



# Student Handbook

## 2020-2021

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### **COVID-19 Handbook Updates**

Any content below in RED ink has been updated and amended for academic year 2020-2021 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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# WELCOME

Welcome to Housing & Residence Life at Montana State University Billings. We are excited you have chosen to live on campus. Your decision will help you be successful as a student at this University. Living on campus provides you with the opportunity to meet new people, quick access to campus facilities, and the ability to get involved in campus life and programs. Make the most of this experience.

## UNIVERSITY HOUSING

Maximize your residence hall experience with this handbook. The information contained here can help:

- Enable you to become more familiar with our residence hall system-its services, programs, facilities, staff, policies, and procedures.
- Acquaint you with the philosophy and goals of Housing & Residence Life at MSU Billings.
- Inform you of your rights and responsibilities as a residence hall community member.
- Serve as a reference guide.

It is important that you have an overall understanding of the MSU Billings residence hall program. This handbook may answer many of your questions. Please take the time to thoroughly read it and become familiar with your campus home and take it with you to keep organized.

In addition, your residence hall staff members are valuable resources who can provide clarification and information about the residence hall and campus communities. Please feel free to address any questions to hall staff.

## DORM vs. RESIDENCE HALL

It has been a long, long time since the days of “dorm” mothers and 10 pm curfews. For the next eight months or more, your residence hall will be your home and should be treated as such. It will be a place in which you will learn much about yourself, grow tremendously, and have a lot of fun!

- Dorm (dorm) n. 1. place for sleeping 2. building or

part of one with sleeping rooms.

- Residence Hall (rez-idenz-hol) n. 1. where college students develop personally or mature 2. a college building in which experiences and programs result in positive growth.

## **LIFE IN YOUR RESIDENCE HALL**

In your new home, you will find:

### **RESIDENCE HALL DIRECTORS**

- A full-time professional.
- Responsible for the administration and safety of your halls.
- Available for addressing concerns, advising students, and facilitating community living.
- Can be reached by calling their office or visiting their office in the main lobby.

### **RESIDENT ASSISTANTS**

- Are students just like you!
- Answer your questions.
- Help with your academic, social, or personal concerns.
- Plan programs.
- Enforce policies and procedures.
- Help facilitate community living and floor community.
- Serve as a valuable resource; get to know your RA!

### **CUSTODIAL STAFF**

- Are a part of your floor community and deserve respect and consideration.
- Work diligently to clean your lobbies, kitchens, bathrooms, and much more!
- Will clean your hallways, but not your rooms!

### **HOUSING STAFF**

- Associate Dean of Students
- Petro and Rimrock Hall Directors
- Operations Manager of Student Life & Auxiliaries
- Nightwatch/Security

We offer student employment opportunities in a variety of roles throughout the department. Hiring information for resident assistants, student maintenance worker, summer conference assistants, desk workers, and main office student staff are

available on the Housing & Residence Life's website.

All of the staff in your residence hall or in the housing office are specially trained staff who are here for you. Please treat them with respect at all times!

## **RESIDENCE HALL PROGRAMMING**

### **WHAT ARE PROGRAMS?**

A program is an event designed to enhance your learning and development or help facilitate floor community. You will learn something new and have fun at the same time. Sometimes these activities will happen spontaneously on your floor, and other times, your RA will plan an activity for your floor or hall.

We are dedicated to the health and well-being of all students in the residence halls. We want to ensure your physical wellness and give you ample opportunity to get to know other students in the residence halls. In light of new safety procedures and policies, you will find more programs taking place virtually or in ways that provide for appropriate social distancing.

### **WHY SHOULD I ATTEND PROGRAMS?**

You will spend a great deal of time on your floor or in your residence hall, so it is important to become involved and connected. By attending programs, you will get to know the students in your hall and have a greater respect for your community.

### **RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION**

Your FREE Residence Hall Association Membership starts the moment you check into the hall. The Residence Hall Association (RHA) is a student organization for all students living in the residence hall and serves as a voice for the residents of MSUB. RHA advocates for residents within the hall through addressing residential questions, ideas, and concerns. RHA enriches the on-campus living experience by providing educational, leadership development and social activities for residence hall students. Students are encouraged to get involved in its leadership positions and to participate in its activities and programs. Learn more about events and leadership opportunities by finding us on social media or visiting the RHA office on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Petro Hall, which is also accessible to Rimrock residents.

# **COMMUNITY LIVING**

Living in a residence hall means becoming part of a community of students. This community is a dynamic place, composed of various people with different values, cultures, lifestyles, and attitudes. As members of the community, we must strive to understand the individuality and life choices of those among us. We can best learn from one another in an atmosphere of positive encouragement and mutual respect. We must possess a genuine desire to learn from those around us as well as give others the respect and tolerance we desire. Each person has a role to play in our residence hall community and should be allowed to do so.

## **RESIDENCE HALL COMMUNITIES INCORPORATE THE FOLLOWING:**

- Education: ensure that teaching and learning takes place outside the classroom.
- Openness: ideas and thoughts can be discussed freely.
- Respect: ensure that the individual accepts obligations to the community and is held accountable for individual actions.
- Involvement: all individuals have a voice in decisions concerning their community.
- Ownership: ensure all individuals care for their building facilities and adjacent property.

## **YOUR RIGHTS IN THE COMMUNITY INCLUDE:**

To socialize in your hall; to sleep and study without disturbance; to live in a supportive and stimulating community; to live in a safe, secure, healthy, and clean environment; to enjoy access to a variety of programs, services, and facilities; and to involve yourself and others in promoting an educational, open, respectful, caring, involving, and celebrative community.

## **YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY INCLUDE:**

To consider the needs of other students in the community and balance them with your own needs; to promote care of the physical facilities, equipment, and services; to communicate with other residents and staff members to let others know when they are disturbing you; to demonstrate a commitment to the community by getting involved; to promote campus and individual safety; and to demonstrate dignity and respect for all

individuals.

All residents are expected to keep their room in a good sanitary condition and maintain proper personal hygiene.

Living on campus at MSU Billings affords you many opportunities to face challenges head on, achieve in a variety of areas and grow as an individual. However, these things only happen when you actively participate and support the community ideals stated here.

*Adapted from In Search of Community, Ernest Boyer, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.*

## **YOU AND YOUR ROOMMATE**

If you are in a double room, you may need support to live with a roommate harmoniously. You will encounter many experiences being in a shared living space. Your roommate needs to know your general personal background, your attitude and emotions, your values (feelings, attitudes, opinions), and personal preferences.

You always heard this as a child, but the term “sharing” is most important here because residence hall living requires a concept of cooperation, whether it is with your roommate or with other residents on your floor. You can begin with a willingness to share some of yourself with your roommate. Open and honest communication usually ensures a satisfactory roommate relationship.

During the first week of the fall semester, your Resident Assistant will schedule an opportunity for you and your roommate to meet and discuss some very important aspects about living together. All of you will come up with a Roommate Success Plan that will be your guide to a healthy living environment. When things are getting tough or you need to clarify something with your room you can use the Roommate Success Plan as a starting point. Be open and honest during the process and ensure your voice is heard. The living experience is shared and not one sided.

The questions outlined below are provided to help you get started in your mandatory roommate contract. Take each question separately — be open, be honest, and be complete. If you have difficulty talking about an issue or subject, make note of it and tell your roommate that you would like to come back to it.

## **PERSONAL BACKGROUND:**

You should start by using the questions below to give your roommate some basic information about yourself – the place where you have grown up, information about your schooling, your family, your hobbies, your interests, etc. Try to offer more than “I’m from Austin, and I’m interested in the outdoors.”

Members of my family include:

I am glad to be away from home because:

I was not glad to leave home because:

I chose Montana State University Billings because:

## **PERSONAL VALUES:**

In this section, you are challenged to communicate – try and share ideas, issues, and values. Learn what you should know about each other. This is the most crucial portion of **THE YOU AND YOUR ROOMMATE SECTION**, because it will help establish the basis for your living arrangements.

How do I want our room to be utilized?

I expect our room to be...

Who will clean what and when?

How about friends and visitors in our room?

How about overnight guests?

My feelings about my personal belongings are...

My feelings about smoking are...

Grades and studying are...

I prefer to study...

## **ATTITUDES AND EMOTIONS:**

Attitudes and emotions (our feelings and how we express them) are an important part of us. We convey feelings both verbally and non-verbally. This portion of **YOU AND YOUR ROOMMATE** encourages you to clarify the emotions and attitudes that you express.

