



DEAN OF STUDENTS  
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Dear Student:

Welcome to the 2018-2019 academic year! We hope you'll enjoy living in the nearby community. We're also counting on your consideration for others, which forms the foundation of responsible citizenship. Multiple tips and resources for off-campus students can be found on the [Off Campus Housing website](#). Please take time to review them and see what may be helpful to you.

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
- host friends at your residence in a responsible, considerate and lawful manner.

*As hosts in your off-campus residence, you assume significant responsibility for the safety and welfare of your guests.*

Please familiarize yourself, your roommates and friends with Washington D.C.'s "Disorderly Conduct Amendment Act of 2010." 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. [Sec. 211. Disorderly conduct. (d)] 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."**

The 2017-2018 academic year was relatively calm with regard to student incidents off campus, thanks to increased risk management and the cooperation of student leaders. We hope to see this trend continue. However, in the 2016-2017 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 substantial monetary fines. Parents serving as co-signers on these leases were also named in the suits. Multiple other students and student organizations have been charged with disruptive behavior or failing to comply with university expectations through the Student Code of Conduct. When found responsible, these students and student organizations were sanctioned and now have a conduct file as part of their student record.

If you'd like assistance in communicating with neighbors, or if you want to discuss ways to effectively manage your off-campus residence, please call the Office of the Dean of Students at (202) 885-3300 and

schedule an appointment to meet with me. I'd be glad to help you develop strategies for living successfully in the local community.

Sincerely,

*Michelle Espinosa*  
Associate Dean of Students