Living Off-Campus Checklist

Living off-campus is a great learning experience. You learn to live with other people, live amongst many different types of neighbors, and be part of a greater community. In order to help you prepare for selecting a place to live, we have developed a checklist of things to look for, ask about, and guard against, prior to signing a lease agreement.

Please remember that you will not find out if you are approved to live off-campus until February 22, 2017. Prematurely signing a lease may cause you and your family unneeded duress. Make sure you review the lease with a family member, or attorney, prior to signing anything.

- How many students may live there? Not every house is zoned by the City of Allentown for four students.

- When is the landlord permitted to enter the house? Is there any clause for eviction?

- Is he/she local? Who do you call when something arises? Get contact/emergency numbers?

- Is house clean on both the inside and outside?

- Is the house equipped with standard safety equipment?
  a. Smoke detectors on every floor and in each bedroom
  b. Carbon Monoxide detectors
  c. Properly working deadbolts on all exterior doors
  d. Properly working locks on all windows

- Who do you call when something breaks or doesn’t work properly? Will they respond immediately? Who is liable for repairs?

- If students have lived there before, ask them how responsive the landlord is to problems?

- Check for watermarks on ceilings? This may indicate that there are leakage problems.
□ Do the sinks and shower/tub drain well? Check by running water for several minutes. If there is standing water, there may be some plumbing problems.

□ Check the electrical system. Students have computers, stereos, air conditioners, televisions, etc. All draw a significant amount of power. Can the house support additional phone lines, cable lines, modems, etc. Check with the landlord or local phone/cable provider.

□ Are there any restrictions on decorating? Having a pet? Smoking?

□ Know who is responsible for grass, snow, yard work, etc.

□ Does your landlord already have appropriate trash and recycling containers?

□ Parking. Do you have a garage or off street parking?

Do a walk through with the landlord prior to moving in. Note any damaged areas so that you are noted billed for them at the conclusion of the lease. You may want to consider videotaping the inside of the house.

We hope this list will help you in making a good decision about your off-campus housing.