



Residence Life Handbook

2018-2019

The Office of Residence Life
360-383-3008
Syre 208

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Welcome to Whatcom

Whatcom welcomes you to your new home!

We are glad that you are joining our Residence Life community. As a member of Residence Life, you have the unique opportunity to help us create a community that will enrich the lives of students at Whatcom for years to come.

How can you do this? It's simple:

- BUILD COMMUNITY. Get to know the other residents.
- ENGAGE. Participate in programs and trips. Use your voice.
- SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS. Ask for help when you need it. We can connect you with campus resources.
- BUILD EQUITY. Our residents are from all around the world and all walks of life. Treat everyone with respect and kindness.

The following sections contain valuable information that will make your housing experience at WCC more rewarding. It is your responsibility to read and understand the policies in this handbook.

If you have any questions or if there is anything we can do to make your stay more positive, just let us know. We are always happy to help! The Office of Residence Life is thrilled to welcome you to Whatcom Community College's student housing community.

New policies and procedures may be implemented throughout the year. Residents will receive notice of any policy changes via email.

The Office of Residence Life

SYRE 208

Residencelife@whatcom.edu

360-383-3008

Residence Life Staff

DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND RESIDENCE LIFE

The Director for Community Standards and Residence Life is responsible for the administrative leadership of student housing and ensuring that the department is providing a safe and positive residential living experience. This includes supervision of professional staff along with the student conduct process.

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8am-5pm
Location: Laidlaw (LDC) - Room 208

Phone: (360) 383-3073
Email: rbutler@whatcom.edu

RESIDENCE LIFE COORDINATOR

The Residence Life Coordinator is responsible for day-to-day operations including facilities management, billing and accounts, occupancy management, and residence life conduct cases.

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8am-5pm
Location: Syre (SSC) - Room 208C

Phone: (360) 383-3008
Email: mwhalen@whatcom.edu

RESIDENCE LIFE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

The Residence Life Administrative Assistant facilitates student placement and lease signing in addition to administrative tasks related to Residence Life.

Office Hours: Vary
Location: Syre (SSC) - Room 208C

Phone: (360) 383-3008
Email: residencelife@whatcom.edu

RESIDENT ADVISORS

Our Resident Advisors are a team of student staff members who live in each building and work to help students feel welcome, assist in emergencies, and develop programming to build community. They are also able to assist residents with issues, concerns, and help them get connected to campus resources. Resident Assistants (RAs) provide on-duty coverage from 8am-8pm and are on call for emergencies during off hours.

Non-Discrimination Statement

We are committed to providing an inclusive community that promotes understanding and appreciation for all races, religions, national origins, socio-economic classes, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, physical & learning abilities, and ages. We are dedicated to recruiting, selecting, and retaining a competent staff that reflects the cultural and personal diversity of our resident population. We recognize the essential role of equity in promoting educational excellence, and provide routine opportunities for personal and professional development for our faculty, staff and students.

FERPA

Once we have received a student's housing application, we are not able to communicate any details about a student's room assignment, payment owed, or other information to parents or other individuals without a release of information signed by the student.

Accommodations

Residence Life allows certified service animals and emotional support animals (ESAs) in housing once they have been vetted by Residence Life. There is an approval process for ESAs which includes required

documentation from a health professional. Upon approval, a resident will receive instructions and policies for keeping and caring for an approved ESA. To apply for approval contact Residence Life.

Residence Life Apartment options

Residence Life has rental options at three apartment complexes close to campus.

- Belleau Woods-4018 Northwest Ave. Shared 2 and 3 bedroom units.
- Cascade Meadows-455 Westerly Road. Shared 2 and 3 bedroom units.
- Village at Baker Creek-3821 Primrose Lane/ Studios, one bedroom, and shared 2 and 3 bedroom units



Application & Rental Agreement

This section is designed to explain the application and housing contract and to answer the most common questions concerning the agreements. It is the responsibility of the resident to read and understand the contract before signing. For additional information or clarification, please contact Residence Life at (360) 383-3008 or residencelife@whatcom.edu

Application

Applications, deadlines, and current rental information can be found on the Residence Life Housing website. Once a completed application has been processed, the Office of Residence Life will determine eligibility and contact applicants according to our processing schedule. Applicants will be contacted by email and applicants should check their WCC student email regularly to ensure prompt attention to any deadlines and additional information requests.

Eligibility

Whatcom Residence Life apartments are open to students who meet the eligibility requirements listed below. Applications for these units will be processed on a first come, first serve basis according to the date and time the completed application is received.

