A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

Living off-campus for the first time can be a daunting task. This booklet has been specifically designed to assist you in finding suitable housing, understanding your lease, inspecting your new dwelling, making a budget and in becoming familiar with local ordinances. The booklet was compiled from a variety of sources both on and off the campus in order to make you a smarter consumer.

In living off-campus you will interface with many people. The residents of your new community have probably lived there for many years. They are as anxious about you as new neighbors as you are about them. Remember you are the newcomer – go visit your neighbors and introduce yourself.

The local townships each have their own ordinances and regulations, and expect students to comply just like other residents. Your landlord should provide you with a safe and habitable dwelling and must comply with certain township and county requirements. The relationship between you and your landlord should not be adversarial, rather it should be a business arrangement where both parties are treated fairly and respectfully.

Critical to a successful year are the roommates you choose. You already know how living in close proximity requires each party to be sensitive to the other. Choose your roommates wisely. Being good friends is not enough. Discuss how you will pay the bills; shop for food; share cooking arrangements etc. Make sure your roommates are responsible. You and they have entered a legally binding document by signing a lease, and you will be held accountable for paying your rent on time and for maintaining the dwelling in good order. Knowledge of your rights and responsibilities as a tenant can help you avoid needless expenses and hassles.

Living off-campus will undoubtedly provide you many positive experiences and challenging opportunities for your own personal growth. Although you live off campus, you are encouraged to actively participate in the many opportunities on campus.
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SECTION I – HOW TO FIND HOUSING ON CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

1. Office for Residence Life Website: http://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/studentlife/reslife/offcampus.html The Off Campus Handbook, a list of Township Approved Housing for Students, and a list of area apartment complexes can be found on this site. The apartment complex list is provided for convenience and does not contain pricing or availability. Students should check with each apartment complex for this information. Students can also use this site to find a roommate. The roommate listing is password protected and is only open to Villanova University students seeking other Villanova University students as roommates. Please note that Villanova University makes no representation whatsoever regarding the housing, landlords or roommates listed through this site. Students are responsible to inspect the property and negotiate lease terms with any landlord and/or roommate. Villanova University has not inspected or investigated these properties, landlords, or roommates in any way and is not endorsing any specific properties, landlords, or roommates.

2. Vice President for Student Life Office: Kathy Byrnes, Esq. is available to meet with students to discuss the legal aspects of moving off-campus. Services provided include: reviewing leases, discussing basic landlord-tenant rights and reviewing local zoning ordinances. Her office is located in 202 Dougherty Hall. Call for an appointment at (610) 519-4550.

3. Dean of Students: Paul Pugh serves as the liaison with local township officials, civic associations, landlords and residents for matters regarding students and off campus community standards. His office is located in 213 Dougherty Hall. His phone number is (610) 519-4200. His website, http://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/studentlife/dean/publications.html contains the Off Campus Handbook and a detailed listing of student approved housing in Radnor, Lower Merion and Haverford Townships. This detailed list is password protected and is only open to Villanova University students seeking information on student approved housing.

4. Off campus housing forums: These informational forums are conducted late in the fall semester and early in the spring semester at various times and locations by the Division of Student Life. Please contact the Dean of Students Office for more information.
CHOOSING ROOMMATES

• Choose your roommates wisely.

• Decide how much you are able to pay, what areas and setting you want to live in and what transportation each of you will have.

• Discuss lifestyles, habits and expectations thoroughly.

• Define what will happen if one party decides to move out before the term of the lease is up.

• Be honest about what you can and cannot live with in terms of cleaning, cooking, noise, guests, etc.

FINDING A PLACE TO LIVE

• Check the Residence Life website for apartment complex listings. Check the Dean of Student’s website for information on student-approved housing.

• Talk to current students who live off-campus.

• Look in the Real Estate Classified sections of local papers such as Delaware County Times or the Main Line Times which are available online.

• Review rental websites – make sure that you review township requirements regarding Student Approved Housing before signing your lease!

• Call a Real Estate Agency (but beware, most realtors are primarily interested in sales, not rentals).

• Go visit places that have "For Rent" signs outside.

• Read The Villanovan.

• Don’t make snap decisions. Visit several places.

• Talk to your parents. Ask them to visit potential homes and assist you in speaking with potential landlords.
It is important that you are aware of what township you are going to live in because each local township has zoning ordinances that control, among other things, the number of unrelated people who can live together. Additionally, some townships restrict student rental property to only those sites designated as a “student home” by the Township (see Insert). Make sure that you ask your potential landlord in what township the property is located, and verify that this location is appropriate housing for students with the township. If you elect to reside at a residence that is in violation of zoning ordinance codes, you could be evicted.

