Roommate Conflict Principles

Aligning with the Student Affairs Learning Outcomes and our mission and values (link), Residence Life and First Year Experience (RLFYE) is committed to the socioemotional and interpersonal development of all students. Our approach to disagreements and conflict between those in a shared living space is intended to support this development. We are guided by some important beliefs about students and these types of conflicts:

- Learning to navigate disagreements in a productive and self-directed way is an important skill for students to master as a part of their holistic educational development.
- Students are fully capable of self-directed problem-solving. Both student and professional staff support are intended to support student-led efforts.
- Most issues between roommates are resolvable through conversation and compromise. Very few conflicts do not have a reasonable solution.
- All students should respect the Basic Rights of Residential Students in Appendix 4 of the Student Conduct Code as well as all other parts of the Student Conduct Code.

Roommate issues can be uncomfortable, but there is much to gain from successfully working through conflict. Here are some important things to remember as we work together to solve a roommate issue:

- Roommate issues are not win/lose situations. The goal is to find livable conditions for you and your roommate. It is in your best interest to understand your roommate’s needs and find what you both can agree on.
- Abusive behavior (including harassment) is clearly defined in the Student Conduct Code. Additionally, a safety threat is credible evidence of imminent physical danger. We take claims of abusive behavior and safety concerns extremely seriously, and it is quite rare that the actions in a roommate situation rise to this level, even if the conflict is uncomfortable.
- Discomfort is an important catalyst for growth, and uncomfortable circumstances may not elicit immediate action.
- Changing living habits and patterns takes time. Patience is a critical component of successful change.
- We prioritize issues based on what students share with us directly, as opposed to what might be communicated home or speculated on. Please share all relevant information directly with RLFYE staff in a timely manner so we can best address the situation.

To support student development in their residential experience, here are some ways that RLFYE will and will not facilitate interpersonal conflicts.

RLFYE student and professional staff will:

- Help students facilitate their own conflict resolution and problem solving
- Consider all available information provided to us directly from students
- Gather each perspective of an issue or conflict
- Support all students involved in a conflict based on their individual needs

RLFYE student and professional staff will not:

- Consider only one side of the story
- Act on claims about past action
- Relocate a resident who does not want to be relocated except in situations involving a credible and verified safety threat