

Office of

OFF-CAMPUS

Student Affairs



BEYOND GW

Guide to Living Off-Campus

2012-2013



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**

WASHINGTON, DC

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INTRODUCTION

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Moving off-campus is a major transition that brings a great deal of excitement and independence. The move to independent living signals a significant milestone in an individual's progression towards an autonomous lifestyle. Whether you are an undergraduate moving off-campus, a new transfer student, or a graduate student moving to DC for the first time, the Guide to Living Off-Campus is written with your needs in mind.

Along with the feeling of excitement and independence comes the responsibility of living in a neighborhood community. Similar to life in GW's residence halls, your new off-campus neighborhood will have various community standards to which all individuals are expected to adhere. Although the Guide will not address every aspect of community living, it will provide you with information about several key matters that you should take notice of as a resident of Historical Foggy Bottom, Foxhall, or other areas of the District of Columbia, Virginia or Maryland.

Information contained in this book is provided as a resource to the GW community. The George Washington University has not inspected, nor does it endorse, any property that is listed in this book. Likewise, information is provided to help students understand their rights and responsibilities. It should not be considered legal advice.

The Guide was written and produced by The George Washington University's Office of Off-Campus Student Affairs. Information has been provided by District of Columbia government, Metropolitan Police Department and The George Washington University Police Department.

For more information about living off-campus as a GW student, please contact:

Office of Off-Campus Student Affairs

The George Washington University

PHONE: (202) 994-0334

EMAIL: ocsa@gwu.edu

<http://gwired.gwu.edu/offcampus>

This Guide was written and produced by The George Washington University's Office of Off-Campus Student Affairs. Information presented is accurate as of January 1, 2012.

FINDING YOUR NEW HOME

Where to Look

A wide variety of housing options are available throughout the metropolitan area. Personal preferences are generally the deciding factors in choosing a home. For GW students, proximity to campus may make a difference in where you want to live.

Criteria in selecting the area you live in:

Location

No matter where you decide to make your home, either close to campus or far away, there are tradeoffs.

Price

As a general rule, the farther away from the city, the less expensive the housing.

Safety

Visit the area you choose to live in during the day and at night to check the neighborhood.

Travel time

If you rely on public transportation, keep in mind that living in the city requires less travel time.

Parking

If you own a car, you should know that parking is generally difficult in the city, as street parking is scarce and garages often cost approximately \$15 per day.

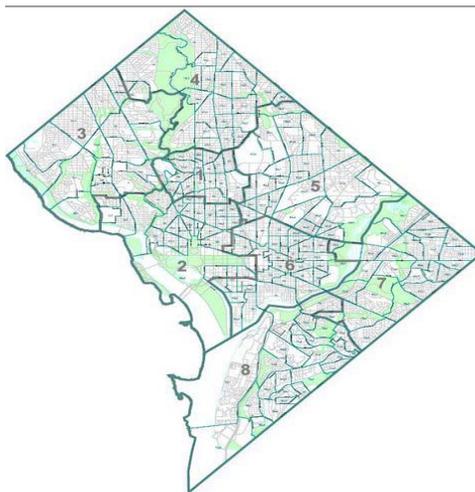
The District of Columbia is divided into four quadrants, with the US Capitol serving as the center point. The quadrants correspond to the compass directions: Northwest, Southwest, Northeast and Southeast. Below is a brief overview of each quadrant:

Northwest

The Northwest quadrant is home to GW's Foggy Bottom and Foxhall neighborhoods as well as Georgetown and Dupont Circle. It is the largest area of the District and is composed of several contrasting neighborhoods, including older areas and those being modernized and renovated. Most neighborhoods within Northwest, DC are accessible by both Metro buses and the Metrorail system.

Southwest

This is the downtown area near Washington's waterfront. Southwest includes a wide range of economic and ethnic groups and is the location of many Federal buildings. New apartment complexes are being built in this area at very reasonable rates. Public transportation exists in the way of Metro buses and the Metrorail system.



Northeast

This is the area around Howard, Catholic, and Gallaudet Universities and Union Station. As many residents of this area are students, housing options are less expensive and less luxurious. Metro buses travel regularly through all major arteries within Northeast and both the yellow and green lines of the Metrorail system service neighborhoods of this area.

Southeast

The neighborhood most famous in this area is "Capitol Hill," location of the Library of Congress and most government offices. The Southeast is a very historic area, consisting of important Federal buildings and residences representing diverse architectural styles. Many Federal employees and young professionals make their home in Southeast. Prices in the Southeast vary greatly. Public transportation via metro bus and the Metrorail system are available on a frequent basis.

AROUND THE CITY

As neighborhoods do vary within the city, students are well advised to visit the prospective home and investigate the neighborhood in order to assess the safety of the area.

Listed below are brief descriptions of the neighborhoods closest to GW's Foggy Bottom Campus, as well as some other neighborhoods in and around Washington, DC that are popular among students living off-campus:

Foggy Bottom

Foggy Bottom is home to GW's main campus. Housing is convenient but can be very expensive and limited. Advantages to living in this area include close proximity to campus, the Orange and Blue lines of the Metro, and other DC attractions. Housing options include high-rise

apartments and townhouses. Dupont Circle West and the West End may also be considered part of the Foggy Bottom, "GW" neighborhood.

Dupont Circle

The Circle is actually the entire area around lower Connecticut Avenue, surrounded by Foggy Bottom to the south, and Adams Morgan/Washington Heights to the north. Dupont Circle is a busy office and luxury shopping area, as well as an urban cultural center populated by young people, artists, and musicians. The streets and avenues that radiate from Dupont Circle offer many types of accommodations at various prices, including older high-rises, smaller apartment buildings, basement apartments, and private rooms in homes. Dupont Circle is within walking distance of the University, is a main thoroughfare for Metro buses, and is situated on the Red Line of the Metrorail.

Georgetown

The Georgetown shopping area caters to students and young adults, but housing in this area is expensive. Many apartments do not rent to students, but rather to government and diplomatic employees. Occasionally townhouses are available and are rented to several students who share the cost. Families sometimes rent individual rooms, or basement apartments in their private homes. This area is within 10-15 minutes walking distance of campus or can be reached by any bus on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Adams Morgan

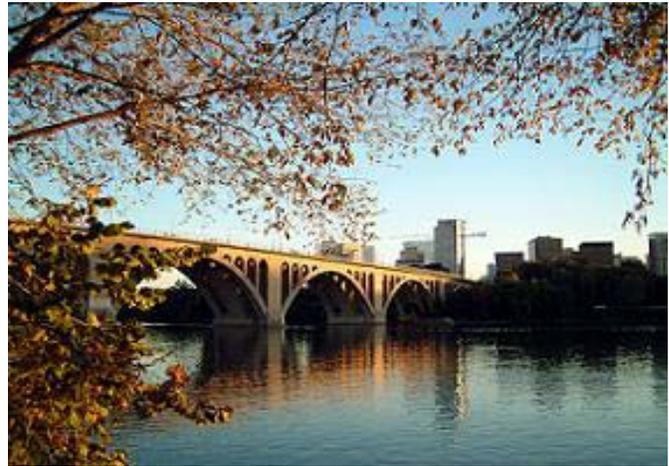
Adams Morgan is an urban area centered around Columbia Road and 18th Street, NW. The area has an ethnically and economically diverse population, including foreign and domestic students, young families, diplomatic officials, recent immigrants, and longtime residents of the District. The neighborhood is richly diverse; many international restaurants and markets call Adams Morgan home, including the Latin Market on Sunday, plus many inexpensive shops and free festivals. Also referred to as Washington Heights and Dupont Circle North, housing options and prices vary enormously.

