AU students are expected to uphold high standards of citizenship and appropriate behavior in their residences and when interacting with surrounding community members. In situations when off-campus behavior becomes an issue, American University has procedures in place and officials designated to respond.

The Dean of Students’ Office responds to and tracks complaints about student conduct off-campus. The data indicate that, since 2002, six to ten “problem addresses” emerge each year. A “problem address” is a residence occupied by students who persist in conduct that disturbs the peace and order of the neighborhood, as identified by neighbor complaints. During 2009-2010, there were eight problem addresses that required AU intervention.

When a complaint is filed, the Dean of Students staff teams with AU Public Safety to respond and resolve the issue. The Associate Dean meets with all students who live at the “problem address.” When troubles persist, the Associate Dean will engage the landlord or the property manager in seeking a resolution. If more formal action is required, then students may face discipline by the University, police intervention, or termination of the lease by the landlord.

In an effort to be more efficient and effective in responding to neighbor complaints, AU has implemented several strategies to manage off-campus misconduct by its students:

- Amended the Student Conduct Code to extend AU’s jurisdiction to address misconduct off-campus;
- Formed a standing committee of University administrators who meet every other week during the academic year to track cases and coordinate interventions;
- Streamlined and centralized the complaint process by creating a 24-hour phone line and online complaint form and designating the associate dean of students as the principal case manager for problem resolution;
- Assigned a Public Safety Officer to MPD-2D briefings to enhance collaboration between the two agencies;
- Opened communication between Community and Local Government Relations and landlords and realtors to build relationships and assist in resolving problems;
- Created and distributed information brochures and refrigerator magnets to provide neighbors with useful information and key contacts for University programs and complaint resolution.