

## Student Association Off-Campus Living Guide

### HOUSING INFORMATION

Living off-campus usually involves entering into a legally binding rental agreement. There are a number of important factors that must be taken into consideration before entering into such an agreement.

A large number of these revolve around the rental agreement itself, commonly called a lease. It is crucial that a student not be shy about asking questions pertaining to any part of the lease she or he does not fully understand. The time to ask these questions is before an agreement is made. While at first this may seem to be a rather trivial point, consider the following questions. If you are about to enter into a lease without understanding answers to the following, it is likely that you are not adequately informed.

What is the length of the lease? Is it for a calendar year or an academic year? Are the exact dates of the lease stated?

Is there a clause in the lease that relieves you of obligation if you withdraw or are dismissed from the College during the year?

If sharing a dwelling with others, is there a clause specifying that tenants are responsible for only their fractional share of the rent? Unless this is specified, you could be held responsible for the entire rent if your roommate(s) default.

As a tenant, have you been given the right to sublet the dwelling, or assign the lease to another person? If you have a 12-month lease, this is of importance to you since your rent deals with semester and summer breaks.

Do you understand all of the specifics about the payment of rent, e.g., amount, due date? Do you know whether there is a late charge that is involved for late payments? If there is, how much is it and when does it go into effect?

Does the rent include utilities? If so, which ones? (Your landlord must provide water).

Does the landlord require a security deposit? Has a procedure been outlined specifying how you go about getting it back at the end of the lease? Is there a clear description of those conditions under which it can be withheld? If you have paid a security deposit, did you get a receipt for it?

Who is responsible for maintenance and repairs? Do you know where to contact that person in case of an emergency?

Is the lease renewable? Is there a deadline date for renewing? Does this lease include a dangerous clause stating that it will be renewed automatically if no notice is given?

Have you obtained a copy of the lease signed by all of the parties? An oral lease is enforceable for a period of up to one year, but you will have no concrete records of its terms if a question later arises. Get a written lease if possible.

In addition to these considerations, there are several things that are advisable to do after you have decided to live off campus. Ask around about the landlord's record. Current or past tenants are a good resource to find out the follow:

Promptness in returning security deposits and making repairs.

Being readily accessible, or having a manager who can be easily contacted when a problem arises.

Compliance with regulations dealing with building, fire safety, and nondiscrimination.

Make a joint inventory of the dwelling with the landlord before you move anything in. The purpose of this is to note all of the existing defects prior to occupancy. This inventory should then be signed by landlord and tenant. It constitutes the only firm basis for protecting the security deposit. This will allow for both parties to clearly recognize when damage occurred if it exists. To avoid conflicts, it is highly advisable to take pictures or a video of the premises upon moving in.

### **Renter's Insurance**

Tenants are strongly encouraged to obtain renter's insurance since most policies held by parents do not cover their students away from home. These policies cover such things as theft, fire, and water damage. Before purchasing renter's insurance, check with your parents' insurance company to determine if you are covered at your residence at school.

### **Security Deposits**

The law requires all landlords, regardless of the number of units in the building to treat the security deposits as trust funds belonging to their tenants. Landlords are prohibited from co-mingling the deposits with their own money. Landlords of buildings with six or more units must put all security deposits in a New York bank account that earns interest at the prevailing rate. The landlord must return the security deposit and any accumulated interest, less any lawful deduction, to the tenant at the end of the lease or within a reasonable time thereafter. A landlord may use the security deposit only as a reimbursement for the reasonable cost of repairs beyond normal wear and tear, if the tenant damages the apartment and/or as reimbursement for any unpaid rent.

### **Snow Removal and Maintenance Standards**

Home owners/occupants are responsible for keeping the sidewalks in front of their homes clear of ice, snow, and other debris. To determine who is responsible for snow removal, consult your lease. Owners/occupants are also responsible for mowing grass on the boulevard, between the sidewalk and street. Properties must be kept free from refuse and/or rubbish.

## **IMPORTANT LOCAL LAWS**

The maximum speed limit on any Village street is 30 MPH.

