

NOTICE OF COVID-19 RISK AND UNIVERSITY HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

The worldwide spread of COVID-19, a respiratory disease caused by a novel strain of coronavirus, has led to a public health crisis. Valdosta State University aims to deliver campus housing while protecting the health and safety of our students and minimizing the potential spread of COVID-19 and other disease within our community. With this priority in mind, the University is working in tandem with public health officials to make informed public health decisions that will impact your campus housing experience during the 2020-2021 academic year. Because of the uncertainty of COVID-19, University housing policies, procedures, and guidelines may evolve throughout the year to minimize the risks posed by COVID-19. University residential students play a key role in helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and therefore should be aware of the following:

Health and Safety. All members of the University residential community—residents, staff, and visitors—shall act in a manner that demonstrates respect and consideration for those around them, including respect and consideration for the health and safety of all community members. Residential students are prohibited from creating any health or safety hazards within University Housing, and the University may request or require a residential student to leave University Housing if their continued presence in the housing community poses a health or safety risk for community members. Residential students will be required to comply with University requirements in addition to health and safety laws, orders, ordinances, regulations. For example, the University may set limits on mass gatherings, require COVID-19 diagnostic and surveillance testing (including before or upon arrival to campus), perform contact tracing, set disinfection protocols, establish limits on guests and visitation at residence halls, and set quarantine / isolation requirements (including before or upon arrival to campus). Adherence to these and other health and safety requirements will be required of all residential students, staff, and visitors. These requirements will extend to all areas of University Housing, including bedrooms, bathrooms, community kitchens, lounges, computer rooms, courtyards, and other common spaces.

In addition to these requirements, the University may strongly encourage residential students to follow public health guidance promulgated by public health authorities including, but not limited to, the following preventative measures:

- Practice good hand hygiene by either washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or by using alcohol-based hand sanitizer which contains at least 60% alcohol;
- Effective July 15, 2020, University System of Georgia (USG) institutions will require all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible, including residence hall common areas but not including an individual's room/suite.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces;
- Avoid contact with people who are sick;
- Stay in your assigned space if you are feeling sick and contact the University Health Center regarding your symptoms; and,
- Practice social distancing strategies, where possible.
 - No gathering in groups of more than 10
 - Maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance between individuals
- Abide by the amended guest policy
 - No overnight guests permitted
 - Limited number of visitors per person
 - If brought back to the room/suite/apartment, all occupants must agree to allow guests to enter

Occupancy. Residence hall rooms will be viewed as a shared residence within each room or suite, similar to a family's shared residence in that social distancing practices are not expected within the room or suite. As such, it is the responsibility of residential students to adhere to appropriate behaviors related to the prevention of COVID-19 within the room, including the cleaning of their assigned room or suite. Residential students should always consider following best practices for prevention even within the shared residence and take responsibility for their own actions.

Quarantine / Isolation / Separation. At any time, the University may request or require a resident to leave University Housing when that resident's continued presence in the residential community poses a health or safety risk for community members. Residential students are required to comply with directions from the University to leave or relocate from their assigned space due to COVID-19 or other public health emergency. Failure to follow University direction may be a violation of the University Housing Agreement and University Housing policies which may subject a student to emergency removal from their assigned space.

De-Densifying Efforts. Residential students are required to comply with any University de-densifying effort on campus due to COVID-19 or other public health emergency, including, but not limited to, the reassignment of all or some residential students to alternative housing.

Dining Services. Dining service, including where and how service is offered to residential students, is subject to modification, at the University's discretion, to address public health concerns. The University may adopt additional guidance at any time to minimize risk such as limiting the occupancy of dining halls, the amount of time students may reside within dining halls, or make other operational adjustments needed to address health and safety concerns or delivery of services for students in quarantine or isolation.

Cleaning. The University will continue to follow the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Georgia Department of Public Health, and other public health authorities' cleaning and sanitizing guidelines. The University will modify its cleaning protocols as necessary

or recommended to minimize the spread of disease. University Housing will educate and inform residential students on appropriate cleaning protocols within their assigned spaces to reduce the spread of COVID-19 within residence halls. Residential students will be required to provide their own cleaning supplies for their assigned space.

COVID-19 IS AN EXTREMELY CONTAGIOUS DISEASE THAT CAN LEAD TO SEVERE ILLNESS AND DEATH. DESPITE THE ABOVE UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19, THE UNIVERSITY CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND VISITORS WILL NOT BE EXPOSED TO OR INFECTED WITH COVID-19 WHILE LIVING IN OR VISITING UNIVERSITY RESIDENTIAL HALLS. AN INHERENT RISK OF ANY COMMUNAL LIVING OR SHARED LIVING ENVIRONMENT IS THE INCREASED POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO PATHOGENS AND CONTAGIOUS VIRUSES, INCLUDING COVID-19 DUE TO THE ACTIONS OR OMISSIONS OF OTHERS. ACCORDINGLY, LIVING ON CAMPUS CAN ELEVATE THE RISK OF CONTRACTING ANY CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS SIMPLY DUE TO THE RESIDENCE HALL SPACE UTILIZATION AND POPULATION DENSITY.

Students who exhibit any symptoms related to COVID19 should call the Student Health Center immediately at 229-333-5886. Students who test positive are encouraged to go home if possible and if they are not able to will be housed in an isolation area until they are symptom free for 3 days consecutively.

The University is committed to keeping you updated about what you can expect for the upcoming academic year. For more information, questions, or updates regarding how COVID-19 may impact campus residential life, please contact University Housing at housing@valdosta.edu, or visit the [University's COVID website](#) for more information.