Cleveland Park/Woodley Park

Located on Connecticut Avenue, these neighborhoods are within walking distance of the National Zoo, a variety of restaurants, shops and nightspots. Cleveland Park and Woodley Park are elegant neighborhoods with a variety of housing opportunities, including apartments, group houses, and basement apartments in private homes. Approximately a 40 minute walk straight up Connecticut Avenue from GW, this area is situated on a busy Metrobus route, and there are two Metrorail stations that provide access to the rest of the city.

North Arlington, Virginia

North Arlington's main streets are Lee Highway (Key Bridge), Route 50 (Theodore Roosevelt Bridge,) and Wilson Blvd, (Theodore Roosevelt Bridge). All are accessible from GW by Metro on the Orange Line at the Rosslyn, Courthouse, Clarendon, and Ballston stations. There are many types of housing in the North Arlington area, including townhouses, garden apartments, large high-rises, luxury apartments, duplexes, and individual homes. Rent is typically lower in Virginia than in the District of Columbia.



South Arlington, Virginia

There are many moderately priced accommodations in South Arlington. As in North Arlington, there are varied types of housing. Crystal City is a section of high-rises off of U.S. Route 1 overlooking the Potomac River and is accessible by Metrorail on the Blue Line. Large populations of students, especially graduate students, live in Crystal City. A new development of apartment complexes has been built at Pentagon City, adjacent to the shopping mall, which is accessible on the Blue Line.

Alexandria, Virginia

Alexandria, a historic city, offers a wide price range and type of housing. Many students, young adults, and historic, established families live in Alexandria. The main thoroughfare, Shirley Highway (I-395) is very crowded during rush hour. A key attraction of Alexandria is Old Town, a restored colonial area with a wide array of shops and other attractions. The Yellow and Blue Line on the Metrorail makes several stops in the Alexandria area.

Silver Spring, Maryland

Silver Spring serves as the primary urban area in Montgomery County and its revitalization has ushered in a diverse mix of people. It contains many reasonably priced apartments. In recent years the Downtown area has been revitalized with an eclectic mix of entertainment, restaurants, and shopping centers. Silver Spring is located on the Red Line of the Metrorail.

Bethesda, Maryland

Bethesda is located just over the District's northern border. It is home to the National Institute of Health, National Naval Medical Center, and the headquarters of both Marriot International and the Lockheed Martin Corporation. Bethesda is best known for its large number of restaurants. According to the 2000 census, it is also the best-educated city in the United States. There are many apartment buildings and condominiums in downtown Bethesda. This lively urban community is located near two metro stops on the Red line (Bethesda and Medical Center).

How to Look

With a little time and a decent search engine, you will find lots of information online regarding apartments for rent in Washington DC. Here are a few links we discovered which may get you started in your search. We do not recommend students rent anywhere sight unseen.

Apartment Listings

<http://gwoffcampus.com>
<http://washingtondc.craigslist.org/>
<http://rentinwashingtondc.com/>
www.apartments.com
<http://washingtondc.forrent.com/>
<http://www.rentalsonline.com>
www.thesublet.com
www.apartmentguide.com
www.washington-dc-apartments.net
www.rent.com

Local Publications with listings

www.gwhatchet.com
www.washingtoncitypaper.com
www.washingtonpost.com
www.hillnews.com

Columbia Plaza

The Columbia Plaza Housing Program provides GW graduate students assistance in securing an apartment in this privately owned, multi-building complex adjacent to GW's Foggy Bottom campus. Just a few blocks from both the GW Law School and the Foggy Bottom Metro station, Columbia Plaza offers GW graduate students a convenient housing option in one of Washington's most desirable and historic neighborhoods.

Please note that efficiencies for the Fall occupancy are usually reserved for incoming law students. All other students should only preference one and two bedroom apartments.

Applying to GW's Columbia Plaza Housing Program:

To secure an apartment through the Columbia Plaza Housing Program, individuals must:

1. Complete a Columbia Plaza Interest Form
2. Receive a Columbia Plaza Apartment offer through GW Housing.
3. Complete the "Request for Housing Reference" form and "Columbia Plaza Housing Program Agreement" and submit the documents to GW Housing.
4. Complete required rental application, sign Columbia Plaza lease, and submit the security deposit and first full month's rental payment to Columbia Plaza management.

For specific information on Columbia Plaza buildings or amenities, please contact:

The Columbia Plaza Management Office
2400 Virginia Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20037
(202) 293-2000
www.columbiaplaza.net

For more information on the Columbia Plaza Housing Program or to submit a Columbia Plaza Interest Form, please contact:

GW Housing
(202) 994-2552

Integrating Yourself into the Community

Students should work to integrate themselves fully into their off-campus community. As a citizen of the District of Columbia, it is both your right and responsibility to take part in governing your community. The laws and regulations adopted by the District as well as the national government directly affect you and your lifestyle. Students are encouraged to take part in various government elections.

Voter Registration

To represent your views and have a voice in your community you have to vote and, therefore register. To register to vote in the District of Columbia, individuals must meet the following criteria:

- United States Citizen
- DC resident
- At least 18 years old by Election Day
- Not claim the right to vote anywhere outside DC

If you meet all of these requirements, you may register to vote by submitting the Mail in Voter Registration Form located on the web at least 30 days before an election.

For information about voter registration:

DC: www.dcboee.org

Virginia: www.sbe.state.va.us

Maryland: www.elections.state.md.us

City Council

The Council of the District of Columbia is the legislative branch of the District government. All legislative powers are vested in the Council. The Council is composed of 13 Members—a representative elected from each of the city's eight wards and five members, including the Chairman, elected at-large. As the local elected representative body, the Council seeks citizen participation throughout the legislative process. It holds public hearings to provide an opportunity for public comment on proposed legislation, policy initiatives and government operations.

The neighborhoods of Foggy Bottom/West End, Dupont Circle and Georgetown are all a part of Ward 2, represented by Councilmember Jack Evans. For more information about the DC City Council or contact information for any Councilmember, please visit their website at: www.dccouncil.washington.dc.us.

US Congressional Representative, Delegate

Residents of the District of Columbia do not have full voting representation in the U.S. Congress. D.C does have a non-voting delegate to the US House of Representatives, Eleanor Holmes Norton. For more information or to contact Rep. Norton, please visit her website at: www.norton.house.gov.



Questions about DC City Government

The District of Columbia maintains an excellent website with over 100,000 pages of information about living and working in the city. You are encouraged to visit www.dc.gov to learn more about the city government and services.

For information about specific services in your neighborhood, including closest Metro, police station, fire station, recreational facility and post office as well as which Ward, Advisory Neighborhood Commission and voting precinct you are in, visit the website <http://citizenatlas.dc.gov/atlasapps/reporhometab.aspx>

Community Service

The District of Columbia and the Foggy Bottom neighborhood are rich with opportunities for students to take part in community service and numerous other community development activities. Events such as “Make a Difference Day” or “Senior Prom” are great ways to not only positively impact the community in which you live, but also provide the opportunity to meet some of your neighbors in the area.

Office of Community Service
2129 G Street, NW
Building D, Suite 101
(202) 994-5493
<http://gwired.gwu.edu/ocs>

Greater DC Cares
www.dc-cares.org
(800) VOLUNTEER

For more information about all that Washington DC has to offer, visit: www.washington.org the official tourism website of Washington DC.

Maintaining Campus Involvement

The University along with the Center for Student Engagement maintains many online resources to keep you informed of upcoming activities and student organizations.