- Applicants must be 18 by the date of move-in. Students age 17 can petition to be accepted and must fulfill specific requirements.
- Residents must remain in good standing with WCC as defined in the [conduct code](#)
- Residents must be enrolled in at least 5 credits (summer exception when registered for fall)
- Residents must pass a WCC conduct history check.
- Residents must pass a criminal background check.
- Residents must not owe any outstanding rent to WCC.

Room Assignment

Room assignments shall be at the discretion of the Residence Life staff and will consider application information such as location, apartment type, and habits from the application. As a courtesy, Residence Life staff will attempt to notify residents at least 24 hours prior to the move in of a new roommate. If the resident is not available, Residence Life staff reserves the right to move in a new resident at any time.

ROOMMATE REQUESTS

Residents may request a specific roommate, and Residence Life staff will attempt to honor these requests. However, all final decisions regarding placement will be at the discretion of the Residence Life Staff.

RENTAL AGREEMENT

Rental agreements, or leases, are signed per resident and each resident is responsible for maintaining and abiding by the policies, guidelines, and expectations in the lease as well as this Residence Life Handbook.

Rent Payment

Rent payments are due on the 1st of each month and can be paid [in person or online](#). Payments made after the 5th of the month will be charged a \$75 late fee and a block will be placed on the student account preventing administrative actions until the account is brought current.

Moving In

Checking in

Residents will be provided a day/time to sign the lease and retrieve keys. At this meeting, residents will receive basic information and a welcome packet, which includes Resident Advisor's name and contact information, emergency numbers for the apartment complex, and local amenities information. An appointment will also be made for the resident and Resident Advisor to complete a walk-through of the apartment to establish move-in conditions.

Room Condition Reports

As part of the check-in and check-out procedures, a Resident Advisor conducts an inspection of the resident's room and common areas of the apartment. The move-in inspection is used to determine potential damage and residents will be held responsible for any damages and consequent fines upon move out. Residents can receive copies of condition reports at any time by contacting Residence Life office.

What to Bring

Sometimes students bring more items than they need. A good rule of thumb is that if you are bringing more than reasonably fits into one vehicle, you are bringing too much. Common items to bring are:

- Bedding (including regular twin sheets)
- Toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothbrush, etc.)
- Towels
- Alarm Clock
- Hangers
- Prescription Medicine
- Important documents (ID, passport/Visa)
- Toilet Paper
- Cleaning Supplies (broom, mop, soaps, etc.)
- Health Insurance Information
- Clothing (including rain gear)
- First Aid/Emergency Kit
- Clothes Hamper and Laundry Detergent
- Re-Useable Dishes/Utensils
- UL-Rated Power Strip and Device Chargers
- Backpack
- Radio/Small Television/Computer
- Desk Lamp
- Small Decorations
- Food

Apartment Key

PROPER USE

Residents will be provided with a door and mail key at lease signing. Keys are the sole responsibility of the resident. Keys are not to be loaned, copied or left unattended. Allowing non-residents to use resident keys is considered a serious violation that jeopardizes the safety and security of residents and their personal property. This may result in termination of your housing contract.

LOCK-OUTS

If a resident is locked out of an apartment during business hours the Residence Life office can check out a lock-out key which must be returned in 24 hours. If a lock-out key is not returned the resident may be charged to re-key the apartment. Outside of business hours (5pm – 8am), residents can call their Resident Advisor or the after-hours maintenance number listed on the emergency sheet on the door.

LOST/STOLEN KEYS

Residence Life staff must be informed immediately if a resident loses their key(s). The resident will be charged a fee of \$25 per key and, if necessary, for rekeying locks.

Orientation

New resident orientation is mandatory and required to remain eligible for the refundable portion of your deposit upon conclusion of occupancy. There are several orientation sessions to choose from each quarter and residents will register for a session at the lease signing. In addition, all new students are required to attend the [Whatcom Wave Orientation](#), a half-day event for new students to learn about resources, success strategies, and expectations at Whatcom.

Community Living

Good Neighbor, Good Roommate Guidelines

These guidelines have been established to create a safe environment and help students be successful in residence life. The outline below covers standards of behavior which encourage freedom and respect among all residents. Residents who are held responsible for their behavior so it is important to be a good roommate and a good neighbor.

