



## Memorandum to Presidents

Date: January 11, 1990 Vol. 90 No. 1  
From: Office of Student Affairs and Special Programs  
Subject: Minimum Living Condition Standards for Residence Halls  
To: Presidents, State-operated Campuses

In accordance with Chapter 416 of the Laws of 1988, the State University Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 89-130 on June 21, 1989, to approve "State University's Minimum Living Condition Standards for University Residence Halls" and to authorize campus presidents to establish campus supplementary standards as well as Codes of Student Rights and Responsibilities in accordance with certain University-wide Guidelines established by the Chancellor or designee. The Board also directed that the campus presidents develop these standards and codes in consultation with campus councils.

### 1. The Standards

The five standards listed in Attachment A are minimum standards for the operation of on-campus residence halls. Each campus is expected to develop and issue supplemental standards, which meet these minimum standards and to submit them to the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Special Programs for review. Once approved these campus specific standards and the University-wide Minimum Living Standards will be published in student handbooks and similar publications and distributed to student residents. The standards will be implemented in the Fall of 1990 and the campus guidelines are due in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Special Programs by April 2, 1990.

The Guidelines (Attachment B) developed by the Committee on Minimum Living Condition Standards represent the expectations of the Board of Trustees for the implementation of the standards. Individual campuses may have different approaches to administering the standards, and the campus administration is expected to discuss the Guidelines with the College Council.

### 2. Campus Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of Student Residents

Chapter 416 of the Laws of 1988 also directed all campuses operating on-campus residence halls to adopt policies relating to the rights and responsibilities of the student residents. The Committee has provided Guidelines for development of this campus policy (Attachment C). The

campus policy to conform with this requirement is also due in the Vice Chancellor's Office on April 2, 1990. Again, these campus policies on the rights and responsibilities of student residents will be published in student handbooks and similar publications and distributed to student residents.

Questions regarding the implementation of these Standards and the Guidelines may be directed to Dr. J. Norman Hostetter, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or Dr. Marie Bush, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (518/443-5139).



Frank G. Poque

Attachment

cc: Chancellor Johnstone  
Executive Council  
Director of Residence Life  
Vice President for Student Affairs  
Dr. Hostetter  
Dr. Bush

Copies for information sent to:

Presidents, Community Colleges  
Deans, Statutory Colleges  
President Coll  
Vice President Nesheim

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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Office of the Chancellor



M E M O R A N D U M

June 21, 1989

To: The Board of Trustees

From: D. Bruce Johnstone

Subject: Adoption of Residence Hall Minimum Living  
Condition Standards and Authorization for  
Guidelines for Campus Standards and Policies  
on Student Rights and Responsibilities

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Resolved that, in accordance with the requirements of chapter 416 of the Laws of 1988, the State University of New York Minimum Living Condition Standards for University Residence Halls, dated June 21, 1989 (copy on file in the Office of the Secretary of the University), be, and hereby are, approved; and, be it further

Resolved that the president, or designee, of each State-operated campus operating residence halls be, and hereby is, authorized, in consultation with the campus council, to develop and issue supplemental campus minimum living condition standards consistent with the foregoing Standards and in accordance with guidelines adopted by the Chancellor, or designee; and, be it further

Resolved that the president, or designee, of each State-operated campus operating residence halls be, and hereby is, authorized, in consultation with the campus council, to develop campus policies on student rights and responsibilities in residence halls in accordance with guidelines adopted by the Chancellor, or designee; and, be it further

Resolved that the president, or designee, of each State-operated campus operating residence halls be, and hereby is, authorized and directed to assure that the State University of New York Minimum Living

Condition Standards for University Residence Halls, the supplemental campus minimum living condition standards and campus policies on student rights and responsibilities are published in student handbooks or other similar publications.

### Background

Legislation enacted into law in 1988 (Chapter 416 of the Laws of 1988) mandates that the State University of New York Board of Trustees develop "guidelines which establish minimum living condition standards to be maintained in dormitories or residence halls of the university." The legislation specifically states that the "standards shall provide that residence halls be maintained in a manner fit for human habitation."

In order to achieve compliance with this mandate, a Committee was established comprised of students, central staff and campus representatives. The Committee met on several occasions and has now concluded its deliberations.

The Committee recommended the adoption by the Board of five over-arching standards for minimum living conditions in University residence halls. The five University-wide standards are contained in Attachment A. The campus presidents, or designees, are further authorized, in consultation with the campus council, to supplement these standards. The Committee believed that it was important to permit each campus the opportunity and flexibility to supplement the University-wide standards to reflect local conditions and needs. The supplemental standards must be consistent with the University-wide standards and with guidelines adopted by the Chancellor or designee. The proposed guidelines of the Chancellor are set forth in Attachment B and require that such supplemental standards be submitted to the Chancellor for review for conformance with the University-wide standards.

