

Roommate Agreement

Welcome to Nipissing University Residence: Your NU Home! The key to successfully navigating roommate relationships is good communication and compromise. The purpose of this Roommate Agreement is to facilitate communication between roommates and mutually establish guidelines for living together.

Where to start: Speaking up for yourself and your needs is an important part of being in a relationship with others, especially in shared living accommodations. Voicing your expectations before issues arise can develop stronger relationships, communication skills and boundary setting abilities. What do you expect the year ahead to look like? What is important to you when living with others? What makes a good roommate? What are your likes, dislikes, needs and habits in a living arrangement? Recognize that your expectations will differ from your roommates, and that’s okay! For a strong roommate agreement, it is recommended that you and your roommates develop thorough and descriptive answers to all the questions in this agreement.

Creating your Roommate Agreement:

You are asked to spend quality time discussing each section, being as straightforward and honest with your opinions as possible. You will find this discussion most useful if you are completely honest about your needs and habits and you are willing to compromise. This is the beginning of an on-going conversation with your roommates to ensure everyone’s needs are being met, and “wants” are being considered.

Health, Wellness and Your Roommate Agreement:

Residence is a communal living environment and as such, the health of each student can impact community wellness. It is important that you and your roommates *always* keep your health and safety and that of others in mind. It is essential that you and your roommates discuss boundaries associated with your suite's health and safety.

Your Voice is Powerful!

Allowing others, including parents and/or friends, to advocate for you in a conflict does not mean the conflict will be resolved. **You are your own best advocate!** The best way to resolve any conflict is by speaking face-to-face. Notes on white boards, social media tools, texts, or through parents and friends are often misconstrued and can cause conflicts to escalate. Tone cannot be interpreted through text. For tips on conflict resolution, reach out to your Residence Don or Community Assistant.

Suite / House Number: _____ **Complex (circle one):** CH FH GH TRC

Roommate Names:

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Communication

Communicating openly and honestly is an essential part of living cooperatively with others. Keeping in mind each person's physical and mental health and wellness, communicating with your roommates may look different during times of illness. You and your roommates are encouraged to develop thorough and well-thought-out responses to these questions as they will lay the foundation for a strong roommate relationship and positive suite dynamic.

How do we want to communicate on a day-to-day basis? (Face-to-face, group chats, video calls, DMs, Facebook Messenger, phone calls). Does your preference of communication change if a roommate needs to isolate due to illness?

What communication method will you use should a conflict and/or issue arise? It is strongly recommended that you communicate any and all issues face-to-face (Face-to-face, texting, etc.). Please also reflect on how you react during conflicts (becoming quiet, defensive, needing time).

Behaviour / Habits

Roommates who make attempts to understand and accommodate each other's differences can help build positive roommate relationships. Keep in mind that some roommates have individual health and safety concerns that should be heard.

Do you have any particular likes or dislikes your roommates should know about? (Loud music, food preparation and/or allergies, scent sensitivity, social activities, swearing/inappropriate language, any pet peeves, etc.).

What are some habits you think your roommates should know about? (Showers/baths, napping, musical instruments, loud talker, sleep walking, cleanliness, etc.).

What concerns do you have about the habits listed above in relation to general health and safety? What can you do as roommates to address these concerns?

Food, Shopping & Personal vs. Shared Items

How will we share cupboard, fridge, and freezer space? Will you label what belongs to you?

Will we be sharing food/groceries? (Items to consider: butter, milk, eggs, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, Tupperware, etc.) If we are not sharing certain items, how will you ensure that your roommates know that they belong to you? (Labelling, keeping them in your bedroom, etc.)

How will we split costs if we are grocery shopping for shared items? (*Buying on a rotational schedule, splitting costs equally, sending money to the purchaser of the items*). How will we make sure that grocery shopping responsibilities for shared items are shared equally by all roommates?

How do you feel about lending personal items? (Clothing, musical instruments, video games, makeup, etc.)? How will we ask to borrow items? Will guests be allowed to borrow any items? What items are completely off limits?

What items can be shared in the common spaces? (microwave, toaster, coffee makers, television and video gaming consoles, musical instruments, etc.) Common spaces include: living room and loft, bathroom(s), kitchen, storage room(s) and connective hallways.

Guests

Guests Include: Any individuals who do not live in your suite/house, any individuals residing in another Nipissing University Residence complex, and any individuals who do not live in any of our residence communities (*family members, guardians, significant others, friends not living on campus*). Refer to page 29 of the Residence Community Living Standards (RCLS) for more specific information.

It is important that all residents are up to date on Nipissing University's Residence Guest Policy, which is subject to change at any time.

How far in advance should you know that a guest or guests are visiting? Check the box that **all** roommates have agreed upon.

- ____ hour(s) before the guest(s) arrive.
 ____ week(s) before the guest(s) arrive.
- ____ day(s) before the guest(s) arrive.
 Other (explain): _____

Does your above-listed choice change based on your relationship to the guest(s)? (Partners, friends known vs not known by all roommates, family members) If yes, explain how this will affect the time frame for alerting your roommates to a guest visit. *We will refer to the communication section of our Roommate Agreement to address issues related to "guests".*

How long can a guest stay? Check the box that **ALL** roommates agree on. Please note that guests are not permitted to stay for more than 2 nights in a row, and they are not permitted to stay for more than 6 nights in one month. Additionally, guests are not permitted to stay overnight during Orientation Week and during any exam period (RCLS page 29).

- ____ hour(s)
 1 night overnight
- 2 nights overnight
 Other (Explain – Within RCLS standards)

Does the duration of the stay of a guest vary depend on the relationship of the guest to the host (parent / guardian, sibling, significant other, friends). *We will refer to the communication section of our Roommate Agreement to address issues related to "guests".*

When will we not host guests? (*This includes not hosting overnight guests during Orientation Week and December/April Exam Periods*).

