

3359-60-04.5 Freshman residential requirement.

(A) Purpose.

The university of Akron seeks to provide a learning environment supportive of its academic mission and complimentary to its academic programs. The university acknowledges national studies that find first-year freshman students uniquely benefit from a residence hall experience. Social integration, access to faculty, staff, and institutional resources are better achieved through an on-campus experience, which positively influences academic persistence and success. Further, the university considered and accepted findings that living on campus facilitates integration into the campus social network of peers and extracurricular activities, all of which positively affects degree completion.

(B) Freshman residential requirement.

Subject to available space and except as otherwise exempted below, freshman students at the university of Akron are required to reside in university residence halls for the duration of their freshman academic year at the university.

(C) Rule Compliance.

Except as provided in this rule, upon being admitted and paying the intent to enroll fee, freshman students are required to submit a housing application and contract in order to be assigned to residence in university housing. Except for those entitled to an exemption as provided in this rule, any freshman student who fails to reside in university housing, may be subject to immediate administrative withdrawal by the university or assessment of residence hall fees for the semester(s) that the student failed to reside in university housing as required by this rule. The director of residence life and housing, upon finding that any such freshman student, during the freshman year, failed to reside in university housing, shall notify the university registrar of such fact. The university registrar, upon receipt of such notice and upon approval of the chief student affairs officer, shall execute rule compliance as outlined herein.

(D) Exemption from freshman residential requirement.

Freshman students are subject to exemption from the freshman residential requirement, based upon the following general categories: automatic exemption without filing an exemption petition, automatic exemption requiring filing an exemption petition, and eligibility for exemption requiring filing an exemption petition. The latter category is not automatic and the university will carefully consider the exemption petition on a case by case basis.

(1) Conditions which automatically exempt a student from freshman residential

requirement without filing an exemption petition.

The university will determine, from the information supplied by the student in the normal course of applying and registering for courses, if a student qualifies for an exemption from the freshman residential requirement. Filing an exemption petition will not be required if:

- (a) Permanent home residence of parents or legal guardians who reside in: medina, portage, stark, summit, wayne counties;
 - (b) Registered for fewer than six credit hours (as verified on fourteenth day of instruction);
 - (c) Twenty-one plus years of age on the first day of the term for which the student has been admitted.
- (2) Conditions which automatically exempt a student from freshman residential requirement which require filing an exemption petition.

The student must file an exemption petition and provide documentation for an exemption based on the following:

- (a) Active duty military experience (one plus years: DD-214 discharge documentation required);
 - (b) Marriage (submit copy of the marriage certificate);
 - (c) Student is single parent with custodial care responsibilities (submit copy of the most recent tax return showing the child is claimed as a dependent or a copy of the medical eligibility card for student and dependent child);
 - (d) Permanent home residence of parents or legal guardians who reside outside medina, portage, stark, summit, or wayne counties and such residence is twenty-five miles or fewer from main campus ("302 E. Buchtel Ave., Akron, OH 44325").
- (3) Conditions which may, in the discretion of the university, exempt a student from freshman residential requirement which require filing an exemption petition.

The student must file an exemption petition and provide documentation for an exemption based on the following:

- (a) Medical condition (written statement is required from student's non-university attending physician/licensed mental health practitioner which outlines the reason why living in a residence hall is detrimental to the student's health);
- (b) Disability (similar documentation as required for medical condition);

- (c) Other extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to special dietary needs or conditions, cultural or religious needs or accommodations, undue hardship, or any other such circumstance or circumstances in support of an exemption, which, if not granted, would undermine or contravene the purpose of the freshman residential requirement.

(E) Exemption petition procedure.

- (1) A link to the freshmen residential exemption petition is available on the university's web page;
- (2) Exemption petitions and documentation must be submitted at least thirty days prior to the initial semester of enrollment. Failure, by the deadline, to submit the freshman residential exemption petition and any/all supporting documentation required, will nullify the petition request;
- (3) Students admitted to the university (fall or spring term) within thirty days of the first day of instruction and who seek exemption from the freshman residential requirement, must submit the exemption petition as soon as possible after admission notification, but no later than the fourteenth day of instruction;
- (4) Upon completion by the student, the petition and supporting documentation is submitted to the department of residence life and housing for processing;
- (5) Completed exemption petitions and documentation will be reviewed by the department of residence life and housing. Consultation with financial aid, dining services, office of accessibility, and student health services will be made as appropriate;
- (6) Exemption petition submittals with insufficient, inaccurate, or incomplete documentation will be returned to the student for completion. University evaluation will be held in abeyance until appropriate documentation is received;
- (7) The student will be notified of the decision in writing via the student's university email address.

(F) Appeal procedure.

Any student who disagrees with a decision about eligibility for exemption from this requirement, an administrative withdrawal under this policy, assessment of any charges or fees for violating this policy, or any other decision made under this policy may appeal such decision. The student must first contact the director of residence life and housing, or designee, and request clarification or reconsideration of the decision. Should the student continue to disagree with such decision, the student may thereafter appeal, in turn, to the chief student affairs officer, and, lastly, the senior vice president and provost.

(G) Availability of housing.

This policy is subject to the availability of university housing, as determined by the university. Accordingly, the university reserves the right, at any time without any requirement for prior notice, to suspend or cancel applicability of this policy to any or all freshman students under such terms as the university deems reasonable and necessary.

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