

Student
Residence
Handbook



2022-2023

FORWARD

Vernon College's Student Residence Handbook is a source of valuable information regarding the student's responsibilities, obligations, and privileges while residing in student housing. This handbook is distributed to residents during room check-in. Additional copies are available in the housing office and published on the Vernon College website.

Failure to read this handbook does not excuse students from the requirements and regulations described herein. Since the policies and statements contained herein are subject to continuous review and evaluation, Vernon College reserves the right to make changes at any time without notice. This publication is for information only.

No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by Vernon College, on any basis prohibited by applicable law including, but not limited to, race, color, origin, religion, gender, or disability.

Vernon College reserves the right to refuse housing service to any person convicted of a felony. Individuals required to register by Texas Law or Megan's Law will not be allowed to live in Vernon College Student Housing. Although we believe the individual can be rehabilitated, we also have to take into consideration the safety of the entire community.

This publication reflects material found in the Vernon College General Catalog and the Vernon College Student Handbook.

Approved by the Vernon College Board of Trustees June 8, 2022

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Calendar

FALL 2022

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| August 16 | Residence hall opens |
| August 22 | Classes begin |
| August 22 | Mandatory Housing Orientation at 6:30 pm in the Auditorium |
| September 5 | Labor Day Holiday - No class |
| October 25 | VC Sports Day -No Class |
| November 23-25 | Housing will close for Thanksgiving Holiday (Check out time TBA) |
| December 3, 5-8 | Final exams |
| December 8 | Last day to check out of residence halls for winter break |

SPRING 2023

| | |
|-------------|---|
| January 10 | Residence hall opens |
| January 16 | Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday- No class |
| January 17 | Classes Begin |
| March 11 | Housing will close for Spring Break |
| March 13-17 | Housing closed for Spring Break |
| March 20 | Housing opens (Check in time TBA) |
| April 7 | Good Friday Holiday - No class |
| May 6, 8-11 | Final exams |
| May 11 | Last day to check out of residence halls*** |
| May 13 | Commencement |

****For those participating in commencement, special arrangements may be made for additional time of occupancy with permission from the Director of Student Housing.*

Welcome

Welcome to Vernon College residential life. In order for students to pursue their educational goals, Vernon College offers residence halls. Living on campus provides students with the life experiences and the educational benefit of group living. Vernon College is dedicated to this educational experience and providing a safe, comfortable living environment. With these responsibilities in mind the following policies and procedures have been set up to ensure the safety of the residents as well as to protect the college's property.

Student Responsibility

Code of Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with generally accepted standards of good behavior and good taste. Standards and procedures which encompass the Code of Student Conduct are considered as college policy. Enrollment in Vernon College is considered by the College as implicit declaration of acceptance on the part of the student of college regulations. It is stressed that all local, state, and federal laws are supported by the College. Being a student does not exempt a person from being a law abiding citizen.

All student housing residents are expected to become familiar with the Code of Student Conduct found in the *Vernon College Student Handbook*. In addition to the Code of Student Conduct, individuals occupying student housing are also prohibited from the following:

- A. Students who harm themselves or any other student is in violation of the Code of Student Conduct.
- B. Inappropriate behavior such as nudity, spectator sex, and any other behavior deemed as inappropriate by the Director of Housing and/or Dean of Student Services.
- C. Gambling of any type.
- D. Any student involved in a Title IX investigation due to an allegation of sexual assault may be asked to vacate Vernon College Housing immediately – temporarily or permanently – as deemed necessary by the Title IX Coordinator, Title IX Deputy Coordinator, Title IX investigator, or the Vernon College President.

Damages to Room or Common Areas

In order to provide students with the best possible residential experience at Vernon College, the housing and maintenance staff monitor the college's property including rooms, common areas, and grounds. The student is individually responsible for the cost of replacement or repair of any breakage or damage to his/her room or furnishings, or any other on campus damage for which the student is responsible. The student is responsible for the cost of any extra-ordinary cleaning, replacement, or repair of items in the common areas. At the time of check out, the college reserves the right to forfeit the housing deposit due to damages. The resident is responsible for the actual cost of replacement or repair if said cost exceeds the housing deposit. Charges will be evenly assessed to each member of an assigned room in which the student resides in the event the responsible person remains anonymous. A damage charge chart has been provided on page 11 of this handbook.

Housing Meetings

Students will periodically be required to participate in mandatory Housing meetings. In order to better benefit from living on campus, the Housing and Student Services staff use this time to inform students of rules and regulations, upcoming student activities, health and safety information, campus updates and other general housing information.

Vernon College Housing will also meet at least monthly with the Vernon College Student Housing Board (VCSHB). The VCSHB will be comprised of 1 member of each Vernon College athletic team (rodeo, softball, volleyball, and baseball) as well as at least 2 non-traditional students. The VCSHB will meet 6 times during the academic year with the Director of Housing and Resident Assistants. Their charge will be to discuss and address any outstanding issues regarding policy, procedure or practices and also provide input on activities and scheduling of activities.