I am generally (reserved, outgoing, etc.)...

My pet peeves are...

When I am:

...angry, I generally...

...frustrated, I generally...

...sad, I generally...

...concerned, I generally...

...excited, I generally...

...happy, I generally...

It is (easy, hard) to talk about my feelings. Why?

### **OUR REACTIONS TO EACH OTHER:**

Last but not least, you are at the point of drawing some conclusions and identifying positive and negative factors in your living situation with your roommate.

Some things I have learned from this discussion are...

An important difference between us is...

And we will work on this by...

We agree that we'll do the following,

If conflict occurs between us...

## **ROOMMATE DISAGREEMENTS**

It is impossible to get along with every person all the time. We hope this information and roommate contract has helped to create a stronger connection with your roommate. If you and your roommate are at a stalemate, however, we are here to help. Your RA has been trained in conflict resolution and has many resources available to help you and your roommate find resolve. If things are still not working out, you can contact your Hall Director to learn about other options.

## **FINANCES**

Handling finances is an educational experience. Avoid your expenses exceeding your income. Establish a budget. Know what's coming in and what's going out

### **INCOMING**

MONEY FROM HOME  
PART TIME WORK  
SCHOLARSHIPS  
FINANCIAL AID  
WORK STUDY

### **OUTGOING**

TUITION  
BOOKS  
ROOM AND BOARD  
SNACKS AND FOOD  
SUPPLIES  
TRAVEL AND GAS  
SHOPPING  
ENTERTAINMENT

We also caution you to use credit cards wisely. Many companies send offers to college students and this is an essential piece of financial management and planning.

You are also responsible to take care of your student account and residence hall room and board payments.

This is essentially the first time you are “renting” your own living space and need to handle your account responsibly. If you do not pay your installment payments on time, our office will be contacting you. We encourage students to take responsibility and be proactive in communicating your financial situation. If you are going to be late on a payment, are waiting for financial aid, or have extenuating circumstances, communicate those concerns with us and the business office prior to receiving a late payment notice from the office. For more information on your student account or starting a payment plan contact the Business Office, McMullen Basement.

Add money to your u-card anytime and your parents can too. You have the option of adding to your general account or food flex. <https://get.cbord.com/msubucard/full/login.php>

The University offers loans primarily for students facing unexpected circumstances. Applications can be retrieved by contacting the Office of Financial Aid or by going to [www.msubillings.edu/seesomething/funds.htm](http://www.msubillings.edu/seesomething/funds.htm) then to the Student Crisis Fund.

## **GET INVOLVED!**

Students who get involved in the total college experience are more likely to be successful as students at MSU Billings. We strongly encourage you to consider a leadership position in RHA, invite you to attend hall and floor programs, and offer your RA assistance in helping with floor programs or community events.

The Center for Engagement office also offers over 60 student clubs and organizations to get involved in. Each week they publish a full calendar of student events and activities for students to participate in. Check out the Master Calendar link: <http://ems.msubillings.edu/mastercalendar>

## **Residence Hall Policies and Procedures**

### **1. Contract Information**

#### **A. Housing Contract:**

Residents have signed their Housing Contracts online and have entered into a legally binding agreement with MSU

Billings for the renting of housing for the eight-month academic year. **A Housing Contract Addendum has been published and will be available online and during the check-in process. This Addendum covers updated contract information in regard to COVID-19 and living on campus.**

Once a student has moved into the residence halls, they are bound to the contract, and may only be released for the following reasons (upon completion of a contract release form with supporting documentation) with a \$75 cancellation fee:

- Students Over 21 Years of Age: As verified through MSUB student information systems
- Military Veteran: As verified through MSUB Student information systems
- Enrolled in 5 or fewer credits: As verified through MSUB Student Information systems
- Transfer Student: As verified through MSUB Student Information systems
- Online Student: As verified through MSUB student information systems
- Non-Degree Seeking Student: As verified through MSUB Student information systems
- Living with Immediate Family (parent, grandparent or legal guardian) within Yellowstone county
- Married
- Physical custody of a dependent child
- Financial Hardship
- Medical Related Condition
- Documented Disability
- Unusual Circumstances

All requests for contract release must be made to the Office of Housing & Residence Life two weeks prior to residence hall opening for consideration. Please contact the Housing Office, by calling 406-657-2333 with any questions. The form can be found online under the housing application portal:

[https://msubillings.starrezhousing.com/StarRezPortalX/48FB22BF/1/1/Home-Home?UrlToken=8336B45E,](https://msubillings.starrezhousing.com/StarRezPortalX/48FB22BF/1/1/Home-Home?UrlToken=8336B45E)

### **B. Room NON-REFUNDABLE Application Fee:**

All residents must submit an Application Fee of \$125 in order to reserve a room on campus. This fee reserves room space and serves as a non-refundable prepayment for your housing.

The Application Fee is kept in a holding account until the student moves into the halls, and then it will be placed on the student's account. The Application Fee will need to be paid each academic year since it is non-refundable.

**C. Cancellation Policy:**

1. If a resident submits an application and fee to reserve a room in the MSU Billings residence halls, but cancels, the non-refundable application fee will be forfeited. Room cancellation requests must be submitted in writing/email to the Housing Office.
2. Any resident accepting and/or signing for a room key will be financially obligated by the contract for the academic year. Cost of key replacement is \$60.00. Cancellation fee is \$75 for cancelling.
3. Residents who wish to cancel their housing contracts and move out of the residence halls should arrange to be granted a release from the Department of Housing & Residence Life. Students who are no longer registered or actively attending classes are required to arrange contractual release with the Department of Housing & Residence Life and must vacate their rooms within 48 hours of withdrawal.
  - a. Residents who wish to cancel their current housing contracts during the current academic semester must complete the Petition for Residence Hall Contract Release Request online. Please keep in mind the residency requirements stated in section 6. The student will be billed according to the schedule set forth by the Office of Housing & Residence Life. If a resident fails to complete a Petition for Residence Hall Contract Release and submit it to the Housing Office for approval, a \$25.00 fee will be assessed on that student's account for failure to follow proper procedure. A \$75 cancellation fee will also be assessed. Room/meal refunds are only made through the third week of the semester.

If a resident does not complete the Housing Contract Release and/or not approved to release their contract, they

will be charged the room and meal plan for the upcoming spring semester term.

- b. At a specified time in October/November, all residents will have an opportunity to change their room assignment and meal plan for the upcoming spring semester at no charge. **Meal Plan changes can be made once for free and after that it is \$25 to change.** Single room occupancy is **NOT** guaranteed. Failure to make any changes by the date required will result in automatic room and board charges for the next semester. Changes after that date may result in additional fees.
- c. Residents who have been approved to cancel their housing contracts for the spring semester prior to the end of the fall semester must properly check out of their rooms by 12:00 noon on the day following the end of final exams unless they have written permission to stay from the Office of Housing & Residence Life. If the room is not vacated prior to the check-out date and proper check-out procedures are not followed, the resident will be charged for an improper check-out and required to remove their belongings. If personal property is abandoned in a room by a resident, the items will be left in the room for 5 (five) days. Once 5 days have passed or Housing & Residence Life reasonably believes that the resident has abandoned all personal property, Housing employees will remove the items from the room and properly store and take inventory of all property. Once this is complete, a certified letter or email will be sent to the previous resident stating that their property has been inventoried and stored. After fifteen days from the date of the letter being sent, if the belongings are not retrieved by their owner, the property will be disposed of. ***A twenty dollar (\$20) per day storage fee may be assessed upon completion of time inventory for up to 15 days.*** Additionally, a

\$50 charge will be assessed for the inventory of all property in the room, regardless if the items are claimed or not.

d. Residents who have signed a contract for the academic year (this includes students graduating in the fall and exchange students) and decide to cancel their room during the break (see Section 1, G of the Residence Halls Policies and Procedures) will be required to:

- Submit a written cancellation to Housing
- Pay a \$75.00 contract cancellation fee unless approved otherwise
- Residents who signed an Interim Break Contract will be charged for their housing interim break contract
- \$20/day storage fee starting the first day of break until properly checked out for Residents who were not contracted to stay over the break.

e. Residents who have signed a contract for the academic year and decide to cancel their contract for the semester, will be subject to:

- A \$75.00 cancellation fee
- Weekly rate charges for the nights they stayed in their rooms during the semester (no refunds after the third week), as well as the fee for the interim break contract.

f. Residents who have signed a contract for the academic year and decide to cancel their contract within the first 3 weeks of the semester:

- Receive a room refund according to the schedule set forth by the housing department,
- Be charged a \$75.00 cancellation fee.

