



Home Visit Assessment Checklist Criteria and Explanations

The Off-Campus Housing Excellence Program is a comprehensive Student Life initiative designed to improve the quality of off-campus life, enhance the vibrancy of the University area, and create an extraordinary off-campus experience by meeting and exceeding student needs.

Student Life, through Neighborhood Services and Collaboration, launched the Off-Campus housing Excellence Program to: (1) reduce off-campus risks and hazards by providing students with information and strategies that enhance personal safety and home security; (2) lower utility costs and raise environmental awareness by promoting sustainable living; and (3) help students and their families make well-informed decisions about off-campus housing options.

Student Life has partnered with the Columbus Division of Fire to perform in-home visits. The home visits will prepare students to live in an off-campus environment and improve the quality of off-campus life by reducing risks and hazards and encouraging landlords and students to think proactively about safety, security, and sustainability.

During each home visit, Student Life and Columbus Fire Department representatives will discuss proactive safety and security strategies, answer resident questions, and assess the safety, security, and sustainability of each rental unit using an assessment checklist. The objective assessment criteria, which were created in collaboration with students, parents, property owners/managers, and city and university officials, represent a standard that is above and beyond the minimum requirements of state and local law. The assessment checklist focuses on safety, security, operations, and sustainability.

Safety & Security

1. Off-site emergency contact number for fire and other emergencies provided to residents

- *Aside from 911, residents are provided with a contact number in the event of an emergency. The emergency contact is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year to respond to such emergencies.*

2. Tenant has life safety training

- *A tenant with life-safety training, such as CPR or fire prevention, can help mitigate serious harm to tenants and others. At least one of the residents has safety training that can be*



relayed to other residents living at the rental unit (free safety training is available through Student Life and the Columbus Fire Department).

3. Tenant(s) provided with personal security and fire prevention information

- *General safety and fire prevention information can help tenants identify and mitigate dangerous risks and hazards to life and property. Security and fire prevention information is either provided to residents at move-in by the landlord, or by the home visit team during a scheduled home visit (safety and fire prevention information and materials are available through Student Life and the Columbus Fire Department).*

4. Keyless exterior door access

- *Lost/stolen keys and/or duplicated keys may be used by unauthorized individuals, risking the safety and security of tenants. Landlord utilizes a keyless exterior access system and has a standardized procedure for handling lost and/or stolen keys for all other locks.*

5. Street address is clearly marked and is visible from front and rear (if there is alley access) entryways, and is a minimum 4" in height

- *Street address is visible to emergency responders so that they can easily identify the home in the event of an emergency.*

6. Landscaping does not obstruct visibility between street and front/rear entryway(s)

- *Shrubs and similar plants can serve as hiding places for potential offenders. To deter criminal activity, all entryways are clear of obstructions and visible from street.*

7. Property is well lighted at entry/exit points, walkways and parking areas

- *In addition to providing clear visibility at night, improved lighting can increase community pride and cohesiveness, leading to a greater willingness to intervene in and/or report criminal activity.*



- 8. Exterior doors and frames are in good condition and properly installed**
 - *Properly installed doors are maintained in good condition to deter intrusion.*
- 9. Exterior doors are equipped with working deadbolts**
 - *Working deadbolt(s) provide added security beyond standard keyed entry.*
- 10. Documented annual review of fire evacuation and other emergency procedures**
 - *In case of fire or similar emergency, evacuation plans (with two ways out of every room) are provided at move-in by landlord.*
- 11. Building emergency evacuation plans complete and clearly posted, or emergency exit signs installed above exits**
 - *In case of fire or similar emergency, evacuation plans (with two ways out of every room) are provided at resident move-in and/or posted on all exits.*
- 12. Security system with off-site monitoring and reporting capabilities available for resident activation**
 - *In the event an individual on the premises is unable to respond to, or report an emergency, a security system allows building operators or an alarm company to check-in on property remotely.*
- 13. Smoke alarms are installed in every bedroom and operate properly**
 - *Smoke alarms reduce the risk of fire death by 50%; a functioning alarm is located in every bedroom and can provide warning to residents in the event of fire.*
- 14. Smoke alarms are interconnected (wired or wireless) and operate properly**
 - *Interconnected smoke alarms provide early warning to residents regardless of their location; if one smoke alarm activates, all of the alarms activate.*



