

Disciples Divinity House

Residents Handbook

2018-19

Things To Know As You Move In

There are 10 apartments and 10 rooms; of the rooms, 5 are “small” and 5 “large.” The dimensions of rooms at the Disciples Divinity House are as follows:

Small Rooms 12’ 6” x 9’

Large Rooms 15’ 3” x 11’ 9 1/2” Apartments –

Living Room/Kitchen 12’ x 15’ Bedroom/Bath 10’ x 10’

The windows measure 77” x 96” on the second and third floors and 71” x 96” on the top floor.

Furniture

Students often bring their own furniture. However, several items of furniture may be provided if the resident wishes. They are as follows:

Rooms (Small and Large)

1 bed
1 dresser
1 bookshelf
1 desk, 1 chair

Apartments

1 dresser
1 bookshelf
1 desk, 1 chair
1 table, 2 chairs

Security Deposit

As stipulated in all House Lease Agreements, Residents moving into the house are required to pay a security deposit the equivalent of rent for the space in which they are living. This deposit is refundable upon moving out of the Disciples Divinity House providing the room or apartment is left clean and in original condition and that all rent has been paid in full. The House may retain part or all of the deposit if any of these conditions are not met.

All rooms or apartments are to be left in reasonably sound condition. Occupants leaving rooms or apartments in an unsatisfactory condition will be charged the cost of restoring the room to a suitable condition. Determination of a satisfactory and reasonably sound condition will be made by the Head Resident and approved by the Assistant Dean. Fee assessment will be made by the Head Resident and approved by the Assistant Dean.

Keys

You’ll get both inside and outside keys when you move in, usually from the Head Resident. Outside keys are special security keys that cannot be copied. You’ll pay a deposit for your keys that will be returned when you turn them in. If lost, you will need to pay a replacement charge.

Leases, Rent

You will receive and be asked to sign and return a lease for the nine-month academic year or for the three month summer term, if you wish to remain in residence. Every resident needs to read the lease and be aware of its terms. Without a signed lease, you will not be permitted to remain in residence.

The Assistant Dean invoices residents for rent and fees. You will receive invoices by email. Upon move-in, residents are asked to pay first and last month's rent. Rent is generally due on the first of the month, in advance of the period for which it pays. For example, Rent for August 15 through September 14 is due on August 1. You may submit rent by giving it directly to the Assistant Dean in the Office, putting it in the "Office" mailbox.

Your receipt for your rent payment is your cancelled check. The office prefers not to keep large amounts of cash in House. Please pay your rent with checks, not cash.

Renter's Insurance

The House recommends that you acquire renter's insurance during your time in residence, since the House's insurance does not cover your personal possessions, should they be destroyed by fire, vandalism, theft, or other similar occurrences.

Cable Television and Internet

The Disciples Divinity House provides a television with basic cable service in the Commons Room. If you would like, you may have cable installed in your room/apartment at your own expense. You will be responsible to meet with the contractor for your installation. House Administration cannot do this for you.

Internet usage is currently a matter of resident initiative and control. Residents on a floor sometimes group together to share a router and its cost. Others with needs for more bandwidth purchase their own.

Mail

Mailboxes are assigned to each resident in the hallway across from the office. Packages can be delivered to the front door during office hours, but when the office is not staffed you may need to make arrangements for deliveries to contact you by phone as they arrive.

When you move out, you will need to make arrangements for your mail to be forwarded. The post office does not allow group delivery mail to be forwarded in the usual manner. The office will be able to forward batches of mail if you provide large, pre-paid postage envelopes for a couple months after you leave.

Kitchen Use

The Disciples Divinity House provides common kitchen facilities primarily for residents of single rooms. These residents may use the common kitchen facilities to store and cook

food. No cooking of any kind is allowed in the single rooms. Apartment residents are to store and cook food in their assigned living units. Office staff may also use the kitchen for food preparation and the community refrigerator for food storage.

