

University Policy: Good Neighbor Guidelines

Policy Category: Student

Subject: Neighborhood Relationship

Office(s) Responsible for Review of this Policy: Office of Campus Life

Supplemental Documents: Not Applicable

Related University Policies: Good Neighbor Parking Policy; Student Conduct Code

I. SCOPE

This policy sets standards for good neighbor relations.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

American University expects members of the AU community - students, faculty and staff - to conduct themselves in a manner that fosters and ensures a continued positive relationship with the University's neighbors. As members of the AU community, the behaviors of students living in the community or commuting to classes reflects directly on the university. The purpose of the policy is to summarize the university's expectations with regard to off-campus behavior and to educate AU community members on how to be active and responsible members of the surrounding community in which they live while maintaining their involvement and connection to the university.

III. POLICY

As members of a community, we all have a responsibility to our city and neighborhood. It is important to foster good relations with one another in order to maintain and enhance the quality of life, safety, and desirability of the neighborhood we share. The Student Conduct Code applies to both on-campus and off-campus behavior as defined in the Student Conduct Code. To help maintain good relations with your neighbors, keep the following in mind.

You are part of a community beyond the AU campus, and your actions affect your neighbors. While you may view your residency as temporary, be considerate of the fact that your neighbors have chosen their homes as their primary residence. Introduce yourselves when you move in and as a courtesy, notify your neighbors if you plan to have a gathering or party.

Remember that the District and the surrounding jurisdictions have strict regulations regarding noise levels and the consumption of alcohol. Also, learn and abide by your local jurisdiction's regulations regarding the upkeep of your front and back yards, trash disposal, and snow removal. Overall, it is your responsibility to know, understand, and abide by these laws and comply with them. A citation by the police for a violation of one of these laws is not a prerequisite for a finding of a violation of the Student Conduct Code. The following are summaries of some federal and District of Columbia ordinances and laws that you should be especially familiar with:

- **DC Code Section 22-1321(d) (Disorderly Conduct):** It is unlawful for a person to make an unreasonably loud noise between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. that is likely to annoy or disturb one or more other persons in their residences.
- **DCMR Section 20-2701 (Noise Control):** No person shall cause, suffer, or permit any sound that emanates from an operation, activity, or noise source under his or her control to exceed the maximum permissible sound level of 60 dBA during daylight hours and 55 dBA after dark in a residential zone.
- **DC Code Section 25-1001 (Consumption of Alcohol):** No person in the District shall drink an alcoholic beverage or possess in an open container an alcoholic beverage in or upon any of the following places: (1) a street, alley, park or sidewalk or parking area; (2) a vehicle in or upon any street, alley, park, or parking area.... No person, whether in or on public or private property, shall be intoxicated and endanger the safety of himself, herself, or any other person or property.
- **DC Code Section 48-911.01. (Consumption of Marijuana):** Notwithstanding any other District law, it is unlawful for any person to smoke or otherwise consume marijuana in or upon a public space, or in or upon any of the following places: (1) A street, alley, park, sidewalk, or parking area; (2) A vehicle in or upon any street, alley, park, or parking area; or (3) Any place to which the public is invited.
- **21 U.S.C 844(a) Penalties for Simple Possession (Controlled Substances):** It shall be unlawful for any person knowingly or intentionally to possess a controlled substance unless such substance was obtained directly, or pursuant to a valid prescription or order, from a practitioner, while acting in the course of his professional practice, or except as otherwise authorized by this subchapter or subchapter II.
- **DCMR Section 24-1700 (Winter Sidewalk Safety):** Each owner of a commercial or residential building or property in the District shall remove snow and ice from any paved sidewalks, curb cuts, and curb ramps abutting the building or property within eight (8) hours of daylight after the snow or other precipitation has ceased falling, regardless of the source of the accumulation. The owner may delegate this responsibility to a tenant, occupant, lessee, or other individual (referred to in this chapter as a "delegee") by written agreement.
- **DCMR Section 12-G302.4 (Weeds):** All premises and exterior property shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of 8 inches (203 mm). All noxious weeds shall be prohibited. Weeds shall be defined as all grasses, annual plants and vegetation other than trees or shrubs; provided, however, that this term shall not include cultivated flowers and gardens.

In addition, it is a student's responsibility to know, understand, and abide by the Student Conduct Code. Specifically, the university may take disciplinary action for off-campus infractions of the Student Conduct Code when a student's behavior threatens or endangers the safety and well-being of the campus community; when a student is the subject of a violation of local, state, or federal law; or when, in the judgment of university officials, a student's alleged misconduct has a direct detrimental impact on the university's functions and operations, pursuit of its mission, or on the wellbeing of its community neighbors.

Help foster a sense of community in your neighborhood by involving yourself in neighborhood events such as meetings, crime watch prevention groups, and opportunities for community service.

A student may be subject to discipline for violations of this Policy adjudicated by the disciplinary procedures specified in the Student Conduct Code.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE(S)

This Policy is effective October 2010. This Policy was review and revised on February 2015 and May 26, 2020.