These refund and break charges are in effect regardless of the reason for the cancellation.

Exceptions are NOT made for students who have lost their financial aid or been suspended from the University for academic or misconduct reasons. Students who are notified in writing by the University during the break period that they have been suspended for academic reasons are no longer eligible to stay in the residence halls during the break period and must properly check-out of their rooms within 48 hours of notification of academic suspension and will be subject to the charges outlined in the Student Affairs Handbook.

4. Prorated refunds are given through the first three weeks of the semester, beginning when halls open.

It takes approximately 5-6 weeks from the date of checkout to receive a refund from the University. The resident's accounting records are reviewed by several offices on campus prior to the check being printed and mailed if there is a zero balance on the students University account.

#### **D. Installment Plans:**

Installment Plans may be arranged with the Business Office (McMullen Hall B-4, phone 657-2301) to allow students to pay for their expenses in four (4) payments throughout the semester. All residents must pay their first installment of a fourth of their total charges by the second day of classes unless fees have been arranged by the Business Office. If a resident fails to make this payment or any of the subsequent installment payments, they will be subject to eviction from the residence halls with a 48-hour notice for failure to meet their financial obligations.

#### **E. Check-In:**

Residential students will be expected to complete a Housing Application and Contract before checking into a room in a residence hall. Upon checking into a room, a student is financially bound to the contract. Proper procedures include:

##### *Before arriving:*

1. Complete Application. A Non-refundable Application Fee must be included with the application.
2. Complete a Housing Contract online.
3. Accept the ResNet Contract online.

4. Sign the Armory contract
5. Accept or Decline the Renters Insurance

*After arriving:*

6. Accept the Room Inventory online and accept a room key. Accepting the inventory verifies the condition of the room and its contents at the time of check-in. All damages should be listed at that time.
7. Get mail combination and Hand code
8. Ensure all fees have been accepted and paid.
9. Join a student organization! Get involved! Enjoy the year!

### **F. Check-Out:**

Residents will be billed for their rooms until such time that they properly check-out of their rooms. At the end of the year or at the time of check-out all residents must complete the following procedures, which can be done with your RA in person:

1. At the end of the spring semester, residents will be given their Express Check-out packet. The Express Check-out packet outlines all the procedures a student is required to complete in order to properly check-out using this method.
2. When the resident signs the check-out envelope, they are agreeing to the conditions and charges that may apply.
3. Clean room and move out. All original furniture must be in the room and in the same arrangement as when the resident moved in. All contact paper must be removed, and all surfaces must be cleaned.
4. Complete Change of Address on envelope and with the University in your MyInfo and the exit survey online.
5. Turn in room key with the express checkout envelope or to the RA if you do an in-person checkout.

See Section **1, B** on Room Deposit and **Section 1, C** on **Refund Policy of the Residence Halls Policies and Procedures** for additional information regarding charges that may be assessed as a part of the Check-Out process. A \$25.00 Improper Check-Out Fee will be assessed if Check-Out procedures are not followed. Cleaning charges start at \$35/hour depending on the severity of the room, minimum one hour charged.

### **G. Holiday/Break Housing:**

In this policy and in all policies to follow, regarding this issue, the term "break" shall refer to the time period between the closing of

the residence halls at the end of Fall semester and the opening of residence halls at the beginning of Spring semester, as well as the time period from the last day of the second or third summer session to the opening of the residence hall at the beginning of Fall semester.

Students who are living on campus during the semester preceding the break and have signed a contract for the academic year may stay in the residence halls during the break for a minimal charge. The interim break contract contains a specific list of interim break contract policies and procedures and must be signed by the resident wishing to stay over the break. Students who are involved in misconduct situations during the semester or owe money on their accounts may be denied housing during break periods. Students must contact the Office of Housing & Residence Life prior to the Friday before the end of the semester to make arrangements to stay during the break and complete an Interim Break Contract. A \$25.00 late charge will be assessed for all Interim Break Contracts received after this deadline.

If a student does not complete a winter break contract, they will NOT be granted access to their building or room during the break. Students who access the building during the break for any reason, and have not completed a winter break contract, will be assessed the full winter break fee.

Students who do not complete a winter break contract and cancel their academic year contract over the break are subject to significant charges, a \$75 cancellation fee and a \$20/day storage fee assessed from the first day of break until the student has been released from their contract and has properly checked out of their room and removed their property.

***Example: Student goes home for the break and then cancels their spring semester housing 14 days into the winter break. This student will be charged a \$75 cancellation fee, as well as \$20 per day storage fee (14 x \$20 = \$280) for a total of \$355***

#### **H. Room Assignments:**

Residents applying to live on campus are able to request a specific room and/or roommate online or indicate a preference for type of floor and roommate they would like. Returning

students have the first opportunity to select a specific room. Room assignments for all students are confirmed through the housing portal. Housing & Residence Life reserves the right to deny an application from a former residence hall student, who was evicted, has a history of delinquent room and board payment, caused physical damage to the facility or violated other contract terms during their previous term.

**Your mailing address will be: your name, hall and room, 1500 University Dr, Billings, MT 59101**

### **I. Room Changes:**

All room changes must be approved & arranged through the Office of Housing & Residence Life. If you are requesting a room change during the semester for roommate problems, please see your Resident Assistant (RA) first, and then your Hall Director. Students wishing to make a room change must complete the online Room change Request Form at [https://msubillings.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_88qBk65IWKjVygB](https://msubillings.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_88qBk65IWKjVygB) then current students and forms. You will be notified of your request within 72 hours via email with your approval or denial letter. If approved, your Hall Director and/or RA will be in contact to ensure all proper checkout procedures are followed. Failure to properly follow room change procedures will result in a \$25.00 Improper Check-Out fee.

### **J. Room Consolidation Procedure:**

If a resident is living in a double room and their roommate moves out or does not check in at the beginning of the semester, the housing office will contact the student with the name of a new roommate, a list of names they can contact, or give them the option to keep the room as a single room if space is available. This may require the student to move rooms in order to match up with another student in a double room. The student must accept the new roommate that has been assigned to their room or move to the reassigned open double room by the specified date. If the resident fails to complete the necessary move, they can be charged the single room rate if space is available or face student conduct.

**All Petro end rooms must have two residents and they will not be assigned as single rooms.**

There are times when a student has a double occupancy contract but may live alone in a double room. It is a

requirement for students to be prepared to have a student move into that space **at any time**. This means one bed is not being used, one closet is empty and available, and the room is generally available for occupancy at any time. If the space is not available upon entry for a student, you will be required to make that space available for a student to be assigned into that space and you will be assessed a single room fee for the period the space was unavailable or until a new roommate is assigned, whichever is greater. This does **NOT** grant you a single room and failure to have the other side of the room ready for immediate check in may result in additional fees to the student.

### **K. Room Damages:**

Residents will be financially responsible for all damages, which exceed normal wear and tear. Residents found vandalizing any university property will be charged for the damages and will be subject to misconduct action. Damage to common areas (bathroom, laundry, kitchen, lounge, etc.) may result in charges incurred by the floor/building community, if responsibility cannot be ascertained.

### **L. Single Rooms:**

A limited number of single rooms are made available at the beginning of the year to be reserved as “guaranteed singles.” Residents may request a single room when they apply to live on campus, and these requests will be honored if space is available in the residence halls. All single rooms are made available on a first come/first served basis. An additional charge per semester is assessed for a single room rate. See the Housing web page for the most updated prices.

<http://www.msubillings.edu/reslife/rates.htm>

**\*NOTE: All Petro end rooms must have two residents and they will not be assigned as single rooms.**

### **M. Credit Requirements:**

Students living in the residence halls must be actively pursuing 6 or more credits (this is defined as attending classes on a regular basis). Exemptions to this policy must be approved in advance by the Housing & Residence Life Office. A credit requirement exemption form must be completed and returned to the Office of Housing & Residence Life for approval.

<https://www.msubillings.edu/reslife> under current students and forms.

## **N. Felony Conviction:**

Any student applying for Housing or Family Housing who has a felony conviction, or any student who is convicted of a felony while living on campus, will be reviewed on an individual basis to determine if the individual will be allowed to reside in the Montana State University Billings residence halls or a family housing complex.

