

Residence Life Conduct Resolution & Referral Manual

In Partnership with the Department of
Student Conduct and Restorative Practices

Guiding Philosophy

- Residence Life manages community behavior.
- Student Conduct manages institutional risk.

Virginia State University recognizes the importance of maintaining safe, respectful, and educational residential communities while also ensuring serious behavioral concerns are addressed through appropriate institutional processes.

This manual establishes a tiered conduct response model designed to:

- Promote consistency in residential sanctioning
- Support educational interventions within housing
- Reduce unnecessary escalation of low-level matters
- Ensure appropriate documentation and accountability
- Maintain campus safety and institutional compliance
- Create operational efficiency between Residence Life and the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices

Residence Life is responsible for addressing low-level residential and community-based concerns.

The Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices is responsible for addressing high-risk, repeated, serious, or institutional-level conduct matters.

Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to establish clear guidelines regarding:

- Referrals, Residence Life may resolve independently
- Referrals requiring immediate referral to Student Conduct
- Documentation expectations
- Progressive discipline practices

- Appeal procedures
- Appropriate sanctioning practices
- Referral responsibilities involving Title IX and campus safety matters

This manual is intended to create a collaborative partnership between Residence Life and the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices while maintaining appropriate boundaries of authority.

Scope of Residence Life Authority

Residence Directors (RDs) may resolve low-level residential policy violations occurring within university housing.

These matters are educational and administrative in nature and should be resolved at the Residence Life level whenever appropriate.

Students are not permitted to adjudicate or determine sanctions for conduct matters.

Final sanctioning authority at the Residence Life level rests with the Residence Director and/or Director of Residence Life or Designee.

All final sanctions issued through Residence Life must be documented and shared with the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices for recordkeeping and via Maxient documentation purposes.

Residence Life Conduct Principles

Residence Life staff are expected to:

- Be educational, not emotional
- Address behavior, not personality
- Document facts, not assumptions
- Remain neutral and professional
- Maintain consistency in sanctioning
- Avoid promising outcomes
- Avoid personal involvement in student disputes
- Refer serious matters immediately
- Consult the Director of Residence Life/Designee or Student Conduct when unsure how to proceed

Residence Life staff should focus on behavior management, conflict resolution, and educational interventions while avoiding escalation of low-level residential concerns.

Documentation Expectations

Documentation is critical.

All Residence Life conduct matters must be documented in Maxient.

Documentation should include:

- Incident reports
- Meeting summaries
- Fines issued
- Student statements
- Educational interventions
- Warnings issued
- Sanctions assigned
- Sanction completion status
- Relevant emails or communication
- Repeat behavior concerns

Failure to properly document incidents may impact appeal outcomes and institutional accountability.

The Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices must receive copies of all final outcomes issued through Residence Life.

This process ensures progressive discipline tracking and institutional awareness of repeated behavior patterns.

Example: If a student receives two smoking violations through Residence Life, the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices should already have documentation prior to receiving a third violation referral.

Prohibited Substances & Contraband

Virginia State University is a dry campus.

The following are prohibited within residence halls:

- Alcohol
- Alcohol containers or bottles
- Marijuana
- Illegal drugs/substances

- Drug paraphernalia
- Smoking devices are prohibited, such as vapes, electronic cigarettes, etc., by University policy
- All tobacco products are prohibited under the age of 21 years of age
- No smoking at all in any University buildings
- Scales, plastic baggies, prohibited by university policy

Residence Life may address first-time low-level violations when appropriate.

Repeated violations and/or serious incidents must be referred to the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices.

Referrals Appropriate for Residence Life Resolution

Residence Life may address the following low-level residential violations:

- First and second smoking violations
- Unauthorized overnight guests/visitation violations
- Minor roommate disagreements
- Violations of roommate agreements
- Excessive noise/loud music disturbances
- Minor courtesy violations
- Failure to comply with quiet hours
- Failure to show Student IDs
- Propping of Exit Doors
- First-time scooter/e-scooter violations
- First-time alcohol possession/container violations
- First-time low-level prohibited substance concerns when appropriate
- Minor verbal disputes not involving threats or violence
- Minor residential policy infractions not threatening safety or well-being

Recommended Residence Life Sanctions

Possible sanctions may include:

- Educational conversations
- Written warning
- Judicial Modules
- Assign a Mentor

- Peer Mediation (Voluntary)
- Community service within housing
- Housing probation
- Restorative meetings/mediation
- Educational workshops
- Parent/guardian notification when appropriate (FERPA)
- Behavioral agreements
- Removal of prohibited items

Residence Life sanctions should remain educational, developmental, and proportional to the violation.

