

# KING'S COLLEGE

WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA



What Every Parent  
Should Know About  
Off-Campus Housing

# What every parent should know about off-campus housing

At King's College, students may select from several living options during their experience as an undergraduate student. Students living in the local area may commute from the home of their parents or guardian or live in a college residence hall. Students who come to King's from outside of the immediate area live in college residence halls as first-year and sophomore students. Juniors and seniors may live on campus in the residence halls, live in college-operated apartment-style residences, or reside off campus in privately owned and operated apartments and houses.

About 300 juniors and seniors, or over 15 percent of the full-time population at King's, live in off-campus apartments or houses.

## May all students live off-campus?

No. First-year and sophomore students are required to live on campus in a residence hall or if their family lives in the immediate area, the student may commute from home. A commuter student is defined as a student who commutes to classes each day and who resides in the permanent home of their parents or legal guardian or in the home of a close relative (who is not a student). A commuter may not reside more than 45 driving miles from home to the campus.

Juniors and seniors may reside on campus. A junior or senior wishing to change from a resident or commuter student living in their parent's home to off campus, must complete an off-campus form at the Office of Residence Life. The office will check the student's class status and provide a letter informing the student their residence status has been changed to off-campus. Students must not sign a lease until

they receive the letter changing their residency status from the Office of Residence Life.

Students who fail to follow this policy will be billed for room and board. This policy applies to unmarried students under the age of 21 and includes transfer students.

## **Issues to be considered in finding off-campus housing**

**Location:** Most students who select off-campus housing choose to live within a three-block radius of King's. Many off-campus students walk to the campus and thus avoid parking problems when attending classes and college activities. Students should also consider the safety of the neighborhood.

**Landlord:** Of primary concern is the landlord's reputation. The best way to check on the landlord's performance is to talk with current or former residents. "Does the landlord keep the building and apartment well maintained?" "Are they responsive to maintenance requests from the tenants?" Some facilities in the area are not well maintained, and students have had considerable problems obtaining repairs. A poor landlord can make the experience of living off campus a negative one.

**Safety:** In addition to living in a safe neighborhood, you need to check for deadbolt locks on the doors and locks on the windows. All apartments should also have at least two smoke detectors. A building with an external access system provides a real safety advantage. Other factors that make a building safe are two exits from every apartment, fire escapes, and screens on windows.

**Apartment mates:** Poor apartment mates can make the experience of living off campus miserable. Help your son or daughter choose their apartment mates well. A friend does not always make the best apartment mate. Apartment mates need to discuss issues such

as cleaning, food sharing, cooking, study and sleeping hours, guests, parties, and alcohol use in the apartment.

**Lease:** A lease is a binding legal agreement among the occupants, the landlord, and co-signers. (Some landlords require a parent or guardian to co-sign the lease.) Make sure that your son or daughter understands the conditions of the lease, their responsibilities, and the landlord's obligations.

**Neighborhood environment:** Many areas near the College are quiet, traditional family neighborhoods with long-time residents and well-kept properties. These are typically the 200-400 blocks north of North Main Street and also include North Washington and Madison Streets. Students are discouraged from living here, but those who do must conform to the traditional residential environment.

## **Statement regarding off-campus behavior and responsibility**

Students at King's College are members of both the College community and the community of Wilkes-Barre. All members of the College community have an obligation to adhere to the policies and regulations of the College and the laws of the Commonwealth and local jurisdictions.

King's College holds students accountable to a higher standard of behavior than what is minimally expected by public law.

The College's policy is to hold students responsible for behavior off campus. The behavior of students, both positive and negative, reflects upon King's College through public officials, residents, and the media. The College will take disciplinary action on complaints received concerning off-campus student behavior from the police, neighbors, landlords, other students, faculty, staff, and the public. Students whose behavior off campus is contrary to public law and/or college regulations and policies will be subject to disciplinary sanctions.

All students need to be aware of the following:

- The College will discipline students for incidents that occur off campus.
- The decisions of the College and magistrate/ courts are independent and mutually exclusive.
- The College will discipline students in all cases where a citation or arrest takes place.
- The College will not delay issuing a decision in a case because of a pending case before the magistrate or courts.
- **Arrest or citations:** If a citation is issued at an off-campus house owned, rented, or leased by King's College students, the tenants of the dwelling will be suspended from the College for no less than one full semester. The tenants, whether present or not at the time of the incident when the citation is issued, are responsible for behavior that takes place at their dwelling. Students who are not tenants of the dwelling who are issued a citation will receive a sanction of not less than disciplinary probation for one semester, notification of parent/guardian, and a \$100 fine. Student conduct cases that are referred, as a result of off-campus incidents or citations, will be heard through the informal disciplinary process or by administrative hearing of the College Judicial Process.
- **Nuisance housing:** Any off-campus dwelling deemed a nuisance, which is defined as two or more complaints by the police or neighbors, will result in the student being required to move from the dwelling. If they do not move, the student cannot remain enrolled at the College. All costs incurred by the student are their responsibility.
- **Street and traffic signs:** Students on and off campus are not permitted to possess any street, traffic, or construction signs. Students who violate this policy will be referred to the local authorities for disciplinary action.
- **Students held at police station:** The College will not pick students up from the

police station if they are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, or if they are acting disorderly. Students will need to contact an appropriate person as determined by the police to sign them out. Students who do not find a person to sign them out will be detained until a time determined by the police.

- **Contact information:** Off-campus students are required to provide their name, those of their roommates, off-campus address and telephone number, and their landlord's name and telephone number to the College by August 15 and December 15. Students who fail to provide this information will be fined \$75 and a hold will be placed on their registration and records, including their semester class schedule.
- **Parking:** In many neighborhoods of the city, there is permit parking for property owners. Often renters are not eligible to obtain permits for on-street parking. Students who violate the permit parking or meter laws should expect to be ticketed and towed.
- **Trash:** Apartments and houses which have city trash service (applies to all apartments except larger apartment units where the landlord may provide dumpsters), are required to use the blue city garbage bags that must be purchased at local stores. Other garbage bags will not be accepted, and violators will be fined by the city.

## **Off-campus residents' responsibility**

Students living off campus are responsible for the behavior that occurs in their apartment or house by themselves, guests, or visitors. If a complaint is received by the College and the individual cannot be identified, all residents of the dwelling will be held accountable and will be issued disciplinary sanctions. Such behaviors for which the resident will be held responsible

are, for example, dropping items or liquids from windows, shouting obscenities or abusive language from a dwelling, underage consumption or possession of alcohol, excessive noise, discharging of fireworks, or causing a fire hazard.

## **College services for off-campus students**

**Meal Plans:** The College offers meal plans from which off-campus students may choose. The plans vary from offering all meals to selecting any five breakfasts or lunches per week. About 40 percent of our off-campus students enroll in a meal plan. Information about specific meal plans is available by calling the Office of Residence Life in the Sheehy-Farmer Campus Center at (570) 208-5856.

**The Student Health Center:** Off-campus students may use the College's health center on a per-visit fee basis. Contact the Student Health Center at (570) 208-5852.

## **In summary**

King's provides housing for students both in traditional residence halls and in college-operated apartments. Students may not live off campus until they earn junior class status (60 credit hours or more).

We recommend that students and their parents/guardians discuss the decision to live off campus. If your son or daughter chooses to live off campus, we recommend that parents/guardians be involved in the selection of the apartment.

The College expects students to live responsibly off campus or face the consequences.

King's College cannot intervene on a student's behalf in problems with landlords or legal authorities. Students must be prepared to address positive and negative aspects of living off campus.

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WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA 18711

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS



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