## **2. General Residence Hall Policies**

### **A. Abandoned Property**

If personal property is abandoned in a room by a resident, the items will be left in the room for 5 (five) days. Once 5 days have passed or Housing & Residence Life reasonably believes that the resident has abandoned all personal property, Housing employees will remove the items from the room and properly store and take inventory of all property. Once this is complete, a certified letter or email will be sent to the previous resident stating that their property has been inventoried and stored. After fifteen days from the date of the letter being sent, if the belongings are not retrieved by their owner, the property will be disposed of. A twenty dollar (\$20) per day storage fee may be assessed upon completion of time inventory for up to 15 days. Additionally, a \$50 charge will be assessed for the inventory of all property in the room, regardless if they have been claimed or not.

### **B. Appliances:**

**Standalone microwaves are not permitted as our power grid is not able to sustain the use**, but with the MicroChill single source powered unit you can have all three at your fingertips for an affordable cost during the school year. Housing & Residence Life is pleased to offer you the chance to purchase or rent a MicroChill unit for your room. This single source powered unit allows you to have the convenience of a mini-fridge, freezer and microwave in your room at any time.

**Renting or purchasing this unit is the only way to have a microwave in your room.** To rent or purchase your MicroChill unit please visit <http://www.collegeproducts.com/msub>.

Rented units must be cleaned before checkout.

Residents may bring one refrigerator into their rooms at no additional charge. Size is limited to residence hall models (4 cubic feet or smaller). Refrigerators are to be empty and unplugged during the break periods if the resident is not staying in his/her room.

Avoid overloading outlets with too many cords and do not use extension cords with frayed wiring or poor connections. Check the wiring and casing on appliances. Residents may have radios, stereos, and televisions (wall mounting is NOT permitted) in their rooms if they keep the volume at a level that does not disturb others.

If a resident's appliance causes a noise disturbance for other residents, the Hall Director and Resident Assistants may require that the appliance be removed from the room. Use of electrical appliances for the preparation or storage of food except coffee pots, toaster ovens or refrigerators (4 cubic feet or smaller) are not allowed. Standalone microwaves are specifically prohibited. The wiring system is NOT intended for items that place a heavy load on the system, such as microwave ovens.

### **C. Building Entrances:**

All residents must follow the building entrance policies as posted at the entrance of each building. The buildings are secured 24 hours a day and residents must follow the technology systems available to identify their status as a resident. **Housing & Residence Life has suspended the guest & visitor policy for the 2020-2021 academic year in order to protect the health and safety of on-campus residents. This new policy is reflected on the Housing Contract Addendum and will help limit the number of people entering the residence halls.**

### **D. Ceiling Tile Removal:**

Removal of ceiling tiles for any reason (ie: storing items in ceiling) is NOT allowed.

### **E. Combustible Materials:**

Combustible materials such as propane, gasoline, kerosene, and items containing combustible materials (i.e. lanterns, live trees, chemicals, lava lamps) are NOT permitted in residence halls.

### **F. Cooking:**

Kitchens are provided on every floor. No appliances with exposed elements (ex: hot plate, toaster, etc) may be used in the residence halls. Misuse of kitchens may result in the facilities being closed. Residents are responsible for keeping kitchens clean and removing their dishes. **All items left in the kitchen area are subject to removal.** If students living on the

floor wish to leave cooking items in the cupboards and drawers, please notify the Resident Assistant and custodian on the floor. Housing staff is NOT responsible for these items. Students MUST clean up their mess & dishes. Do NOT put food in sink or down drains.

### **G. Desk & Bed Storage:**

Desks may be put in storage for residents. A storage fee of \$25 annually will be assessed. Please speak with your RA if you think this is something you would like and wish to have your desk or bed removed. If a resident is in a single with two beds/desks they may be illegible to store one for no charge.

### **H. Laundry:**

Laundry facilities are provided on each floor for resident use only for a dollar to wash and a dollar to dry (money needs to be put on your general u-card or use quarters). Residents must clean out washers and dryer lint traps after each use. Non-resident's laundry is prohibited and will be removed. Residents are responsible for watching their own clothes, and the Housing department assumes no responsibility for theft. Misuse or consistent damage to the laundry equipment may result in the loss/closing of services. Refund link for machine not working: <https://msubillings.edu/reslife/laundry.htm>

### **I. Lost Keys:**

A fee of \$60.00 will be assessed for any lost key. A \$60.00 fee will be assessed for lost outdoor keys if you were issued one. Security of the resident rooms is of primary importance; therefore, locks are changed, and new keys are made whenever a key is lost. Keys may not be duplicated.

### **J. Lounges and Balconies:**

**Students utilizing common shared spaces are expected to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Housing & Residence Life strongly encourages all students to wear face masks or face coverings when outside of their residence hall room.**

These areas are provided for the residents as an informal gathering place. Quiet/courtesy hours apply to these areas at all times. Balcony doors will be locked at 10:00 pm and opened in the morning by custodial staff. Rooftop access is prohibited. All furniture must remain in the lounges. Throwing objects off the balcony is prohibited and will result in misconduct action. MSU Billings is not responsible for any personal items left in lounges, lobby areas, laundry rooms, or

kitchens – and items left are subject to removal. Smoking is prohibited on the balconies. Balconies can be subject to closure for misuse and abuse.

Common areas in residence halls (lounges and lobbies) are for the use of the building's residents. Only groups or individuals invited by residents or staff may make informative or educational presentations in the hall lobbies. The residence hall staff will monitor and schedule all presentations or events.

No group or individuals may schedule residence hall common space for regular meetings or activities (ie. Campus club meetings, bible studies, political groups, etc.) except for activities directly sponsored by the hall staff and made available to all students. Any student group wishing to use the hall space needs to be approved by the Hall Director of that building. Presentations or activities may not include the sale of product or services, nor may residence hall facilities or rooms be used for personal profit or gain.

### **K. Maintenance Requests:**

All maintenance requests must be submitted through the online system. You can find the maintenance request link at the front desk in each Residence Hall. The link to submit a maintenance request is <https://msubillings.edu/reslife> then Current Students, Forms and Maintenance Request. Please be as specific as possible when completing the request. These requests are checked daily. Maintenance requests are **NOT** to be called directly to Facility Services or to the student maintenance worker. Questions or concerns regarding maintenance requests may be directed to a Hall Director. If you have an emergency situation (sink flooding, lock broken) that needs immediate attention, please phone it into the Hall Director, Housing Office or contact your front desk or RA. If you have submitted a request and you want to follow up on the status, please contact your Hall Director or the Office of Housing & Residence Life. By submitting a maintenance request, you are granting permission to enter your room, unless otherwise specified.

The response time will depend on the nature and severity of the maintenance problem, but we will respond to all problems in a timely manner.

Each room is equipped with its own steam radiator that is

controlled by adjusting the thermostat mounted on the wall of the room. During freezing weather, NEVER COMPLETELY TURN RADIATORS OFF! Doing so may cause the radiator to freeze and result in extensive water damage. The cost of repair is the RESIDENT'S responsibility.

### **L. Moving Furniture:**

Furniture in floor lounges must remain in the proper area. Residents found with lounge furniture in their rooms will be charged a fine for removal of the furniture (\$25.00 per item) and be asked to remove the furniture immediately. Fire codes state that no more than two beds and no more than two desks are allowed in the rooms.

### **M. Personal Property & Insurance Encouragement:**

MSU Billings is not responsible for the personal belongings and property of students living in the residence halls, regardless of how the damage is caused (ex: sinks overflowing, natural disaster, theft, etc). Students are encouraged to carry appropriate personal property insurance. Your parent's homeowner's insurance may cover you, please consult with agent. Students are also expected to lock their doors and carry their keys with them at all times.

### **N. Phones:**

Room phone access is available upon request. The phone service works with voice over the internet and not traditional phone lines, so you will need to use the phone that is checked out to you when you sign up for the phone service. You will be unable to use your own landline phone. You will be given a phone information sheet and the \$100 annual fee will be assessed to your student account. If you damage this phone, charges will be assessed. There is no voicemail on the University's phones.

### **O. Posters & Room Decorations:**

Residents may decorate their residence hall rooms with posters and other similar decorations as long as they do not cause damage to the room (nails, hooks, screws, etc. are not permitted). You must have your room number visible on your room door at all times. Residents are financially responsible for all damage or loss in designated rooms. Placing signs in windows and on the exterior of room doors in university residence halls is considered a resident's privilege. Any resident who chooses to express their creativity, via their window or door assumes the responsibility for

balancing their personal tastes with the image of the total community. Controversial, antagonistic, or pornographic materials may draw personal confrontations from others within the community who may be offended by the content. Posters of an offensive nature cannot be placed in public view; i.e. windows, showers, outside doors, etc.