Residence Life Conduct Sanction Matrix

Violation	1st Violation	2nd Violation	3rd Violation
Smoking in the Residence Hall	Warning/Fine/Education	Housing Probation	Referral to Student Conduct
Covered Smoke Detector	Referral Eligible Immediately	Student Conduct	Student Conduct
Alcohol in the Residence Hall	Warning/Education	Housing Probation	Referral
Alcohol Bottles/Containers	Warning	Referral if Repeated	Student Conduct
Marijuana/Drug Odor	Referral Eligible	Student Conduct	Student Conduct
Drug Paraphernalia	Referral Eligible	Student Conduct	Student Conduct
Unauthorized Overnight Guest	Warning	Housing Probation	Referral
Loud Music/Noise	Warning	Educational Sanction	Referral if Pattern Continues
Scooter/E-Scooter in Residence Hall	Warning + Removal	Referral to Student Conduct	Student Conduct
Roommate Agreement Violation	Mediation	RD Meeting	Referral if Escalated
Minor Courtesy Violations	Warning	Educational Conversation	Referral if Repeated
Failure to Comply with Housing Staff	Warning	Housing Probation	Referral
Minor Verbal Dispute	Conflict Resolution	Housing Probation	Referral if Escalated

Automatic Referral to the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices

The following matters must be immediately referred and should not be resolved solely within Residence Life:

- Fighting/physical altercations
- Assault or threats of violence
- Weapons/gun violations
- Theft
- Significant property damage
- Drug distribution or sales
- Repeat prohibited substance violations
- Repeat smoking violations
- Repeat covered smoke detector violations
- Hazing
- Retaliation
- Interim suspension considerations
- Failure to comply with emergency directives
- Repeat disruptive behavior
- Harassment or intimidation
- Conduct posing a threat to campus safety

The Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices reserves the right to assume jurisdiction over any Residence Life matter when deemed appropriate.

Title IX Matters

All allegations involving:

- Sexual misconduct
- Sexual harassment
- Dating violence
- Domestic violence
- Stalking
- Retaliation
- Gender-based discrimination

must be immediately referred to the Title IX Office and the VSU Police Department.

Residence Life staff should not investigate or adjudicate Title IX-related allegations outside of required reporting responsibilities.

Progressive Discipline

Repeated violations may result in increased sanctions, including referral to the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices for formal disciplinary action.

Progressive discipline may include:

- Housing probation
- Loss of housing privileges
- Housing reassignment
- Removal from university housing
- Referral to Student Conduct
- University suspension recommendations
- Referral to Threat Assessment Team

Students demonstrating repeated behavioral concerns may be referred earlier based on pattern behavior, safety concerns, or failure to comply with prior interventions.

Appeals Process

Students have the right to appeal Residence Life sanctions through the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices within the designated appeal timeframe.

An appeal does not constitute an automatic reversal or overruling of the Residence Life decision. Rather, the appeal moves the matter into a higher-level institutional conduct review process through the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices.

Students should understand that the Student Conduct appeal process differs from the Residence Life process and may result in additional institutional review and accountability measures.

Upon appeal review, sanctions may be:

- Upheld
- Reduced
- Modified
- Increased

based on the review of documentation, conduct history, prior interventions, and circumstances surrounding the incident.

Students appealing Residence Life outcomes may become subject to formal Student Conduct processes and institutional conduct records if found responsible for policy violations through the Student Conduct review process.

Unlike low-level Residence Life resolutions, formal Student Conduct outcomes may result in institutional conduct notations and additional sanctions in accordance with university policy.

Conduct notations assigned through the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices may remain active for up to three (3) years in accordance with university record retention practices and institutional procedures.

Failure of Residence Life staff to properly document incidents, conversations, educational interventions, or prior violations may impact the outcome of the appeal review.

All Residence Life staff are expected to maintain accurate and timely documentation within Maxient.

Final Review Authority

All Residence Life sanctions must be reviewed and approved by the Residence Director or designee before final issuance.

The Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices maintains oversight authority regarding institutional conduct trends, repeat behavior concerns, and high-risk matters.

This partnership model is designed to support:

- Student accountability
- Residential community standards
- Institutional safety
- Educational interventions
- Operational efficiency
- Consistent conduct practices across campus

Closing Statement

This manual is intended to support a collaborative relationship between Residence Life and the Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices.

Residence Life plays a vital role in fostering healthy residential communities through education, accountability, and early intervention.

The Department of Student Conduct and Restorative Practices remains responsible for addressing serious, repeated, and institutional-level conduct concerns impacting the safety and well-being of the university community.

Together, both departments contribute to a safer, more accountable, and student-centered campus environment.

Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct is the official and authoritative guide for all policies, procedures, student rights, responsibilities, and behavioral expectations at Virginia State University. Please refer to the Code for the most current and comprehensive information regarding the student conduct process.

Access the Student Code of Conduct: <https://www.vsu.edu/student-life/student-conduct/>