As a part of the legislative requirements, this resolution also authorizes each campus president, or designee, in consultation with the campus council, to adopt policies on student rights and responsibilities in residence halls. These policies are to be developed in accordance with guidelines issued by the Chancellor, or designee. The proposed guidelines are set forth in Attachment C.

Finally, in compliance with the legislation publication of the University-wide standards, the supplemental campus standards and the campus policies on student rights and responsibilities in student handbooks and other similar publications is required in order to provide appropriate notice to affected individuals.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
Minimum Living Condition Standards  
for University Residence Halls

Adopted by the Board of Trustees  
June 21, 1989

- I. The residence halls shall be constructed and maintained to conform with all applicable safety codes and health standards.
- II. The campus maintenance plan shall provide for a regular schedule of cleaning and repair for all common areas in residence halls.
- III. The campus shall provide each student resident with adequate living space, furniture, and appropriate and sufficient heat, light and hot water.
- IV. The campus shall establish procedures for routine and emergency repairs to residence hall facilities.
- V. The campus shall establish procedures for redress for student residents in the event of the loss of services such as heat, light and hot water in residence halls for extended periods that are within the control of the campus.

**GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPLEMENTAL CAMPUS  
MINIMUM LIVING CONDITION STANDARDS  
FOR RESIDENCE HALLS**

Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of Chapter 416 of the Laws of 1988, the State University Board of Trustees has approved minimum living condition standards which, with the Guidelines provided herein, shall guide the president, or designee, of each State-operated campus in developing supplemental campus minimum living condition standards for on-campus residence halls operated by the campus (see Resolution 89-130, adopted June 21, 1989, copy attached). These supplemental campus minimum living condition standards will be submitted to the Chancellor or designee for review for conformance with the University-wide standards and these Guidelines. The Chancellor will make periodic reports to the Trustees. The minimum living condition standards shall be incorporated into student handbooks or other similar publications for distribution to student residents.

Board of Trustees' Standards

- I. The residence halls shall be constructed and maintained to conform with all applicable safety codes and health standards.
- II. The campus maintenance plan shall provide for a regular schedule of cleaning and repair for all common areas in residence halls.
- III. The campus shall provide each student resident with adequate living space, furniture, and appropriate and sufficient heat, light and hot water.
- IV. The campus shall establish procedures for routine and emergency repairs to residence hall facilities.
- V. The campus shall establish a procedure for redress for student residents in the event of a loss of services such as heat, light, and hot water in residence halls for extended periods that are within the control of the campus.

### Guidelines

The following guidelines have been developed to provide assistance to campuses in the development of supplemental campus minimum living condition standards consistent with these Board of Trustees' standards.

#### Standard I

The residence halls shall be constructed and maintained to conform with all applicable safety codes and health standards.

### Guidelines

1. All furnishings and equipment supplied by the University will meet applicable fire and safety code standards promulgated by the State of New York.
2. Each resident's sleeping room will have an operational smoke detector.
3. Student residents are required to adhere to all applicable safety codes and health standards in the use of private equipment and appliances (where permitted).
4. Access to residence hall living on each campus that operates residence halls will be provided for the differently abled in accordance with applicable codes and standards (e.g., section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973).
5. Inspection and assessment of the physical facility and its components (e.g., water, electricity, and heating systems), will be conducted annually by appropriate campus personnel. The report of this inspection should be distributed to appropriate campus personnel. A priority list (as viewed by appropriate campus personnel) of repairs/refurbishment should be part of this report, with recommended timetables for completion. Backlogs from earlier reports should be noted.

#### Standard II

The campus maintenance plan shall provide for a regular schedule of cleaning and repair for all common areas in residence halls.

Guidelines

1. A regular schedule for cleaning of common areas including lounges, hallways, bathrooms and areas used by all residents should be established. Copies of the schedule should be posted.
2. Every reasonable effort by the campus administration and student residents should be made to keep residence halls sanitary and vermin free, and all appliances provided by the University in working order or removed from service.
3. Campuses should have an established procedure, developed in conjunction with the Central Administration Offices of Finance and Business, Capital Facilities, and Student Affairs for declaring student rooms unlivable and for removing them from service until conditions are corrected.

**Standard III**

The campus shall provide each student resident with adequate living space, furniture, and appropriate and sufficient heat, light, and hot water.