15. Smoke alarms are connected to off-site monitoring & reporting system

- *Smoke alarms connected to security system or other off-site monitoring and reporting system provide advance warning to emergency responders, which can be critical if a resident is not present or unable to call for emergency assistance.*

16. Carbon Monoxide detector installed and operating properly in each sleeping area

- *A CO detector is as important as a smoke alarm. Because carbon monoxide is a toxic gas that is colorless, odorless, tasteless, combustible, and deadly, a CO detector warns residents when carbon monoxide is present.*

17. At least one fire extinguisher provided at resident's request (properly tagged & inspected annually)

- *In an emergency situation, a fire extinguisher is available and may be used to extinguish or control a small fire, resulting in the protection of life and property (fire extinguisher training is provided through Student Life).*

18. Emergency escape ladders or permanent exit provided for bedrooms above ground floor

- *Emergency escape ladders or similar permanent exit provide means of escape in the event an emergency blocks primary exit(s).*

19. No combustible materials are stored indoors or near heating or ignition sources

- *Residents are warned against the storage of combustible materials at move-in or soon thereafter. If combustible materials are present, residents will be asked to relocate the materials.*



Safety & Security: Bonus Credits

20. Tenant completed online SAFE@Home safety course

- *At least one resident has completed the SAFE@Home safety course, which covers home security, personal safety, and home fire safety. The course is free on carmen.osu.edu.*

21. Keyless access for building entry

- *A magnetic key, coded-entry, or key card, provides an added level of home security by allowing entrance only to authorized residents.*

22. Battery operated door alarms on all exterior doors

- *A sensor-based sound system to alert tenant(s) of intrusion is provided through Student Life –Neighborhood Services and Collaboration.*

23. Sprinkler system installed, tagged and properly maintained (partial or full coverage)

- *A sprinkler system, combined with smoke alarms, reduces the risk of fire death by 82% and mitigates property loss. A full or partial sprinkler system is installed in the rental unit.*

24. Kitchen hood suppression system or cooking fire prevention technology installed in kitchen/range

- *A kitchen hood suppression system can mitigate the risk of cooking fire, which is the leading cause of residential fire injuries. A cooking fire prevention technology or an induction range can prevent fire before it starts.*

25. Battery operated window alarms on all accessible windows

- *A sensor-based sound system to alert tenant(s) of intrusion is provided through Student Life –Neighborhood Services and Collaboration.*



26. If security bars are installed on lower level windows, security bars are break-away style

- *Break-away bars on all ground level or lower exit windows not only prevent against intrusion, but allow for exit in emergency situations.*

27. Fire alarm system with manual pull stations and emergency strobes

- *A manual fire alarm system with emergency lighting provides advance, mass notice of fire to all residents.*

28. Operational security camera system at all entry/exit points

- *Overt surveillance systems can deter robberies, and if a robbery occurs, potentially record the identity of the offender(s).*

29. Operational security camera system monitors tenant parking area

- *Overt surveillance systems can deter robberies, and if a robbery occurs, potentially record the identity of the offender(s).*

30. Carbon Monoxide detector installed and operating properly on every floor (not within 15' of gas appliances)

- *Carbon monoxide is a toxic gas that is colorless, odorless, tasteless, combustible, and deadly. A CO detector is as important as a smoke alarm.*

31. At least one fire extinguisher on every floor (tagged and inspected annually)

- *In an emergency situation, a fire extinguisher is available and may be used to extinguish or control a small fire, resulting in the protection of life and property.*

32. At least one entry/exit is wheelchair accessible

- *A wheelchair ramp ensures access to housing by disabled residents.*



Operations & Sustainability

1. Maintenance request system available at all times

- *A designated maintenance request number with voicemail capabilities is available to residents for reporting property-related issues. Such a system provides a clear line of communication for residents, regardless of the date/time.*

2. Web-based service request system

- *Some residents may be unable to notify owner/operator of property issues by phone. A direct email/online system to maintenance or a building coordinator facilitates service requests and enhances the resident experience.*

3. Confirmation of service request made to tenant within 48 hours

- *An acknowledgement within 48 hours of a service request stating that a service request has been received and a completion timetable has been set assures tenant(s) that the maintenance issue will be resolved by a specific date.*

4. Confirmation of service request made to residents within 24 hours

- *An acknowledgement within 24 hours of a service request stating that a service request has been received and a completion timetable has been set assures residents that the maintenance issue will be resolved in an expedited manner.*