- For a calendar of events on campus visit: http://gwired.gwu.edu/gwired_events.php
- For a complete list of Student Organizations visit: <http://studentorgs.gwu.edu/directory>
- For information about the student government, including current legislation and activities, visit the GW Student Association website at: <http://www.gwstudentassociation.com/>
- The Center for Student Engagement - Graduate, Distance, and Professional Student Experience (CSE-GDP) offers social and cultural events on campus and within the DC area as well as resources to improve your success as a graduate, distance, or professional student. Visit the CSE-GDP at: <http://gradlife.gwu.edu>



Contact GW Day or Night

GW Community Concern Policy

GW is committed to being a good neighbor and working with members of the community to respond to complaints regarding student behavior both on-campus and off-campus. As a GW student and community member, you can exercise your right to report behavior that is disruptive to the community. When a GW-related concern is reported by a member of the Foggy Bottom/West End community, the University responds to the report taking into account factors such as the geographic location of the complaint/incident. GW's University Police Department ("GWPD") can exercise police power to respond to incidents that occur in/on property owned or leased by the institution and controlled or used by GW for institutional purposes. GWPD enlists the assistance of DC's Metropolitan Police ("MPD") when a police response is required outside of GWPD's jurisdictional boundaries. GW also maintains a good neighbor policy that calls for an active response to noise/behavior issues involving townhouses or streets within specific neighborhood boundaries.

GW Property

If the concern involves GW Property, GWPD will respond to the concern and attempt to resolve the problem. If necessary, GWPD will use police authority to resolve incidents that occur on GW property.

Townhouses

If the concern involves noise/behavior issues at neighborhood townhouses within the townhouse response boundaries, GWPD will respond, knock on the door of the property and make the occupants aware of the concerns. If GW students are involved, GWPD will attempt to resolve the issue. If police authority is necessary, GWPD will contact MPD

*Townhouse boundaries: 19th Street - 26th Street, E Street - M Street

Apartment Buildings

If the concern involves noise/behavior inside apartment (or condo) buildings in the neighborhood, GWPD dispatchers will document the concern and GW officials will follow-up with the building management, and MPD when deemed necessary.

Street Noise

If the concern involves noise/behavior on the neighborhood streets, sidewalks or other public areas within the street noise response boundaries, GWPD will attempt to contact the reported offenders and make them aware of the concern. GWPD also maintains a policy of proactive engagement that calls for similar actions if each behavior is witnessed during patrols, regardless of a call to the Hotline. For police response outside of the street noise response boundaries, MPD will be contacted

* Street noise response boundaries: 19th Street - 26th Street, E Street - Pennsylvania Ave. (E of Washington Circle) & K Street (W of Washington Circle)

If you have a GW-related concern regarding violations of the law and/or city ordinances, you may contact:

Metropolitan Police at 911 or the

**GW University Police Department Community Concern Hotline - 202-994-6110
(Press '0' for the Dispatcher)**

Important Telephone Numbers

Metropolitan Police Department	Emergency: 911 Non-Emergency: 311
Fire & Emergency Medical Services Department	Emergency: 911 Non-Emergency: (202) 673-3331
Foggy Bottom Station	(202) 282-0050
GW Police Department Foggy Bottom Emergency	(202) 994-6111
Foggy Bottom Non-Emergency	(202) 994-6110
GW University Police Department Community Concern Hotline	(202) 994-6110
Mount Vernon Campus Emergency	(202) 242-6111
Mount Vernon Campus Non-Emergency	(202) 242-6110
Mayor's City-wide Call Center	(202) 727-1000

Provides information on services of the Government of the District of Columbia. Residents should call the Mayor's City-wide Call Center to request many services, such as bulk collection, parking enforcement, trash and recycling collection, and street or sidewalk repair.

Utilities

Washington Gas Emergency	(703) 750-1400 or (800) 752-7520
Billing or to schedule service	(703) 750-1000 https://eservice.washgas.com/
PEPCO (electricity DC & MD)	(877) PEPCO-62
To report an outage	(202) 833-7500
To schedule service	www.pepco.com
Dominion Power (electricity VA)	(888) 667-3000 www.dom.com
DC Water and Sewer Authority Emergency	(202) 612-3400
Billing & new connections	(202) 354-3600 www.dcwasa.com
Comcast Cablevision	(800) COMCAST www.comcast.com
RCN (Cable & Internet Provider)	(800) RING-RCN www.rcn.com

GW Departments

Office of Off-Campus Student Affairs	(202) 994-0334 http://gwired.gwu.edu/offcampus
University Counseling Center	(202) 994-5300 http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel
Student Health Services	(202) 994-6827 http://gwired.gwu.edu/shs
Center for Student Engagement - Graduate Experience	(202) 994-6555 http://gradlife.gwu.edu
GW Campus Advisories	www.gwu.edu/~gwalert

LEGAL ISSUES

Living off-campus involves many new responsibilities. As a tenant, you are responsible for understanding the terms of agreements you make, including your lease and security deposit. One step towards maintaining a good relationship between you and your management or property owner is a clear understanding of your rights and responsibilities. While most property owners and managers do an excellent job of caring for their rental property and dealing fairly with renters, knowing your rights will ensure that you are treated equitably.

Laws Regulating the Landlord-Tenant Relationship

The District of Columbia Housing Code contains the standards by which residential housing must be maintained. The regulations pertaining to the Housing Code are contained in Title 14 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations. The Housing Regulation Administration is responsible for administration and enforcement of the Code.

The Housing Regulation Administration
1800 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20020
(202) 442-9505

The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs' (DCRA) mission is to protect the health, safety, economic interests, and quality of life of resident in the District of Columbia. The DCRA can provide you with information to ensure your landlord is in compliance with DC Laws and regulations.

DCRA
1100 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024
(202) 442-4400

DCRA Off-Campus Student Initiative

The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) sponsors <http://dcra.dc.gov/DC/DCRA>. This site is a central location where you can request free services, obtain resources and verify if your landlord is legally licensed to rent.

Inspecting

The DC Housing Regulations state that apartments and their furnishings must be "in a clean, safe and sanitary condition." It's important, therefore, that you ask a prospective landlord permission to inspect an apartment before you sign a lease, pay rent, or make a security deposit.

It is smart to walk through the property with the owner or building manager before you move in. Make notes about anything that requires repair. Have the owner or manager sign the list and make sure you both have a copy. This serves two purposes. The landlord is made aware of any necessary repairs and the list also documents damage that existed when you moved in, so you can't be held liable when it comes time to move out.

Some things to keep in mind when you perform this inspection:

- Check all walls and ceilings to make sure that they are free of peeling paint, wide cracks, and holes.
- Check all windows to make sure that they are in good working order and not broken.
- Check all doors to make sure that they are in good condition. The exterior door, when closed, should fit well in its frame and should be equipped with a lock.
- Check the floors to make sure that they are structurally sound, reasonably level and free of holes, cracks, and loose, splintered, protruding, or rotting floor boards.
- Check all electrical outlets to make sure that they are covered with plates and work properly.
- Check the plumbing facilities to make sure that they do not leak and are clean and sanitary. Also check the hot and cold water supply in both the kitchen and bathrooms.
- Check all appliances to make sure that they are clean and in good working order.

Leases

The most important step in protecting your rights as a tenant is to read your lease and understand what your responsibilities are when you sign it. A written lease protects both you and your landlord by clarifying the rights and obligations of each party. Verbal agreements are difficult to prove or enforce should a problem arise. A tenant's lack of awareness of the obligations they agreed to in their leases does not release them from those obligations. To avoid surprises, obtain written copies of all your agreements and make sure you understand your obligations.