Here is a summary of the zoning ordinances that affect most students:

**Radnor Township:** In order to rent to students, a landlord must obtain an annual license each June and advise Radnor Township if the tenants are students. The number of students residing within a 1,000-foot radius of a rental unit occupied by students can not exceed two students, regardless of whether the students are blood-related. Multiple family dwellings and apartments are exempt.

**Lower Merion Township:** No more than 3 unrelated people and the property must be approved by the township as a "student home".

**Haverford Township:** No more than 3 unrelated people and the property must be approved by the township as a "student home".

**Conshohocken Township:** No more than 2 unrelated people.

**Upper Merion Township:** No more than 2 unrelated people.

**Tredyffrin Township:** No more than 2 unrelated people.

See Section VII of this publication for more information about important local ordinances.
SECTION II – THE LEASE

THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE SIGNING A LEASE

TALK WITH DIFFERENT LANDLORDS AND ASK:

- When is the property available?
- What parking is available?
- What utilities are included in the rent?
- What is the condition of the dwelling?
- What is the monthly rent?
- What security deposit is required?
- What does the security deposit cover?
- Has the landlord provided the township with a certificate of occupancy?
- Are there any special conditions or provisions in the lease?
- Is the dwelling unit required to be registered with the township?
- When was the last time the property was inspected by the town-

UTILITIES

- Discuss utilities with your landlord and review what the lease includes. Utility costs may or may not be part of the monthly rent.
- Check with the landlord about specific companies you will have to deal with and what services they provide.
- Check with the landlord or former tenants about average utility costs. Be aware that heating and air conditioning bills can be expensive, budget accordingly.
- Decide whose name will appear on the bill. Discuss ahead of time how the bill will be divided to prevent any disagreements.
SIGNING THE LEASE

- **READ YOUR LEASE THOROUGHLY BEFORE SIGNING**
  - Make sure you understand all aspects of the agreement.
  - A lease is a legal and binding contract!
  - You should not pay your entire rent up front or in two large sum payments. Withholding rent is your primary bargaining power over your landlord.
  - BE AWARE of zoning ordinances dealing with student housing.
  - Do not agree in the lease to pay possible fines against the landlord for township code violations. **Both tenants and landlords are responsible for compliance with the zoning ordinances.**
  - DO NOT SIGN a lease with a clause labeled "Confession of Judgment." If you do, you give your landlord the right to take you to court without your knowledge or presence. Ask your landlord to cross out that paragraph and initial it.
  - Inspect the property before signing the lease. You should physically visit the dwelling and discuss with the landlord those items that require maintenance. Discuss with your landlord what constitutes normal wear and tear. We recommend that you take pictures with dates for your records.
  - Have the landlord put in writing, in the lease, any improvements the landlord says he/she will make. Anything not repaired before you sign the lease should be annotated in the lease.
  - Send all correspondence to your landlord by certified mail. This way you will have a receipt of all communications with him/her.
  - Have one roommate be the contact person for the landlord.
  - Keep a photocopy of the lease for yourself.
  - Keep a copy of all correspondence to and from your landlord with your lease.
SECURITY DEPOSIT

• The security deposit is typically one or two months rent.

• By law, the landlord must place your security deposit in an escrow account, (a separate account keeping your money safe for the length of the lease). In Pennsylvania, the landlord is not obliged to pay you interest at the end of the lease until you have rented for three years.

• By law, the landlord must return your security deposit or give a written list of the claimed damages within 30 days of the end of the lease.

• If he/she does not, the landlord loses the right to withhold any of the deposit.

• To protect this right, you as the tenant must give the landlord a forwarding address in writing.

• To protect your security deposit make a careful inspection of the house or apartment as soon as you move in.

• Make a written list of EVERYTHING in less than "good" condition. (see Section III).

• Look for stains, loose tiles/windows/door knobs, etc; turn on all lights and check all outlets; flush toilets and run the shower unit checking for pressure; turn on heating and air conditioning units; open and close all windows, check for torn screens; make sure all doors and windows lock and all keys fit in the locks.

• BE PICKY!

• Take pictures of the house when you move in, and date the pictures.

• Date and sign the list.

• Send the original to the landlord (also known as the Lessor) and keep a copy with your records.

• When you move at the end of your lease, be sure to give the written notice required in the lease (usually 60 or 90 days before the end of the lease) and a forwarding address to the Lessor in writing.
RENTER'S INSURANCE

Renters face the same risk as homeowners in cases of disasters striking their dwelling. Your landlord may have insurance, but this only protects the building, not your things in it. We recommend that you purchase renter’s insurance because it can protect your belongings in case of disaster.