**Do not cover the room number posted on the room door.**

**\*Helpful Hint—When placing posters on walls, use poster putty/command strips. Masking tape pulls paint off walls and the surface off the ceiling tiles (use pins in tiles). Please do not use nails in the walls.**

#### **P. ResNet Wireless Internet Access:**

Each room has wireless internet access. Residents must log any problems with their connection at the IT helpdesk 247-5700. Each resident has signed a ResNet contract in the application process, outlining the policies of MSU Billings internet usage. As stated in the ResNet Contract, the MSU Billings Information Technology Department has the right to disconnect your access for improper usage. There are limited services the IT department have to help with your computer. You may be responsible for taking your computer off campus to have it looked at. Routers are NOT allowed in the halls.

#### **Q. Room Lockouts:**

If a resident is locked out of their room, a key may be checked out at the hall desk by showing a valid MSU Billings ID or driver's license. The key must be returned within one week or the resident will be billed, and a lock change of \$60 will be processed. Contact the RA or Hall Director to retrieve an ID from a residence hall room in order to check-out a key.

#### **R. Showers and Bathtubs:**

Residents using the showers or bathtubs are not allowed to shower in a shower stall or use a bathtub area with another individual. All shower stalls and bathtub rooms are to be utilized by one individual at a time.

#### **S. Traffic and Parking Regulations:**

Parking permits can be purchased within your secure area online or at the University Police Department located in the parking garage on Poly Drive. Permits can be purchased by the semester or for the entire year. See Parking in Section IV, C

and Section IX, Number 2, K of the Student Affairs Policies and Procedures for more information.

#### **T. Trash:**

Chutes are located on each floor. Residents are asked to keep the surrounding area clean and all boxes must be torn apart before being disposed of. Any resident found disposing of garbage in the hallway will be assessed a charge to clean up the garbage. Residents should not dispose of personal trash from their room into trashcans outside the bathroom or elevators; this could result in a minimum charge of \$25. Please do not put cinder blocks/loose bottles/loose trash/cat litter/human waste/or other heavy objects down the trash chutes. All trash must be in a garbage bag that is tied closed before putting down the chute. We reserve the right to lock the trash chute for abuse at any time. You can take your trash to the main trash areas in designated areas.

#### **U. Recycling**

Small recycling bins are located in each room of the residence halls, with all-in-one single stream recycling available on each floor (Trash Rooms in Petro, Laundry Rooms in Rimrock). Cardboard is recycled separately and should be broken down and placed in the designated area near the single stream recycling container. Glass is not currently recycled at MSUB and should be disposed of in the designated containers on each floor.

#### **V. Waterbeds:**

Waterbeds are not allowed in the Residence Halls.

#### **W. Window Screens:**

All screens must be kept on the windows. A \$15.00 fine will be assessed to anyone removing screens. For the safety of everyone, residents are not allowed to drop or throw objects from or at residence halls windows, balconies, or ledges.

#### **X. Elevators:**

Tampering with elevators (removing button plates, pulling doors open and shut, inappropriately ringing the alarm) is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

#### **Y. Entrance Doors:**

Do not grant residential access for individuals unknown by the community; refer them to the front desk or Housing &

Residence Life office for assistance. Do not prop open doors that require student ID or hand code access to enter. Report any malfunctioning doors to residence life staff.

### **3. Residence Hall Services and Activities**

#### **A. Bikes:**

Bicycles may be stored in the designated bike storage room areas on specific floors (Petro 5 and 7). These rooms are not secured so students should use a bike lock to secure their bike. The bike storage areas are only secured by the lock and chain provided by the bike owner and are not monitored or locked by the Housing staff. MSU Billings is not responsible for items stored in storage rooms or bike rooms. **Bikes left in the storage room at the end of spring semester will be inventoried and kept for 15 days and then disposed of as abandoned property (see abandoned property policy), unless arrangements were made with the Hall Director in writing.**

#### **B. Computer Lab & Rimrock Classroom:**

Each residence hall has a Computer Lab and a printer located at the front desk. The Petro computer lab hours are limited to the hours that the front desk and night watch staff are on duty. The computer lab in Rimrock is available 24/7 unless reserved for a class or special event. At this point, there is no charge for printed pages, though anyone found abusing this privilege (75+ pages per day) may be charged \$0.10 per page. ONLY residents are allowed access to printing in the labs.

#### **C. Fitness Center:**

**The Fitness Center located in Petro Hall will be closed for the academic year 2020-2021. We recommend all students utilize Recreation Activities located in the PE Building for all gym-related activities.**

#### **D. Food Delivery:**

Students who order food from local delivery companies need to be available in the main lobby when the food arrives to pick up your order. If you give your cell phone to the company as a contact, we are not responsible to contact you by cell phone from the front desk. Please clarify with the company when you order the food that you will meet them in the main lobby to pick up your delivery or that they will use their phone to contact you when they arrive in the main lobby.

### **E. Front Desk:**

The front desk is staffed in the lobby of each residence hall on a regular basis. Services at the front desk include; check-out of brooms, mops, and vacuums; information on hall programs; and phone numbers of the campus offices. Change machines are located in the main lobby of each hall. **An ID is needed for items to be checked out.**

### **F. Ice Machines:**

Each residence hall lobby is equipped with a complimentary ice machine. Students may dispense ice at their leisure but are encouraged to not leave a mess.

### **G. Ironing Boards:**

Ironing boards and irons are available at the front desk in Petro. Your ID is required to check them out. Rimrock Hall has built in ironing boards in the laundry rooms.

### **H. Kitchens:**

There is a kitchenette on each floor of the residence halls accessible to all residents. Each kitchen is equipped with a stove, microwave and sink. Cleaning of the kitchen areas are the responsibility of those utilizing the facilities. Any cooking grease should be disposed of in the garbage NOT the sink.

**Dishes, pots, pans, and cooking utensils are not provided. Students are not permitted to leave any cooking materials (dishes, utensils, pots, pans, food, etc.) behind after they have finished cooking. Any left items will be immediately disposed of.**

### **I. Mail/Packages:**

Residents will receive mail through the residence hall mailboxes located in the main lobby of each residence hall, Monday through Friday, with the exception of holidays. Packages may be picked up at the mailroom in McMullen Hall during the business hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Mailing addresses are as follows: hall and room, 1500 University Dr, Billings, MT 59101. Notify your friends and family as well as magazines and banks so they have the appropriate address. When checking out of the residence halls, residents must let the Housing Office know of the mailing address change, and first-class mail will be forwarded for ninety (90) days after the effective date on the address change card. Residents are encouraged to change addresses with newspaper and magazine subscriptions prior to moving out of the halls, as they

are not forwarded. Update your address with MSUB at:  
[https://prodmyinfo.montana.edu/pls/blagent/twbkwbis.P\\_Gen\\_Menu?name=homepage](https://prodmyinfo.montana.edu/pls/blagent/twbkwbis.P_Gen_Menu?name=homepage)

### **J. Medical Problems & Emergencies:**

The Student Health Service is located in the Petro Hall Complex and provides basic health care to students from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Residents with specific medical concerns should contact their RA for additional information. Counseling services are also available through the Student Health Services at no additional charge. For emergency illness or injury call 911 and contact a hall staff member or the front desk. First aid kits are located at the front desk in each hall and an AED is available in the lobby by Health Services and in Rimrock Hall lobby.

We support the proper disposal of prescription medications to reduce the improper use of them Student Health Services offers packets that enable more environmentally friendly methods of disposal that neutralizes pills, liquids, and patches. Stop by the Student Health Office in Petro Hall on the second floor for more information.

**Unsure about reporting a crime of sexual violence or have questions about your options? Call the Phoenix Center 24-hour crisis helpline at 406-794-3829.**

### **K. Security/University Police:**

The MSU Billings University Police Department is staffed with P.O.S.T. (Police Office Standards Training) certified Police Officers 24-hours a day to serve your law enforcement needs. Programs relating to issues of personal safety and crime prevention are available upon request, and information regarding those issues is available on a continuous basis. Students are encouraged to report any suspicious or criminal behavior to the University Police Department. Specific and individual concerns will be addressed to fit student needs in order to enhance the campus experience. The University Police Department may be contacted at any time by calling extension 2147 for non-emergencies and 657-2222 for emergencies. Current campus crime data in accordance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act is posted on the MSU Billings website ([www.msubillings.edu](http://www.msubillings.edu)) or available at the University Police office. Sign up for the emergency notification system: <http://www.msubillings.edu/msubalert> today!

