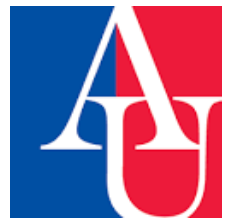


OFF-CAMPUS LIVING

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY'S COMMUTER STUDENT NEWSLETTER



Housing & Residence Life

American University

Fall 2017

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Off-Campus Housing

Office Hours:

Tuesday & Thursday

9am-5pm



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American University
Housing & Residence
Life

Monday-Friday
9am-5pm



HomeAtAU



@HomeAtAU



202-885-3370

Welcome to Off-Campus Housing

Hello, off-campus students!

We hope that your fall semester is off to a great start.

The Off-Campus Housing branch of American University's Housing & Residence Life works with AU students living off-campus. Off-Campus Housing provides students with resources and guidance in their housing search and offers support and resources for off-campus living.

This newsletter comes out once per semester and provides students with advice and information to help them navigate off-campus living.

If you have questions about finding housing in the DC area or would like to schedule a consultation with our Off-Campus Housing Assistant, please email offcampushousing@american.edu. You can find our contact information in the sidebar.

Is your rental licensed?

Making sure your rental follows the law.

Residential Housing licenses are required for all rental properties in the District of Columbia including homes, apartments, condominiums, basement apartments and apartment buildings.

It is important to make sure that the person you are renting from has the appropriate license to rent. A licensed space is up-to-date with fire and safety codes. It also means that there are no structural issues with the space. If you currently reside in a space that does not have a rental license, it's possible that you may be forced to leave.

All properties listed on the Off Campus Housing Posting site are licensed rentals and must submit legal proof before advertising on our site. You can find more information through the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs at dc.gov/DC/DCRA



DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER & REGULATORY AFFAIRS

dcra@dc.gov

(202) 442-4400

1100 4th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20024

Break and Vacation Checklist

Whether it's a weekend away or a longer vacation, make sure you follow these tips.

- Unplug electronics and small appliances (toasters, lamps, chargers, etc.)
- Turn down the heat--no use heating an empty house!
- Close and lock your windows. Make sure your window blinds or curtains are closed.
- If you'll be gone for an extended period of time, let your landlord or property manager know. You can also ask a friend or neighbor to keep an eye on your place.
- Throw out your perishable food and take out the trash and recycling.

A Message From The Associate Dean of Students

Contributed by Michelle Espinosa, Associate Dean of Students



Welcome back to the 2017-2018 academic year! We hope you will enjoy living in the nearby

community. We also are counting on your consideration for others, which forms the foundation of responsible citizenship.

My colleagues and I are available to provide support to you. We also need your cooperation in this partnership. At a minimum, we want you to be aware of the expectations American University has for you. We expect you to:

- know, understand and abide by local ordinances and laws;
- know, understand and abide by the terms of your lease;
- monitor and maintain the condition of your property;

manage the behavior of your guests; and when you choose to host friends at your residence, do so in a responsible, considerate and lawful manner.

Please familiarize yourself, your roommates and friends with Washington, D.C.'s disorderly conduct law. This law specifies prohibited conduct related to "preservation of the public peace and the protection of property" and imposes serious penalties on convicted violators. Although it is important for you to become familiar with all the provisions of the act, one provision warrants your immediate attention:

"It is unlawful for a person to make an unreasonably loud noise between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. that is likely to annoy or disturb one or more other persons in their residences. A person who violates this or any of the other provisions of this section will be guilty of a

misdemeanor and, upon conviction, will be fined up to \$500, imprisoned up to 90 days, or both."

During the last academic year two different groups of neighbors brought legal action against individual students renting in nearby neighborhoods. Students named in these actions were evicted or required to pay a substantial fines. Parents serving as co-signers on these leases were also held responsible. Students or student organizations charged with disruptive behavior or failing to comply with university expectations through the AU Student Conduct Code will be sanctioned.

For assistance in communicating with your neighbors, or to discuss ways to effectively manage your off-campus residence, please call the Office of the Dean of Students at (202) 885-3300 to schedule an appointment. I would be glad to help you develop strategies for living successfully in the local community.

Identifying Bed Bugs

- Eggs are tiny, white, and stuck to surfaces
- Bed bugs are oval shaped, with six legs.
- Young bugs are light colored, mature bugs are rusty brownish-red in color.
- Adults bugs are roughly the size of an apple seed-- 1/4 to 3/8".
- Tend to congregate together in mattress seams and along baseboards
- Bed bugs leave small black droppings, blood stains or shed skins on bottom bed sheet.
- If bitten by a bed bug, you will experience red, itchy rashes.

