

Hello, and welcome to Residential Life at UMBC! My name is John Fox, and I have the pleasure of serving as your Director.

The mission of Residential Life is to provide facilities, services, and programs that support the academic mission of UMBC and enhance the quality of life for students that live on campus. We foster the personal, social, academic, and leadership development of residential students and prepares them to be active and responsible citizens within the community and beyond.

Our vision to co-create exceptional and innovative living-learning environments with our campus community.

This semester looks different for all of us, but we remain committed to innovative community building even in face of the COVID-19 pandemic. If you've lived with us before, know that this semester will look different than past years you've been here. If you're brand new to Residential Life, know that this semester is far from typical, but we're looking forward to working with you to create community. Expect campus to look different. Our residential facilities are open at roughly half capacity, most classes are fully online, and many student services will be provided virtually. The campus will be quieter than usual, but we're still here to support you.

This is certainly an unprecedented semester, so while we've made this video to give you some information, please remember that things may change. Be sure to regularly check your UMBC email, and know that up-to-date information is always available on the Residential Life website.

Residential Life is made up of a group of full-time professional staff members, graduate assistants, and many student staff members who specialize in a variety of functional areas to keep our communities running smoothly. In line with state guidance, many of our staff members who can work from home will be doing so, but our central office can still be reached at 410-455-2951 and contact information for all our professional staff members can be found in our directory.

A number of staff members will continue to work on campus to best serve our students. This includes our community directors, student staff -- including our resident assistants and desk receptionists -- and our facilities staff that includes maintenance assistants, tradespeople, and housekeeping staff.

Community directors -- or CDs -- are full-time live-in professional staff members who serve in each of our residential communities. CDs supervise the RA staff of each community, but also serve as a resource and point of connection between each community, Residential Life leadership, and other resources on campus. If you have a question or concern your RA can't directly help with or refer to a campus resource, they'll probably pass it up to your CD. CDs also serve as conduct hearing officers in the community.

Resident assistants -- or RAs -- are student staff members who serve as a resource, community builder, role model, guide, or just someone to talk to. Particularly in this unprecedented time, RAs are here to make sure you feel a part of your community and connected to our campus! RAs also enforce policies and document policy violations in the community when necessary. There is an RA on duty every night and 24 hours a day on the weekends. To get in touch with the RA on duty, you can call the desk of your community who will route your concern to the RA.

Our community desks are staffed by a team of desk receptionists 24 hours a day, so there is always someone who can assist you. The DRs help keep our halls secure and also can serve as an easy point of contact with Residential Life at any time. If you need to speak to a staff member but can't find your RA, you can always call the front desk of your community who can get you in touch with a student staff member or professional staff member.

Historically, the desks have been used as hubs to sign guests in and out and check out cleaning supplies and games. However, these practices have been suspended for the semester due to COVID-19. Like in past years, the desks will still serve as a hub for mail and package delivery, and you are required to show your ID confirming you live in the building as you pass by the desk. The desk can also assist you if you find yourself locked out of your room.

Our facilities staff works within our communities to keep them up and running. This includes our maintenance assistants, residential students who handle simple facilities issues, and fulltime tradespeople and housekeeping staff who maintain and upkeep the buildings. This semester, in particular, our housekeeping staff will be working hard to keep common areas sanitized in keeping with health and safety protocols.

If you encounter a non-urgent facilities issue in your space -- like a light that went out or a slowly dripping faucet -- you can submit a FXIT request at fxit.umbc.edu. If you encounter any urgent issues or facilities emergencies, get in touch with your community desk and the desk receptionist will route the concern appropriate.

Upon enrolling at the university, UMBC students agree to abide by the Code of Student Conduct and COVID-19 addendum, and when they sign their housing license, residential students agree to abide by the Residential Rights and Responsibilities Guide and Retriever Community Agreement. As a residential student, you have agreed to uphold the community standards set by these documents and will be held accountable for any violation of these standards. Therefore, you should take the time to read these documents. Click on this link and make sure to bookmark it; it will be your most important resource for referencing out policies.