Any changes or additions to the lease should be agreed to by both parties. They should appear in the lease before it is signed, and should be initialed by both you and the landlord. A rider or addendum may be attached to the lease and should be signed and dated by both parties. If the landlord has agreed to make repairs, for example, this statement should be included in the rider.

Some landlords require a co-signer on a lease if a student is under 21 years of age and has no prior rental references. After you have signed the lease, the landlord may mail it to whomever you designate (usually a parent) to obtain another signature. The co-signer will be held responsible if the rent is not paid or if any problems arise.

Be sure to get a copy of the signed lease from your landlord and keep it in a safe place. You may need it for future reference if any problems occur during the term of the lease.

The following points should be covered in the lease:

Names and addresses of landlord and tenant(s).

Description of the property being rented.

The number of people allowed to live in the unit. DC law prohibits occupancy by more than six unrelated persons.

Dates covered by the lease, when and if the lease can be renewed, and when and how the lease can be ended. If the lease is terminated early, is there a penalty?

Are you allowed to sublet?

What is the amount of the rent and when is it due? Is there any grace period if not paid on this date? Is there a penalty for late payment? When can the rent be increased?

Are utilities included in the rent? If some are included, they should be specified.

Who is responsible for maintenance and repairs? How will these costs be handled? Are you expected to pay any part?

Is extermination part of the maintenance? How often will it be done? Who will pay for it?

Are pets allowed? If so, is there an extra charge?

If the accommodation is furnished, a list of the furniture and its condition should be included in the lease. Who is responsible for the furnishings in case of fire or theft?

Who has the right of entry to the rental unit? May the owner enter for inspection or repairs?

Is a security deposit required? If so, how much? When and under what conditions will it be returned?

If renting a room within a house, what areas may you use and when? Are there any kitchen restrictions? What are the guest policies?

Joint and Several Liability

It is common for several students to rent a house or apartment. If everyone in the house signs a lease together you should be aware of a concept known as “joint and several liability.”

Most rental agreements have a joint and several liability clause. What this language does is makes every signer of the rental agreement responsible for the entire amounts due and owing. This means that if your roommates desert you, or damage their rooms beyond repair, your landlord can sue all of you, or perhaps just you and you may be liable for the entire amount.

This can become a bigger problem in “group home” situations. Initially, a number of people sign a lease, but then people sequence through the house. Some move out, new people move in — and then some of the people who originally signed the lease are no longer there. Under the joint and several liability clause, if legal disputes arise or back rent is owed, the house’s landlord can pursue all the original signers of the lease for remedy, or the landlord may choose to concentrate on the one or two left in the house.

Security Deposits

Often the security deposit is the first major exchange of money between a new tenant and a landlord. To protect this deposit, you must clearly understand the landlord’s terms and conditions regarding the deposit and its return when the time comes. The landlord is required to state these terms and conditions on the lease or on your receipt for the deposit. When you move out of the apartment, the landlord has 45 days to return your deposit or to notify you in writing if he or she intends to apply the money toward damages in the apartment. If your landlord does this, s/he then has 30 days from the day s/he notified you to return whatever money is left over and provide you with an itemized statement of the repair costs.



The DC Housing Regulations also authorizes the landlord to make an inspection of the apartment three days before or after your tenancy ends, but must notify you in writing of the inspection at least 10 days before it occurs.

Your security deposit accrues interest and the law dictates that the interest rate on the deposit be equal to the passbook interest rate for the escrow account holding the deposit, or that it shall accrue at a rate not less than 5 percent per year.

Renter’s Insurance

Unless your personal property is covered by a parent or spouse’s insurance, you should consider investing in insurance. Although your landlord should have insurance, their policy typically only covers the building itself. This means that if there was a fire in your building, the landlord’s policy would cover repairs to your apartment, but not replacement of your property.

You may think your things aren’t worth much. But the average person has over \$20,000 worth of property. That is why it is a good idea to invest in renter’s insurance.

Most renters’ policies are really homeowner’s insurance modified to fit the needs of tenants and the premiums are usually low. A good place to begin searching for a policy is with your parents’ insurance agent or the company which carries the insurance on your car.

Even if it does not result in a decrease in your premiums, make sure all your valuables are marked with your driver’s license number or other identifying mark to aid in identification and return of stolen items. It is also a good idea to record the serial number of all electronics and photograph other valuables.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities as a GW Student

Collection of Student Address Information

Each student at the University is required to update as necessary his or her current local address. It is important to note that “current local address” means it must be the address at which you, the student, including those who commute, resides during the week while attending classes at the University. Failure to report a current local address accurately to GW or failure to advise GW promptly of a change in current local address will constitute a violation and may result in the encumbrance of further registration.

Be sure to update your address and contact information on GWeb.

Responsibilities as a Tenant

State and local laws vary regarding the specific rights and responsibilities of tenants. However, there are some general responsibilities you assume when entering into a rental relationship. The following should be taken as general guidelines.

Pay your rent.

You have to pay your rent on time without the landlord having to remind you.

Sign and keep a copy of the lease.

You must be given a copy of the lease (rental agreement) within one month of the date you move in. Even if your landlord does not give you a copy of the lease, you are agreeing to the terms of the lease by occupying the apartment or paying the rent. Whether or not you have a copy, you are bound by the terms of the lease that you signed.

Follow the terms of the lease.

You and the landlord must follow the terms of the lease. The only way you can be evicted before your lease is up is if you do not obey the terms of the lease.

Write down the damages in the apartment when you move in.

You are responsible for documenting and providing your landlord a written list for everything that is wrong with your apartment when you move in. When you move out, if there are damages to the apartment that were not listed during those **first 5 days**, you will be held responsible. The landlord has the right to charge you for the damages.

Agree to reasonable entry of your apartment by the landlord.

If the landlord has a good reason, you must allow him or her to enter your apartment. Some good reasons are to inspect the property, make repairs, alterations and improvements, supply necessary/agreed services, or show the apartment to prospective purchasers, mortgagees, tenants, workmen, or contractors. The landlord can enter the apartment without your consent in emergency situations. The landlord can only enter at reasonable hours of the day and must tell you before he/she plans to enter your apartment.

Give proper notice before moving.

You have to give your landlord a written notice in advance of the time you move out. Your lease should state how much time is enough notice. Usually you must give the landlord written notice that you plan to move at least 30 days before the rent is due. If you have a week-to-week lease then you must give a 10-day notice.

Provide correct information on your rental application.

If you give false information on your application, the landlord has the right to end your lease.

Noise & Disorderly Conduct

Although residential neighborhood communities do not have specific “quiet hours,” they do have general “courtesy hours” by which all residents should abide. Loud parties, unnecessary shouting, and amplified sound are all examples of violations of general neighborhood common courtesies. Neighborhoods are full of working professionals, families with children, and older adults who seek respectful neighbors in their community. According to the general provisions of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations:

Noise Control Act

... every person is entitled to ambient noise levels that are not detrimental to life, health, and enjoyment of his or her property... [as such], excessive or unnecessary noises within the District are a menace to the welfare and prosperity of the residents and businesses of the District.
20 D.C. Municipal Regulations § 2700

When in doubt, go to your property line or community hallway. If the noise from your apartment can be heard there it is probably too loud. Activities subject to the noise disturbance standard include, but are not limited to: musical instruments, loud speakers, amplifiers, unamplified speech, construction, and vehicle-mounted loud speakers.