Housing Payments and Fees

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Room Deposit..... | \$100.00 |
| Room and Board (Fall)..... | \$2350.00 |
| Room Rent - | \$500.00 |
| Board Fee - | \$1850.00 |
| Room and Board (Spring)..... | \$2375.00 |
| Room Rent - | \$ 500.00 |
| Board Fee - | \$1875.00 |
| Room Rent (Summer I)..... | \$200.00 |
| Room Rent (Summer II)..... | \$200.00 |

Fall and Spring—Room and board rates are based on a per person, per semester charge (2 persons per room). The student agrees to pay room and board fees and other properly billed charges (i.e., damages) at the times scheduled by the College. Room and board charges are due and payable by the semester and may be paid by one of the following methods:

1. Total semester charge paid at the time of occupancy (**prior to move-in**).
2. Enrollment in the FACTS payment plan.

NOTE: The room deposit is not a part of the housing fees.

Vernon College accepts the following methods of payment: Visa, MasterCard, money orders, cashier's check, personal check or cash. Banks in Vernon and Wichita Falls offer free checking accounts for college students. Vernon College will **NOT** accept out-of-country checks, out-of-country cashier's checks, out-of-country personal checks, out-of-country travelers' checks or out-of-country money orders. Contact the Vernon College business office with any questions.

Summer—Summer terms will be contracted by the term in accordance with the dates set out in the current catalog or schedule of classes. Board is not included or available in the summer.

All rates as well as any additional charges for room use are subject to change by the College with appropriate notice.

A \$100.00 refundable room deposit is required to reserve occupancy in student housing. If at time of check-out the student has no outstanding charges or room damages and has followed proper check-out procedures, the room deposit will be processed for refund. The deposit will not be reimbursed unless the student has checked out of their room properly.

Alterations of Dorm Rooms

No changes will be made in college housing by the student without written permission from the Director of Student Housing. This includes but is not limited to shelves, partitions, wallpaper, painting, plumbing, heating, and other structural changes, alterations to furniture, or the removal of furniture and its replacement with items owned by the student. The use of nails or markers on the walls, furniture, mirrors, or doors is prohibited. Do not remove locking screws or blinds from the windows. For the safety of the student and to prevent damage to residence hall furniture, stacking/ bunking beds is not permitted. The use of Command Strips is acceptable but incorrectly removing them and causing damages to the wall will result in a fee.

Basement Policy and Care

Vernon College provides a large basement open to student residents for organized study groups, movie nights, ping-pong, and social events. Residents are responsible for cleaning the area after use and for any damages. The college reserves the right to prohibit specific residents from use of the basement based on misuse or continued failure to keep the area clean. No furniture can be removed from the basement.

Bicycles

The storage of bicycles is not permitted in the resident's room, lobby area, or basement. For the convenience of the housing residents, Vernon College has provided a bicycle rack outside of the main dorm. The resident must provide their own lock. Vernon College is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property. (Please see *Care of Rooms and College Liability*)

Cable TV

Basic cable is provided in each room. For service beyond basic cable, students must contact the local cable provider to make arrangements at the students' expense. The resident must provide their own cable cord.

Care of Rooms and College Liability

The resident is responsible for cleaning his/her assigned room and bathroom. Removing waste materials regularly and keeping the floor clear of obstructions are important health and safety measures expected of every resident. For compliance with health, maintenance, safety, and college housing regulations, the college reserves the right to periodically inspect a student's room with or without notice. All attempts will be made to have the inspections announced in advance and scheduled when one or both residents are available, although some inspections such as visitation check, drug or alcohol check, etc., may be unannounced. The College shall assume no responsibility for the theft, vandalism, destruction, loss of money, valuables, or other personal property belonging to, or in the custody of the student for any cause whatsoever. It is the student's responsibility to keep their rooms locked at all times. Each room door has a locking knob as well as a locking deadbolt. Students are encouraged to use both. Students are encouraged to carry their own property insurance.

Check-in/Check-out Procedures

CHECK-IN

Each resident should report directly to the housing office during posted times. Follow the instructions to ensure a smooth and proper check-in:

- A. Go to the housing office and report to the residence hall staff member on duty.
- B. Sign in to receive a room assignment and fill out a check-in cards.
- C. Go to the assigned room with the check-in card and check the condition of the room. Be sure to note ANY damaged or missing items. Residents may be charged for unreported damage. Sign and return the card to the staff member on duty.
- D. Once they have reviewed the check-in card, a housing staff member will issue keys (door and mailbox) and a Student Residence Handbook. All students are issued a mailbox key and a room key by the Director of Student Housing or residence hall assistants. The loss of a key should be reported immediately to the director. In order to maintain security, the lock will be changed and new keys issued. There will be a charge for the cost of this service. For security purposes, the rooms should be locked at all times. The student shall not alter or duplicate any room or mailbox key. Any student in possession of a duplicate key will be charged for replacing the lock.

CHECK-OUT

The Director of Student Housing or residence hall staff member and the student must complete the check-out form. The student must sign the check-out form and leave it with the residence hall staff. Failure to check out properly and turn in the room key can result in academic records being withheld by the College and will result in forfeiture of the room deposit. If there are damages in excess of the deposit, the College reserves the right to withhold academic records until the damages are paid.

Residents who no longer require Vernon College housing need to fill out a Room Deposit Refund Request form at the time of check-out.

When checking out:

- A. Be sure that all items are still in the room that were there at the time of move in. These may be checked against the check-in form.
- B. Clean the room and bathroom facilities. Any student leaving a room dirty will be charged the cost for cleaning service.
- C. Turn in room key and mailbox keys to the Housing Office.
- D. If a student is graduating and needs to remain on the campus until graduation, arrangements to stay in the dorm may be made through the Director of Student Housing.
- E. Personal mail will be forwarded for period of 3 months to the address given by the student at checkout.