Kitchen Cleaning

Head Residents will wipe down the counters and the stoves, sweep and mop the floor, and carry out the trash once per week. In addition to these cleanings, residents of single rooms and all other users of the kitchen are expected to cooperate in keeping the common kitchen clean by doing the following:

1. Wash, dry and put away all dirty dishes immediately following their use. Dishes are not to be left in the sink or on the countertops, even once they are clean. Drying racks are available for use and can be found underneath the sink. However, if a drying rack is used, it and the dishes it holds must be returned to their places within twenty-four hours of use.
2. Store all food, dishes, cooking utensils, pots and pans in assigned cabinets. None of these items are to be left on the countertops. Only the proper owner of food, dishes, cooking utensils, or pots and pans may use them, unless permission is given otherwise. If you do not have permission to use someone's property, please use the utensils and plates available in either the community refrigerator and/or the community cabinet.
3. Remove all food residues from the sinks, drain baskets, and drains after washing dishes.
4. The House has provided residents of single rooms with two personal washrags and a personal towel. Rags and towels are to be hung on the racks inside assigned kitchen cabinets. Drying washrags and towels are not to be hung where they are visible. Community washrags will be found in a designated area for non-single-room residents and office staff. It is the responsibility of those who use these community rags and towels to wash them.
5. Clean all kitchen surfaces (floor, countertops, stoves, the kitchen tables, and inside the microwave) immediately following use.
6. Carry the trash to the dumpster when the trashcan is full enough that your trash will not stay in the can. Replacement bags can be found in the Recycling Room.
7. Assigned Refrigerators must be cleaned and freed of decaying food at least once a month, if not more often. All disposable food must either be immediately run through the garbage disposal, or taken immediately to the dumpster.

The House will provide all of the necessary cleaning supplies to maintain kitchen cleanliness according to these guidelines. The Head Residents will help you locate the cleaning supplies for cleaning the kitchen, if you can't find what you're looking for. If you use the last of a particular cleaning supply, it is your responsibility to notify a Head Resident of its need for replacement.

If cookware, dishes, or silverware are left out, please return them to the kitchen sink, wash them, and place them in the community cabinet.

Community Refrigerator

The Community Refrigerator is for the purposes of storing food for the purposes of house meals, shared food given to us by our churches and other partners, or office staff.

The House may provide a black sharpie and masking tape. EVERY ITEM (excluding condiments) placed in the community refrigerator must be marked with:

- Date placed in Community Refrigerator
- Name of person placing food in the refrigerator

House Meal food will be stored in the community refrigerator and should not be touched unless designated by those who purchased it. Leftovers will be kept in the refrigerator for no more than two days following house meals. On the third day, leftovers may be appropriated by individuals to their own refrigerators. On the fourth day, the individual responsible for the food must dispose of it. All food placed in the refrigerator that is older than five days will be disposed of.

Shared food given to us by our churches and partners must abide by the same conditions as house meal leftovers. Thus, leftovers will be kept in the refrigerator for no more than two days following house meal.

House Kitchen Supplies And House Meals

Some storage space for kitchen supplies belonging to the House, for use in House meals, will be maintained in the common kitchen and the recycling closet.

Kitchen Clean Up Day

Residents of single rooms will participate in a cooperative cleaning effort in the common kitchen at the beginning of each semester. Head Residents will coordinate this cleaning effort. All residents of single rooms are expected to participate. Apartment residents will be encouraged to clean their apartment kitchens during this time. Head Residents will organize and schedule workdays with the community.

Recycling

The House provides containers for recycling in the closet adjacent to the common kitchen. Attention should be paid to the signs that indicate which recyclable items go in which containers. Head Residents will organize with your help disposal of recyclables.

Commons Room

Head Residents will sweep, mop and take the trash out of the Common Room every week. However, if the trash can is full please carry the trash to the dumpster yourself and replace

the bag. As the Common Room is commonly shared space, each resident is responsible for keeping it clean and organized. Throw all personal trash in receptacle.

We will, from time to time, host House Meals. All residents in attendance are responsible for cleaning after the meal, and are asked to do all in their power to help expedite the cleaning process.

In an effort to conserve power, please turn the lights off and the television off if you are the last person to leave the Common Room. At night, we have a front porch light for safety and convenience. The Head Residents will do their best to make sure this light is on every night. However, if you notice that it is not on, please flip it on. In the mornings, please turn it off if you notice it still on.

Event Permission

Since we live in community, if you wish to sponsor or host an event or meeting at the House in its common space, you need to consult with the office in advance and fill out the event permission form. It will require clarity about responsibility for set up and clean up and liability for damages, as well as a deposit. The deposit will be returned to you after the event if everything is acceptable to the Head Resident and administration. In some cases, you may be asked to gain assent from the rest of the resident community as well.