Please be aware that a violation of the “Noise Control Act” has occurred if an average citizen would consider the noise unreasonably loud.

The District of Columbia Code also addresses general noise violations as well as disturbances of the peace in the community, specifically:

Whoever, with intent to provoke a breach of the peace, or under circumstances such that a breach of the peace may be occasioned thereby: (1) acts in such a manner as to annoy, disturb, interfere with, obstruct, or be offensive to others; (2) congregates with others on a public street and refuses to move on when ordered by the police; (3) shouts or makes a noise either outside or inside a building during the nighttime to the annoyance or disturbance of any considerable number of persons; (4) interferes with any person in any place by jostling against such person or unnecessarily crowding such person or by placing a hand in the proximity of such person’s pocketbook, or handbag; or (5) causes a disturbance in any streetcar, railroad car, omnibus, or other public conveyance, by running through it, climbing through windows or upon the seats, or otherwise annoying passengers or employees, shall be fined not more than \$250 or imprisoned not more than 90 days, or both.
D.C. Code § 22-1321 Disorderly Conduct

Please note that the disorderly conduct prohibited by the D.C. Code is not limited to loud noises. It also addresses actions which are an annoyance to others on public transportation and in general.

Additionally, the D.C. Code prohibits profane or obscene language in public places:

... it shall not be lawful for any person or persons to curse, swear, or make use of any profane language or indecent or obscene words, or engage in any disorderly conduct in any street, avenue, alley, road, highway, public park or enclosure, public building, church, or assembly room, or in any other public place, or in any place wherefrom the same may be heard in any street, avenue, alley, road, highway, public park or enclosure, or other building, or in any premises other than those where the offense was committed, under a penalty of not more than \$250 or imprisonment for not more than 90 days, or both for each and every such offense.
D.C. Code § 22-1307 Profane and Indecent Language

When in doubt go to your property line or community hall. If the noise from your apartment can be heard, then it is probably too loud.

Alcohol

It is illegal to consume alcoholic beverages under the age of 21 in the District of Columbia. In addition, falsely representing one's age, public intoxication, and serving alcohol to minors are all violations of the University's "Code of Student Conduct" and the District of Columbia's Alcoholic Beverage Regulations (D.C. Code § 25).

Underage drinking is a very serious offense and is not taken lightly by the Metropolitan and GW University Police Departments. Penalties for underage possession of alcohol include a citation from the MPD and sanctions through the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities as well as parental notification. Repeated or serious violations may result in suspension or expulsion from the University. These policies also apply to off-campus students.

Excessive alcohol consumption often leads to community disturbances that detract from the quality of life that community members expect. As a new member of the neighborhood and out of courtesy for your neighbors, please act responsibly if you choose to drink alcoholic beverages.

DC Code § 25-1001 prohibits drinking alcohol in a public place, regardless of age. Please be mindful that hallways and lobbies in apartment buildings are considered public domain. Violation of this provision may result in a fine of no more than \$500 and/or imprisonment for no more than 90 days.

The Center for Alcohol and other Drug Education (CADE) at The George Washington University (GW) serves to educate students so that they can make informed and responsible decisions regarding substance-related behavior and other student-wellness issues. Through collaboration with other service areas and departments on campus, CADE provides programs, services, and resources that encourage students to recognize that their decisions impact not only themselves, but also the greater GW and District of Columbia communities. For more information about alcohol and other drugs in the community, please contact:

Center for Alcohol & Other Drug Education (CADE)
John Quincy Adams House
2129 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20052
(202) 994-2599
cade@gwu.edu
<http://qwired.gwu.edu/cade>

Parties

One of the privileges of off-campus life is more room and freedom to throw parties. If you are 21, those parties may include alcohol. However, this privilege comes with the responsibility to have fun without violating the law, the "Code of Student Conduct," aggravating neighbors, damaging property, and most importantly endangering yourself or others. Below are some tips for entertaining your friends without annoying the neighbors:

Party Guests

- Not everyone in the neighborhood is attending the party. Be considerate of others by keeping your voice at a moderate level on your way to and from the party.
- Please use the sidewalks at all times. Many people spend a great deal of time and money to maintain their yards, which can be destroyed by too many people walking across it.
- Regardless of your age, it is illegal to carry your alcoholic drink into a public place.

Party Hosts

- Keep your neighbors informed. Let immediate neighbors know at least 2 days before a planned event so they will expect the increased noise and traffic.
- Invite a manageable number of guests. Do not post flyers or issue open invitations. As a host, you are responsible for the actions of your guests – whether you know them or not.
- Try to reduce the noise as much as possible by keeping guests inside and closing doors and windows. Do not allow your party to spill over into hallways or common areas.
- Know your lease restrictions. If there is a clause in your lease about hosting parties or creating other public disturbances, your gathering could put your lease in jeopardy and you could face eviction.
- It is illegal to serve alcohol to minors. Be certain you know the age of your guest before you hand them a drink.

Garbage

The Department of Public Works (DPW) provides regularly scheduled trash and recycling collection to single family homes and small, multifamily buildings in the District. Collection is scheduled either once or twice a week, depending on one's location in the city.

Larger apartment buildings, condominiums, and co-ops do not receive municipal trash service and handle their trash and recycling somewhat differently. Consult your lease, rental agreement or apartment manager for information regarding trash disposal. Most buildings have a trash chute or dumpster, which they require be used. One should never leave trash or trash bags in common areas, including hallways.



Supercans

Supercans are 96-gallon containers that are constructed with wheels and handles for easy mobility and have attached, tight-fitting lids to deter rodents. Supercans are designed for both safety and cleanliness in the communities as well as for easier trash collection by the District. One Supercan was provided to each once-a-week household collection location in the District and should remain with the home. Residents may purchase additional Supercans for \$62.50. Warranty repairs (replacement of wheels, replacement of tops) are done free of charge. Stolen Supercans will be replaced for a \$20 delivery and handling fee. A police report is required. Here are some helpful hints for using your Supercan:

- Always put trash in plastic bags before placing in Supercan. (Tie bags closed).
- Periodically wash out can to eliminate odors that can attract rats.
- Do not overload Supercans. Lids must be kept closed.
- When full, the Supercan must weigh no more than 250 pounds
- If your Supercan is damaged or needs repair, call (202) 727-1000

Bulk Trash

The Department of Public Works (DPW) collects large, bulky items—by appointment—from households that receive DPW trash collection service (not apartments, condominiums or co-op buildings). To arrange for a bulk collection appointment, call the Citywide Call Center at (202) 727-1000. Only seven items may be collected at a time. Customers with more than seven items will be given subsequent appointments. Bulk items (sofas, refrigerators, hot water heaters, mattresses and box springs) should be put in the alley or on the sidewalk where the collection team can identify your address.

DC residents not eligible for bulk trash collection may hire a private hauler to dispose of their item or transport the item to the Fort Totten Trash Transfer Station at 4900 Bates Road, NE. In order to dispose of bulk trash at Fort Totten, an individual must provide proof of District residency, such as a DC driver's permit and a valid vehicle registration. A third form of proof in the form of a utility bill or voter registration card may also be required.

Helpful tips when preparing your trash for pickup:

All trash must be securely bagged and put inside a Supercan or other garbage can. Bags outside of containers are allowed only for grass clippings and leaves.

Use heavy duty plastic or metal cans with tight-fitting lids to deter rats or other animals.

Place trash cans out no earlier than 6:30 pm the night before collection. Residents are also required to remove trash containers from public space by 8 pm on collection day.

Inform DPW of a missed collection or spillage by calling (202) 727-1000.