Consolidation of Room Assignments

The College reserves the right to assign or reassign space for the benefit of the College, individual student, roommate, or suitemate(s). Students who do not wish to have a roommate will be given the option to contract for a room as a “single” when space will permit or agree to accept the assignment of a roommate. Consolidation is an effort to fairly achieve maximum use of the student residence center space as well as creating the safest possible environment. If a conflict between the two residents arises, one or both may choose to select new rooms at the discretion of the Director of Student Housing. A student who elects to use a room as a single or fails to consolidate is subject to additional charge. Students are not allowed to “trade” rooms or move to other rooms without the prior approval of the Director of Housing.

NOTE: Single occupancy will not be considered until all double occupancy requests have been satisfied. Single occupancy, when available, will result in the doubling of the room rent fee.

Cooperation of Residents

Students are required to cooperate with campus police by showing student identification when requested. Students are urged to report any suspicious incidents or individuals on campus to campus police or to the housing staff member on duty. To contact campus police, a student may call the main switchboard at 940-552-6291 and ask for campus police or in emergencies, when time is of the essence, a student should call the Vernon Police Department by dialing 911. At the beginning of each semester there will be a mandatory housing meeting where the students will receive contact phone numbers for VC police and on duty housing personnel.

Damage Charge Chart

The following is a list of common damage charges. Other charges for room damage may apply, even if not listed. Prices are subject to change at the discretion of the Director or Student Housing or the Director of Physical Plant based on cost of materials. A hold will be placed on the resident's record until damages have been paid.

| Description of Damage | Charge | Comments |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Wall Damage (Hole) | \$75 | Depending on Size |
| Closet Door Replacement | \$100 | |
| Window Blinds Replacement | \$175 | |
| Broken Mirror | \$100 | |
| Spring Mattress Replacement | \$175 | |
| Bed Frame Replacement | \$250 | |
| Chair Replacement | \$95 | |
| Six Drawer Chest Replacement | \$500 | |
| Excessively Dirty Room at Check Out | \$150 | |
| Desk Replacement | \$300 | |

Eligibility

In order to be eligible to live in student housing, residents must maintain nine semester hours during the fall and spring semesters and three semester hours for each summer term. Residents must have a signed housing contract on file in the housing office prior to occupancy. Those convicted of a felony or individuals required to register by Texas law or Megan's Law are prohibited from living in Vernon College housing. **Registered Sex Offenders are prohibited from living in Vernon College Housing.**

Emergency Procedures

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES

If the fire alarm sounds, students are to evacuate the building IMMEDIATELY, following the instructions listed below.

1. If the door is hot to touch, do not open it. Roll up a wet towel and place it at the base of the door to prevent smoke penetration. Close windows, turn on lights, and close room doors but do not lock them.
2. If the door is cool to the touch, open it slowly. Leave the room, close the door, and proceed to the nearest exit/stairwell. If possible, alert other students on the way to the exit.
3. If smoke is present, take short breaths through the nose and stay close to the floor, crawling if possible.
4. Once outside students are to report to the tennis courts in order to account for all occupants and make way for fire equipment.

A false fire alarm and/or the abuse of fire equipment (including smoke detectors) is an offense of the Texas Penal Code and may be considered a misdemeanor or felony. The College may elect to

deal with these violations and/or refer them to appropriate law authorities. College action can include disciplinary action or expulsion from Vernon College.

TORNADO/SEVERE STORM PROCEDURES

Vernon College is located in Wilbarger County and sees a number of severe storms. It is important for residents to stay aware of the weather and to understand the difference between a tornado watch and tornado warning. A tornado **watch** means that conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes within the next couple of hours. A tornado **warning** means that a tornado is imminent, and students need to immediately seek shelter.



In the event of a tornado warning,

- A. The City of Vernon will sound a CONTINUOUS alarm. This indicates that a tornado has been sighted in the area and there is immediate danger.
- B. When there is ADVANCED warning go to the basement of the Student Residence Center.
- C. Remain calm and wait for the housing staff to release the students.

OTHER EMERGENCIES

Life threatening emergencies should be immediately reported to 911, followed by the Vernon College housing staff. Non-life threatening emergencies should be reported to the housing or security staff.

Fine Charges

Housing fines will be issued by the housing staff and must be signed by the resident violators at the time of the offense. Second violations for the same offense will result in doubled fines. Repeated violations will be viewed as total disregard and lack of respect for the rules and regulations of Vernon College and will be subject to disciplinary action. Any infraction of the rules will be subject to a fine at the recommendation of the Director of Student Housing and the discretion of the Dean of Student Services. All fines will be charged to the resident’s account and a hold will be placed on their records. All charges must be paid before transcripts will be issued. Residents will not be allowed to register for the next semester until their account has a \$0.00 balance. A fine chart and list of prohibited items can be found on pages at the end of this Handbook. Vernon College reserves that right to contact the parents or legal guardians of any resident under the age of 21 who has violated the drug and/or alcohol policy. (See *Illegal Drugs and Alcohol Policy*.)

Fire Safety Equipment

A false fire alarm and/or the abuse of fire equipment including fire extinguishers and smoke detectors is an offense of the Texas Penal Code and may be considered a misdemeanor or felony. The smoke detectors are not to be taken down, unplugged, or turned off and residents are not allowed to use the fire extinguishers unless there is a fire emergency. Any resident caught using an extinguisher will be fined for breaking this policy and will be charged for its replacement. A first offense fine is \$50. Any subsequent offense will result in another fine and/or a referral to appropriate law authorities. Safety equipment is here for your protection.