Guidelines

1. The campus will provide each student resident with adequate living and lounge furniture. As a minimum, except in the case of tripling, each student resident will be provided with: a bed, adequate area illumination, chair, dresser/chest, desk/carrel unit, closet or wardrobe. All such equipment should be clean, sturdy, free from major scarring and of acceptable appearance.
2. Campuses should provide for a planned replacement or rehabilitation of residence hall furnishings.

**Standard IV**

The campus shall establish procedures for routine and emergency repairs to residence hall facilities.

Guidelines

1. Protocols will be established to address promptly inquiries, requests, and complaints regarding routine repairs and maintenance for the provision of heat, lights and hot water. The student resident should also be apprised periodically of the status of

his/her request. These protocols, along with appropriate telephone numbers should be provided in writing to each student resident. All repairs, especially those involving heat, light and hot water, should be accomplished within a reasonable amount of time.

2. To the extent possible, major rehabilitation or other capital projects should take place at times when students are not in occupancy of the residence halls. Major construction projects which are disruptive to ongoing programs should not continue during scheduled examination periods. If this is impossible, arrangements should be made to house residents elsewhere.

#### **Standard V**

The campus shall establish procedures for redress for student residents in the event of the loss of services such as heat, light, and hot water in residence halls for extended periods that are within the control of the campus.

#### **Guideline**

1. These procedures will include a plan for reassignment on campus if conditions continue for an unreasonable time which involve the loss of heat, light, or hot water or the creation of any other condition which is detrimental to the life, health or safety of the student residents.
2. If reassignment on campus is not possible, the procedures should also include a plan for the provision of alternate housing at no additional charge to student residents and/or refund of a portion of room rental charges where applicable.

**GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF  
CAMPUS POLICIES ON RIGHTS AND  
RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT RESIDENTS**

Introduction

In accordance with chapter 416 of the Laws of 1988, the State University Board of Trustees has directed that all campuses operating residence halls adopt policies relating to the rights and responsibilities of student residents (see Resolution 89-130, adopted June 21, 1989, copy attached). The Trustees also directed that such campus policies be published in student handbooks and other similar publications and distributed to student residents. Guidelines to assist campuses in establishing new policies or reviewing any existing policies or codes have been developed at the request of the Board of Trustees.

Guidelines

The following guidelines for development of campus policies on rights and responsibilities of student residents in the residence halls of State University of New York are intended to supplement those principles and policy statements already developed by each campus in consultation with students and with the assistance of its campus council.

1. In the development of campus policies on rights and responsibilities, the "1987 ACUHO-I Statement of Student's Rights and Responsibilities" adopted by the Association of College and University Housing Officers - International should be utilized as a model.
2. The residence hall license and other handbooks or publications which incorporate a statement of the campus minimum living condition standards and the campus policies relating to student resident rights and responsibilities should use words with common and everyday meanings and should be clear and coherent.
3. Campuses should make provisions for the enforcement of student resident rights and responsibilities.
4. Student residents shall not be subject to unreasonable searches and seizures by University officials. Examples of warrantless searches which are proper include those involving threats to health and safety and those which are conducted as inspections with advance notice to student residents. Fire alarm

systems should not be utilized for any purpose other than actual fires or fire drill procedures. Residence hall training programs should include instruction on the basic principles relating to unreasonable searches and seizures.

5. Inspection for residence hall damages which will be assessed to resident students should be conducted, when possible, before residents vacate the residence halls. At the time of their departure from the residence halls, student residents should be informed of the damages which have been identified as assessable to them. To the extent possible, at the time damages are identified, student residents should be given a standard repair summary which lists the typical costs for certain categories of damages. A campus appeals process should be instituted through which students may initiate complaints regarding damage assessments. Resident students who vacate residence halls without formal notification to campus officials are not entitled to these pre-departure inspection or identification procedures prior to the assessment of damages.
6. Student residents will be held accountable for damages to residence hall property (buildings, equipment and furnishings). Student residents have a responsibility to refrain from causing property damage through vandalism or other intentional or reckless misconduct. It is incumbent upon student residents to report to residence hall staff situations involving property damage due to vandalism, along with the names of those responsible, in a timely manner. Resident students and other students responsible for property damage will be billed for damages and may also be subject to discipline in accordance with campus procedures. All monies collected from students attributable to damages for which they are responsible should be applied, whenever possible, to the repair of that damage within one semester, or during the summer recess period. When the repair is delayed, the cause of the delay should be noted in physical plant reports.
7. Student residents should continue to be involved in campus committees that study or develop policies that impact directly on their living situation; e.g., program planning, budget review, codes of conduct, and residential life planning committees.