Office/Contact: Office of Student Affairs

Source: SDBOR Policy 3.7.1

Link: <https://public.powerdms.com/SDRegents/documents/1680651>

Associated Forms: [Residential Life Forms](https://www.sdstate.edu/student-life/housing-residential-life/housing-residential-life-forms); [Housing & Residential Life Student Handbook](https://www.sdstate.edu/sites/default/files/file-archive/2021-09/Residential_Life_Handbook.pdf)

# **SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY**

# **Policy and Procedure Manual**

## SUBJECT: Student Housing

## NUMBER: 3:3

1. Purpose

This policy and its procedures set forth the requirements and exceptions for student housing and the guidelines for residence hall security at the University. This policy applies to students attending the Brookings campus as their primary location of enrollment.

1. Policy
	1. During the first two (2) years following their high school graduation, all unmarried students enrolled in six (6) credit hours or more at the University are required to enter into a housing agreement and designated meal plan for the specific living environment with the University unless an exemption to reside or dine elsewhere is received from the University.
		1. This policy does not apply to students who are registered for internet courses only, or students who take a combination of internet and on-campus courses, provided the on-campus courses do not exceed five (5) credit hours.
	2. When occupancy allows, University apartments are available to any married student or any student who has legal dependents and any full-time single graduate student.
	3. Graduate students enrolled in no less than five (5) credit hours of graduate work or proceeding on a regular planned program with the Graduate School may apply to live in University housing.
	4. The effective dates of the housing contract range from the first day of the fall semester classes through closing for summer following final exams week in May. Exact dates and break periods are reflected in the student housing living agreement which is signed during the housing application process.
	5. Students seeking an exception to the above requirements must request an exemption when completing the online housing application based on the following. The submission of an exemption request does not guarantee approval.
		1. Commuter Exemption: Students living at the primary residence of a parent or legal guardian may request a commuter exemption. The student must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.25 and the residence must be within 30 miles of campus. Students must provide documentation that the parent or legal guardian is residing at the address.
		2. Financial Hardship Exemption: Students requesting a financial hardship exemption must complete the FAFSA and a *Supplemental Financial Need Verification Form* which can be obtained from the Department of University Housing and Residential Life. Due to the timing of financial aid awards, Housing and Residential Life will provide status updates in the summer prior to the contract start date. Housing and Residential Life will work with the Office of International Affairs regarding financial hardship for international students. An exemption will be granted when:
			1. The student has a significant, verified need for financial aid as determined by the University’s Financial Aid Office and that need is not fully funded by University financial aid, or
			2. A student can demonstrate a substantial change in their financial situation, thereby creating extenuating circumstances, defined as “situations over which the applicant has had no control, such as loss of parental support due to death, divorce, loss of employment, catastrophic health issues, bankruptcy, etc., which create a financial hardship and which occurred after the housing contract was signed.”
		3. Medical Condition Exemption: Students requesting an exemption based on a medical condition must complete a *Supplemental Medical Need Verification Form* which can be obtained from the Department of University Housing and Residential Life. Applicants may be required to provide additional documentation from Student Health and Counseling Services or other referral physicians before a final decision is made. Housing and Residential Life may reach out to campus partners (i.e. Office of Disability Services, athletics) to review medical requests.
			1. Students requesting a release based on behavioral health or emotional needs must provide a specific psychological recommendation from a licensed behavioral health provider. Applicants not seeing personnel at the University Counseling Center must also provide the Department of Housing and Residential Life with a written statement evaluating the student’s specific needs or problems written by a certified behavioral health care provider.
		4. Medical Cannabis Exemption: Students requesting an exemption based on their use of Medical Cannabis must submit a copy of their Registry Identification Card issued by the South Dakota Department of Health.

* + 1. Academic Requirements Exemption: Students requesting exemption because of academic requirements, such as student teaching, nursing, study abroad, etc., must ask their academic department to provide verification of the academic requirement to Housing and Residential Life. Students who leave the residence hall for academic requirements will be released and reimbursed only for the number of days needed to complete their academic requirements.
		2. Reduction to less than Six (6) Credits Exemption: Students who initially register for more than six (6) credits and then reduce the number of credits to less than six (6) credits may request an exemption. The Student must be registered for five (5) or less credit hours at the time of requesting this exemption. The Department of University Housing and Residential Life will periodically verify the credit level of students granted this exemption.
		3. Fraternity and Sorority Life Organization Member Exemption: The Fraternity and Sorority Life Council grants member releases each year for members of chapters, who are at least sophomores, to live in approved chapter housing at the University. Students applying for a Fraternity and Sorority Life release must be approved by Fraternity and Sorority Life. Housing and Residential Life is notified of approved members. Fraternity and Sorority Life maintains the minimum GPA requirement and Housing and Residential Life sets limitations of the number of students that can be exempted.
		4. Dependent Child Exemption: Students requesting an exemption due to living with a dependent child(ren) must provide a certified birth certificate of the dependent child(ren) or court order of guardianship.
		5. Non-degree Seeking Exemption: Students requesting an exemption due to being a non-degree seeking student must have applied as such. A change to degree seeking will void this exemption.
		6. Capacity Exemption: The University may grant exemptions for students when residence hall occupancy exceeds manageable capacity.
	1. Each student, together with the student’s spouse, dependents or household members, who applies, or is required to apply, to reside in a University operated housing facility must disclose on the application form whether the student or spouse or any dependent or household member is required to register as a sex offender pursuant to law, or has been convicted of a felony offense. A conviction includes a guilty verdict, plea of guilty or nolo contendere, or suspended imposition of sentence that has not been discharged.