Housing Contract

The housing contract is a nine-month, academic year contract for students entering housing space in the fall. Those completing their course of study in the fall or those not returning to the campus for the spring semester should notify the housing office by December 1. Students entering housing in the spring or summer will sign a contract that covers the spring or summer only. This contract governs the housing refund regulations. Residents are required to read the Housing Contract and are responsible for the terms and conditions set within.

Illegal Drug and Alcohol Policy

Vernon College recognizes that drug and alcohol abuse pose a serious threat on college campuses and Vernon College is committed to protecting the well-being and safety of its residents. The Illegal Drug and Alcohol Policy along with the sanctions and fines subjected to violators are a result of the concerning effects drugs and alcohol abuse have on a student's health, academic success, and future. Residents are also considered liable for their visitors or guests who violate the illegal drug or alcohol policy. Vernon College reserves the right under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 1998 to notify parents/guardians of residents under the age of 21 and the parents/guardians of residents considered dependent students regardless of age of any violation of the Illegal Drug or Alcohol policy. **Vernon College is an alcohol free entity at all locations meaning that no one is allowed to have alcohol at any location for any event.**

ILLEGAL DRUG VIOLATION

Vernon College holds to a ZERO TOLERANCE policy for drug related offenses. Prohibited behavior includes possession, distribution, selling and/or the manufacturing of an illegal chemical substance in the dorm rooms or on campus property. This also includes distribution, sale, and/or consumption of prescription drugs for any student other than the specific student listed on the prescription.

Any resident violating this policy will face immediate expulsion from Vernon College housing and parental/guardian notification. If illegal drugs are found in Vernon College Housing, Vernon College personnel reserve the right to search all rooms.

ALCOHOL VIOLATION

Alcohol is strictly prohibited on the Vernon College campus and in student housing regardless of age. Violations of this policy include the following prohibited behaviors:

- Possession of an alcoholic beverage including opened, unopened, and/ or empty containers.
- Public intoxication
- Other alcohol related offenses as determined by the Director of Student Housing.

Failure to comply with the Vernon College Alcohol policy will result in the fines and sanctions outlined below.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <u>1st offense:</u> | \$100 Fine, Parental notification, and referral to the Dean of Student Services |
| <u>2nd offense:</u> | \$200 Fine, Parental notification, and referral to the Dean of Student Services |
| <u>3rd offense:</u> | Expulsion from Vernon College Housing |

Internet Access, Inappropriate Network Use, and Best Practices

Vernon College residents have Internet access in their rooms which include wireless access and Ethernet capabilities. Residents are responsible for both maintaining their personal computers including updated virus protection and for proper use of the Internet services provided. Excess use of bandwidth, unlawful downloading and any other illegal activity will be monitored and may result in termination of this service. On Vernon College computers and on personal computers connected to the Internet in the student residence centers, students may not download, upload, save, receive, send or publish web pages, e-mail, messages or other material related to, containing, or including any of the following:

1. offensive material of any kind, including pornographic, obscene or other inappropriate material
2. material promoting discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability;
3. information promoting, encouraging or facilitating illegal activities, including terrorism;
4. information or messages encouraging the use of illegal substances;
5. abusive, inflammatory, obscene or otherwise objectionable language;
6. information or messages threatening or encouraging violent behavior;
7. copyrighted materials, including but not limited to music, movies, and software, subject to the following two exceptions:
 - a. the student has paid for the downloaded item and it is downloaded to a student-owned computer in a student residence center;
 - b. the student has been directed to download the item by a Vernon College instructor.
8. commercial advertising;
9. publishing material or sending messages for personal financial gain;
10. unethical or illegal solicitation;
11. sending a message with someone else's name on it;
12. knowingly placing a computer virus, worm or Trojan on the network;
13. publishing or distributing unlawful information;
14. sending unsolicited bulk e-mail messages commonly known as spam or,
15. gambling.

INTERNET SAFETY AND BEST PRACTICES

1. Residents should not put a room or phone number, cell phone number, class schedule, or other personal information on a public profile. Also, do not allow someone to access this information. This is extremely dangerous and could open a resident up to stalkers, assaults, identity theft, and other problems.
2. Parents, students, administrators and police have access to these accounts and to these profiles. Do not write anything or post any pictures considered offensive.
3. While the college appreciates a person's need for self-expression, Vernon College must conduct business and maintain a safe and secure environment for the well-being of all students. Residents are responsible for any information on a profile or online community. Photos and/or information that may violate any of Vernon College's rules or regulations can be used to access fines and initiate room searches or investigations.

Laundry Room

A laundry room with washing machines and dryers is provided in the Student Residence Center for resident use only. Malfunctioning laundry room equipment should be reported to the Director of Student Housing immediately. The college is not responsible for items left in the laundry room. Equipment and/or furniture in the laundry and lobby area must not be removed.

Lock out and Key Policy

Each resident is provided with one room key and one mailbox key given at check-in. Sharing or switching keys with other residents or with guests/visitors is strictly prohibited as it is a security violation. Residents should carry keys with them at all times and must immediately report if keys are lost, stolen, or damaged. Once reported, a room replacement key and lock will be issued and the resident charged with a replacement fee of \$50. A mailbox replacement key fee is \$10. Both keys must be turned in at check-out and failure to do so will result in aforementioned fees. Residents are prohibited from tampering with any college lock or installing new or additional locks or bolts. Altering or duplicating any room or mailbox keys will result in key and lock replacement fees and may face criminal charges. Residents are allowed three free lock outs per semester. After the third lock out a \$10 fee will be assessed then and for each additional lock out. This includes the main door and the suite bathroom door.