Everyone is at UMBC, first and foremost, to get an education. If we want to live and study with integrity, we need to know the policies for our areas. These policies are created to protect each member of our community and preserve the academic living-learning experiences of the buildings.

It is important to review alcohol and drug policies on campus. These policies are designed to keep you and others in the community safe. Students each year report that the alcohol or drug use of others often has a negative impact on their experience, so it is important to be considering how your actions impact the community. Remember, it's state law and university policy that no person under the age of 21 may purchase, possess, or consume alcohol. Therefore, if you are under the age of 21, you may not have alcohol present in your room, even if you are hosting a guest over the age of 21. Further, possession or use of illegal drugs, including marijuana and controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia, is prohibited.

If you are concerned about the health and safety of another student or friend because they may have consumed too much alcohol or some other substance, immediately contact a residential life staff member. If you think it's life threatening, contact UMBC Police. Remember that the community desk is staffed 24/7 when communities are open, so calling or reporting to the community desk may be the most efficient course of action.

We have rules around noise in the residence halls. Excessive noise can be disruptive to others in your community who may be trying to sleep, study, or just enjoy their space. On weeknights -- that is Sunday night through Thursday night -- quiet hours begin at 10 PM and end at 8 AM. On weekends, quiet hours begin at 1 AM and still end at 8 AM. Technically that's Saturday morning and Sunday morning, but you might refer to it Friday and Saturday night. During quiet hours, excessive noise (which can be heard from more than two doors down the hallway), is prohibited. Additionally, we have 24-hour courtesy hours, meaning that at any time of day a reasonable request from a neighbor to quiet down should be accommodated.

Because noise is one of the things that most impacts the other students around you, it is something we take seriously here at UMBC, and if you are heard at a disrespectful level, the issue may be addressed by an RA and could result in documentation. The best way to maintain respect within a community is to talk to each other about noise levels - ask your neighbor if your music or TV is too loud, or tell your neighbor if their noise level is excessive.

Quiet hours and alcohol policy violations make up a significant amount of residential policy violations at UMBC, but the policies we mentioned are far from an exhaustive list. Please be sure to read the Code of Conduct and Rights and Responsibilities Guide to ensure you aren't unintentionally violating policy.

Please know that the role of our resident assistants -- when faced with any potential policy violation -- is to document what they see, hear, and sometimes smell. It is not their role to decide what the outcome of the situation will be. Please be respectful and cooperative of RAs documenting any situation you may be involved with. If you have questions about being documented or next steps in the process, you can reach out to your community director or the assistant director of residential student conduct.

Since the health and safety of our community are paramount, the Rights and Responsibilities Guide has been updated to reflect the actions we as a community can take to keep each other safe in the era of COVID-19. Beyond simple social distancing and frequent handwashing, this video outlines some of the changes, but please take time to review the Code of Conduct, COVID-19 Addendum, and Rights and Responsibilities to make sure you understand all the changes.

In line with guidance from the state of Maryland and the CDC, students will be required to wear face coverings inside residential facilities. Face coverings should cover both your nose and mouth, and should not be removed or lowered in public spaces, including lobbies, hallways, stairwells, lounges, community laundry rooms, and community kitchens. Students may remove their face coverings in their personal bedrooms. If you live in Harbor Hall, Erickson Hall, or any of our apartment communities, it is up to the discretion of you and your roommates if face coverings must be worn in spaces shared by your suite or apartment.

Think of your face covering like pants. You have to wear it in any public spaces, you can take it off in your bedroom and bathroom, and it's probably a good idea to ask your roommate what they're comfortable with before taking it off in the living room, especially if guests are around. Also, just like wearing your pants around your ankles doesn't really count as wearing pants, wearing your face covering around your chin or neck, really doesn't count as wearing a face covering.

Remember, a face covering is a well-secured paper or cloth that fully covers a person's nose and mouth. This can include scarves that are secure and provide full coverage. This does not include material with visible holes or gaps -- like lace, mesh, or materials that have been knitted or crocheted. Additionally, face coverings with exhalation valves should not be used. Face shields are not sufficient unless they are accompanied by an appropriate face covering. If you need a face covering, masks will be available at your community desk, but they are not washable and should be discarded after use.