Door Code and Building Security

The Disciples Divinity House is, first and foremost, the living shelter for all its residents. Thus, building security is of utmost importance. The front door has a keypad on it. The code to the keypad is usually changed at the beginning of the year and whenever a code change becomes necessary. It should only be known by house residents, Disciples students outside the house, and office staff.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THIS CODE BE GIVEN TO FORMER RESIDENTS, VISITORS, OR ANYONE ELSE.

To do so would violate the community's safety and security. If this happens, the code will have to be changed.

If a visitor at the door says they want to visit a friend living at the House, ask them to call that person or ask them to wait outside while you go and check the resident's room.

Meanwhile, the house's two side doors and kitchen door are accessed by key. The North door tends to slam, so please guide the door slowly closed when using. The Kitchen door tends not to shut completely, so please guide the door closed when using.

Although this is not typically a dangerous area, residents should use common sense in taking precautions for personal safety as one would in any urban neighborhood. The restaurants across 20th Avenue stay open late into the night, and many patrons come and go who do not live in the neighborhood.

You are strongly advised not to venture out by yourself in this neighborhood late in the evening. Be aware of your immediate surroundings. Know where you are going and how you will get there. Seek the assistance of friends and neighbors to insure your safety. It is always wise to be safe.

For everyone's safety, please advise the Head Resident if you see any suspicious person or activity in or around the House or parking lot. If you see anyone in the House you don't know, inquire about his or her access to the building by asking, "Did a student let you into the building?" Be courteous, but do not ignore someone's unauthorized presence. If they are unauthorized, please notify a Head Resident so that they can take care of the situation.

Possession of firearms or any other weapon, or engaging in illegal activity of any sort is explicitly prohibited on the property of the Disciples Divinity House and will be grounds for immediate termination of the lease.

Fire Safety

Emergency escape routes are posted on the first floor bulletin board along with the following instructions:

IN CASE OF A WORKING FIRE:

- If a smoke detector goes off, go to the nearest hallway or common area pull station to set off the alarm to alert all residents to evacuate.
- Call 911 for the Fire Department.

At the beginning of each academic year the Assistant Dean performs a maintenance check of all smoke detectors in the building. Residents are encouraged not to remove batteries or otherwise sabotage the early warning features of the detectors.

The fire alert pull stations and fire alarm panel are inspected annually by SimplexGrinnell.

There are 5 lb. fire extinguishers hung at the end of each hallway and in the kitchen. There is a 10 lb. fire extinguisher hung in the basement outside the laundry room. All extinguishers are new (September 2017) and are annually inspected. The kitchen gas range hood has a detector and an automatic fire suppression system along with an automatic gas shut-off valve. All extinguishers are maintained and serviced by American Fire & Safety Equipment. The House pays for all small extinguishers that apartment dwellers request for their kitchenettes.

Illuminated emergency exit signs, equipped with back-up batteries for power outages, are installed on every floor, in the common kitchen, and in the basement. The last maintenance check and replacement of malfunctioning signs and batteries was conducted January 2018. This is also the case for emergency flood lights in the common areas and stairwells, which only come on when building power goes out.

Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the building – including your own room or apartment – for safety reasons. Lit candles are discouraged in your living space as well, for the same reason. Personal space heaters should never be left running unattended. Besides being a fire risk, these heaters run up House utility costs and they should only be used when you are present.

Laundry Room

The House laundry room is located in the basement. The door to the basement is located just inside the south entrance outside door (kitchen side). In the basement, the laundry room is the door at the far end of the hall. However, the light switch for the laundry room is on the right, about halfway down the hall. There are two washers and two dryers provided. All residents of the House share these machines.

Posted on the wall by the machine is a list of Laundry Etiquette pointers. Please follow guidelines when doing laundry. There are shelving units down there to hold detergents and dryer sheets. It is recommended that you put your name on your detergent and dryer sheet box to prevent anyone from using them by mistake.

DO NOT USE BLEACH IN THESE MACHINES.

While it might help to clean your clothes, it has the potential (and the past history) to destroy some residents clothing. Out of consideration for all residents, please refrain from using bleach.

Parking

Most residents with cars can be assigned a parking space in the House lot. Parking is limited to residents and office staff only. Head Residents are instructed to have cars towed that are not authorized and permitted to park, in order to prevent inappropriate use of the lot.