Between collections, store trash cans or Supercans on your property, rather than in the alley or on the sidewalk.

Recycling

The Department of Public Works provides recycling services for residents of the District of Columbia whose trash is also collected by the Department. Residents with Supercans who receive once-a-week trash collection should put their recyclables out at the same site and on the same day as their regular trash collection. Residents who have twice-a-week service should put out their recyclables on the second collection day along side their trash container. Put out trash and recyclables no earlier than 6:30 pm the evening before collection. To make sure that your stop is not missed, set out trash and recyclables by 6 am on collection day.

For more information on any of the services offered by the Department of Public Works, please contact them at:
Public Works Main Office
Franklin D. Reeves Center
2000 14th Street, NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 673-6899
<http://dpw.dc.gov/dc/dpw>

Inclement Weather

GW Campus Advisories is the principal method the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and the University leadership use to communicate incidents related information to the GW community. Students can use the website and GW Information Line to stay informed about inclement weather conditions, school closings, important issues concerning safety, and anything else that may disrupt normal operations.

Website: <http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/>
GW Information Line: (202) 994-5050

Litter

The Clean City Initiative is aimed at preserving the appearance of neighborhoods in the District of Columbia. A major component of this initiative pertains to litter, which is a violation of DC Municipal Regulations:

No person shall deposit, throw or place, or cause to be deposited, thrown or placed any solid waste in any alley, street, catch basin, or other public space, or into the Potomac River or other waters in the District, or onto any premise under the control of others.

21 D.C. Municipal Regulations § 700.4

For more information about the registration of dogs or to submit an application for processing, contact the following office:

Department of Health
Division of Animal Disease Prevention
51 N Street, NE
6th Floor
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 535-2323
(202) 576-6664
<http://dchealth.dc.gov>

Pets

Unlike living in a residence hall, certain off-campus living communities permit pets. Depending on the type of facility that you are living in, the ability to have pets will vary. You should check with your landlord or management company to see if pets are allowed.

Dogs

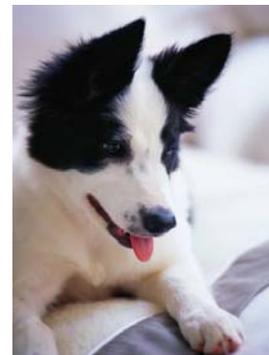
As a measure of public safety, all dogs in the District of Columbia must be registered through the Division of Animal Disease Prevention in the Environmental Health Administration of the Department of Health. The District of Columbia Code addresses the timeframe for registration of dogs in the following section:

An owner who has a dog over the age of 4 months shall before July 1st of each year, or within 10 days of acquiring the dog, or within 10 days after the dog becomes 4 months of age, obtain an annual license. An owner shall ensure that his dog wears a collar and a license. D.C. Code § 8-1804 Licenses and Fees

In order to register a dog, the owner must have the following items:

- A completed application with current information
- Proof of rabies and distemper vaccinations
- Proof of sterilization
- Annual License Fee
 - \$13.00 for a male dog certified neutered
 - \$13.00 for a female dog certified spayed
 - \$46.00 for non sterilized dogs.

In order to keep your community enjoyable for all and to support a clean city, note that it is the owner's responsibility to clean up (scoop up) after their pets.



“Code of Student Conduct”

It is important to recognize that in addition to abiding by community standards and District of Columbia, Virginia or Maryland laws, off-campus students are obligated to adhere to The George Washington University’s “Code of Student Conduct.” **The “Code” applies to all GW students; the University may charge students for violation of laws or University policies on and off campus.**

Inherent Authority

GW maintains the right to take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of the campus community. This includes taking disciplinary action against those students whose behavior off-campus is in violation of the **“Code of Student Conduct.”**

Disciplinary action carried out by the University does not prevent civil authorities from also taking action. The University and civil authorities are separate bodies that act on their own.

Students as Off-Campus Citizens

The George Washington University has been an integral part of the District of Columbia community for more than 180 years, and works to continually improve our community relations. GW provides education, health care, employment, and other benefits and resources to District residents and has done so for decades. But GW’s positive impact on the community can become overshadowed when student conduct negatively affects the quality of life of community residents. While a GW student, you are responsible for behaving in a courteous manner. You must comply with GW policy, District law, and community standards that demand your respect for the rights of others.

Rule of thumb:

If you weren’t allowed to do it on-campus, you shouldn’t do it off-campus either.

Off-Campus Students On-Campus

While on University premises, whether to attend class, a University function, visit a Residence Hall, or to take part in a student activity, the University-wide regulations and standards for student conduct are in effect. Disciplinary action can be taken against students who live off-campus for behavior on University premises.

If you have any questions regarding the “Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities” and the “Code of Student Conduct,” please contact the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities at (202) 994-6757 or by e-mail at rights@gwu.edu.

The complete **“Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities”** can be found on-line at <http://gwired.gwu.edu/rights>

Being a Good Neighbor

One of the challenges of living in a neighborhood community is making the transition from life in the residence hall to integration within a non-University or an off-campus neighborhood setting. Many behaviors that are acceptable in on-campus facilities are not acceptable in residential neighborhoods.

Here are a few suggestions on how to be a good neighbor and member of your community:

Say hello and get to know your neighbors.

Opening the lines of communication makes it easier to talk about issues before they become big problems.

Watch out for the safety of your community.

If you observe any suspicious behavior in your community, report it to the Metropolitan Police Department.

Understand and follow the local community and landlord rules.

You may find these guidelines in your lease or a supplemental set of rules and regulations.

Keep your noise and belongings within your own space.

Avoid talking on your mobile phone in community areas and leaving trash or personal items in the hallway.

Observe reasonable hours for noisy activities.

Check your lease/rental regulations and local regulations and respect any specified quiet hours.

Treat your neighbors' children with respect.

Watch your words and behavior around neighborhood children.

Take pride in your environment by keeping visible areas neat and tidy.

Keep your yard, balcony, or entrance neat, and place your garbage cans out at the appropriate time. See Page 19 for more information.

Understand that not everyone loves your pet like you do.

If your lease allows pets, be aware of the rules concerning where they can be when they are outside your apartment or house. Keep your pet on a leash and at all times be prepared to clean up after your pet. If your landlord doesn't allow pets, don't try to get away with it.

Don't let your right to party overshadow your responsibility to your neighbors.

Let them know ahead of time when the party will be happening so that they can prepare.

Be courteous to those neighbors around you and request the same of them.

Avoid creating unnecessary noise in your neighborhood.



Community Concern Line

Through the GW University Police Department (GWPD), GW maintains a 24-hour community concern hotline. If residents have a GW-related concern regarding violations of the law and/or city ordinances, they may call 202-994-6110 or 202-994-TIPS for anonymous calls.

If the violation takes place on GW property, GWPD will respond immediately and forward a report to the appropriate campus departments. If the concern involves non-GW property, GWPD will notify the Metropolitan Police Department and forward a report to the appropriate campus departments.

Safety at Home

Most students living off-campus rent apartments or group houses and as a consequence, live in group-living situations similar to residence hall life on-campus. As with residence hall living, two of the major concerns in off-campus housing are security breaches and life safety hazards. However, since off-campus residents are without GW University Police personnel and Center for Student Engagement staff, they must bear greater responsibility for their own safety. Off-campus residents must take extra caution to be aware of possible dangers.

Locks & Alarms

Security breaches can usually be prevented with the use of adequate door locks and window latches. Nevertheless, the best lock in the world cannot prevent entry of an unwanted person intent on theft or bodily harm if the lock is not used. All off-campus residents should make certain that they have adequate locks and latches and should be diligent in their use.