Beating Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are a serious pest issue that must be contained quickly and dealt with thoroughly. If you think you may have bed bugs, contact your landlord or property manager as soon as possible. Bed bugs can spread to neighboring apartments.

Treating bed bugs is an extensive process that often requires the assistance of extermination professionals. The most effective measure against bed bugs is a thorough heat treatment, where the temperature of the affected rooms are heated to 117 degrees Fahrenheit. This treatment, combined with the use

of pesticides, should be handled by a professional exterminator. All fabric materials—including clothing, pillows, sheets, towels, coats, rugs, mattress covers, suitcases, bags, backpacks, and more—must be treated for bed bugs to avoid further infestation. Simply laundering and drying clothing with the highest heat setting is an effective way to kill bed bugs when used in combination with professional treatment.

If your property does not deal promptly with a bed bug infestation or other pest issues, contact the Office of the Tenant advocate for legal assistance.

Nighttime Safety Tips

The weather is getting colder, it is getting darker earlier, and you're staying at the library later--fall is here! Now is a good time to brush up on personal safety tips.

We recommend following DC's Metropolitan Police Department and AU Public Safety on social media for the latest crime and safety news.

 @DCPoliceDpt | @AUPublicSafety  /DCPolice

Personal Safety at Night

- 1 Walk with another person or a group if possible!
- 2 If you must walk alone, stay in well lit and heavily trafficked areas.
- 3 Don't be distracted with headphones. Be aware of your surroundings.
- 4 Know when the metro closes. Trains run less frequently later in the evening. Know when metro buses and the AU shuttle stop running
- 5 Download the **RAVE Guardian** campus safety app--it works off-campus too.





Clawed's Corner

By Clawed Z. Eagle
AU Mascot & Housing Expert

What is the OTA?

Established in 2006, the Office of the Tenant Advocate (OTA) is an organization that serves DC renters and provides them with access to legal information regarding their rights as tenants. They provide reports on new laws and regulations affecting those who rent and live in DC.

What can they help me with?

OTA is a great resource for any legal or safety concerns that you as a tenant may experience. Are you worried that your apartment is not up to code? Is there insufficient ventilation or is your building not turning on the AC? OTA can help you make sure that your living conditions are up to standard. Are you experiencing a sudden rent hike? The OTA can help you advocate for a fair rent. Not sure of your rights as a tenant? OTA lawyers are available to explain your rights and provide guidance.

How can I learn more about my rights as a tenant?

We strongly suggest that all students living off campus know their rights as renters! The OTA's website (ota.dc.gov) is an excellent resource and their "Information for Tenants" page is particularly useful for new renters (ota.dc.gov/page/information-tenants) as is their "Tenant Bill of Rights" (ota.dc.gov/publication/tenant-bill-rights)

If you can't find the answer to your question or have a specific concern, call the OTA at (202) 719-6560 or visit them at 2000 14th Street, NW, Suite 300 North, Washington, DC 20009.

Clawed, do you live off-campus? Where?

I have a couple nest-egg properties around DC

On-Campus Events: Fall 2017

AU Study Abroad Fair

September 19, 11am-3pm
MCG 2-5

Take your first step toward your study abroad experience! Meet students who have studied abroad and learn how to integrate study abroad experience into your academic career.

Double Up!

September 21, 4-5pm
Battelle Atrium

Are you interested in a second major or a minor, but don't know how to start? Attend this information session to learn about where to start!

Jobs & Internship Fair

September 27, 1-4pm
Bender Arena

Over 140 public, private, and nonprofit organizations are eager to recruit AU students and alumni. Contact the Career Center to learn more.

ONGOING FALL EVENTS

AU Farmers Market

Wednesdays, 11am-4pm
Main Quad
Shop fresh and local at the weekly farmers market outside Mary Graydon Center every Wednesday this fall.

Self-Defense Classes

Various times Sept-Nov.
The Department of Public Safety offers free self-defense classes each semester. Courses are available in gender-specific or gender-neutral formats, with full course and short course options. Any member of the American University community is eligible for the class. For more information, email PublicSafetySelfDefense@american.edu or sign up at american.edu/finance/publicsafety/RAD-Classes.cfm

Preparing for Changing Weather

- Find out when in the season your building will be turning the heat on.
- If you have an outdoor hose or faucet, turn it off so the water doesn't freeze.
- Now's a good time to check your smoke detector.
- If you live in a house, find out if you or your landlord are responsible for cleaning the gutters.
- Don't wait till a snowstorm to buy that snow shovel. Make sure your home has a shovel and salt for the walkway if necessary.