

What are your Housing Plans for Winter Break & Spring Semester?

Angelo State
University

Residential Programs

Issued: October 2009

This is Important Information for YOU!

Failure to properly take care of some of these “details” can have financial & contractual implications...

Please read this information carefully!

Although your current housing contract is binding for the academic year, we realize that some of you might be considering a change of scenery for the 2010 Spring semester.

We have put together this newsletter so that you can make some decisions and take care of any housing related “details” before the avalanche of finals hits, and before you are in a frenzied rush to get on with the nice long winter break. **Please take the time to read through this information carefully!**

We can best answer your questions if we know what they are. So when in doubt, please contact us at the Residential Programs Office at 942-2035 or via email at housing@angelo.edu!

“I plan to stay in the same building, same room, and keep the same meal plan for spring.”

Good news! You don’t need to do anything. Remember, your contract is for the whole academic year, so Spring is automatically included. If we don’t hear from you, we will leave you “as is.” If you are leaving for the long winter break, **please follow the room preparation guidelines provided on the last page of this newsletter.**

When you return, (if you aren’t staying on campus over break) just check in at the desk and sign your room inventory form so that we know you have returned safe and sound. You will pick up where you left off in December - except for maybe needing to make room for any new stuff you picked up over the holidays. **Just a reminder, if your current roommate is not returning for Spring, you should plan on receiving a new roommate— maybe even as soon as the end of finals week.**

You may want to log in to MyHousing and **update your Personal Preferences** to assist us in matching new roommates. You can also help get off to a good start by making sure your room is clean and ready for your new roommate.

Individuality!

Just like you, your situation is unique.

If you are not sure about the “what if’s” of any changes you are contemplating, (particularly contractual and/or financial) please:

- Read this newsletter
- Review your contract and Handbook
- Check the cost.
- Come see us in the Residential Programs Office in Hardeman– Student Services Building 200 so we can work with you!

What are your Housing Plans for Winter Break & Spring Semester?

“I would like to move to a different room for the Spring.”

Spring Semester Room Change Lottery Scheduled for November 16th – 18th!

If you are considering a room change for Spring semester, you are strongly encouraged to carefully read the [Spring Room Change Lottery Info](#) document that is posted on the Residential Programs main web page under **News & Updates**. This document contains important information about the room change lottery process.

Deadline to submit a Room Change Request through MyHousing is 5:00pm Tuesday, November 10th.

Students who submit their request by the deadline will be eligible to participate in the Spring Room Change Lottery November 16th—18th. Requests received after the deadline will be reviewed after new student assignments are completed in January.

For those of you unfamiliar with the lottery process, there are a couple of important things to keep in mind:

- **During this room change lottery process, you get to select a specific room** from any of the available rooms. Just make sure you log in during your assigned lottery time! If you enter the lottery and don't select a new room, we will auto-assign you at the end of the lottery process.
- **You have to give up your current SPRING SEMESTER room assignment in order to be included in the Room Change Lottery.** What this means, is that if you want to change rooms for spring, and you submit a room change request to be included in the lottery, we will DELETE/UNASSIGN your SPRING SEMESTER room assignment. You will not have a SPRING assignment until you either select a new room (from available rooms) during the lottery process or you are auto-assigned to a new room for SPRING at the end of the lottery.
- **Please remember that a room change may affect your student bill.** Please check the cost of the room / building you are planning to move to, to make sure that it fits your budget.
- All students who are participating in the room change lottery are making their room available for someone else to choose. This is what creates the spaces for everyone to choose from. It also means that **you should NOT count on being able to re-select your current room** if you don't find something else that you like better.
- If you submit a room change request to be included in the lottery process but don't log in to MyHousing and select a room yourself, you will be **auto-assigned** to an available space that best matches the information in your Personal Preferences.

Our goal is to get as many of you who are granted a move, moved to your new room before you leave for break in December. If you can arrange for some flexibility in your travel plans, it would be helpful if you can stick around until December 15th-17th (after check-out when rooms are more likely to be empty) to move. It is a very fluid process—so we ask for your patience.

If it is not possible for you to complete your move before you leave for break, you may have to wait until after Spring check-ins are completed and move if there is still space available at that time. Because we are also assigning new students, we can't "hold" a space in a different building for you until you return.

We try to accommodate your requests in the most convenient way for you that we can. To do this, we need your help, patience and cooperation. Please stay in touch with us!

Can I stay in my room or leave my stuff in my room over break?