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

Some townships require that a certificate of occupancy be filed for any rental property. A certificate of occupancy certifies that a dwelling complies with all housing ordinances and may be occupied. IT IS THE LANDLORD’S RESPONSIBILITY TO FILE THIS CERTIFICATE WITH THE TOWNSHIP. One month prior to moving in, check with your landlord or township to see if this has been filed. If it has not, you may not be able to move in.
## SECTION III—MOVING IN
THE INSPECTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EX = Excellent</th>
<th>G = Good</th>
<th>P = Poor</th>
<th>Check-in Condition</th>
<th>Check-out Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front door &amp; lock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back door &amp; lock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail box</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porch/Railings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrubbery/Lawn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness outside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kitchen:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stove</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Garbage disposal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishwasher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microwave</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countertops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washer/Dryer</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bathroom:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shower/Bath tub</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirror</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towel racks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For each room:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows/screens/locks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooring</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceilings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turn on the water, A/C, heat and check cable, phone jacks and every outlet.
## SECTION IV – ESTABLISHING A BUDGET

### MONTHLY BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>INCOME</strong></th>
<th><strong>EXPENSES</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings</td>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans</td>
<td>Cable/Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>Groceries—Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Groceries—Non-Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CALCULATE MONTHLY BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Monthly Income</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Monthly Expenses</td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>= $</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES $
SECTION V – RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

TENANT RIGHTS

- Live in a clean, safe place under the implied warranty of habitability which is automatically part of every lease. This warranty includes:
  - waterproof roofs, ceilings and walls
  - adequate heat in winter
  - hot and cold running water
  - bathroom equipment and drains that work properly
  - doors that lock properly
  - windows that work and can be locked
  - no infestation with roaches and/or rodents at move-in
  - smoke detectors

- Quiet enjoyment of the premises.

- Fair housing – no discrimination based on race, color, national origin, gender, or disability.

- Make complaints to governmental authorities about code violations without retaliation.

- Return of their security deposit within 30 days of vacating the premises or receive written notice from the landlord outlining the reasons part or all of the deposit is being retained by the landlord, along with any balance of the security deposit.

- Specified legal procedures before a landlord may evict a tenant including a notice period to remedy the alleged default.

If the rented dwelling is not habitable, a tenant has recourse. Seek help from the Office of Student Life (202 Dougherty Hall), the Dean of Students Office (213 Dougherty Hall), your parents, an attorney, or the township.
TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Limit the number of residents to the number of people permitted by local zoning ordinances.
- Pay rent and utility bills on the dates due.
- Keep the unit clean and safe.
- Promptly notify the landlord of damages to the premise.
- Dispose of all trash and other waste in a clean and safe manner in accord with the instructions provided by the landlord and in compliance with local ordinances.
- Use electrical, plumbing and heating facilities safely.
- Do not destroy, deface, or damage the premises or remove any part of the premises.
- Do not make any alteration to the premises without first obtaining the landlord’s permission (in writing).
- Do not keep any animals in the unit, unless permitted by the lease and the township code.
- Do not change locks to the premises without written permission from the landlord.
- Tenants and guests should conduct themselves in a manner that will not disturb the neighbors.
- Report all problems with the dwelling to the landlord; if a problem persists, give the landlord notice of the problem in writing, keep a copy of the letter for yourself, and provide notice to your township.
- Leave the dwelling clean and in a condition similar to the one they moved into at the beginning of the lease.
- Provide proper written notice of intention to terminate or renew the lease at the appropriate time.
- Provide written notification of forwarding address for the return of security deposit.
- Comply with all provisions of the lease.
- Be familiar with local and state laws regarding noise, disorderly conduct, and underage drinking.
SECTION VI – BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR

TIPS FOR GETTING ALONG IN YOUR NEW COMMUNITY

• Introduce yourself and get to know your neighbors. They can be very helpful, especially when you need someone to watch your house/apartment over breaks.

• Give them your phone number, so they can contact you rather than the police if there is a problem. KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN!

• Consider helping your neighbors with raking leaves, shoveling sidewalks, etc., to improve relations with your neighbors.

• Be courteous with respect to noise. Keep in mind that students often keep different/later hours than families.

• Be courteous with respect to parking. Parking tends to be a GREAT concern of neighbors and leads them to call the Township when they suspect more than the legal number of people live in a particular house/apartment. When friends visit, ask them to park in nearby lots if possible.

• Do not block sidewalks so that pedestrians cannot pass by.

• Do not block driveways.

• Maintain a respectable appearance of your property.

• Watch for lawn and shrub overgrowth if lawn care is your responsibility under the lease.

• Shovel sidewalks promptly if it is your responsibility under the lease.

• Store and dispose of garbage appropriately and as required by local ordinance (see Section VII).

• Avoid litter in the yard and on the street.

• Avoid unsightly porch furniture that may be an eyesore to your neighbors.