### **L. Sick Tray System:**

Students who are ill and practicing self-isolation may utilize the Sick Tray System through Dining Services. Students can call 406-657-2381 to place a sick tray order which they can have a friend pick up for them or can be delivered to them by the housing staff. Students should also notify the Housing Office if their illness prevents them from leaving their rooms (406-657-2333).

### **M. Storage:**

No storage space is available for residents to store luggage or extra boxes. However, a bike storage room is available on specific floors in Petro and in front of Rimrock Hall. Residents storing a bike in this area must provide their own chain and lock. The bike storage areas are only secured by the lock and chain provided by the bike owner and are not monitored or locked by the Housing staff. MSU Billings is not responsible for items stored in storage rooms or bike rooms. Unless arrangements were made with the Hall Director in writing, abandoned property will be disposed of after 15 days, see Residence Hall Policies and Procedures, Section 2, A.

### **N. Study Lounges:**

The Housing & Residence Life Office is committed to helping residents attain academic success. Study lounges are provided in Petro Hall on residential floors and in Rimrock Hall in the back lobby to provide space for residents to concentrate on academic pursuits.

### **O. Vending:**

Each residence hall has an area set aside for pop and candy vending machines. General U-card monies can be used in the vending machines in each of the lobbies in Petro and Rimrock Hall. Problems should be reported to the Business Operations Office, McMullen Hall 1st floor West (657-2023). Refunds for the machines need to be called to the company, not housing.

### **P. Printing:**

Residents may print for free in your hall, however the printers do not print color. Following are the areas identified as pay for print stations for specific printing needs as color paper/color printing/collating: COE 401, Information Commons, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Library, McDonald 213/251/308, Academic Support Center, and City College HS and Tech Building.

#### **Q. Cable:**

Cable television is provided in each of the residential floor lobbies. Issues with the cable should be reported to the Housing & Residence Life Office or your Hall Director.

#### **R. Daily Cleaning:**

Custodial staff clear out the trash chutes and clean the bathrooms and other floor areas daily, including weekends. Please do not use a shower or restroom while a custodian is in the process of cleaning it. Bathrooms/showers can be closed if excess damage or misuse occurs temporarily for repairs.

### **4. Residence Hall Rules and Regulations**

**\*\*Violation is subject to misconduct action\*\***

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the laws of the state of Montana and the Federal Government, Billings City Ordinances, Board of Higher Education policies and the MSU Billings Code of Student Conduct regulations. In general, students are expected to behave in a considerate and reasonable manner, which respects the rights of the University and of any other person who may be affected by their actions.

#### **REPORTING AN INCIDENT**

**It is the responsibility of each resident to help promote a safe and effective living environment. When residents see something happening that is a violation or out of the ordinary, they are encouraged to say something (SEE IT, SAY IT).**

**Residents can report concerns to a student or professional staff member in person or can submit a report via the online system from the housing webpage. Simply go to [www.msubillings.edu/reslife](http://www.msubillings.edu/reslife) current students and under forms select "Report An Incident". Your right to remain anonymous will be protected to the best of our ability.**

#### **A. Marijuana-Drug Policy:**

No illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia are permitted (**see Part IX, B, 2B of the Student Affairs Policies and Procedures**). MSUB takes drug use seriously and eviction is not an uncommon practice for first time use.

- **Medical Marijuana Permits:** Although Montana state law permits the use of medical marijuana, i.e., use by persons possessing lawfully issued medical marijuana cards, federal laws prohibit marijuana use, possession and/or cultivation at educational institutions and on

the premises of other recipients of federal funds. Possession of a valid and appropriately held Medical Marijuana Permit identification card does not authorize a Resident to possess, use, or distribute marijuana in any university residence hall or apartment, university-owned property or in any public area of the university.

Students who receive a valid and appropriately held Medical Marijuana Permit identification card may submit a Contract Release Petition to the Housing & Residence Life Office for review. These petitions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Petition request will be evaluated, and refunds are not guaranteed, but may be considered.

- **Legal But Abused Drugs:** MSUB is aware that there are some drugs that are often abused by students, but are legally obtained through certain shops (ie. Spray paint, Spice, Bath Salts). While these may have been obtained legally, MSUB does not allow or encourage use of them as they can have harmful effects when consumed. Any use of these types of drugs will be in violation of the residence hall drug policy and may result in misconduct action.

### **B. Liquor (Alcohol) Consumption:**

- The legal drinking age in Montana is 21.
  - Personal consumption of alcoholic beverages by residents of legal drinking age in private living quarters in the residence halls or other campus living units, shall not unduly interfere with the rights of others, nor cause the normal operation of the residence halls or campus living unit to be disrupted.
  - Individuals who are not residents may not bring alcohol into the residence halls.
  - No alcohol is permitted in community gathering places; i.e.—lobbies, elevators, stairwells, balconies, hallways, etc.
- (see Part IX, B, 2A of the Student Affairs Policies and Procedures.)**
- At no time will any size keg or party ball or large quantities of alcohol be allowed in the residence halls.
  - Residents must close their doors where alcohol is legally being consumed in an effort to avoid noise violations.
  - Students, who are not of the legal age, may not be present in a room where alcohol is present or being consumed.

- It is illegal for those of legal drinking age to provide alcohol to any person under 21 years of age.
- Residents who are not of the legal drinking age may not display or store empty alcohol containers in their room.
- The sale of alcoholic beverages on campus is prohibited.

### **C. Tobacco Use on a Tobacco FREE Campus:**

MSUB is a Tobacco Free Campus. This means the use of any tobacco related product (i.e. cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, chewing tobacco, or other legal tobacco substances) IS NOT permitted to be used within campus property, including the residence. While students may possess tobacco products, the USE of ANY tobacco related product is prohibited. This includes any public area of the residence halls, balconies, in any residence hall room, and parking lots.

Students found in violation of the university wide Tobacco Free Campus policy may be subject to misconduct action.

Repeated and flagrant violations of this policy may result in the termination of a resident's housing contract.

**If you currently use tobacco products and would like information on quitting please pick up a "Quit Kit" from Student Health Services in the Petro Building foyer.**

### **D. Weapons and Explosives:**

No firearms, ammunition, weapons, fireworks, explosives, noxious materials, incendiary devices, dangerous instruments, pellet guns of any kind, rifles, paint ball guns, or other dangerous substances are allowed in the residence halls or on campus property or buildings. Switchblade knives, bayonets, and all concealable weapons with blades over three (3) inches (7.62 cm) in length are prohibited on campus and within the residence halls at any time (**see Part IX, B, 2C of the Student Affairs Policies and Procedures**).

MSU Billings provides safe and secure storage of weapons, for those who qualify, in the campus Armory located at University Police. For information regarding, expectations, policy, and procedures please visit the [MSU Billings Armory](#) page.

### **E. Room/Hall Damages:**

Residents will be financially responsible for all damages which exceed normal wear and tear in their room. Painting of residence hall rooms is prohibited. Any damages to lounges, restrooms, etc. will be charged to the resident

responsible for the damage. Rooms will be checked at both the time the resident checks-in and checks-out. Corporate charges may be assessed to the wing, floor, or entire building if common areas are damaged. The Housing Department reserves the right to lock off bathrooms, kitchen, or laundry rooms that have been excessively damaged or vandalized in order to have the area repaired and/or identify the person(s) responsible.

**F. Quiet Hours:**

Quiet hours are in effect from 10:00 pm to 8:00 am Sunday through Thursday and 11:00 pm to 8:00 am on Friday and Saturday. (Noise that can be heard further than two doors away is too loud). In addition, “courtesy” hours are in effect 24 hours a day. These hours allow for the normal pursuit of academics during non-quiet hours. 24-hour quiet hours go in effect the Sunday leading into finals week during fall and spring semesters, with non-quiet hours between 11:00 am to 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm.

**G. Visitation:**

Housing & Residence Life has suspended the guest & visitor policy for the 2020-2021 academic year in order to protect the health and safety of on-campus residents. This new policy is reflected on the Housing Contract Addendum and will help limit the number of people entering the residence halls.

**H. Solicitation/Sales/Electioneering:**

No solicitation/sales/electioneering will be allowed in the Residence Halls. Violators will be escorted out of the Residence Halls (see Part VII of the Student Affairs Policies and Procedures).

**I. Overnight Guest Policy:**

Housing & Residence Life has suspended the guest & visitor policy for the 2020-2021 academic year in order to protect the health and safety of on-campus residents. This new policy is reflected on the Housing Contract Addendum and will help limit the number of people entering the residence halls.