Yes! Your academic year contract includes break periods that occur between August—May i.e. Thanksgiving, Winter (Christmas) Break, Spring Break. There is no additional charge to stay over the break and you **DON'T** have to take all your stuff home with you. (We do recommend that you take valuables home with you... see the “check-list” on the last page.)

Your room is for your use only. You may not allow others to stay in your room over the break. For safety reasons, visitation hours are limited during the break. Please check your Hall Handbook for info.

There will be staff “on-call” over the break to assist you. Their names, room numbers and contact cell phone numbers will be posted by the Hall offices. In addition, University Police will also be available to assist with emergencies.

“I would like to change my meal plan for spring.”

All you need to do is log in to your MyHousing account and change your SPRING meal plan. **Please check the dates and make sure you are changing the SPRING 10 term meal plan.**

Reminder: If you are planning to drop your meal plan for Spring, you need to meet the eligibility requirements (i.e. live at Vanderventer Apartments or have more than 60 credit hours)

Please see us if you have questions.

Is there food service available on campus during the break?



Yes! If you have a fall meal plan, and are also signed up for a spring meal plan, you will automatically be covered for the break, at no extra charge. There are some differences between the break meal plans and regular semester meal plans.

- There are no “points” with the break meal plan.
- Service Hours are: 11:00am—7:00pm. Meals will be served at the Snack Bar in the University Center only.
- Special Holiday Meals: For Thanksgiving and Christmas and day meals, we will be hosting special event “traditional” dinners, served buffet style, from 11:00am—2:00pm in one of the residence halls.

Thanksgiving “dinner” will be served at Texan Hall. The Christmas Day meal will be served at Centennial Village. All students who are

staying over the break are encouraged to come share these special meals together. More information will be coming soon!

“I will be coming back to ASU, but I’m not planning to live on campus in the Spring.”

The Housing contract that you signed is binding for the academic year (Aug-May). Petition for release from your contract mid-year is made through the **Contract Release Process**.

We are happy to talk to you about your situation individually. If you have any questions about the contract release process, please call or come to the Residential Programs Office, Hardeman Building, Rm. 200.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Please do not make other housing plans until you have received written notice (ASU email) that your request has been approved.

Until approved, you are still under contract with us!

DEADLINE:

All Contract Release Requests and supporting documentation must be received in the Residential Programs Office by December 15th!

Contract Release Process:

There are several generally accepted/approved criteria for mid-year release. Please be advised that a **Liquidated Damage Charge** may apply.

Many of these requests require supporting documentation which can take some time to collect and review. For this reason, we strongly encourage you to come to the Residential Programs Office in Hardeman 200 and complete a **Request for Housing Deposit Refund/ Contract Release form** and if applicable, pick up an **Exemption (Contract Release) Packet**.

Standard Release criteria:

- Having earned 60+ credit hours by the end of the Fall semester.
- Reaching age 21 prior to the start of the Spring semester.
- Having completed 4 or more continuous long semesters in University owned/operated housing.
- Not returning to ASU for spring semester.

Special Circumstances release requests may be considered for:

- Request to reside with parent, grandparent or sibling.
- Marriage.
- A student teaching/internship assignment which requires living in another city.
- A financial hardship which has occurred after check-in (August 2009).
- 6 months active military duty.
- A serious medical condition that is directly related to your ability to live on campus.
- Other “Special Circumstance” that you would like us to consider.

Liquidated Damage Charge (LDC):

The Student Housing Contractual Agreement is an academic year commitment. If you request, and are granted, a mid-year release from your academic year agreement, you will be obligated to pay **50 percent (50%) of the applicable spring semester housing charges** as liquidated damages.

Exceptions to this fee include students who:

- graduate or terminate enrollment at the close of Fall semester
- will be married prior to the beginning of the Spring semester.
- have a teaching assignment/internship requiring residency in another city.
- Approved medical release.
- Approved significant financial hardship release.

If you plan to request a release from your Housing Agreement and are subject to the Liquidated Damages Charge (LDC), you will need to complete and submit a **Request for Housing Deposit Refund and Contract Release** form. The LDC must be paid before your contract will be cancelled and your housing charges removed from your account. Your housing deposit is a damage deposit and may NOT be applied toward the LDC.

Per your Housing Contract: XII, C: Liquidated Damage Charges must be paid in full by no later than December 20. Failure to complete payment of Liquidated Damage Charges by the Dec. 20 deadline may result in cancellation of approval for you to be released from your contract. Please contact us if you anticipate problems meeting this deadline.

“I won’t be returning to ASU for the Spring Semester.”