Additionally, several kinds of local door alarms are available commercially at reasonable cost. Such alarms can alert a resident to the entry of a thief or another unwanted person. The local emergency number to summon law enforcement officials and fire fighters should be posted on or near each telephone in the apartment or house.

Crime Watch

Locks, latches, and alarms can help prevent crimes, but they are not the only line of defense. Security awareness is also important. Many communities in the metropolitan area have developed successful “crime watch” groups. These groups depend on local inhabitants who report suspicious people or activities to the proper authorities. Many such groups post “crime watcher” signs to discourage potential intruders.

Sidewalks

For access by District of Columbia residents and tourists, and for various safety reasons, all sidewalks must be kept clear at all times. Each owner, tenant, or lessee is responsible for keeping the sidewalk areas clean and debris-free. This is particularly important during winter snowstorms as home/business owners are responsible for clearing the sidewalks and steps adjacent to their property. Failure to clear the sidewalk and steps adjacent to your property may result in ticketing. Be courteous to those individuals that may need help shoveling their sidewalks and steps, particularly the elderly.



Fire Precautions



Fire prevention is extremely important for off-campus residents. Monthly tests of fire alarm systems and routine checks and servicing of fire extinguishers are performed in campus residence halls, but such care is often neglected in apartment buildings and private residences. All residence halls have sprinkler systems while most apartment buildings and private houses have none. Check with the owner or building manager for information regarding the fire prevention system and evacuation plan in your building.

Potential fuel for fire can be limited in private homes by good housekeeping practices. All clothing, wood, and other combustibles should be stored away from sources of ignition such as open flames, matches, and heated objects. Cigarettes and matches are the major causes of fires, but in homes, stoves and candles are also high on the list of potential fire sources. Sparks from electric motors and defective electrical equipment also constitute sources of ignition. Play it safe with any potential ignition source.

Be certain that your living unit has a fire extinguisher mounted in a readily accessible place. If you have only one extinguisher, make certain that it is a multipurpose dry chemical type. If you have a kitchen, the extinguisher should be mounted near the kitchen entrance. Also, make certain that you have at least one functioning smoke alarm because smoke may be the first warning of a fire. Consider this: smoke kills more people than heat in building fires.

The Smoke Detector Act of 1978 (D.C. Law 2-81) and DC Code § 14-904 requires each owner or operator of a housing business to install working smoke detectors. Contact your landlord immediately if you believe your smoke detector is broken or defective.

What to ask your landlord

- Has an electrical installation safety check been done recently? When and by whom?
- Has an annual visual check of sockets, switches, and lamp holders been conducted?
- Is there a regular program of maintenance for all gas appliances, including heaters?
- Is the building regularly inspected by the local fire department or city?
- Has the city ever received safety complaints regarding this housing? If so, what was their nature and were they dealt with?

Toxic Substances

Regardless of the label, any product which may contain potentially harmful chemicals should be handled with the following precautions:

- Follow instructions.
- Do not overuse a product.
- Do not leave containers open.
- Seal the product container when you have finished with it.
- Clean up and dispose of contaminated cloths and rags, preferably in closed containers.
- Keep products in their original containers.
- Use volatile substances in well-ventilated areas only.
- Whenever necessary, wear protective gloves and clothing.
- Treat all insecticides with extreme caution.
- Keep products out of the reach of children and pets.

Personal Safety

Living in a city can offer residents tremendous opportunities and resources, but also provide some challenges regarding personal safety.

Just as in any city, residents of the District of Columbia should take precautions to ensure their safety in the District. Among other things, you should:

1. Always carry a form of personal identification with you.

This is particularly important in Washington, DC because of the amount of federal and local security that is utilized in the District.

2. Be wary of isolated spots—laundry rooms, underground garages, parking lots, offices after business hours. Walk with a friend, co-worker, or security guard, particularly at night.

3. Always keep jewelry and other valuables out of sight.

4. Keep a firm grip on your purse. Use a purse with a secure clasp, and keep the purse close to your body with a hand on the clasp.

5. Carry your wallet inside your coat or side pants pocket, never in your rear pants pocket.

6. Park your car in busy, lighted areas.

7. Always lock your car and take the key with you. Consider using an anti-theft device for your car.

8. Be aware of your surroundings when using the ATM machine. Look around before conducting a transaction. If you see anyone or anything suspicious, cancel your transaction and go to another ATM. If you must use an ATM after hours, make sure it's well-lit.

9. Wherever you are, stay alert and tuned in to your surroundings—on the street, in an office building or shopping mall, driving, waiting for a bus or subway.

10. Trust your instincts. If something or someone makes you uneasy, avoid the person or leave.

11. Know the neighborhoods where you live and work. Check out the locations of police and fire stations, public telephones, hospitals, and restaurants, or stores that are open late.

12. Never open your door to strangers. Offer to make an emergency call while someone waits outside. Check the identification of sales or service people before letting them in. Don't be embarrassed to phone for verification.

13. Know your neighbors, so you have someone to call or go to if you're uncomfortable or frightened.

14. If you come home and see a door or window open, or broken, don't go in. Call the police from a cell phone.



Emergency Preparedness

Living off-campus, it is important to know how to protect yourself in the event of an emergency, such as hurricane, flood, tornado, fire, explosion or terrorist act. Being prepared can reduce fear, anxiety, and losses that accompany disasters.

In case of a threatened or actual local emergencies, the Emergency Alert System will broadcast timely information and instructions. The primary radio stations (FM/AM) to listen to in the District of Columbia include the following:

- WTOP 103.5 FM
- WGMS 103.5 FM
- WKYS 93.9 FM
- WPGC 95.5 FM
- WMAL 630 AM
- WJZW 105.9 FM
- WHFS 99.1 FM

The information broadcasted will inform the public what actions are being taken by the District government in response to the emergency, and will also tell them what to do.

Alert DC - <http://alert.dc.gov/>

The Alert DC system provides updated emergency notifications to your e-mail, cell phone, pager, Blackberry or wireless PDA. Sign up for an account to receive alerts and emergency notifications.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency suggests every household have a disaster supply kit containing food, water and supplies for three days. This kit should be kept in a designated place and be ready in case you have to leave your home quickly. FEMA suggests you keep the following things in your disaster supply kit:

- Three-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Three-day supply of water - one gallon of water per person, per day.
- Portable, battery-powered radio or television and extra batteries.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- First aid kit and manual.
- Sanitation and hygiene items (moist towelettes and toilet paper).
- Matches and waterproof container.
- Whistle.

For information about the University's status check the Campus Advisories Web site at www.gwu.edu/~gwalert or Call the GW Recorded Information Line at (202) 994-5050.

- Extra clothing.
- Kitchen accessories and cooking utensils, including a can opener.
- Photocopies of credit and identification cards.
- Cash and coins.
- Special needs items, such as medications, eye glasses, and contact lens solutions.

Students should plan with their roommates and family in advance about how they will communicate in an emergency situation. It is also a good idea to familiarize yourself with the proper way to shut off your gas, electricity and water if you live in a house. You should also think about a plan for your pets should an emergency cause you to evacuate or be kept from your home. Always have 72 hours worth of their prescription medicines available. If possible they should have an additional 72 hours kept somewhere other than their residence in case the residence is the scene of the incident. If there is an incident it could take that long to have pharmacies open again to refill prescriptions.