• While your house/apartment may be only a temporary place for you to live, remember that it is your neighbors' permanent residence and that your actions correlate to their quality of life.
### SECTION VII—LOCAL ORDINANCES

#### SUMMARY OF LOCAL STUDENT HOUSING RELATED ORDINANCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RADNOR</th>
<th>LOWER MERION</th>
<th>CONSHOHOCKEN</th>
<th>HAVERFORD</th>
<th>UPPER MERION</th>
<th>TREDYFFRIN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number living in dwelling</td>
<td>No more than 2 unrelated</td>
<td>No more than 3 unrelated</td>
<td>No more than 2 unrelated</td>
<td>No more than 3 unrelated</td>
<td>No more than 2 unrelated</td>
<td>No more than 3 unrelated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered with township?</td>
<td>Yes, by landlord</td>
<td>Must be a “student home”</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Must be a “student home”</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Must be a “student home”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash</td>
<td>Covered; Leak-proof containers, stored in rear yard. Curbside pickup. Schedule bulk pickup. Max 35 gallon cans not to exceed 50 lbs</td>
<td>Covered; max 45 gallon trash cans; not to exceed 50 lbs; place at curb only on pickup date; call for large items</td>
<td>Max 20 gallon trash cans; max 50 lbs; place at curb only on pickup date;</td>
<td>Max 5 cans on pick up date; each must not exceed 40 lbs; must curbside on pick up date.</td>
<td>Place in closed, water-tight containers; place at curb on day of pickup; Recyclable material must go in township containers</td>
<td>Place in closed, water-tight containers; place at curb on day of pickup; Recyclable material must go in township containers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass and weeds</td>
<td>Not to exceed 12”</td>
<td>Not to exceed 12”</td>
<td>Not to exceed 6”</td>
<td>Not to exceed 6”</td>
<td>Not to exceed 6”</td>
<td>Not to exceed 12”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow</td>
<td>Remove within 24 hours</td>
<td>Remove within 30 hours</td>
<td>Within 24 hours</td>
<td>Remove within 24 hours</td>
<td>Remove within 24 hours</td>
<td>Remove within 30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Minimum of 3 on-site spaces</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Minimum of 3 on-site spaces</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **In all communities:**
  - Unruly gatherings, excessive noise, public drunkenness and other acts that significantly disrupt the community are prohibited.
  - It is unlawful to possess, carry or transport any alcoholic beverage in an open container in any public place or in any vehicle.
  - It is unlawful for any person to urinate in public.

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Please remember that the availability of future student rentals is contingent upon the behavior of the students currently residing in the community.
SECTION VIII – USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS & WEBSITES

**Fire and Emergency**
- 911

**Police Departments**
- Haverford Police (610) 853-2400
- Lower Merion Police (610) 649-1000
- Radnor Police (610) 688-0500
- Conshohocken Police (610) 828-4032
- Upper Merion Police (610) 265-3232
- Tredyffrin Township Police (610) 647-1440
- Villanova Public Safety Dispatch (610) 519-6979
- Villanova Public Safety Emergency (610) 519-4444

**Utilities**
- PECO Energy Co.
  - Billing matters or to order service (800) 494-4000
  - Gas and Electric emergencies (24hr day) (800) 841-4141
  - www.peco.com

- AQUA (877) 987-2780
  - www.aquaamerica.com

**Telephone/Cable/Internet**
- Verizon (800) 837-4966
  - www.verizon.com

- Comcast (800) 266-2278
  - www.comcast.com
Townships

Haverford Township (610) 446-1000
www.haverfordtownship.com

Lower Merion Township (610) 649-4000
www.lowermerion.org

Radnor Township (610) 688-5600
www.radnor.com

Upper Merion Township (610) 265-2606
www.umtownship.org

Conshohocken (610) 828-1092
www.conshohockenpa.org

Tredyffrin Township (610) 644-1400
www.tredyffrin.org

Health Care

Bryn Mawr Hospital (484) 337-3000

Villanova Student Health Center (610) 519-4070

United States Post Offices and Local Zip Codes

Ardmore 19003 (610) 649-5615
Bryn Mawr 19010 (610) 525-2374
Conshohocken 19428 (610) 834-9025
Haverford 19041 (610) 649-6065
St. Davids 19087 (610) 964-1248
Villanova 19085 (610) 520-1049
Wayne 19087 (610) 964-0208
Villanova University makes no representation whatsoever regarding the student housing listed in this publication. Students are responsible to inspect the property and negotiate lease terms with any landlord. Villanova University has not inspected or investigated these properties or landlords in any way and is not endorsing any specific properties or landlords. Villanova University disclaims any responsibility, among other things, for the condition of any premises, terms of any leases, treatment by any landlord, or compliance with any applicable local ordinances.

The summary of local ordinances contained in this publication is intended as a guide for student use. Because ordinances and laws are subject to change, students should check with their local township for a current and complete listing of all laws and ordinances.