Living with Roommates

We encourage all residents to have a conversation with their roommates within the first few days of moving in together. It is important to talk about living preferences and lay out clear boundaries during this process. Some of the most common roommate challenges are:

- Use of common space (dishes, decorations, scheduling)
- Noise
- Guests, significant others
- Cultural differences, respect
- Sharing items (food, toiletries, dishes, etc.)
- Cleanliness
- Conflict Resolution

While sharing an apartment with others, you will have the opportunity to meet people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Your interactions with them can be one of the most interesting aspects of your college experience. In the event you find yourself in conflict with another resident, Whatcom has some tips:

- Use difference as a basis for enrichment. Attempt to understand one another.
- Address your conflict with the person directly before approaching a staff member.
- Be assertive and respectful in your interactions.

If you cannot resolve the challenge on your own, or if you feel unsafe, Residence Life staff can help mediate the conflict or refer you to someone who can. Ask your RA for assistance.

The campus incident reporting system is available 24/7. Through this system, you can file a report that will be routed for follow up to a staff member on campus. The Incident Report system is generally reserved for violations of Policy, Property, or Person. The Incident Report form can be found here: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WhatcomCC&layout_id=8

Quiet Hours

Quiet hours are in effect from 8pm-8am daily. Noise audible through a closed door will be considered excessive and in violation of the quiet hours policy. Outside of quiet hours, we ask that residents maintain a courteous atmosphere for those who choose to sleep and study throughout the day. Televisions, game systems, and music should not be played at excessive volume.

Waste Disposal

Each resident is responsible for disposing of their own trash and recycling. Recycling must be clean and sorted. All trash should be contained in bags and placed in designated receptacles. Do not leave trash or recycle on the ground. Apartment complexes will fine you for trash left outside your front door.

Room Changes/Transfers

Room transfers are at the discretion of the Residence Life Staff. Transfers are not available during the first 3 weeks of the quarter. After 3 weeks, you may request a room change in writing to residencelife@whatcom.edu explaining the reason for your request. Residence Life Staff will attempt to accommodate individual requests but cannot guarantee them. If your request is approved, you may be charged a \$75 transfer fee.

Cohabitation

Leases are signed and rooms are assigned per person. Residents may not allow another person to reside with them or sublet their room. Those found residing in student housing without a current lease will be instructed to leave immediately and any host/permitting resident will be subject to disciplinary action and additional charges.

Vacant Rooms

There will be times when a room in an apartment is unoccupied or vacant. Residents may not enter or store their belongings in a vacant room. Any resident utilizing the space in a vacant room will be charged rent for the use of the space, cleaning fees, and any cost for damages incurred from their occupation of that space.

Living Information

Student Mail

Mail is delivered to apartment complex mailboxes Monday-Saturday. Other carriers (UPS, FedEx Etc.) may place a note inside of mailboxes or on doors which indicate alternative locations for pick up (complex office, nearby store, etc.). A key may be placed in the mailbox indicating a package in the adjacent larger mailbox. Residents are responsible for completing an address change with the US Postal Service online, the WCC office of International Programs and with WCC registration office upon move in and move out. Mail for former residents will be returned to sender.

Maintenance Services

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

Maintenance requests can be sent directly to your RA via email. By submitting this request, you are giving permission for maintenance to enter your apartment to complete the work. If your request is not resolved within 14 days, please e-mail residencelife@whatcom.edu.

EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE

For emergency maintenance issues, call the apartment complex emergency phone number listed on the emergency sheet on your front door. The following issues are generally considered emergencies:

- Plumbing (toilet is not flushing or is spewing water)
- Broken window
- Fire safety equipment issue (fire alarm is activated or beeping)
- Loss of heat or hot water
- Power outage
- Key/lock issues (cannot unlock or lock your door)
- Any situation that compromises the health or safety of residents or the community
- Occupancy

Utilities

Whatcom Community College pays all utilities on the residence life apartments to include: water, sewage, garbage, and electricity. Electricity bills over \$150 per month will be divided equally among all roommates and charged to the student accounts of each resident. Residence Life and Whatcom Community College strive for sustainability and encourage you to turn off heaters and lights and unplug small appliances before leaving the apartment each day. Please do not leave windows or balcony doors open during the winter months.

INTERNET ACCESS/PHONE

Residence Life does not provide internet or phone connections. Residents are encouraged to talk with roommates about internet and phone options and shared costs. There are several providers for Internet and phone service in the Bellingham area.

Laundry

Each apartment contains a washer and dryer. Residents are required to use washers and dryers only as intended by the manufacturer and use laundry detergent only. Problems with the machines should be reported to the Residence Life staff for maintenance.