Mail and Packages

Mail is delivered to the Vernon campus by the U.S. Postal Service Monday through Friday. It is important for residents to check their mailbox periodically as they will be held responsible for any and all information distributed. Mail will be placed in student mailboxes by resident hall staff by 4:00 pm. If the resident has a package the housing staff will put a notice in the post box alerting students of the time and place the package may be picked up.

Maintenance

Student residents must report all maintenance problems and any damages to a member of the housing staff. Maintenance services are provided by the physical plant personnel who are responsible for all the residence halls. Residents are prohibited from attempting to fix a maintenance issue themselves. The college reserves the right for an authorized member of the maintenance or IT staff to enter a room without advance warning in order to provide repairs, improvements, or assess any damages.

Missing Persons

If the Vernon College Housing Department becomes aware of a missing resident, it is policy to react seriously to this event. The National Child Search Assistance Act allows police to report missing persons under 21 to the National Crime Information Center. A person residing on the Vernon Campus student residence halls is required to list a confidential name on the emergency contact information form to be notified in the event they are reported missing. When a missing person report is made regarding a

student residing in Vernon College Housing the protocol as outlined in the *Student Residence Handbook* will be enacted.

Outdoor Areas, Games and Sporting Equipment

Vernon College offers a variety of activities for its residents. This includes tennis, sand volleyball, basketball, grills, sporting equipment, board, card, and lawn games. All sports and game equipment will be signed in or out with the housing staff. Students are responsible for their own charcoal and grilling supplies as well as being aware of burn bans for Wilbarger County. Fees will be assessed by the Director of Student Housing for loss or damage of this equipment.

Pets and Comfort/Therapy Animal

Pets are strictly prohibited in Vernon College housing even temporarily. “Pets” include mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds or insects. Having an unauthorized animal in a dorm room or indoor public area will result in a removal of the animal and a fine of \$250.

COMFORT AND THERAPY POLICY

Vernon College recognizes the rights of Vernon College Housing residents to have Comfort Animals or Therapy Animals. Comfort and Therapy Animals may also be called Emotional Support Animals. *This is different from Service Animals which are registered with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).* Service Animals registered with Vernon College OSD are allowed access to all areas of Vernon College. Comfort or Therapy Animals are only permitted in Vernon College housing not in classrooms, administrative buildings, dining halls, housing common areas, or gyms and athletic fields.

No animal will be permitted in Vernon College Housing that:

- Does not have prior approval by the Vernon College OSD Office, the Dean of Student Services and Vernon College Housing Office
- Poses a direct threat to the health and safety of other students or staff
- Would cause substantial physical damage to Vernon College facilities or other residents
- Would fundamentally alter the nature of Vernon College Housing operations
- Is defined as “dangerous wild animals” in the Texas Health and Safety Code 822.101 (big cats, apes, bears, hybrids of these animals), primates, high rabies risk animals (bats, fox, raccoon, coyote), venomous animals, or domestic animals with an unknown health history are not allowed

The Dean of Student Services, OSD Coordinator, and the Housing Director will make the final determination for on-campus residents requesting a waiver of the “no pets” policy so that they may have a Comfort or Therapy Animal. A decision about if a particular accommodation is reasonable is a fact intensive, case-specific determination. To request to have a Comfort or Therapy Animal in Vernon College Housing the student must submit the following to the Office for Students with Disabilities:

- Complete a Disability Services intake form
- Provide a Comfort or Therapy Animal Request letter completed by a licensed mental health professional (therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist – not a family doctor) on his/her letterhead that states the student is under his/her care, is emotionally or psychiatrically disabled, and prescribes a Comfort or Therapy Animal for the specific student

- Provide documentation from a licensed veterinarian that the animal is inoculated and free from diseases. The paperwork must also show that all shots are updated and in compliance with Wilbarger County and the City of Vernon requirements

Once a Comfort or Therapy Animal is approved the student will be required to complete animal registration paperwork with the Vernon College Housing Office and sign an acknowledgement of Comfort and Therapy Animal Housing Policies.

Residents with approved Comfort or Therapy Animals will not automatically be assigned a private room. Efforts will be made to match students with Comfort or Therapy Animals to potential roommates to whom contact has been made to prevent possible incompatibilities such as allergies or other concerns. If a private room is requested, and available, approved standard private room rates will apply. A specific exercise location for the Comfort or Therapy Animal is the responsibility of the student. Comfort or Therapy Animals may not be fed food or scraps from on campus dining.

In addition to complying with ADA guidelines, Vernon College Housing policies, and community standards residents with Comfort or Service Animals must meet the following expectations:

- Animals must be on a leash, in a carrier, in a cage or otherwise restrained when not in the residents room
- Animals must receive daily care (food, water and attention) from the resident
- Animals must be kept clean, their waste disposed of properly, and any problems with fleas or ticks promptly eliminated
- Animals must not bite or make excessive noise – barking, growling, screeching howling, crying, etc.
- Residents will be responsible for any damages caused by the animal
- Repeated complaints by students or staff about an animals hygiene or behavior without prompt resolution may result in removal of the animal
- If the animal poses an immediate threat to other Vernon College students or Vernon College staff Wilbarger County Animal Services may be contacted to remove the animal immediately
- All liability for the actions of the animal is the sole responsibility of the owner
- The owner of the animal must notify Vernon College Housing staff immediately if the animal escapes or is lost
- Students are not allowed to leave the Comfort or Therapy Animal unattended overnight at any time If a student will be gone from Vernon College Housing overnight the Comfort or Therapy Animal must be removed from Vernon College Housing to either be with the student or be in proper boarding

Any violations of the above policy can result in immediate removal of the animal and permanent revocation of the Comfort or Therapy Animal privileges for the student.