How do I get my Housing Deposit back?”

If you are not planning to live on campus for Spring 2010 and you want your housing deposit back, you will need to come to the Residential Programs Office and complete a **Request for Housing Deposit Refund and Contract Release Form** indicating that you will not be enrolling at ASU for Spring 2010.

All refund requests must be submitted in writing.

The deadline for requesting refund of your deposit is **December 15th**. After December 15th, contract releases/cancellations will result in forfeiture of the deposit in addition to any other applicable charges or fees that may apply.

Please remember that you are responsible for paying any damage or cleaning charges that you may incur when you check out. If you are checking out permanently, the charges will be deducted from your

housing deposit, and the balance, if any, will be refunded through your OneCard. If your charges exceed your deposit amount, you will be billed for the additional amount and a hold placed on your registration/transcripts until the balance is cleared.

If you are checking out to move to a different room or building, you need to pay any damage/cleaning charges at the Residential Programs office so that your full deposit may be maintained.

Deposit refunds can take 4-6 weeks to process.

Refunds will be disbursed through your OneCard account. If you have questions about your OneCard account, please contact the OneCard Office at 942-2331.

Since this is one of those “money” issues, we strongly encourage you to contact the Residential Programs office (942-2035) if you have any questions about the deposit refund process.

Room Preparation Hints: Leaving for Break or Checking out?

I'm Leaving—But just for the Break-Checklist:

Finals are over and you are ready to take off for a much deserved break. Before you leave, we ask that you take a little time to prepare your room for your absence. As a reminder, the Office of Residential Programs and ASU assumes no responsibility for theft or damages that may occur. We recommend taking care of a few little housekeeping details now to help ensure happy returns in January.

- **Take things that you will need over the break home with you.**
- **Take out the trash.** Trash + time = well... just YUCK!
- **Remove perishable food items from your fridge.** You should leave the fridge on, but if the power goes out or something else unexpected happens... you just don't want to deal with that when you come back!
- **Unplug electrical appliances / devices if you are leaving them here over the break. (Except the fridge)**
- **Pick stuff up off the floor.** In the event of a pipe or plumbing problem, flooding in the room could harm belongings. You might consider placing them up on your bed, putting them in the closet, or storing them in covered plastic storage containers.
- **Take valuables home with you!**
- **Take valuables home with you!** (Oh, did we say that all ready?)
- **Tidy up.** Take down holiday decorations, do the laundry (if you are not taking it home) etc. Who wants to come back to a mess?
- **Secure valuable objects that you are not able to take home with you out of sight.** Most thefts are opportunity thefts . . . don't leave tempting targets in plain view. (Or maybe take valuables home with you?)
- **Turn out the lights, LOCK YOUR DOOR and TURN IN YOUR KEY at the Front Desk (only if you are just leaving for the break) on your way out.** You won't have to worry about losing your key over break, and it will be here for you when you return.
- Have a safe and pleasant trip home.

I'm not coming back to this room and/or ASU-Checklist:

It is important that you complete a proper check out of your room if you are not planning to return in the spring or if you are moving to a new room. **Failure to check out properly may result in a \$50.00 improper check out charge** (in addition to any cleaning/ damage charges). Checking out properly is easy— and doing it will save you that 50 bucks!

Here's what you need to do:

- **Go to the Residential Programs Office and fill out a Housing Deposit Refund Request and Contract Release Form** and make sure you are approved for contract release. (If you are just changing rooms, you don't need to do this.)
- **Sign up for a check-out time in advance with your Resident Assistant.**
- **Pack your stuff and move it out.** While making trips from room to vehicle, please remember to keep both your room and car locked. You might even ask a friend to help keep an eye on things for you.
- **Clean, Clean, Clean...** Your room condition should match what is indicated on the inventory you signed when you checked in. If there are damages now that aren't indicated on the inventory, or if you haven't taken care of making sure the room, and any common areas you are responsible for, are clean when you check out, you will likely be assessed a charge.
- **Meet your RA at your room at the check out time to review the condition of the room.**
- **NOTE: All of your belongings have to be out of the room before you can complete the check out.**
- **Turn your key(s) in to your RA (NOT the front desk) and sign the check-out paperwork.**
- **Make sure that you ask and are informed of any charges you may have been assessed.** In most cases, the RA should be able to tell you the amount of the charge. If you have questions about a charge or would like to contest the charge(s), you will need to talk to your Area Coordinator first. Your RA or Hall Front Desk staff can help you contact them.

Thank you for staying with us.

Have a safe trip home.