Room Inspections

Residence Life staff perform cleaning and safety inspections on a monthly basis. If your unit does not pass inspection, a corrective list will be provided, and a follow-up inspection will be performed. If the unit still does not pass inspection, Residence Life staff may have the room cleaned and charge the resident a cleaning fee. Staff attempt to provide 48-72 hour notice before these monthly inspections.

Pest control

Pests are common in communal living spaces. To avoid pests and potential health issues, please remember to take out your trash, cover your food, and practice personal hygiene. Pests will leave evidence of their presence, even before you see them. This usually includes droppings, or nibbled food. Bed bugs will leave bites on your body. If you find evidence of bed bugs, fleas, rodents, or other pests, contact Residence Life immediately.

Health and safety checks

Staff may enter a room without notice if there is a concern for the immediate health or safety of a student. Otherwise, we do not enter an apartment to check up on students. When a parent or community member inquires about a student who has been unreachable, Residence Life staff will perform a courtesy visit to the apartment of residence. If the resident is located, they will be encouraged to contact the parent, friend, or other individual trying to reach them. Due to federal privacy laws, we will not be able to confirm with parents, friends, or other individuals that the resident has been located except in cases of emergency.

Break periods

When you leave your apartment for extended breaks or a vacation quarter, for health and safety reasons, it is important that you do the following:

- Remove all garbage from your room.
- Dispose of all perishable food items in your room.
- Close/lock windows and close blinds in your room.

Residence Life staff will conduct health and safety inspections in each room during extended breaks. If any of the above needs to be done by staff, you may be subject to a charge.

Resident Rights & Behavioral Expectations

Residence Life has established guidelines to help students be successful in the residence life apartments. Whatcom Community College and Residence Life rely on standards of conduct to guide and define acceptable behavior on issues related to behavior and property.

Residents are responsible for their own actions, the actions of their guests, and maintaining an environment that fosters academic success, safety, and the well-being of the community. If it is determined that a student has violated a policy, disciplinary actions may be implemented ranging from a warning to termination of the housing contract. Severe, continuous, or repeated violations may be subject to progressive disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the college and/or criminal charges. Bellingham Police may be called for any crime, including violence and drug and alcohol violations.

As a part of the Whatcom residential community, each resident has the following rights and responsibilities that are intended to help students develop a healthy community living environment.

Resident Rights and Responsibilities

RESIDENT RIGHTS

- Respect of self and personal belongings
- Freedom from excessive noise or disturbance during sleep and study
- A clean and safe environment
- Access to your own bedroom and common areas of apartment
- Privacy
- Fairness and due process for grievances
- Access to Residence Life staff for support

RESIDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Abide by the Residence Life Handbook and Student Code of Conduct ([Link to Code of Conduct](#))
- Consider the needs of other residents
- Respect the rights of other individuals
- Communicate needs with other residents and staff
- Support individual and campus community safety and security
- Accept responsibility for behavior at all times
- Maintain cleanliness and order of own room, bathroom, and common areas
- Honor agreed upon rent payment and charges

Student Rights and Responsibilities

All residents are obligated to abide by the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policies ([WAC 132U-125-020](#)). Enrollment in Whatcom Community College carries with it the obligation to be a responsible citizen of the college community and to treat others with respect and dignity. All students are responsible for understanding and complying with college policies and regulations along with local, state, and federal laws. The student conduct code and disciplinary procedures are implemented to assist in the protection of the rights and freedoms of all members of the college community. The

purpose of the student code is to hold students accountable while upholding their rights and responsibilities.

Prohibited conduct includes:

- Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of documents, funds, property or electronic resources
- Damage or destruction of property
- Theft of property or services
- Harassment or intimidation, including bullying or stalking, whether in person or online
- Behavior demonstrating discrimination of any kind
- Hazing
- Endangerment, assault, or infliction of personal harm
- Sexual misconduct, including harassment, intimidation and violence
- Obstruction or disruption of any college activity or property
- Failure to comply with college staff directives
- Use of weapons, firearms, explosives, dangerous devices or chemicals
- Possession or use of alcohol or drugs on college property
- Unauthorized access to restricted areas or misuse of keys
- Violations of any other College policy, rule, or procedure
- Any other action that interferes with the rights or safety of others

Residential Community Standards

TAKING CARE OF YOUR ROOM

Apartments and furnishings are the property of WCC and misuse, abuse, theft, or destruction of College or student property is prohibited.

BICYCLES

Bicycles must be stored outside. Residents are encouraged to lock their bicycles. Whatcom does not assume responsibility for loss or damage to bicycles or any other student property.