Checkout expectations of students with Comfort or Therapy Animals are:

- Checkout must be scheduled by appointment with the Director of Housing
- The room must be completely clear of animal hair
- The room must be cleaned sufficiently to eliminate any animal odor or waste odor
- Residents will be charged upon checkout if any additional cleaning, deodorizing, or disinfecting is required to remove animal hair, dander, waste or odor.

Prohibited Items

The following items shall not be used or held in the student's room, storage areas, basement, or lobby and violations will result in the item(s) being confiscated and fines assessed.

1. Firearms – The open carry of firearms is prohibited on any Vernon College campus or center premises, including all public driveway, street, sidewalk, or parking area. Those individuals who lawfully hold a license to carry may carry a concealed handgun on Vernon College property unless otherwise prohibited by law or policy. This policy does not apply to commissioned peace officers.
 - a. License holders must follow applicable state laws and College District policy and procedures.
 - b. License holders may be asked to show proof of license to a commissioned peace officer in accordance with law.
 - c. A person, including employees acting outside their duties, whose possession, use or storage of a handgun results in personal injury or property damage shall be personally liable for the injury or damage.
 - d. The College shall not provide general storage for firearms.
 - e. License holders shall either carry the concealed weapon their person or store the weapon in a secure gun storage provided by the resident that has been approved by the College's police department. The weapon should only be visible during the time it takes to transfer the weapon from their person to their locked container.
 - f. Violations of College's rules that are also violations of state law may be prosecuted criminally.
2. Explosives (including firecrackers, fireworks, etc.), incendiary devices, instruments designed to expel a projectile with use of pressurized air (like a BB gun), weapons including hunting bows, arrows, illegal knives, martial arts equipment, hazardous chemicals, gasoline driven vehicles of any kind i.e. motorcycles, vehicle parts, heavy repair equipment or accessories to any vehicle or engine parts.
3. Prohibited appliances.
 - i. Hot plate
 - ii. Toaster
 - iii. Toaster oven
 - iv. Electric grill or griddle
 - v. Space heaters that are not a personal size or do not meet minimum fire protection safety requirements including an automatic shut off
 - vi. Microwave ovens must use less than ten (10) amps of power. Refrigerators must be 4.5 C.F. or less.
 - vii. Amplifiers
4. Outside television or radio antennas.
5. Waterbeds or water filled furniture.
6. Pictures or items deemed by the Director of Housing to be obscene or pornographic.
7. Street signs and other public signs are considered to be stolen property and are not allowed in College Housing.
8. Open flames including candles, incense or hookahs.

Quiet Hours

Living in college housing requires that each student be considerate of other residents. No individual, in attempting to exercise his right, may impose on the personal rights and liberties of others living in college housing. Therefore, housing will maintain quiet hours each evening from 11:00 p.m. until 9:00 a.m. Music, conversation, etc., must be quiet enough that anyone outside the room will not be disturbed or if the outside the building, no one inside a room is disturbed. Any students breaking the quiet hour policy will be fined \$25 for a first offense and \$50 for a second. A third offense will be fined and seen as complete disregard for the rules and will be referred to the Associated Dean of Student Services for disciplinary actions.

Residential Staff

Vernon College residents are prohibited from disturbing, annoying, harassing, or interfering with the residential staff in the performance of their duties. The Director of Student Housing and staff are employees of Vernon College and are responsible for the operation of student housing.

Their goals are

- to foster an academic environment favorable to successful scholastic experiences
- to aid the resident in transition from the family environment to that of the broader social and educational community
- to promote mature, realistic daily living
- to promote proper habits for good mental and physical health
- to promote participation in democratic group environment and to work toward the development of a sense of community among all residents
- To create and foster an interpersonal environment that embraces diversity and celebrates individual differences

Housing staff members are available 24/7 to help with information, maintenance requests, and other general housing issues however it is the responsibility of the resident to know which member is on duty and to be sensitive to the privacy and needs of all off duty staff. A Residence Hall duty calendar is posted on the Housing Office Door and the staff member on duty as well as their contact information is always identified.

Right of Entry and Search

The College reserves the right of entry into residents' rooms for the purpose of inspection, verification of occupancy, safety, health maintenance, and to reclaim college property. The room may also be entered at break periods to insure that established closing procedures have been followed. College officials, upon proper identification and purpose, may enter the room without consent if either probable cause and/or an emergency situation exists. The Dean of Student Services, Director of Student Housing, housing staff, and maintenance and custodial staff have master keys in order to serve these conditions.