The speed limit on-campus is 15 MPH.

Parking on village streets is not allowed between 2am and 7am. Parking on lawns or other unapproved areas is also prohibited. A municipal parking lot is located behind the Village and Town Offices on Main Street. Anyone is allowed to park there in the designated parking spaces either during the day or overnight.

Commuter Parking Lots on-campus require a parking pass. This permit can be purchased at the University Police office.

No person shall carry or transport any open, resealed, or partly empty alcoholic beverage container in public areas unless otherwise specified.

No dog is allowed to run at large within the Village of Geneseo unless accompanied by someone in full control of the dog.

Village law prohibits any unreasonably loud, disturbing or unnecessary noise, the intensity and duration of which can be construed as detrimental to the health of any person, or contrary to public welfare. Anyone found in violation of this law can be arrested and prosecuted.

## **AVAILABLE SERVICES**

### **Commuter Lockers 245-5851**

The Commuter Locker Room is located in Room 130 of the College Union. Commuter locker spaces, as well as combination locks, are available to off-campus students. Arrangements are made in the Department of College Union and Activities, Room 353 of the College Union, 245-5851.

### **Center for Dispute Settlement 243-7007**

The Livingston County Center for Dispute Settlement can assist you by arranging to mediate any problem that is keeping you from living in a worry-free environment, including roommate/neighbor disputes and family problems.

### **SA Legal Service 245-5878**

The Student Association provides initial legal consultation based in Geneseo and Mt. Morris at no cost to students. Any legal matters are appropriate for discussion. Appointments must be made through the Student Association Office, located in Room 316 of the College Union. Most schedules can be accommodated.

### **SAFE Rider 245-7777**

Student Association Funded Escort (SAFE) Rider runs on weekday nights Monday through Thursday 9 pm to 2 am. The SAFE Rider service is provided to the single

rider in order to ensure maximum student safety.

**CU Ticket Office 245-5873**

The Ticket Office sells tickets to most campus events sponsored by the Student Association. Organizations planning to conduct their own ticket sales also make arrangements here for cashboxes and tickets. The Ticket Office is located in Room 112 of the College Union.

**Information Center 245-5861**

The Information Center offers services such as general campus information, student organization and office mail service, duplicating requests for Student Duplicating Service, college student and staff directories, and key sign-out for Union operation areas and student offices.

**Greek Affairs/Off Campus Living 245-5968**

The Greek/Off- Campus Advisor develops programs and offers assistance to people living and looking for off-campus housing. The advisor also assists students involved in sororities and fraternities by overseeing various Greek councils, providing support and guidance for major Greek programs, and assisting in development of overall chapter programs.

**HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS**

Police/Fire/Emergency (off campus)	911
University Police/Emergency (on campus)	245-5222
Village Police Department	243-2420
Village Fire Department	243-1200
Code Enforcement	243-2279
University Police Non-Emergency	245-5651
Lifeline/Poison Control	1-800-333-0542
Livingston Rape Crisis Center	1-800-527-1757
Lauderdale Health Center	245-5736
Counseling Center	245-5716
Department of College Union & Activities	245-5851
Ticket Office Brodie Fine Arts	245-5833
College Union	245-5973
WGSU Request Line	245-5586
Volunteer Center	245-5893

Workout Center	245-5348
Student Association	245-5878
Student and Campus Life	245-5618
Dean of the College	245-5541
Dean of Students	245-5706
Information Desk	245-5861
Off-Campus Living	245-5968
Center for Dispute Settlement	243-7007
Village of Geneseo	243-1177
Town of Geneseo	243-0722
Building/Fire Inspector	243-1177
Under the Sun, College Bookstore	245-5866
Career Services	245-5721
Milne Library, Circulation	245-5594
Milne Library, Interlibrary Loan	245-5589
Multicultural Affairs	245-5620
Recreation Hotline	245-5349
Student Employment	245-5734
Interfaith Center	243-1460
Utilities Rochester Gas & Electric	243-0120
Frontier Telephone	777-1200