Visitors should only use the space of their host currently living in the House. If you find another car in your space, inform the Head Resident who will take appropriate action. If the Head Resident is not available, contact the Office.

“Admin” spots are not only designated for office staff but for any vendors or technicians conducting business for the upkeep and repair of our facility. If “Admin” spots are occupied then staff, vendors, and technicians are instructed to park in the open spots that they find, even assigned spaces. Their vehicles will not be towed.

Two days each year (in June and November) the Disciples Foundation Board meets at the House to make important decisions for the good of our community. In recognition of their service, we might invite them to park in an open spot. Their vehicles will not be towed.

Residents who remain in their parking spaces on Board meeting days may, of course, abide there.

Heating, Cooling, Thermostats

A new HVAC system was installed in 2014. A quick list of do's and don'ts:

- Do not hang anything on the wall thermostat or block it with pictures, shelves etc. The “Vane” control is not functional in rooms (only in the main kitchen units).
- Do not mount anything to or on top of the Heating/ Air condition unit.
- The metal shroud to the left or right of the unit can support some weight if it is to be used as a shelf. However, Do not use it as a seat or chair. Do not pile a large amount of items such as books or bookshelves on it.
- Do allow room in front of it to allow air to circulate.

The units are designed to allow each person to control their room’s temperature. The units can be in heat or cool mode any time of the year. If you are out of your room for extended periods, you are encouraged to leave the fan on circulate, even at a low speed, and not turn the units off. Better, use the setback function when you are gone. This will also prevent the hallways and neighbors from feeling the effects of spaces getting too warm or too cool. If one room gets too hot or cold, it will take time to return to a normal set point when turned on. The system is energy efficient when left on continuously.

Room Care

Residents are expected to keep their rooms reasonably clean and do no damage. If you know how to do minors repairs, you may attempt them. Please consult the Head Resident, who might be able to help with clogged toilets, etc. Do not assume we need to “call a plumber” for something that might turn out to be simple to remedy but costly if a professional is called for the wrong reason.

If you do not understand something, please ask! We’ve had expensive repairs caused by foolish actions. Don’t flush anything down toilets other than waste and toilet tissue. Don’t pour grease or coffee grounds down the sink drains. Clear hair from sink and shower/tub drains and throw it in the wastebaskets—the plumbing is getting old.

In order to hold down costs for everyone, unnecessary repairs due to negligence may be charged to the resident.

As noted, if special cleaning or repairs are necessary at the end of your residence, amounts will be deducted from the security deposit before it is returned.

Only special hooks designed for concrete walls may be used to hang pictures or other decorations. Nails or screws are not permitted.

Changing the paint color on the walls or ceilings of rooms must be approved first by the Assistant Dean. Otherwise, paint colors shall remain neutral.

The cost of wall repairs or painting will be charged to residents’ security deposit.

Filter Cleaning

The Head Residents will need to clean the air filter in the blower units in every room and apartment, probably monthly and at least bi-monthly, to keep them working efficiently.

The Head Resident will give you notice of an approximate time that s/he will be entering your living area so that you will not be inconvenienced by this maintenance task.

Repair Requests

There are two options for making repair requests:

DDH Online Repair Request Form (requires a password):

https://docs.google.com/a/discipleshousevandy.org/spreadsheet/viewform?hl=en_US&pli=1&formkey=dDlXVVJseGJSQTRKaWdCeUlRZEJYcnc6MQ#gid=0

If you cannot go online, then contact your Head Resident. The online form sends priority alerts to the Assistant Dean and it dumps all of the information you enter into a facilities database that our Board may use when making important decisions about the building. Using other means of notifying the office may cause delays in repairs.

Exterminator Services

An exterminator sprays the building monthly and can also come upon request if there is a problem. However, insect problems can be kept to a minimum if apartments/rooms and common spaces are kept clean. The exterminator does not spray in individual living spaces.

Conservation

The Disciples Divinity House is a non-profit organization, and the rent is based in part on the expenses incurred in operating and maintaining the building. Therefore, cooperation is requested in not using utilities in a wasteful manner.

All appliances should be turned off when leaving your room or apartment. Some past residents have recommended keeping non-necessary appliances on an extension cord with an on/off switch, so that when you leave you can flip the power off.

Also, try to turn your ceiling fan and any additional fans off when you leave your room. Adjust the heating and cooling appropriately, especially if you will be gone for a longer time, so as not to waste energy resources.