**J. Burning of Incendiaries/Candles:**

The burning of incense, candles, cigars or any other substance, creating a noxious odor in the halls is prohibited. Residents are encouraged to use & closely monitor warming devices.

We recognize the sacred medicines of sage, cedar, and sweetgrass that smudging may incorporate as elements of purification and sacred ceremony. Other related medicinal plants may be considered but must receive prior approval from the Associate Dean of Students. We support the use of the sacred medicines for indigenous cultural events and activities taking place in the residence halls including, but not limited to, opening and closing prayers, smudging, feasts, sacred circle gatherings, and pipe ceremonies. Per the 1978 Native American Religious Freedom Act, University Housing & Residence Life policy allows these traditional practices when used in a safe, careful and consistent manner. At student wishing to use sage, sweetgrass, or cedar for religious purposes should register as a user with the Residence Hall Director upon move-in. The online form is at [www.msubillings.edu/reslife](http://www.msubillings.edu/reslife), current students and under forms.

#### **K. Fire Alarms:**

Treat all fire alarms as if they were the real thing. All residents must evacuate the building immediately, when the fire alarm sounds. All students need to exit down the closest stairwell, if it is safe to do so and out the fire doors. Any students who do not evacuate the building are subject to misconduct action. Anyone found tampering with any fire equipment will be subject to misconduct action and possible criminal prosecution (see **Part IX, B, 2I of the Student Affairs Policies and Procedures**).

#### **Fire safety information:**

Fire extinguishers are strategically located throughout each residence hall floor. They are to be used only in the event of a fire. If you are found tampering with them, you could be charged a fee to refill and/or may be subject to misconduct action.

Exit signs are considered fire equipment and are placed to guide residents to exit routes in emergency situations. They are not to be covered or tampered with. Smoke Detectors are also sensitive pieces of fire equipment.

Actions that result in the activation of a smoke detector, tampering with fire alarm apparatus and equipment (including removing smoke detectors or batteries) or false alarm may result in criminal penalties and misconduct action.

If a smoke detector is beeping, the battery probably needs replaced. Please contact your hall director for a replacement.

Before a fire occurs, you should prepare yourself by knowing the location and route of your escape via the closest exit. A smoke alarm can wake you, but an escape plan can help save you. Fire drills occur periodically throughout the semester and are designed to provide an opportunity to help residents hear alarms and evacuate the building. Please treat them as the real thing every time – it could save your life!

**If a fire occurs, please follow the fire safety procedures outlined below:**

1. Keep your head low and move quickly to the nearest exit. Crawl, if you can, so you do not breathe smoke.
2. Touch the door with the back of your hand before opening it. Before touching the door handle, cover your hand for protection. Intense heat, deadly smoke, or gas may be on the other side. If the door is hot, do not exit the room; place a sheet or something to gather attention outside your window for the fire crews to know which rooms they need to send rescue crews to.
3. Do not waste time getting dressed, looking for keys, or gathering valuables. Leave the building immediately and stay out.
4. Alert other occupants of the building and residence hall staff.

**L. Pets:**

Pets are not allowed in resident rooms, lobby areas or public spaces with the exception of fish. Turtles, frogs or any other fully aquatic animals are not allowed. Aquariums of more than 10 gallons must receive approval of the Hall Director. We are not responsible for Pets in case of an emergency.

For information regarding service animals or emotional support animals, please visit the Housing webpage

[http://www.msubillings.edu/reslife/service\\_and\\_esas.htm](http://www.msubillings.edu/reslife/service_and_esas.htm)

There is an application that must be completed and turned into the Housing Office as well as to get registered with Disability Support Services.

**M. In-Hall Sports:**

To promote consideration of others and to protect facilities and fire safety equipment, any recreational activity; i.e. frisbee,

racquetball, golf, water fights, soccer balls, hackey-sack, running, NERF guns, darts, etc. occurring on residence hall floors is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to wrestling, rollerblading, skateboarding, riding bicycles, hover boards or wheeled device and the tossing, throwing, or kicking of any items. Gambling is also prohibited.

#### **N. Room Inspection and Entry:**

MSU Billings is committed to respecting the student's right to privacy. However, the right to enter rooms and perform required maintenance, to determine the condition of university property, and to regulate suspected violations of university rules and regulations or if suspected conditions in the room are deemed life threatening is reserved. Rooms will only be entered in accordance with State law, which requires prior written notice be given in all cases which are not deemed emergencies by virtue of belief that the occupant or the facility is in imminent danger or University policy is being violated. This notice may be individually addressed, or a general notice may be posted on each floor. We reserve the right to do room inspections with proper notice at any time.

#### **Procedures:**

1. Fire Drill Checks: During fire drills, rooms may be entered for the purpose of determining if all residents have evacuated. Students will be required to leave their rooms during a fire drill. This action is for the protection of your life.
2. Emergency situations which warrant entrance of rooms:
  - a. Occupant has been missing for an extended period of time for unknown suspicious reasons or is reported missing by a roommate, friend, or parental call of concern.
  - b. Occupant calls for help verbally or by telephone.
  - c. Residents and/or their belongings are threatened by imminent danger.
  - d. Conditions in a room are a constant and annoying disturbance to other residents, for example: radios, alarm clocks, phones, stereos, etc.
  - e. The possibility of trespassers exists, indicating that residents are in danger.
  - f. There is reasonable cause to suspect University rules and regulations are being violated.
3. Room Entry:
  - a. Staff members will knock, but need not receive verbal permission, before entering a room if, in the

mind of the staff member in charge, the danger is of sufficient magnitude.

- b. If an occupant refuses entrance to a staff member, the staff member may enter with a pass key, only if he or she is reasonably sure that the occupant or state property is in danger.
- c. Room searching for contraband, such as Residence Hall firefighting equipment, narcotics, university property, or items, which may endanger Residence Hall occupants, shall be done in accordance with state laws.

#### 4. Spraying for Insects

- a. **ALL** rooms will be sprayed for insects twice a year (the end of each semester).

#### 5. Maintenance requests that have been submitted grant permission to enter your room, unless otherwise specified.

If an authorized person enters a room when the resident is not present, a written note will be left indicating who entered the room, when they entered and for what reason.

Generally, staff will not enter a student's room to retrieve items for occupants who are not present or for other students who have left personal items in the room. Exceptions may be made, but staff will take precautions to protect themselves from possibly liability and have the right to refuse such requests.

## **5. Student Conduct & Judicial Information**

Students are essential members of the MSUB community and are expected to uphold and abide by certain standards of conduct that form the basis of the [Student Conduct Code](#).

The student conduct program at MSUB is an educational and developmental process that balances the interests of individual students with the interests of the academic community. It is not intended to punish students; rather, it exists to challenge those whose behavior is not in accordance with our policies and to protect the interests of the community.

Educational interventions are intended to improve the students' moral and ethical decision-making and to help them learn more about what is expected as members of our

community. In cases where students fail to live by the conduct standards or pose a threat to the continuing safety of the university community, the conduct process may determine that the student should no longer share in the privilege of being a member of this community.

Students should be aware that the student conduct process is quite different from criminal and civil court proceedings. Procedures and rights in student conduct process are conducted with fairness, but do not include the same protections of due process afforded by the courts in criminal cases.

Due process, as defined within these procedures, assures written notice and a hearing before an impartial hearing officer with the right to appeal most decisions. No student will be found in violation of the MSUB Code of Student Conduct without determination that it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred. Any educational interventions will be proportionate to the severity of the violation and to the cumulative conduct history of the student.

### **A. Student Rights**

One of the concerns of Montana State University Billings is to provide each student the opportunity to learn. Therefore, some personal freedoms and rights of students include, but are not limited to:

1. Freedom of inquiry, speech, and assembly.
2. Freedom from threats.
3. Freedom from acts of violence.
4. Freedom from unfair or obscene treatment from others.
5. Freedom from interference from others in an unreasonable and unauthorized manner while in class, activities, and public events.
6. Freedom from theft and willful destruction of personal property.
7. Right to study and learn in an atmosphere of academic freedom.
8. Right to procedural due process in University, misconduct action.
9. Right to be governed by justifiable academic regulations.
10. To be informed in writing of the academic requirements determined by individual instructors.

11. Right to be informed of the regulations for academic and social conduct, and graduation requirements of the University.
12. Right to petition for redress of grievances, academic and non-academic.

## **B. Student Responsibilities**

Each student has the responsibility:

To respect the rights and property of others.

