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person and has had consistent contact with this person. The roommate has self-isolated from others with the exception of the COVID-19 positive person, as this is the roommate's significant other. The roommate has had no symptoms for more than 14 days and plans to proceed with move-in to the apartment. Student is uncomfortable with the incoming roommate's potential for exposing the student to COVID-19.

Q: Can the roommate be prevented from moving in due to previous exposure to a COVID-19 positive person?

A: The Public Health protocols recommend a 14-day self-isolation period if exposed to the COVID-19 virus. If the roommate has had no symptoms in the 14-day period, the roommate has exercised appropriate social distancing measures. There is no prohibition to the roommate's move in simply because the roommate's previous exposure makes the student uncomfortable.

Q: Can the Housing Corporation/Association be prevented from assigning and permitting the roommate to move into the bedroom designated to the roommate?

A: No. The Housing Corporation/Association is free to make room assignments consistent with the terms and conditions of the lease contract. COVID-19 is not a legal factor in this determination.

Q: What choices/options does the student have?

A: Developing roommate rapport and boundaries to ease concerns is important. However, the roommate has followed the recommended protocols and has not done anything wrong. An individual's personal comfort levels are not the standard (or requirement) for anyone else. The student may choose to return home during the school months to avoid contact with the roommate for a few weeks. Again, the student is paying for the space to be available for the lease period, but that does not require the student to actually use the space over that period of time. The student may continually reassess the public health circumstances prior to the start of school and decide when the student is personally comfortable to move back in. That is simply a choice/option for the student. The student cannot control or dictate the decisions of the roommate.

REMEMBER, students can only control their own actions. They cannot control the actions of others, regardless of whether others' actions are outside of their own comfort level.

- Developing a roommate rapport and boundaries that everyone can agree on is important. No matter a student's personal comfort level, COVID-19 is not unlawful, and failure of others to take the same level of precaution as you believe necessary does not provide a legal remedy to make anyone act in accordance with his individual wishes.

- All people in society must learn a valuable lesson to effectively assess what one can control, recognize what one cannot, and make effective decisions accordingly.
- It is also important to “see the bigger picture” for society as a whole. While a student in Scenario #1 may be personally uncomfortable, first responders and health care workers are making sacrifices for others. We need to encourage a level of introspection to see the situation objectively before panicking about individual/personal concerns.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We are cognizant that we are navigating this pandemic with a degree of uncertainty. It will be paramount for all Housing Corporations/Associations to be flexible and as understanding as possible to certain student situations. The below list are items that we do NOT have answers/guidance for:

- On-campus housing move-in protocols and behavioral expectations by your campus.
- Emergency Testing/Quarantine Protocol for your campus.
- Designated “Quarantine space” in on/off-campus complexes are not yet identified if different from your facility.
- Availability of personal protection equipment for students living at off-campus locations (how much will your campus provide and what will need to be provided by the Housing Corporation/Association?)

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- Essentials article "[Why COVID 19 Is the Biggest Unregistered Unofficial Event of our Lifetime.](#)"
- [ACHA Considerations for Reopening Institutions of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era](#)
- [CDC Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education](#)
- [Holmes Murphy COVID-19 Resources](#)
- [UpperCrust Food Service Preparation Plan](#)
- [Greek House Chefs Foodservice Plan](#)
- [NIC Think Tank Resources](#)
- [James R. Favor Healthy Living Guidelines](#)