Room, Board, and Deposit Refunds

Except in cases where medical reasons preclude being enrolled in college, room rent is nonrefundable. Students withdrawing from classes and leaving before the end of the semester will be refunded the unused portion of their meal plan. For purposes of refund, “unused portion” will be defined as the remainder of weeks in the semester immediately after the date the checkout card is signed. No refund is made for missed or unused meals. If a student makes partial payment and moves out prior to making full payment, that student is liable for the entire portion of the semester room fee. It is the responsibility of the student to request his/her room deposit refund. Failure to properly check out will result in forfeiture of the deposit. Students vacating housing space prior to the conclusion of a semester will forfeit their room reservation deposit. Any room deposit not requested following the student’s last date of room occupancy will become the property of the College. Room deposits not forfeited or refunded may be applied toward a future enrollment period upon request.

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Vernon College to provide an environment free from implicit and explicit sexual behavior used to control, influence, or adversely affect the well-being of any member of the College community. Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Sexual harassment of any individual is inappropriate and unacceptable and is grounds for disciplinary action. Please see the Vernon College website for the college’s definition of sexual harassment and the complaint procedure.

Solicitation Policy

Solicitation by a resident is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to babysitting, the selling of concessions, or the distribution of unapproved literature. Any non-resident door-to-door salesperson, flyer, or brochures must be made known to a housing staff member immediately.

Tobacco Policy

The use of smokeless tobacco, including snuff and chewing tobacco, is prohibited in all Vernon College buildings. Evidence of use of smokeless tobacco inside buildings including “spit cups” or spitting in sinks will be seen as evidence of use and result in a tobacco fine. Smoking is prohibited in all buildings on campus including common rooms in the Student Residence Center. This includes but is not limited to: e-cigarettes, vapes, EC’s, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) or hookahs.

Transferring Rooms

Roommates and room assignments are chosen at random by the Director of Student Housing. Athletic team members are assigned rooms in collaboration with the coaching staff. Vernon College will attempt to honor room and roommate changes. Should a resident wish to change roommates he or she must contact the Director of Student Housing at which time the student may be reassigned a room and must follow standard check-out procedures. Residents are not allowed to switch rooms and room keys without the permission of the Director and may face fines when caught.

Vehicle Registration

Residents with vehicles are required to register the vehicle with the campus police and display the appropriate permit for campus parking. Parking in emergency, fire, reserved, or delivery lanes will result in a ticket. In addition, only those authorized to park in handicapped spaces may do so. Refer to "Parking Regulations" in the *Student Handbook*. Residents are asked to park vehicles in marked spaces in designated Student Residence Hall parking lots. Students who also bring stock trailers are asked to specifically not park trailers in the Residence Hall parking lots. Any stock trailers should be parked at the on campus rodeo facility.

Visitation and Guest Policies

STUDENT HOUSING VISITATION POLICY

Guests not registered for overnight visitation are permitted to visit students in their rooms only in accordance with the following schedule:

Sunday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday - Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 a.m.

There is no curfew; however, students are not to congregate around the outside by the dorm rooms past the visitation hours.

GUEST POLICY

Any resident may have an overnight guest in his or her room if it is approved in advance by the Director of Student Housing. All overnight guests must register by filling out a guest policy form with the Director of Student Housing by 3pm on the day they are planning to stay. A host must inform roommates and suitemates of an overnight guest. All unregistered guests will be asked to leave the campus at the end of normal visitation hours and any resident caught with an unregistered non-resident guest after said hours will be fined \$50 for a first offense and \$100 for a second. A third offense will result in a fine and possible expulsion from the dorms. Guests must understand the rules and regulations of Vernon College housing. The host will be held responsible for the conduct of the guest. The guest must not be left unattended if the host will be gone for any length of time. Residents may not "loan" their key to non-residents. Guests of the opposite sex are not allowed to stay overnight in a residents room.

STUDENT LIFE AND COLLEGE SERVICES

Counseling

Confidential and professional counseling assistance is available for all Vernon College students through Student Services. Please understand that the members of the Housing staff are not licensed counselors. However a member of the Housing staff may refer a student to see a Vernon College Student Success Specialists. Students will immediately be referred to a Vernon College counselor if a student shows signs of alcoholism, an eating disorder, suicidal behavior, cutting and/or harming themselves, or any other disturbing behavior as identified by the staff and Director of Student Housing.

Dining and Meal Plan

Board is provided as part of the fees for both the fall and spring semesters and is mandatory for all student residents. Board consists of fifteen meals per week (three meals per day, Monday-Friday) for fall and spring semester. Meals not eaten are not transferable to others. No board is included in summer contracts. Meals are not served on holidays.

Getting Along with a Roommate

Honesty, consideration, mutual respect, discussion, compromise, and understanding are important in learning to live with a roommate. If a resident experiences initial difficulties in adjusting to a new roommate or to student housing life, they should remember that they are not alone. It would be surprising if residents felt at home right away. The following steps work towards establishing an amicable relationship with a roommate.

- A. Communicate - discuss pet peeves, personal habits, sleeping and rising schedules, musical tastes, needs, wants, and expectations.
- B. Set ground rules - How is the room going to be divided? Who gets first dibs on bathroom/shower on what days? When and who is going to clean the bathroom? Who can borrow what, when, and for how long? What will studying time be? What about overnight guests? Make arrangements and keep them.
- C. Be respectful and follow the golden rule. *“Do unto others what you would have them do unto you.”*

Health Care Clinic

The Health Care Clinic is available to all students attending the Vernon campus. Vernon campus students support the clinic through a service fee paid at registration. Prevention is the primary goal of the Vernon College Health Care Clinic. The scope of the Health Care Clinic includes treatment of students' injuries and illnesses as well as to provide students with the tools they need to maintain a state of optimum health. The clinic serves as a resource in areas of health promotion, health maintenance, and health education. The clinic is staffed by a registered nurse and a family practice physician on a scheduled basis.