The University has a comprehensive emergency plan, much of which can be found on their website at: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/upd>. The University has various systems in place for communicating information to all the offices, phones, and computers on campus. These methods of communication include network emails, faxes, voicemail messages, Web site updates at www.gwu.edu/~gwalert, GWPD vans equipped with Public Address systems, and a recorded information line that members of the University community can call (994-5050) to obtain the latest news.

GETTING AROUND THE DISTRICT

Metrorail

The Metrorail is a subway system that serves the metropolitan Washington area with over 80 stations located in Washington, Northern Virginia, and Southern Maryland, including the Foggy Bottom/George Washington University station on the corner of 23rd and I Streets, NW. The Metrorail system operates 7 days a week.

Fares depend on the time of day (rush hour), and distance of the trip. For more information about the Metrorail system, including fares, maps and timetables, and a trip planner visit the Metrorail website at: www.wmata.com

SmarTrip

SmarTrip is a permanent, rechargeable fare card. It's plastic—like a debit card—and is embedded with a computer chip that keeps track of the value on the card. Instead of inserting a fare card through the Metrorail fare gate slot, you touch the SmarTrip card to the circular target panels on top of or inside station fare gates. Likewise, you can tap the SmarTrip fare box on Metrobus to pay your fare with SmarTrip. Not only is this more convenient for frequent traveling, but by registering the card the value is protected even if the card is lost or stolen. For a \$5 fee to replace the card itself, SmarTrip will issue you a new card with the value on the card at the time you notify SmarTrip it was lost. For more information on the SmarTrip system or to purchase a card online, visit the SmarTrip website at: <http://www.wmata.com/>



Metrobus

The Metrobus system is a public bus system that also serves the metropolitan Washington area. For more information about the Metrobus system, including bus stops, maps, timetables and a trip planner, visit the Metro website at: www.wmata.com

DC Circulator

The Circulator is a quick, efficient, low-cost way to travel to popular DC locations. For \$1.00, the Circulator has the following routes:

Georgetown - Union Station

Woodley Park - Adams Morgan - McPherson Square Metro

Smithsonian - National Gallery of Art

Convention Center - SW Waterfront

Union Station - Navy Yard via Capitol Hill

visit the DC Circulator website at: www.dccirculator.com



Car Sharing

Although public transportation in the District is convenient and easy-to-use, there may be times when access to a car is necessary: if you need to pick your mother up at Dulles or you want to take a weekend trip. Car sharing is an economical and easy way to do this. Zipcar is a service in the area that offers car sharing options. It has multiple cars parked throughout the city near Metrorail stations and along Metrobus routes. Members can call or go online to reserve a specific car for a specific amount of time. Prices vary, but average between \$7.00 and \$13.00 per hour, which includes gas and insurance. For more information about car sharing or to become a member, visit the Zipcar website at: www.zipcar.com. Zipcar may offer a discounted membership rate for GW students at www.zipcar.com/gwu.

Cars and Parking

Most GW students choose the convenience of not having a car in the District of Columbia. By traveling to destinations on foot or by utilizing one of the nation's finest mass transportation systems (the Metro), not having a car is a very viable option for most GW students. With respect to Freshmen and Sophomores in particular, these students are prohibited from bringing vehicles and parking them in the Foggy Bottom/West End Area, other than in exceptional circumstances. However, if you choose to have a car in the city, pay particular attention to the following information:

Residential parking permits are issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) at 301 C Street, NW. For more information call (202) 727-5000.

Street Parking

Because Washington is a metropolitan area and traffic flow is often heavy, laws regarding parking on city streets and in residential neighborhoods are important to know and follow. Thousands of tourists and commuters swell the city's driving population each day, and adherence to various parking rules is extremely important. In the District of Columbia, parking laws are vigilantly enforced.

Residential Parking Permits

In an effort to allow a measure of public parking for residents of the District, over 3,500 blocks of neighborhood streets are designated for residential parking. These parking zones are clearly marked with red and white signs. The zone system limits parking to two hours only for motorists who do not live in that zone. DC residents who live on zoned streets must display a valid Residential Parking Permit (RPP) to park in their neighborhoods. The RPP is usually included on the vehicle's District registration sticker which is affixed to the windshield.

Meters

In most areas of the District, parking meter effective hours are from 7:00 am until 10:00pm, Monday through Saturday only. Vehicles displaying DC-issued handicap license plates or placards may park for double the amount of time indicated on the meter. All other vehicles, including those with out-of-state handicap plates or placards, must observe posted fees and time limits.



Vehicle Registration Reciprocity

For more information about obtaining a driver's license, registering a vehicle, obtaining a parking permit or paying a ticket at the Department of Motor Vehicles

District of Columbia:

301 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 727-5000

<http://www.dmv.washingtondc.gov>

Virginia:

4150 South Four Mile Run Dr.
Arlington, VA 22206*
1-866-DMVLINE
(1-866-368-5463)

<http://www.dmv.state.va.us>

*Locations in Alexandria & Franconia

Maryland:

15 Metropolitan Grove
Gaithersburg, MD 20878*
1-800-950-1MVA

<http://www.marylandmva.com/index.html>

*Multiple locations available

Temporary residents of the District of Columbia, including students with permanent homes located outside of the District, may qualify for a reciprocity parking permit that allows a vehicle to be parked in residential areas of the District while keeping the vehicle registered in its home state.

To obtain a reciprocity parking permit, you are required to bring all of the following documents to the Department of Motor Vehicles:

Valid out of state driver's license

Valid out of state vehicle registration information

Proof of DC residency (acceptable documents include water, gas, electric or cable bill; lease or rental agreement or unexpired Renter's Insurance policy)

Statement from registrar's office on the university's letterhead stating that you are a full time student.

Sticker fee

Reciprocity parking permits, however, are not available for students in Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) areas 2A and 2E and ANC 3D06 and 3D09 (Georgetown area). Students in these wards must get a DC driver's license and register their vehicles in the District in order to be able to park in those areas.

Parking Restrictions on Campus

Due to the limited number of parking spaces on the streets around campus and the availability of public transportation, students are generally discouraged from bringing vehicles to campus. If exceptional circumstances require students to bring a vehicle to campus, the vehicle should be parked in a University parking facility.

Student Commuter monthly parking is available to all students at the University. During the Fall and Spring Semesters, commuter students may park at Student Parking locations during the first two (2) weeks of classes without a semester parking permit. However, in order to pay student parking rates, pre-paid student tickets must be purchased to use as payment. Student tickets may be purchased at the TicketMaster in the Marvin Center.

Student Contract parking allows the student unlimited access to the University Parking Garage or the Marvin Center during the regular operating hours of the respective facility. No overnight parking is permitted. This monthly arrangement allows the student to pay in advance for a calendar monthly permit. Student Contract permits are valid for parking at the following locations only:

Ivory Tower - 616 23rd St. NW
(Student entrance is on Virginia Ave)

Marvin Center Garage - 800 21 St. NW
(Entrance is on H Street)

Check with the Parking Services Office for the current fee for a Student Contract permit. The month runs from the first calendar day to the last calendar day of the month. Renewals of a Student Contract permit can be purchased in the Parking Office during the last week of every month.

For more information about University Parking:
Parking Services Office
800 21st Street, NW, Marvin Center, Ground Floor
Washington DC 20052
202-994-7275
<http://www.gwu.edu/~parking/>

Please note: It is illegal for motorists to use a mobile phone or other electronic device while driving in the District of Columbia, unless the telephone or device is equipped with a hands-free accessory under the Distracted Driving Safety Act of 2004.

The 2012 - 2013 Guide to Living Off-Campus was written and produced by
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