In order to ensure residential facilities have been de-densified, the guest policy has been modified. Residents may only host one guest at a time, and guests must be limited to those assigned a space in the same community. For example, if you live in Patapsco Hall, you can only have a friend over to your room if they also live in Patapsco Hall, and you wouldn't be able to visit a friend in Potomac Hall, the apartments, or any community other than Patapsco. For our apartment communities, you are able to have guests over who live within the same apartment community. West Hill, Terrace, and Hillside are considered part of the same apartment community, while so West Hill residents may host Hillside or Terrace residents. Walker residents may host other residents of Walker.

Since each resident may only host one guest at a time, this means that two individuals may be present in any room in our traditional style residence halls -- that is the resident and their guest. In our suites and apartments, up to two guests may be in a suite or apartment maximum. For

most of our communities, this means that both residents of an apartment or suite may each host a guest simultaneously -- for a total of four people in the apartment or suite. However, for residents living in Walker that have more than one roommate, only two guests are allowed at a time. This means in an apartment with three roommates, five people may be present -- the three residents and two guests. And for an apartment with four roommates, six people may be present -- the four residents and two guests. If more than two residents wish to have a guest simultaneously, the residents must find alternate plans.

If you're living in a suite or apartment, please be considerate of your roommates. Be proactive in having discussions about hosting guests, and what conduct is acceptable for guests. Are they allowed in the common spaces? Should they wear a face covering? These are conversations you should have before inviting guests into your space and will be addressed in the roommate agreement process this year.

Unless an exception has been made by ResLife professional staff, all guests should be from within the community. There is no need to sign in guests since they already live in the community, and you will receive information from ResLife about how to sign-in approved exceptions at the time the guest is approved. Fortunately, this allows for greater social distancing to take place at the front desk. Since no one from outside the community will need access -- even to a lobby -- front doors to our communities will be locked 24/7 and you'll need to swipe to gain access.

This means two things: First, it's vitally important that you carry your UMBC ID with you at all times since the black and gold ID card is your key to the building and your individual room. It's a good idea to keep it in your phone case or wallet. Second, you may not hold doors for others or prop open any doors requiring card access. Though it may feel impolite, everyone who needs access already has it, and anyone grabbing a door that hasn't closed may not be authorized to enter the building. Plus, it's hard to hold a door while remaining six feet away from someone.

Per university guidance, a public space should have 200 square feet of area per person to ensure that folks can properly social distance. Hence, some of our common areas may be locked and inaccessible for the semester. Other common spaces will have a posting of the maximum occupancy of the space based on its square footage. Staff are instructed to document all students in a space that is over capacity, regardless of who was there first.

If you are using a common space, please be considerate of the amount of time you are spending there and how you're using the space. Don't camp in a lounge all day. Sort your laundry before heading to the community laundry room and fold it back in your room. Particularly in shared kitchens, be sure to sanitize areas after you are done and don't leave dirty dishes in the sink. Additionally, please stay six feet away from others whenever possible while in these spaces.

If you notice community members failing to adhere to safe social distancing practices, you are encouraged to hold them accountable as you feel comfortable doing so. If individuals still fail to follow regulations or you aren't comfortable addressing them, you can contact a Residential Life staff member, like the front desk, an RA, or a CD for issues inside residential facilities and contact UMBCPD for issues outside residential facilities?

Residential Life can't and won't require that residents stay on campus for the duration of the semester. However, it is strongly recommended that residents limit travel off campus and travel safely when they choose to do so. Always maintain good social distancing practices and be particularly mindful if you need to travel to visit areas or individuals that pose an elevated risk of transmitting the virus. Upon your return, it is recommended that you quarantine until 14 days have passed and you show no symptoms of the virus. Remember that irresponsible practices off campus could put you and your peers at risk of contracting COVID-19.