What do we define as an issues with a guest(s)? (*Noise level, frequency of visits, undesired behaviours*). How will we address issues with guests? Expectations about guest behaviour should be communicated prior to the guest arriving so they can be held to those expectations. Will we speak to them directly about their behaviour? ask them to leave? call the Don on Duty? call security? *We will refer to the communication section of our Roommate Agreement to address issues related to "guests".*

Noise & Sleep

How late is too late for excessive noise? (resulting from partying, screaming, etc.) For references, residence quiet hours are 11PM to 10AM Sunday through Thursday, and 1AM to 10AM on Fridays and Saturdays (RLCS Page 26). *We will refer to the communication section of our Roommate Agreement to address issues related to noise and sleep.*

What time do you like to sleep? (*weekend vs weekday, napping vs. sleeping*). When do you like to sleep in? Are you a night owl or an early bird? How much or how little noise do you prefer when you are sleeping?

Study Habits

What are your preferred places to study / do schoolwork within the suite? What time(s) do you like to study / do schoolwork? (Common areas vs bedroom, early morning vs late at night). *We will refer to the communication section of our Roommate Agreement to address issues related to study habits.*

What is your preferred noise level for studying/doing schoolwork? Does this change based on your location in the suite, time of day, or day of the week?

How will we communicate with each other if a roommate has an online lecture/lab/seminar, is writing an online exam/midterm or need the time and space to study / do schoolwork? (*Posting class schedules somewhere prominent, creating a roommate calendar together, creating a 'do not disturb' sign*). *We will refer to the communication section of our Roommate Agreement to address issues related to study habits.*

Parties

Residents are expected to respect and follow residence standards regarding hosting and attending parties in residence. Specific residence standards with regard to parties and partying (guests, alcohol and cannabis policies, noise, etc.) can be found in the RCLS.

What constitutes a "party" vs "hanging out" vs "having friends over" (Number of people, environment, noise level, activities involved). We will refer to the communication section of our Roommate Agreement to address issues related to partying.

Will we host parties? If so, how often do we want to host parties (Expectations around behaviour at parties, what are you comfortable with? How do we communicate or enforce these expectations with your guest(s)?)

Alcohol & Cannabis

*This section of the Roommate Agreement pertains to residents who are 19 years of age or older. Residents who are 19+ may consume alcohol responsibly within a residence suite / house and bedroom space. Residents may **NOT** consume alcohol in common spaces of a residence complex such as residence lounges / studies or hallways. Specific standards related to alcohol in residence can be found on page 23 of the RCLS.*

Cannabis has become a more common substance in residence, therefore it would be beneficial to discuss items relating to cannabis in your suite, provided that these expectations are following Nipissing University's campus policy (RCLS page 24). (Should you smoke cannabis, how will you "air out" your clothing before coming back to campus as cannabis cannot be consumed on campus, comfortability around cannabis and those under the influence of cannabis). Be sure to clearly communicate your expectations and boundaries with cannabis to achieve greater mutual respect in your suite.

How regularly are we comfortable with alcohol being consumed in a social setting? (Weekends, Thursday to Sunday). We will refer to the communication section of our Roommate Agreement to address issues related to alcohol, cannabis and drugs.

Do you have any concerns abouts guests consuming alcohol in your suite / house? What will you do to address these concerns and how will you communicate our expectations?

Safety & Security

Every resident has the right to feel safe and secure in residence, and the responsibility to ensure that their actions do not detract from their own safety and security or that of the residence community.

When will we be locking our suite / house door? (*Residents must bring their keys with them when leaving their suite / house / complex to avoid being "locked out"*). Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> When all of us are home | <input type="checkbox"/> When none of us are home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Every time we leave the house / suite | <input type="checkbox"/> When other roommates are home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Explain): _____ | |

Cleanliness & Cleaning Responsibilities

Roommates must decide how to equitably share cleaning responsibilities in all shared spaces. Roommates are encouraged to sanitize shared spaces weekly (Use the cleaning guides provided to you in the bathroom, living room and kitchen to generate tasks).

Residents should sanitize their shared spaces weekly. How will we divide these shared sanitizing responsibilities.

How often will we do our dishes? Are we responsible for doing our own dishes? Are dishes allowed to stay in the sink or drying rack? If so, how long? (Personal dish bins, keeping dishes in your room until you can wash them, having one set of dishes per student. Keep in mind general health and safety considerations when developing these expectations).

How will we share the responsibility of taking out the garbage and recycling in our shared spaces? (*Garbage should be removed following sanitization to ensure the space remains clean*).

What concerns do you have about shared cleaning tasks in regards to general health and safety. How will you address these concerns as roommates? Are there any additional agreements that you would like to make as roommates in regards to the shared, above-listed cleaning tasks?

Bathrooms

How will we divide bathroom cleaning tasks? Bathrooms should be sanitized weekly (*Follow the instructions on the bathroom cleaning poster*).

What time of day do you prefer to bathe / shower? Will we use a shower schedule?

Additional Expectations

Are there any other living expectations that were not discussed in the Roommate Agreement that are important to you or your roommate group?

Commitment to Open Communication and Conflict Resolution

We understand that we may negotiate and/or review this agreement at any time during the year either on our own as a roommate group, or by contacting our Residence Don. We understand that we should review our Roommate Agreement when necessary, and report any changes to our Residence Don. By signing our Roommate Agreement, we are agreeing that we have discussed every item openly and honestly, that we agree to the terms and values that have been included, and will do our best to communicate and learn from each other as roommates.

You have completed your Roommate Agreement! All that's left to do is sign together as roommates and give your agreement to your Residence Don.

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Date: _____

Residence Don Signature: _____