COMMON SPACE

All residents are expected to keep the common areas of the apartment clean and clutter free. When you are finished using an area, pick up after yourself by removing all garbage and cleaning the surface of the table/counter. Common Areas include: kitchen, bathroom, living room, and balconies.

DECORATIONS

Personalizing your space is encouraged and provides many students with a relaxing respite and encourages academic success. However, the following ways of personalizing your space are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action:

- Removing, customizing, or altering college provided furniture
- Items that can cause damage to walls, doors, or blinds (including but is not limited to darts, wallpaper, paint, tacks, nails, and strong adhesives. Blue painter's tape does not damage the walls and is allowed.)
- Placing items too near or in contact with heaters, smoke detectors or sprinklers
- Décor that create a hostile environment for students, guests, or staff

- Décor that is obviously intended to be pornographic, obscene or offensive
- Décor that glorifies drugs or alcohol
- Décor made from cut, resin-bearing trees or vegetation such as pine trees. Live soil plants and trees are permitted
- Items that are determined to be dangerous or cause a reasonable person to be fearful

FIRE AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Tampering with fire alarms or other safety/security equipment (smoke detectors, fire sprinklers, pull stations, window screens and fire extinguishers) is strictly prohibited.

FURNITURE

Apartments are furnished with beds, couches, dining tables, desks, and chairs. Some apartments contain dressers. If the student rearranges the furniture they are expected to return all furnishings to the original state upon move-out. No furniture is to be disassembled or removed from the apartment. For your safety, do not stack furniture. No additional large furniture is permitted. Small items (side table, chair, dresser etc.) are acceptable.

GUESTS – RESPONSIBILITY FOR

Residents are responsible for the behavior of their guests. Guests should have no known criminal background. Guests who conduct themselves in a disorderly or disturbing manner will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

GUESTS - OVERNIGHT

Overnight guests are limited to three (3) consecutive nights per quarter. Guests are only permitted in resident's room and common areas. Other rooms in the unit are not to be entered, regardless of whether or not they are currently occupied by another resident. If you permit a guest to stay in a room that has been cleaned and prepared for an incoming resident you will be charged a cleaning fee to re-clean that room.

Residents are responsible for making their guests aware of Residence Life policies. Please notify Residence Life when you are having an overnight guest. To request an exception to the guest policy contact Residence Life staff: residencelife@whatcom.edu. Previous residents who have been evicted from Residence Life apartments are not allowed as visitors or guests.

PETS

Because of the potential health problems and inconvenience to other residents, no pets are allowed in Residence Life apartments. This includes all animals including those in tanks or cages. Having unauthorized pets may result in forfeiture of security deposit.

Certified service animals and approved Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) are not considered pets. Owners of these animals must notify Residence Life staff of their presence and complete approved procedures before moving animal in.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

The following items are not permitted in the Residence Life apartments.

- Large Pieces of Furniture
- Flammable Materials & Explosives: candles, incense, camp stoves, gas grills, fireworks, gasoline, any open-flame device.
- Open Coil Equipment, Halogen Lamps, etc.
- Pets (other than certified service animals or approved ESAs)
- Hookah Pipes
- Drug/Alcohol Advertisements
- Pornographic Decorations
- Weapons
- Spray paint/wall paint
- Large Appliances
- Large Tools

SMOKING AND TOBACCO

Residents and their guests may not smoke inside Residence Life apartments. Smoking must take place at least 25 feet from the building. This includes the use of cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, vaporizers, pipes, cigars, hookahs, etc. No smoking of any kind is permitted indoors.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Drugs and alcohol are prohibited in Residence Life apartments, regardless of whether the resident or guest is of legal age. No person shall possess, use, consume, sell, manufacture, cultivate, package, or distribute a controlled or illegal drug or substance in their Residence Life apartment or on college premises. While state law permits the recreational use of marijuana, federal law prohibits such use on college property or in connection with college activities.

WEAPONS

Possession, holding, wearing, transporting, storage or presence of any firearm, dagger, sword, knife or other cutting or stabbing instrument, club, explosive device, or any other weapon apparently capable of producing bodily harm is prohibited on the college campus, subject to the following exceptions:

- a) Commissioned law enforcement personnel or legally authorized military personnel while in performance of their duties;
- b) A student with a valid concealed weapons permit may store a pistol in their vehicle parked on campus in accordance with RCW 9.41.050(2) or (3), provided the vehicle is locked and the weapon is concealed from view; or
- c) The president may grant permission to bring a weapon on campus upon a determination that the weapon is reasonably related to a legitimate pedagogical purpose. Such permission shall be in writing and shall be subject to such terms or conditions incorporated in the written permission.
- d) This policy does not apply to the possession and/or use of legal disabling chemical sprays when possessed and/or used for self-defense.