5. Annual HVAC equipment maintenance by certified inspector

- *HVAC systems accumulate particulates and microbial growth, and, over time, can become inefficient. A certified inspector annually cleans filters, air conditioning condensers, and maintains the efficiency of the HVAC system, resulting in improved air quality and energy savings.*



6. Process for addressing pests is established

- *To protect the health of residents, a process for addressing pest problems is in place.*

7. Property and building free of graffiti

- *Columbus requires the removal of graffiti from occupied structures. Landlords can grant the City permission to remove graffiti. If a property owner chooses not to remove the graffiti themselves or with the City's help, the landlord can be charged the cost of the removal (City of Columbus will remove graffiti for free).*

8. Property and exterior of building in good repair

- *Building exterior is free from damage, and to prevent property loss or injury, exterior staircases and railings are secure and there is no visible roof or gutter damage.*

9. Property is free of trash, with regularly scheduled pickup

- *Landlord provides exterior trash receptacles and has a standardized trash pick-up schedule (access to receptacles is not blocked).*

10. On-site recycling provided to residents

- *Residents are provided with interior and exterior recycling bins, which are collected according to a set schedule.*

11. Building interior is maintained in good repair

- *The building interior is maintained in a habitable condition and is free from mold or other health and safety hazards.*

12. Electrical system updated to include polarized, grounded receptacles

- *Polarized, grounded receptacles protect against electrical shock and damage to appliances and electronics.*



13. GFCI outlets in bathroom, kitchen, and areas within 6” of water

- *GCFI outlets protect against electric shock; in the event an electric current travels through water or an individual, the GFCI outlet will trip and stop all electrical current flow.*

14. At least 80% efficient furnace or electric heat pump

- *An 80% Efficient Furnace ensures 80% of the fuel consumed by the furnace goes towards heating the unit, thereby reducing energy costs.*

15. Refrigerator is thick-wall insulated or Energy Star Rated

- *An insulated refrigerator minimizes the amount of lost cold air; an Energy Star Rated refrigerator operates efficiently and reduces energy costs.*

16. Double pane glass windows installed, or residents provided with plastic to cover windows

- *Double pane glass windows, or plastic covering, reduce energy costs by efficiently handling temperature changes.*

17. Bike rack on property

- *Many residents rely on bicycles as their only form of transportation. Presence of bike racks promotes sustainable transportation while providing a clear location to secure bikes as well.*



Operations & Sustainability: Bonus Credits

18. Insulated exterior sidewalls and/or attic

- *Exterior sidewalls and/or attic are insulated to help minimize heat loss and energy costs.*

19. At least 90% efficient furnace

- *A 90% efficient furnace ensures 90% of the fuel consumed by the furnace goes towards heating the unit, thereby reducing energy costs.*

20. Additional exterior lighting on motion sensors beyond entry/exit points

- *Exterior lighting on motion sensors maximizes operability.*

21. Low flow, aerating showerheads and faucets are installed in bathroom(s) and kitchen

- *Low flow, aerating (2.5 GPM showerhead & 2.0 GPM aerators), showerheads and faucets mix air with water, forming a misty spray that reduces hot water use, resulting in energy cost and water savings.*

22. Major appliances (refrigerator, range, and washer) provided are Energy Star Rated; oven is self-cleaning

- *Energy Star appliances reduce energy costs and protect the environment through superior energy efficiency. A self-cleaning oven is well insulated and helps the energy efficiency for regular baking.*

23. Storm windows installed and present (at least December through February)

- *In addition to reducing energy costs by providing added insulation, storm windows provide an additional measure of protection to glass panes during inclement weather.*



24. Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs installed for all interior fixtures that use standard screw-based lamps

- *CFL bulbs use about 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs, resulting in energy cost savings. Also, CFL bulbs produce 75% less heat than incandescent bulbs, so they are safer to operate and reduce home energy cooling costs.*

25. Bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, and living room light fixtures hardwired to use energy efficient technology (CFL or LED)

- *CFL and LED lights are more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs. While the use of CFL bulbs result in a cost savings, the life-span of a CFL bulb can be greatly reduced if used with enclosed light fixtures. Light fixtures designed for energy efficient bulbs will maximize the life of the bulb and improve cost savings.*

26. Indoor bike rack storage

- *Indoor bike racks promote sustainable transportation and provide a secure location for bike storage.*