After the Health Care Clinic is closed, students becoming ill or receiving injuries are referred to the emergency room of the Wilbarger General Hospital.

Health insurance policies for students are available. These policies are issued by private agencies authorized by the College. Policy brochures may be obtained at registration or by contacting the student services office.

VC Title IX Policy

Vernon College employees strive to foster a safe and healthy learning culture. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 is an all-encompassing federal law that prohibits discrimination based on the gender of students and employees of educational institutions which receive federal financial assistance. Sex discrimination includes sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Title IX states that "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..."

Vernon College Title IX Coordinator (for employees)

Jackie Polk
Director of Human Resources
4400 College Drive
Osborne Administration Building
Vernon, Texas 76384
940.552.6291
jpolk@vernoncollege.edu

Vernon College Title IX Deputy Coordinator (for students)

Kristin Harris
Dean of Student Services
4400 College Drive
Osborne Administration Building
Vernon, Texas 76384
940.552.6291
kharris@vernoncollege.edu

Vernon College's Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures prohibits sexual misconduct, which includes: sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, stalking, dating and domestic violence. Additionally, the College prohibits retaliation against any individual who brings a good faith complaint under the policy, participates in the resolution process, or assists as a bystander to prevent sexual misconduct of any kind.

Vernon College encourages all student and employees to immediately report incidents of sexual misconduct. Designated Student Services professionals, Campus Police, and the Title IX Coordinator are available as resources. Specific information for the Vernon College Sexual Assault Policy can be at <https://www.vernoncollege.edu/sexual-assault>

Vernon College's Sexual Assault Policy, the Vernon College Employee Handbook, and the Vernon College Student Handbook outline the steps for conducting investigations, leveling charges, coordinating hearings, and notifying both the complainant and the respondent throughout the process. Vernon College administration will always defer to local law enforcement during investigations involving a criminal matter as to not jeopardize legal proceedings. The respondent and the complainant involved in alleged sexual misconduct cases are entitled to be accompanied to any disciplinary hearings by a hearing advisor of their choice. The respondent and the complainant are also entitled to prompt notification of the outcome of these proceedings as outlined in procedures.

Important Resources: Vernon College Student Handbook, Vernon College Employee Handbook, Vernon College Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures, Vernon College Anonymous Crime Reporting.

The United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is in charge of enforcing Title IX.

Information regarding OCR can be found at:
https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html

NOTES

Accreditations

Vernon College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award Associate's degrees. Questions about the accreditation of Vernon College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, by calling (404)679-4500 or by using the information available on SACSCOC website (www.sacscoc.org).

Vernon College is an affirmative action/equal opportunity educational institution and employer. Its students and employees are selected and/or assigned without regard to their race, age, color, gender, religion, national origin, or disability consistent with Titles IV, VI, and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Titles IV and IX of the Higher Education Act as amended in 1972 and 1976, and with Executive Order 11246 as amended by Executive Order 11375, Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL-93-112) and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

For information about individual rights and grievance procedures, contact Jackie Polk, Director of Human Resources, Vernon College, 4400 College Drive, Vernon, TX 76384, telephone number (940) 552-6291 ext. 2328.

Vernon College Student Resident Center Rule Infraction Record and Fine Charge List

Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Date/Time of Incident: _____ Room #: _____

Staff member present at time of incident: _____

- Alcohol and/or firearms in the Student Resident Center will result in an automatic referral to the Dean of Student Services and my result in expulsion from Housing.
- Illegal drugs found in dorm room will result in immediate expulsion from Vernon College Housing and notification to parents or legal guardians by the Dean of Student Services.**

| OFFENSE OR INFRACTION | Fine | Offense Number |
|--|----------------------|----------------|
| Possession of any alcohol and or containers (including empty containers) | \$100.00 | |
| Tobacco use inside Vernon College Housing. | \$25.00 | |
| Fighting in or around dormitory area. | \$100.00 | |
| Exhibiting an exceptionally dirty room or bathroom at the time of announced health and safety inspections. | \$25.00 | |
| Producing excessive noise during quiet hours (between 11pm and 9am) | \$25.00 | |
| Causing damage to any dorm facilities including removing or dismantling furniture. | \$100.00 to \$500.00 | |
| Having a prohibited item in your dorm room as listed in the student resident handbook. | \$25.00 | |
| Violating the overnight visitation policy or otherwise having guests in the dorm facilities outside of visitation hours. | \$50.00 | |
| Having unauthorized animals in the housing facility. | \$250.00 | |
| Tampering with any smoke detectors or fire extinguishers (subject to higher fines from the fire marshal) | \$50.00 | |
| Requiring your personal room door be unlocked by staff more than three (3) times in a semester | \$20.00 | |
| Other: | | |
| TOTAL FINES: | | |

Second violation for the same offense will result in doubled fines. Repeated violations will be viewed as total disregard and respect for the rules and regulations of Vernon College, and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Although not listed above, any infraction of the rules of Vernon College as stated in the Student Resident Handbook is subject to a fine at the recommendation of the Housing Director and the discretion of the Dean of Student Services. All fines will be charged to your student account and a hold will be placed on your student records. All charges must be paid before the end-of-semester grades and/or transcripts will be issued. You may not be allowed to register for the next semester until all your fines have been paid in full.

Housing Staff Member

Student

Director of Housing

Dean of Student Services