* + 1. For each felony offense, provide a certified Judgement of Conviction or other certified court document containing details identifying the jurisdiction, date of the offense, circumstances of the offense, and the sentence or parole conditions. The individual may submit documentation on other facts or circumstances that are relevant. The individual reporting the felony conviction is responsible for the costs of obtaining these documents to enable to the Department of University Housing and Residential Life to confirm the conviction.
		2. Students, spouses, dependents or household members are not required to respond to the felony question if their only felony offenses resulted in adjudication as a delinquent child or as a child in need of supervision.
		3. Where the application process reports a felony conviction involving unlawful use or sale of a controlled drugs or substance or involvement in a crime of violence, as defined by law, the individual may not reside in any University operated housing facility.
		4. Where the circumstances of the offense otherwise reasonably suggest that placement within a University operated housing facility may place the individual into settings that are similar to those in which the original offense occurred, the University may deny the individual the privilege of residing in any of its housing facilities.
		5. No person who is required by law to register as a sex offender may reside in any University operating housing facility.
		6. Any person, other than a registered sex offender, who has been denied residence in a University operated housing facility may request a review of the determination and will be provided an opportunity to submit such writings as the person deems necessary and helpful to explain why the University should permit the person to reside in one of its housing facilities.
	1. Students’ individual residence hall rooms and individual apartments constitute private places to which the general public does not have an unrestricted access right. The following measures are in place to establish and enhance residence hall security at the University:
		1. Notification of areas restricted to residents and areas that are open to the public will be posted as appropriate.
		2. Education programming to inform residents of security measures and provide them with information to report security concerns will be provided during student orientation, and any concerns will be addressed on an ongoing basis.
		3. Exclusive locks to individual rooms will be maintained, and the security of these rooms will be enhanced through the rights of privacy policies along with the current solicitation, lock core replacement, and room key check out policies specified in the *Housing and Residential Life Student Handbook*.
		4. Community Assistants will be generally available in each building a minimum of four (4) nights per week. The number of Community Assistants in each building will depend on the number of students present in the building.
		5. Designated Community Assistants will be on duty between 8:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. and will make rounds through each building at least two (2) times. Additional rounds will be conducted on an as-needed basis determined by the Residence Hall Director of each residence hall.
		6. The central entrance doors of residence hall areas will be monitored during primary traffic hours each day by either an Office Assistant or Community Assistant within the residence hall.
		7. Alarms will be used for fire protection only.

* 1. Students living on campus must comply with the *Housing & Residential Life Student Handbook*.
	2. The University does not carry insurance covering loss or damage to students’ personal effects and does not assume responsibility for such loss or damage. It is recommended students consider the purchase of renter’s insurance.
	3. The Department of University Housing and Residential Life will assist students who are unable to leave the campus during official University vacations, including summer vacation, to locate housing alternatives. Students will be charged during University vacation periods if they reside in University housing. During summer sessions, residents of University housing do not have to be enrolled in classes, but must be registered for fall classes. Students who do not enroll in at least one (1) summer session or are not engaged in an otherwise academic activity (e.g. internship), may be provided housing if space permits.
	4. Students subject to this policy, but who do not complete an online housing application will be assigned housing by the second week of the semester and be charged accordingly.

1. Procedures
	1. Students subject to this policy as set forth in Section 2.a. must complete the online housing application.
	2. Students who wish to be exempted from on-campus living requirements must complete an exemption through the online housing application by July 1 prior to the Fall semester and by December 1 prior to the Spring semester. Students will have 30 days to submit all necessary information for a review of the request. Students who apply for housing after July 1 prior to Fall semester will have 10 days from application start date to submit all necessary information for review of request and will be charged a $25 administrative fee. Students whose request is incomplete will not be considered and will not have the right to appeal.
		1. Students whose request is denied may appeal the outcome to the Department of University Housing and Residential Life for the following reasons within five (5) business days of the decision:
			1. Relevant information has been obtained that was not available at the time of the original request;
			2. The student can demonstrate that the process for obtaining an exemption was not properly followed; or
			3. The student’s circumstances have substantially changed altering the basis of the initial request.
		2. The Department of University Housing and Residential Life will typically respond to an appeal within ten (10) business days. Failure to respond to an appeal within the ten (10) day window does not constitute approval of the appeal.
			1. Students whose request or appeal is denied may not request release under a different category. Students will only be granted one appeal and must provide all new relevant information at the time of the appeal.
		3. Students whose request for an exemption to the residency requirement has been approved will have five (5) business days to communicate acceptance to the Department of University Housing and Residential Life. Students who do not accept an exemption within the five (5) day window will continue to hold an assignment and be charged the residence hall rate accordingly.
	3. Applicants, excluding sex offenders, who have been denied residence in a University- operated facility will have five (5) business days to submit a written request for reconsideration. This request must be directed to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and should include all information necessary to explain why the University should rescind its denial.
2. Responsible Administrator

The Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, or designee, is responsible for the annual and ad hoc review of this policy and its procedures. The University President is responsible for approval of any modifications to this policy and its procedures.

SOURCE: Approved by President on 08/25/2014. Revised; Approved by President 07/29/2021. Revised 01/29/2024 (clerical). Revised .