1. To be fully acquainted and comply with the published rules and regulations of the University.
2. To comply with all local, state, and federal laws.
3. To recognize that student activities reflect upon the individuals involved as well as upon the entire University community.
4. To recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment conducive for learning and academic inquiry.
5. To adhere to the academic requirements determined by individual instructors.
6. To abide by the reasonable direction of a University official acting within the legitimate scope of their duties.

## **C. Student Conduct Tenets**

- To regard each student as an individual, deserving individual attention, consideration, and respect.
- To consider the facts fully and carefully before resolving any case.
- To speak candidly and honestly to each student.
- To hold each student to a high standard of behavior, both to protect the campus community and to promote student moral development.
- To recognize the reality of human fallibility, as well as the stresses associated with collegiate life, and to demonstrate compassion, understanding, and a sense of perspective.
- To contribute to the educational mission of the university by designing policies, conducting programs, and offering instruction that contribute to the intellectual and moral development of the entire student body.

## **D. Privacy Rights**

Disciplinary proceedings conducted by the university are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

(FERPA). Generally, under FERPA, disciplinary records may not be released or disclosed without the expressed written permission of the student whose disciplinary record is being sought unless provided by law. Release of student disciplinary records is permitted without prior consent to university officials with legitimate educational interest; victim/s of an alleged crime of violence or of an alleged sexual assault; and parents of a student who can provide written documentation that the student is financially dependent.

## **E. Student Disciplinary Process**

### **1. Incident Referral**

Any person having knowledge of an alleged violation of the Code of Student Conduct may submit an [Incident Report](#) to alert the university of specific behavior. The referral should contain a description of the incident; information identifying the complainant; and the time, date, and location of the incident.

Upon receiving the report, the student will receive a letter (typically via a secure email system) requesting a formal administrative meeting with a hearing officer to discuss the referral.

### **2. Formal Administrative Meeting**

A formal administrative meeting is an informal discussion with designated university hearing officer in which the student will be asked to respond to the allegations against them. Although the reporting party may not be present, the staff member reserves the right to contact that party if necessary. An advisor, as specified in the Code, may accompany students.

During the meeting, the staff member will review accounts presented by the referred student and the complaining party. The staff member will then determine if the student is responsible or not responsible for the alleged violation(s).

Possible outcomes of a preliminary interview include:

- Dismiss the case due to insufficient evidence;
- Defer the case for a period of time pending further investigation by the hearing officer;
- Resolve the case immediately, by determining charges and rendering a determination;

### 3. Educational Interventions

MSUB takes a very educational approach with student conduct and provides educational interventions for responsible behavior to help prevent the behavior from taking place again in the future. There is no rubric for how educational interventions are issued as each student's needs are different. Possible sanctions (or combinations thereof) include but are not limited to:

- Verbal warning
- Formal warning
- Misconduct Probation
- Deferred Suspension
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Probation or Removal from University Housing
- Educational/Academic Programming or Workshops
- Restitution
- Counseling
- Follow Up Meetings with Hearing Officer

### 4. Right to Appeal

Any student or organization shall have the right to appeal the final decision of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Access and Success or designee within 10 business days from receipt of sanction.

In general, appeals must be based on the issue of substantive or procedural errors which are prejudicial, and which were committed during the formal resolution process.

- a. The specific questions for the review which should be addressed in any written appeal are the following:
  - i. Were the procedures of this Code followed?
  - ii. If a procedural error was committed, were the rights of the accused materially violated?
  - iii. Has the student discovered new evidence, not previously available, which would have materially affected the decision?

### **F. Eviction:**

Resident students who flagrantly or repeatedly violate housing policies may be subject to eviction from the residence halls and/or referred to the University Misconduct Process.

Students who flagrantly or repeatedly violate housing policies

will be informed of their alleged violation(s), the date of the violation(s) and the name of the person(s) who were witnesses to the alleged violation(s), and staff members involved in responding to the complaint. The student will be given the opportunity to admit or deny the charges and may appeal a decision regarding an eviction to the Dean of Students or their designee.

Complaints referred to the University Misconduct Process will be subject to the due process procedures and sanctions as outlined in the ***Code of Student Conduct Part IX of the Student Affairs Policies and Procedures.***

## **6. Residence Hall Residency Requirement**

Montana State University Billings has a long-standing history of supporting the success of all students, especially first year students who are making the transition to college.

National and Institutional research suggests that student who live on campus are significantly more inclined to remain in college, graduate in 4 years, and have a higher GPAs in comparison to students living off campus. It is this research that MSUB supports the Board of Regents Policy that all students taking 12 or more credit hours, with less than 30 credits reside in the residence halls for one academic year.

Recent institutional data (2015) indicates that students who lived on campus were retained to the following year at a rate of nearly 15% greater than those students who lived off campus.

The University recognizes that the live on practice positively impacts all students, therefore City College students are now required to live on campus during their first year as well. In fact, many City College students currently make the choice to live on campus due to the amenities, affordability, and the ability to better connect with other students.

Note: City College students are not exempt from the live on requirement and must sign up for housing accordingly or complete an exemption request that meets any other exemption area.

**Here is who is required to live on campus:** Traditional age student less than 3 years out of high school and under 30

credits at the start of the fall semester. All students living in the residence halls are required to enroll in a meal plan; contact dining services for any accommodation requests.

**Here is who is automatically exempt from housing if they are under 30 credits (no exemption form is needed for the following):**

- Students Over 21 Years of Age: As verified through MSUB student information systems
- Military Veteran: As verified through MSUB Student information systems
- Enrolled in 5 or fewer credits: As verified through MSUB Student Information systems
- Transfer Student: As verified through MSUB Student Information systems
- Online Student: As verified through MSUB student information systems
- Non-Degree Seeking Student: As verified through MSUB Student information systems

**Contact the Housing Office if you believe you meet one of the following exemptions to the live on requirement:**

- Living with Immediate Family (parent, grandparent or legal guardian) within the following county: Yellowstone
- Married
- Physical custody of a dependent child
- Financial Hardship
- Medical Related Condition
- Documented Disability
- Unusual Circumstances

All requests for exemption must be made to the Office of Housing & Residence Life two weeks prior to residence hall opening for consideration. Please contact the Housing Office, SUB 225, by calling 406-657-2333 or any questions. The exemption form can be found online at [www.msubillings.edu/reslife](http://www.msubillings.edu/reslife).

### Exemption Process

The committee will schedule a meeting time to convene every other week (one time per month).

- Completed exemption forms and all associated documentation is submitted via email or hard copy to the housing office
- Administrative staff verifies that all paperwork is in order and the information scans the paperwork in one document labeled on box in the housing folder with the requester's last name.
- Administrative housing staff will forward the scanned document to the membership of the committee for consideration.
- Two days before the scheduled meeting the housing staff handling exemptions will send a finalized list of those requests for consideration at the meeting and attach the requester's document one more time.
- The committee meets, discusses, questions each of the requests and comes to one of the following conclusions:
- More documentation is needed to verify circumstances. In this case the administrative staff contacts the individual to alert them to turn in the requested documentation
- The committee would like to meet the person for an in person or online interview to better understand be circumstances and request outside of the documentation provided. The administrative staff will schedule an interview that works for all committee members and the requester
- Denial of the exemption request. Administrative staff sends the person a letter outlining the denial and reasoning. Copy is kept for record keeping and tracked on a master spreadsheet for historical tracking.
- Approval of the exemption request. Administrative staff sends the person a letter outlining the approval. Copy is kept for record keeping and tracked on a master spreadsheet for historical tracking.
- In the event the student wishes to file an appeal on the decision, written notification must be sent to the Dean of Students within ten (10) business days of the decision. The decision of the Dean of Students is final and may not be appealed further.

# **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

(Unless otherwise specified the prefix is 406-657)

Petro Front Desk	2586
Petro Hall Director	2588
Rimrock Front Desk	2580
Rimrock Hall Director	2366
University Police (non-emergency)	2147
University Police (emergency)	2222
Housing & Residence Life	2333
Student Health Services	2153
Library	1657
Recreation Activities	2175
Academic Support	1641
Admissions/Registrar	2158
Advising & Career Services	2240
Student Union/Center for Engagement	2387
Campus Store	2121
U-Card	2023
Business Services	2301
Financial Aid	2188
Campus Information	2011
Information Technology	247-5755
Dean of Student Engagement	1660
Phoenix Center	794-3829
City College Jacket Student Central	247-3007
City College Financial Aid	247-3000
City College Advising	247-3019