

Roommate Agreement: Topics for Living Together Well



Welcome to Pres House! Whether you and your roommates just met or are good friends,* you'll likely find that sharing an apartment brings surprises. This document is meant to set you up for success by prompting discussion about boundaries, expectations, and common issues that may arise as you navigate your shared space and the interpersonal relationships within it.

New residents may find this tool very helpful, especially if this is a new type of living situation for you! **Returning residents**, the start of a new year is a great opportunity to check in about your living habits.

Conversations early on will lay the foundation for a great year. Trust us, it's much better to talk and agree on expectations *before* small irritations become big problems! Even if it feels awkward now. Ideally, you can identify possible conflicts and prevent them altogether.

That said, it's normal to have unexpected sticking points. Resolution takes effort: have conversations that are direct but kind. Ask and request, rather than accusing. Listen. Assume best intentions from and towards each other. Take responsibility for your own actions as well as your own needs. And make it a habit to "nip it in the bud": address issues early, before they can grow. You can refer back to these agreements throughout the year, revising if necessary, to help resolve issues.

**Yes—roommate agreements are extra important if you are already friends, as your friendship may lead you to overlook issues and avoid conflict longer, and you may feel more hurt if things go wrong.*

This document is not a legally binding contract, and in no way supersedes your lease. It is not required; it is a suggested tool developed by Pres House staff to support your well-being. It is highly recommended and has proven valuable to many residents. Ginger and Manato are available to talk with any resident about roommate communication and challenges.

COMPLETE IT WITH YOUR ROOMMATES, EARN FREE PIZZA & ICE CREAM:

We want to reward you for proactive conversations! **Any apartment group that completes this document together and provides one copy of your completed agreement to Pres House staff no later than Friday September 16th will be treated to free pizza and ice cream!**

Make sure to keep a copy for yourselves. Deliver a hard copy or digital file to Manato Jansen, Associate Director of Residential Community, 2nd floor office, manato@preshouse.org. Please submit one copy per apartment. An electronic version can be downloaded from our website: phapts.com/community-life.

YOUR APARTMENT NUMBER: _____

ROOMMATE NAMES (please print - you will sign on the last page):

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Individual and Shared Needs:

For each question, start by letting each person voice their own thoughts (aloud or in writing if desired). Then, having identified where your needs do and don't line up, write group agreements that strive to fulfill everyone's needs as best you can, coming up with solutions and compromises.

1. **Sleep:** When does each person generally wake up and go to bed? (*Any exceptions? Exams, job, etc.?*) Do you set alarms that could wake up others? Are you a light sleeper (sensitive to noise, light, movement)? How will you handle issues, like waking or keeping each other up?
2. **Studying:** Where and when does each person usually study? Will the apartment's common area be used primarily for studying, for leisure, or for both at different times?
3. **Noise:** What do you do that makes noise? (*Music, instrument practice, TV, games, videos...*) Beyond what came up for #1-2, write any agreements for keeping noise levels respectful.
4. **Temperature:** What temperature does each person like the apartment to be? Day vs. night? Per season? What will work for the group as a whole?
5. **Privacy:** Discuss how each person feels about others entering their room (or side of the room). Is it allowed? Under what circumstances? What does it mean if your door is closed?
6. **Possessions:** How do you feel about others using your possessions? (*Always / ask me / never...*) Talk through items that might be ambiguously shared or private: shampoo and soap, kitchen or entertainment appliances, dishes, furniture... And what happens if an item gets damaged?
7. **Food & Kitchen Space:** Are there food items we share collectively? (*Milk, eggs, butter, flour...*) How do we designate kitchen & fridge space for collective vs. individual use? Also consider sharing of any kitchen appliances, utensils, dishes, etc. not addressed in #6.

8. **Purchases:** Who buys items that are shared (possibly toilet paper, cleaning supplies, kitchen items mentioned above, etc.)? Do we share costs? Do we rotate shopping?

9. **Alcohol and Substance Use:** Do we keep alcohol or drugs around? If so, how will we manage the associated risks? *(Note that smoking--tobacco or marijuana--is not permitted in any apartment and violates your lease agreement. If you smoke on balconies, please use a butt can for disposal.)*

10. **Safety:** When should our apartment door be locked?

11. **Cleaning:** Who cleans shared areas (bathrooms, kitchen, living room)? How often? What does “clean” mean? Should we set up a chore chart / schedule? Address possible pet peeves like food on the counter, spills, hair in shower drains, empty toilet paper rolls, etc. *(Note that PH Apts. will bill you for professional cleaning services if the apartment gets too dirty.)*

12. **What is the best way for us all to communicate?** *(Group chat, weekly meetings, etc...)*

COVID-19 Health and Safety:

13. **Vaccinations:** Are we comfortable disclosing our COVID-19 vaccination status with each other?

14. **Social Distancing in the Apartment:** Are we going to take any precautions around each other in the apartment, such as distancing or wearing masks? ***This could be due to differences in risk or exposure levels, vaccination status, etc.*** If so, what will those precautions look like?

15. **COVID-19 Testing:** Do we inform one another if we test positive for COVID-19? Will any of us be getting tested regularly? Will we test if we suspect we’ve been exposed, or we have symptoms?

Apartment #: _____

16. **In Case of Illness:** What is our plan if someone gets sick? *If only one person is sick, the CDC recommends they self-isolate to one bedroom and bathroom, monitoring symptoms and seeking medical care if they worsen. www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/*
How will the sick person get food and do laundry? Are roommates in a position/willing to deliver food and assist, or should the sick person plan to meet their own needs independently?
17. **Guests:** Are guests allowed? If so, who? How many? How much advance notice? If we are worried about safety, are there other ways to see friends, like outdoors or other public spaces?
18. **Significant Others:** How do significant others / partners (if applicable) fit into guest rules, if not already addressed? If a partner visits, how long or how often can they stay? Are there noise limits? If you share a room, can roommates request alone time—if so, how and when?
19. **Social Circles & Behavior outside the Apartment:** To what extent do we keep each other informed about the activities we are each engaging in outside the apartment? Do we all practice similar precautions, and if not, do we feel a need to get on the same page about anything?

We agree to communicate openly and promptly with each other about needs, concerns, frustrations or disagreements. We agree to respect each other's privacy and autonomy. We agree to hold our own and each other's best interests at heart and work to maintain a positive, healthy living space.

Signed by the residents of Apartment # _____: Date: _____

This agreement is for your benefit. If you provide a copy to Pres House staff for **free pizza and ice cream** (see first page), make sure to keep a copy! Ginger (ginger@preshouse.org) and Manato (manato@preshouse.org) are available to help if you need outside mediation for conflicts, or just a listening ear. We hope you have a happy, nourishing residential experience this year at Pres House!