

ROOMMATE AGREEMENT INFORMATION
St. Mary's College of Maryland
Office of Residence Life

Part of the experience of living on-campus is living with a roommate. Many students expect that they will be lifelong friends with their college roommate(s). Although this is true for many students, it is not always the case. Many students coming to college have never had to share a bedroom with a sibling or a bathroom with more than a couple of people. Roommates do not have to be best friends to live together, but they do have to share a relatively small living space. Learning how to effectively share a living space with another person will aid in the development of many skills that you will use later in life.

The Office of Residence Life has developed a tool to help you and your roommate get to know each other, communicate your expectations of living together, and set some ground rules for the use of your shared space. This tool is the Roommate Agreement. The issues listed are common cause of roommate disagreements. We feel strongly that completing this Agreement will help start the roommate relationship in a positive way. Once you have completed your Agreement, the original will be maintained in the staff office, and a copy will be given to you and kept in your student file. The RA or RHC will refer back to this Agreement if and when conflict arises. This Agreement should be used as a starting point for discussion among the roommates. Changes can and should be made during the course of the year.

Please take some time to review the contract, consider your responses, and discuss these issues openly and honestly with your roommate(s).

What If the Roommate Agreement Does Not Work?

1. It is important that all efforts to resolve a roommate conflict be exhausted between the roommates before a room change request is made. This usually involves sitting down together to discuss differences reasonably and assertively (but not aggressively), to attempt to resolve the conflict or negotiate a settlement that the roommates can live with.
2. If roommates are unable to resolve the problem themselves, one or more should contact the RA or RHC. The staff have been trained to mediate roommate conflicts. The staff will meet with each roommate separately and then together. During this time, the RA/RHC will act as a mediator, trying to facilitate a greater sense of cooperation and communication so that the dispute may be resolved.
3. If a roommate violates a section of the Agreement, one or more of the roommates may wish to return to the RA/RHC for further mediation.
4. If a roommate is still miserable with the situation, he/she should see the Assistant Director of Residence Life. The Assistant Director may then ask one or more of the roommates and the RA/RHC to discuss the situation. Again, the staff will attempt to effect reconciliation through mediation.
5. The Office of Residence Life may approve or initiate a room change, contingent upon available space or the ability to swap rooms with other students if irreconcilable differences exist. Depending on the severity of the conflict, either one or more of the roommates may be instructed to change rooms.
6. The resident moving out of the room is responsible for locating a new, acceptable room/roommate. The Office of Residence Life will offer some assistance by giving out the names of students who are interested in switching rooms or who have a vacancy in their room. The resident moving out must fill out and submit the Room Change Request Form (available at www.smcm.edu/residencelife). The room change request must be approved prior to the student moving out.

Acknowledgements/Sources:

Campbell University (http://www.campbell.edu/sl/campus_life/roommatecontract.pdf)

George Mason University (<http://housing.gmu/policies/guide0405.pdf>)

Western Maryland College (McDaniel College)

Villanova University (http://reslife.villanova.edu/housing/roommie_contract.htm)