When using the common area, please turn off any lights that may have been left on unnecessarily, and turn the television off when you are finished using it.

Please help us all save water and sewer expenses. You can do so by taking shorter showers and by not allowing water to run in kitchen and bathroom sinks for long periods of time. When washing clothing, try to wash it in as few loads as possible.

Thank you for doing all you can to help us keep costs down with minimum impact to your quality of life.

Head Residents

Head Residents are assigned cleaning duties and help to facilitate life in the House for the convenience of all residents. They supervise repairs, especially after office hours, and handle concerns from residents about their rooms, the common areas, and the facility in general. Head Residents organize and supervise kitchen-cleaning procedures and work days. Their responsibilities include checking room conditions before and after residents move in or out and processing check-in/check-out paperwork. They oversee basement storage and stock cleaning/facility supplies.

Every resident needs to cooperate with the Head Residents to make maintenance and upkeep of the building less burdensome. Residents are expected to do their own personal housekeeping, including returning common areas to the clean state the Head Residents leave them in.

Moving to a New Living Space

The Assistant Dean keeps a list of residents who would like to change rooms. Let him know if you want to move to a different room or apartment. As soon as the space becomes available, it will be offered to the first person on the list. Disciple students have priority.

Storage

Storage space is limited at the House. Due to fire codes, residents cannot keep any belongings in the House hallways.

Some storage space is available in the basement, but the Head Resident or Assistant Dean should be consulted before placing items there. If permission is granted to use some of the basement space, make sure all items are clearly labeled with your name before placing them in the basement storage area.

No storage is allowed in the furnace/chiller room.

Pet Policy and Fee

Residents are not allowed to have pets unless first approved by office staff. For those in single rooms, they must also be approved by their suitemate. Also, those in single rooms should anticipate keeping pet food and water in their own room. Those entering the house who already have pets should consult with the Assistant Dean to be sure your living situation will be conducive to the best quality of life for both you and your pet. House rooms preclude the possibility of large or even medium sized pets. However, cats, small dogs, and other animals of that size are usually acceptable.

Residents should anticipate cleaning up after their animals, both inside and outside of the house. Pet owners are required to dispose of pet waste in the dumpster. Pet waste carries diseases and should not be considered fertilizer for our garden or on our grass. All pet waste must be completely cleaned from all surface areas on any part of the Disciples House property.

As noted in the application, an annual, non-refundable pet fee will provide for the extra cleaning required at the end of your stay in the house.

Community

The House is built on the vision of a residential community of ministry students who share a commitment to faith, church, theology, and justice. It is more than a building. As the application states, “Residents of the House should be aware that one of the House's goals is to promote community among those who live here, without regard to denominational affiliation. Residents should not expect Disciples Divinity House to function only as a dormitory.”

Everyone’s rent is subsidized toward this goal. If you live here, you are expected to take part in community life such as the Opening Retreat, House meals, Work Days, Talent 4 the House, and other programs. A House Community Activity Fee underwrites the cost of House meals and community life. Please do not treat the House only as a cheap place to live. If you prefer to live in solitude or isolation, you probably live elsewhere.

Fall Semester Retreat

At the beginning of the Fall Semester, a House Retreat is held called for all in the residential community to discuss and cast a vision for the “state of the community.” Information on schedules, expectations, and processes vital to the functioning and administrative well-being of the House and community will be disseminated and discussed. We will distribute and collect release forms and emergency contact forms. It is critical to the community, to the efficient sharing of information, to the administration and leadership of the House, and therefore to you to be present, and rent subsidies may be reduced if you do not attend.

Staff Roles, Emergency Contacts, Information Release forms

We will distribute an updated staff responsibility description, emergency contact information, and information release forms at the Opening Retreat.

Office Hours

The Assistant Dean’s office is normally staffed from 8:00AM—2:00PM. Schedules of the Dean and Associate Dean vary by day or week.

Programming

During the school year, the house community chair and Head Residents, as well as other residents, will work to coordinate house meals. All residents, out-of-house Disciples, office staff and friends of the house are invited to attend these meals. The program schedule is usually posted by the first week of each semester. It will also include Talent 4 the House,

Wise Practice (in which all residents are welcome to participate), Pie Night at the Dean's, and the DDH Graduation Celebration Dinner after VDS Baccalaureate.