Conduct Procedures

Depending on the severity of the alleged policy violation, residents will meet with the Director of Residence Life, the Residence Life Coordinator, or a campus Conduct Officer. A meeting notice will be sent to the resident's WCC student email, which will include the following information:

- Alleged policy violated

- Date/Time Location of the alleged violation
- Date/Time/Location of the conduct meeting

During the meeting, the staff member will explain the resident’s rights and responsibilities, and discuss the alleged violation in question. Following the meeting, an outcome letter will be send that includes a determination of “responsible” or “not responsible” for each policy violation and any assigned sanctions. Residence Life disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Warning: a verbal warning or letter of consequence that the student has violated a policy and that future violations may result in progressive disciplinary actions.
- Restitution/fines: compensation for loss, damage, cleaning, or injury, in the form of service and/or monetary or material replacement. This disciplinary action may be imposed whether the violation was intentional or accidental. Fines will be billed directly to the resident’s student account. Any unpaid balance on a student account will result in the student being unable to register for classes and may result in contract termination.
- Loss of deposit: forfeiture of refundable portion of security deposit.
- Relocation to another apartment: mandatory relocation to another residence life apartment complex. This disciplinary action is intended to give the student a fresh start in another residential community. The student's right to visit their former apartment and/or complex may be restricted.
- Contract termination warning: written notice that additional policy violations may result in termination of the housing contract.
- Contract termination: mandatory cancellation of occupancy in residence life apartments. This disciplinary action is typically reserved for students who demonstrate an unwillingness or inability to live within the parameters established by and for residence life and Whatcom Community College. This disciplinary action may also include visitation restriction, payment for remainder of contract, and/or referral to the Office of Community Standards for additional action that may impact the student's enrollment.

Appeal Procedures

All appeals concerning Residence Life disciplinary actions must be submitted in writing to the Office of Student Conduct within 10 days of the of hand delivery, postmark, or electronic timestamp of the Associate Director of Residence Life’s decision (See WAC132U-125-050). If no request for review is filed within ten (10) business days of service of the initial decision, the initial decision shall be deemed the final decision.

Residents can file an appeal only if they believe one or more of the following has occurred:

1. An incorrect decision was made
2. The disciplinary action imposed is unfair or disproportional
3. The decision was based on insufficient information or evidence

A written request for appeal must include the following:

- Reason for submitting an appeal
- Any follow up documentation
- Completed FERPA waiver, if the resident wishes for WCC staff to discuss the case with a third party

- Resident's preferred outcome from the appeal

Residents will be notified of the result of their appeal in writing within 45 days. Determinations of the Conduct Review Officer or designee are final. In cases where the disciplinary action is a contract termination, the student is not permitted to stay in the Residence Life while awaiting the determination of their appeal. Questions about submitting an appeal request can be directed to The Office of the Vice President for Student Services 360-383-3077.

All appeals concerning Residence Life disciplinary actions must be submitted in writing to the Office of Student Conduct within 10 days of the of hand delivery, postmark, or electronic timestamp of the decision. If no request for review is filed within 10 business days of service of the initial decision, the initial decision shall be deemed the final decision.

Safety

Safety and security is a priority for Whatcom Community College. Safety is a collective responsibility and we rely on every single member of our community to contribute to the security of our campus and residence life apartments by using a common sense approach and reporting suspicious activity when observed. This section covers several privacy, safety, and security issues that may arise in Residence Life.

Whatcom encourages all students to sign up for campus alerts through our [website mywcc page](#).

Personal safety

Whatcom is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all students and staff. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to abide by the policies and procedures of Whatcom Community College and local, state and federal laws. There is a trained Residence Life staff member on-call 24 hours a day to respond to emergencies and crisis situations. Whatcom students have an important role in maintaining a safe campus community by taking personal responsibility for their conduct and safety.

