Room and Apartment Entry by Residence Life Staff

Summary

University procedures for being on call in the residence halls for residence life staff.

Purpose

To provide guidelines to assist Resident Assistants (RAs), Conference Assistants, Graduate Assistants and full-time staff members (Residence Life Coordinators, the Assistant Director of Residence Life, Senior Residence Life Manager, and Director of Residence Life) on entering student rooms and apartments.

Scope:

This policy applies to Resident Assistants (RAs), Conference Assistants, Graduate Assistants and full-time staff members (Residence Life Coordinators, the Assistant Director of Residence Life, Senior Residence Life Manager, and Director of Residence Life; hereon mentioned only as “staff members”) when entering student room(s)/apartment(s) in all Columbus State University Residence Life facilities.

Procedure

1. The Department of Residence Life at Columbus State University has established guidelines that must be followed by all staff members when entering into a student room/apartment.

2. Staff members may only enter into a student room/apartment if they are accompanied by another staff member.

3. Staff members may only enter into a student room/apartment without the presence of one of the above listed staff members if they are accompanied by law enforcement or by EMS.

4. Staff members may only enter into a student room/apartment only if they have just cause(s) to do so. Those just causes include one or more of the below circumstances:

   a. There is an immediate threat, or the staff member believes there is a threat, to the health and safety of the student or to the property;
   b. During fire drills, alarms, or severe weather evacuations;
   c. To open bedrooms doors in suite style apartments;
   d. To conduct health and safety inspections;
e. Assisting in maintenance concerns.

5. Before entering into a student space, staff members must attempt to contact the resident(s) via a university telephone or by knocking on the room/apartment door.

6. Staff members must properly check out the needed key/scan card to gain access to the student room/apartment.

7. Before entering into a resident(s) room/apartment, staff members must follow the below process:
   a. Step 1: Physically knock on the room/apartment door at least two (2) times and announce yourself as a Residence Life Staff Member;
      i. Example: “Residence Life”
   b. Step 2: Repeat Step 1 by physically knocking on the room/apartment door at least two (2) times and announce yourself as a Residence Life Staff Member;
   c. Step 3: Physically knock on the room/apartment door at least two (2) times and announce yourself as a Residence Life Staff Member and that you will be keying into the room;
      i. Example: “Residence Life. Keying In!”
   d. Step 4: Enter into the room/apartment by utilizing the key/scan card obtained through the community designated key box, crack the door open and attempt to make verbal contact with a student in the room.
      i. Continue announcing yourself as a Residence Life Staff Member until you have verified that there is no one in the apartment.

8. Once the staff members enter the room/apartment, they must address the concern/issue as quickly and calmly as possible.

9. Upon leaving the room/apartment, staff members must lock all room/apartment doors.

10. Staff members then must immediately return the checked out key/scan card to the community designated key box.

11. Any time a staff member enters into a student room/apartment, they must report their interaction(s) through the appropriate reporting log. This report must reflect the reason(s) why the staff member(s) entered the room/apartment and everything that happened while in the room/apartment.
   a. Appropriate reporting logs include:
      i. Duty Log;
      ii. Lockout Log;
      iii. Incident Reporting/Maxient Reporting system.

Exception to the Policy/Process
1. The only reasons a staff member may enter into a student room/apartment without the presence of another staff member are:
   a. To open bedroom doors in a suite style apartment;

2. Lockouts do not require a written incident report
   b. To conduct end of semester/year room inspections.
   c. To conduct a room inspection after a resident moves their belongings out of their assigned space.

Related USG Policy

N/A

Last Update

1/26/2017

Responsible Authority

Director, Residence Life