In order to help keep both individual residents and our community safe, all students living on campus this fall will be required to perform daily symptom tracking to ensure that UMBC can respond immediately to any possible COVID-19 symptoms. You should bookmark the daily symptom tracking website, which you can find at <https://umbc.edu/go/symptom-tracking>. In the form you will report your body temperature, to indicate whether you may have a fever, and any symptoms you've experienced that have been associated with COVID-19. It's as easy as checking a few boxes, and it takes about 30 seconds to complete. If you have your own thermometer, bring it with you to campus so you can start symptom tracking as soon as possible. If you don't, that's fine. A thermometer will be included with welcome materials placed in your room prior to move-in. This is also a great opportunity to sign up for E2Campus, UMBC's emergency text alert system that we will be using this semester to send updates as well as daily symptom tracking reminders.

If you test positive for COVID-19, have been in close contact with someone who has recently tested positive, or have reason to suspect that you or someone you've been in close contact with may have the virus, please fill out the COVID-19 Case Report Form and contact your RA or CD as soon as possible. Residents who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate. This would likely involve temporary relocation to an isolation space. Residential Life will provide support and additional details to any students who test positive.

Again, the summary of policy changes involving COVID-19 in this video are not exhaustive, guidelines can change rapidly, and this video is not intended to serve as your primary source of information around COVID-19. Take some time to educate yourself on the virus, be sure to frequently check your email for updates from Residential Life and UMBC, and know that the most current information available will be on our website. Also, did we mention to read the Code of Student Conduct and Rights and Responsibilities Guide in their entirety?

If you or someone you know has an emergency, we continue to have a University Police Department that operates 24/7. Make sure to plug their number into your phone: it's

410-455-5555. Calling this number leads to a quicker response than 911 on our campus and can be used for emergencies and non-emergencies, so again, make sure you know that their number is 410-455-5555.

UMBC must be a safe place where every one of us can be successful. We accomplish this in the residential community by working together to live in community. We recognize our residents are all here as students first, and we want everyone to be able to succeed in their academic goals.

Seek ways to resolve conflict on your own first, then talk to the RA or CD if you don't make progress. If there is a conflict with your roommate or another person on the floor, it is always better to talk about it. Respect the boundaries of others. Early on in the semester, RAs will facilitate agreements for those sharing spaces, including shared bathrooms to assist with minimizing conflicts on the microlevel. Additionally, they will facilitate a virtual gathering around standards for their entire community -- like a floor, wing of a building, or an apartment building or stack.

Acts of Intolerance, or incidents that intentionally target another individual person in the community based on any factor of their identity (for example, race, sexual orientation, religion, etc.), are against the principles of our community and are unacceptable. If you ever feel targeted, you should talk to your RA or a professional staff member.

UMBC has a Sexual Misconduct Policy that outlines guidelines for treating others with respect. It is important to know this policy, understand the importance of consent, and act in a way that helps us to respect each other.

Generally, please treat the other members of our community with respect. If at any point you do not feel safe or are concerned about a fellow resident, please reach out to a Residential Life staff member.

In line with our principles, we in Residential Life work with our residents to co-create opportunities for community and involvement within our facilities. Much of what we do is rooted in restorative practices. However, as we prioritize social distancing some of the ways we interact will inherently look different than the typical year. A community gathering or "floor meeting" cannot involve an entire floor circling up in a lounge space and utilizing a talking piece. And many of our signature events -- particularly large-scale events -- just aren't possible. However, fear not, we'll still be reaching out and finding ways to get you connected to the broader UMBC community. You will be able to find out about our events and events held by other offices through your RAs and myUMBC.

All official virtual events and hangouts from Residential Life will be held over WebEx, Blackboard, or Google Meet, the systems utilized by UMBC for video conferencing and virtual connection. These tools can take some getting used to, but we have put together some sheets

with tips on each of these platforms that can be found here in order to make these events run smoothly. Also, know that your RA will reach out to you early on via your UMBC email to figure out what forms of communication are best for staying in touch with you and keeping you connected to the community.

It's going to be a different kind of semester for all of us, but we are here for you. Don't be afraid to ask for help at any time. Be sure to check out our website for the most up-to-date information, and if you still have questions, feel free to reach out to us by emailing or by phone.

You can also check our website to see if we have any current events scheduled, and we're always happy to interact and answer your questions.

We're so excited to see you and make you a part of the Residential Life family.

Welcome home!