Emergency preparedness

For our community to be better prepared, we must all be individually prepared. Students should have an emergency kit with at least a 3-day supply of food and water. For more specific information on how to build a kit, please click on the following link. Phones may not work after a disaster, so have a way to get in contact with others. When on campus, be aware of pre-designated meeting locations. Have a pre-designated meeting location to assist with finding friends and colleagues. Make a plan, be informed, get a kit. [Be Red Cross Ready](#)

Medical Emergencies

Whatcom staff are not permitted to transport residents to the hospital in their personal vehicles. If you or someone you know has an injury or illness that requires immediate medical attention, call 9-1-1. When calling, give as much information as possible (name, location and type of emergency). If time allows, student's should notify an RA of the emergency.

Precautions

Whatcom is a safe campus in a safe city, but crime does still occur here, most often crimes of opportunity. To prevent theft, apartment doors and windows should be kept locked at all times and valuables should not be left out in the open. Do not leave valuables in vehicles. Do not walk alone at night, do not loan keys to anyone or prop doors open, and if approached by a stranger, trust your instincts and walk away. If you feel in danger call 9-1-1.

Renter's Insurance

Residents are responsible for insuring their personal property. Whatcom assumes no responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen items. Whatcom strongly recommends that all residents purchase a renter's insurance policy through a licensed insurance provider.

How to Report a Crime

If the crime is in progress, call 9-1-1. Please report any thefts to the police. If you need assistance, or have concerns regarding your personal property, please contact Residence Life staff at residencelife@whatcom.edu

Major Events

FIRE

In case of fire, residents should remain calm and never re-enter a burning building to save personal possessions. Upon discovery or suspicion of a fire residents should:

- Pull the nearest fire alarm.
- Exit the building. If fire or smoke are visible, stay low to the ground and exit away from the fire
- Attempt to warn others while exiting.
- If there is no smoke in your room, and your doorknob is hot to the touch, do not exit. Open the window, stuff towels under door, and wait for emergency personnel to reach you. Exit through your window only if it is safe to do so.
- If safe to exit, go to the parking lot and call 9-1-1.
- Once in a safe location, contact Residence Life staff.

EARTHQUAKE

During the Quake:

- Keep calm. Do not panic or run.
- Remain where you are.
- If indoors, immediately get under a heavy table, desk, or bed, brace yourself in a doorway or inside corner away from windows, mirrors, or heavy objects. Watch for objects that could fall on you such as light fixtures, furniture or chunks of plaster.
- Wait a few minutes after the shaking stops before leaving your cover.
- Take time exiting. Stairwells may be jammed with people and elevators will probably shut down.
- If outdoors, avoid tall buildings, trees, power poles and other objects that could fall. Move to an open area if possible.

After the Quake:

- Check yourself first. Sometimes people are injured without realizing it.
- Think before you move. Use common sense and don't take any risks.
- Be prepared for aftershocks. Wait until all motion has stopped before exiting cautiously.
- Evacuate if there is immediate danger. Use stairs, not elevators.
- Do not light a match or turn on a light switch. Use a flashlight if necessary.

Difficult situations

In college, students may experience situations that are difficult to respond to. These situations may appear innocent or "typical", but can in fact be serious and sometimes life-threatening if not addressed. If you believe someone is experiencing such a crisis, please call 9-1-1 or a Residence Life staff member for help immediately. Whatcom has an amnesty policy which means residents do not

need to worry about getting in trouble or getting a friend in trouble by reporting a health emergency. The primary importance is that someone cared enough to help. It is always best to prepare a plan before a crisis situation to assist with proper response in the event that an emergency occurs. Below is an overview of some common challenges students may face in Residence Life apartments and in college in general.

DRUG OR ALCOHOL OVERDOSE

Critical signs and symptoms of an overdose

- Mental confusion, stupor, coma, or person cannot be roused
- Vomiting
- Seizures
- Slow breathing (fewer than eight breaths per minute)
- Irregular breathing (10 seconds or more between breaths)
- Hypothermia (low body temperature), bluish skin color or paleness

What should you do if you suspect someone has overdosed?

- Know the danger signals.
- Do not wait for all symptoms to be present.
- Be aware that an overdose of drugs or alcohol can cause death.
- If there is any suspicion of an overdose, call 9-1-1 first and then notify your RA.

What can happen to someone with an overdose that goes untreated?

- Victim chokes on his or her own vomit.
- Breathing slows, becomes irregular, or stops.
- Heart beats irregularly or stops.
- Hypothermia (low body temperature).
- Hypoglycemia (too little blood sugar) leads to seizures.
- Severe dehydration from vomiting can cause seizures, permanent brain damage, or death.
- Even if the victim lives, an overdose can lead to irreversible brain damage. Rapid binge drinking (which often happens during drinking games, on a bet, or a dare) is especially dangerous because the victim can ingest a fatal dose before becoming unconscious.

EXTREME MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

Critical Signs and Symptoms of Extreme Distress

- Suicidal thoughts or actions
- Verbal hostility, aggression, or other inappropriate communications
- Inability to communicate clearly or focus
- “Call for help”, whether in person or in writing
- Hallucinations, paranoia, stalking or harassing behaviors
- Total withdrawal from class or social activities
- Picks fights or cries excessively

What Should You Do If You Suspect Someone is in Extreme Distress?

- Try to get that person referred to counseling or other resources. Offer to go with them or to make the call together. If they refuse help, don't push it.
- Report to Residence Life staff.

- Listen. Do not debate or minimize their feelings.
- A person in a mental health crisis is not likely dangerous, although they may trigger your fear response. Remain calm.
- If safety is an immediate concern, walk away and call 9-1-1.
- Ask the question. “Are you thinking of killing yourself?” “Do you have a plan?”

What Can Happen to Someone In Extreme Distress That Goes Unaddressed?

- Self-harm/harm to others
- Escalation of symptoms or dangerous behaviors
- Criminal activity
- Inability to stay in school

Sexual Misconduct – Title IX

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct includes sexual harassment, sexual intimidation, voyeurism, sexual violence (including sexual assault and rape). Whatcom is committed to providing a living environment in which one can live, sleep, and study free from sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and sexual assault. Individuals who engage in these types of behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible eviction from the Residence Life apartments and may be subject to criminal charges. Any consensual sexual acts in the Residence Life apartments cannot interfere with other resident's rights.

Residents who have been impacted by sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, are encouraged to contact a WCC counselor in Entry and Advising (Laidlaw 116) at 360-383-3080 to receive confidential support and learn about reporting options. Any disclosure of such misconduct shared with another faculty or staff member is not confidential and requires a report to WCC's Title IX coordinator who has been designated to handle such reports. Inquiries regarding the non-discrimination, Title IX, and sexual misconduct policies for WCC can be directed to the Executive Director for Human Resources, 237 W. Kellogg Road, Bellingham, WA 98226, and 360-383-3400.

Limited Immunity for Victims of Crime and/or Good Samaritans

WCC does not condone violations of other college/housing policies, but it does consider reporting sexual misconduct to be of paramount importance, and may therefore extend limited immunity for other policy violations to victims of an assault and/or good Samaritans in order to foster reporting and cessation of sexual misconduct on campus.

Moving Out

Resident Responsibilities

The resident agrees to leave the unit clean and in good condition and to return all keys. Residents are not required to be present during the move out inspection with the Resident Advisor but will be notified of the day/time and can attend at their discretion. Whatcom is not responsible for any items left in Residence Life apartments and items left behind will be disposed of.

Damages

Upon completion of the move-out inspection, damages are assessed and costs for repair will be charged to student accounts. Any damage in common areas will be split between residents unless it is proven that the damage was a result of one particular resident. Damages confined to one room will be charged to the resident of that room. Common charges include:

- Wall damage from unapproved fasteners or moving furniture
- Dirty floors (not vacuumed/mopped, carpet stains)
- Personal items/trash left behind
- Kitchen and bathroom surfaces not wiped down
- Inside of appliances/cabinets not cleaned
- Damaged furniture

Cleaning

Residents are responsible for leaving the apartment in the clean tidy condition similar to move-in. To avoid cleaning charges, residents should make sure cleaning tasks are completed before the scheduled move-out inspection and generally should include: dusting, wiping down surfaces, sweeping/mopping/vacuuming, removal of all items, washing windows and mirrors, shower/tub/sink areas cleaned, and more. For a complete list of tasks to guide cleaning please request the cleaning list from Residence Life staff.

Key Return

Residents are provided with a door and mail key at lease signing. Keys are the sole responsibility of the resident and must be returned upon move out. Failure to turn in keys will result in a charge to re-key the apartment.

Deposit Eligibility

A resident is eligible to receive the refundable portion of their deposit (\$250) if proper 30-day notice to vacate is provided. Additionally, the unit must be left clean, there must be no belongings left behind, keys must be returned, and there must be not damage to the unit. Deposit refunds are typically processed in 7-10 business days but can take longer if there are damages to consider.

If the deposit was paid with a debit or credit card, a refund will be issued to that card. If the resident paid for the deposit with cash or check, a check will be mailed to the resident. To ensure delivery, please make sure to update addressed on file with the Business Office. Additional time may be needed to process checks.