



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY
N E B R A S K A

Off-Campus Living Guide

A resource for our students.

Introduction:

Off-campus living is a right of passage for most students. Once you've determined with whom you will live and identified a place of residence, there can be a great sense of excitement. Often that excitement overshadows the seriousness that is related to signing a lease. This booklet has been developed to assist you as a new renter. We encourage you to read it before you sign a lease.

You are welcome to review the information about leases, tenant and landlord responsibilities, safety, and utilities. This booklet also provides information about community standards and consequences regarding alcohol-related citations in Seward. Beyond that, it provides suggestions for hosting parties, discusses signs of alcohol poisoning, and provides emergency phone numbers.

It is our hope that this publication will also provide basic information that will assist you in being a good tenant, a good neighbor, a welcomed citizen of Seward, and a contributing member of the Concordia University community.

Please remember, it is *your* responsibility to inform the Student Life Office:

- of your intention to live off-campus
- of your off-campus address and contact information
- of any changes in your address while a student at CUNE

Finally, we want to remind you that just because you may be living off-campus, you are still an important member of the Concordia community. We encourage you to stay involved with campus activities, chapel, concerts, dances, shows, sports, and fellowship!

Thank you for looking through this resource for a successful off-campus living experience. Feel free to call if there is any way we can help you.

If you have questions about or suggestions for this publication please direct them to the Student Life Office.

God's blessings to you!

- Director of Student Life
402-643-7411

INDEX

The Lease	pg. 3 - 4
• Things to look for	
• Important Questions	
Safety Considerations	pg. 4
Landlord Duties	pg. 4 - 5
Tenant Responsibilities	pg. 5
Housing Codes	pg. 6
Renter's Insurance	pg. 6
Unit Entry	pg. 7
Getting Connected (Utilities)	pg. 7
Moving	pg. 7 - 8
<i>Landlord and Tenant Law Handbook</i> link	pg. 8
Community Standards & Consequences	pg. 8 - 10
• Frequent Party Violations & Penalties	
• We Agree	
If You Choose To Host A House Party	pg. 10 - 11
• Recommended host behaviors	
• Alcohol Poisoning	
Campus Map	pg. 13
Stay Involved	pg. 14
Seward Map	pg. 14
Emergency and Important Numbers	Back Cover

THE LEASE

When you rent an apartment or house, you will be expected to sign a lease that includes your obligations and rights as a tenant and your landlord's rights and obligations as the owner. A lease is a **legal contract** to which you will be legally bound. Make sure that you read the lease, ask questions, and get a copy.

The lease may include the period of time the apartment/house will be rented to you, the cost of the rent for the apartment/house and the cost of the security deposit. A security deposit may not exceed the amount of one month's rent unless pets are allowed and you have one. Then it may be the amount of 1 ¼ month's rent. The landlord may keep this money to cover any damage or cleaning costs that occur after you have left the premises. Normal wear and tear is not to be covered by the security deposits. The lease may also list the utilities covered by the owner and those for which the tenant is responsible.

The lease may also indicate what items are in the apartment/house, vanity changes that can be made to the apartment/house and who is in charge of keeping up with the facilities. It may also include by whom and when snow removal and lawn care will be completed... important things to know when it has snowed six inches and you need to be at class at 8 a.m.!

Things to look for in the lease:

- Length of time the lease is effective
- Penalties for breaking the lease early
- Number of people permitted to live in the unit
- Pet Policies
- Amount of rent
- When rent is late and what late fees may apply
- Utilities and repairs/Who is responsible for them
- Another important component of your lease, though one that is not so obvious is to ask about absences...the law requires that you notify your landlord if you are going to be away from your unit (the number of days varies by lease/landlord). Make sure you tell your landlord before you leave how long you will be away. If you do not tell him/her, he/she may think you have abandoned the unit and he/she can move your things out and rent the unit to someone else while you are gone. This may result in you owing storage fees too. Ouch! Also remember never to turn the heat off or below 40 degrees in the winter months as the pipes might freeze.



It is recommended that any renter obtain a copy of the Landlord-Tenant Law brochure which outlines basic rights. Remember that renters can have their names placed on a “bad tenant” list nationwide by their landlords which could result in other landlords being reluctant to rent to them. Additionally, if a renter leaves damages, unpaid rent, etc., many landlords will send a bill to a collection agency which can damage a tenant’s credit rating when he/she wants to purchase a home.

Things you may want to ask:

- Where are the garbage facilities?
- Who picks up the garbage?
- When is it removed and is this a cost to me or is it included in the rent?
- Where are the laundry facilities?
(**Seward Econo Wash**, 727 Seward Street: 402-643-3685)

Safety Considerations:

Look for the following safety features...

- Well-lit entryways and hallways
- Well-lit off-street or on-street parking
- Well-lit and well-trafficked pedestrian areas and sidewalks
- A locked outer security door on multi-unit apartments
- Locked access to common areas such as laundry rooms and storage facilities
- Deadbolt lock on the apartment doors
- Peepholes or chain locks on doors
- Locks on all first-floor or ground-level windows
- A sufficient number of electrical outlets in every room (two and three prong) – no extension cords or adaptors.
- Working appliances plugged directly into appropriate outlets
- Locked mailboxes
- A fire escape for upper floor apartments
- Locks on any window accessible from a fire escape
- Working smoke detectors and fire extinguishers

Landlord Duties:

- Making repairs on your home (they must obey city/local codes).
- Units may not be rented until they contain safe heating equipment, which heats the whole unit.
- All foundations, floors, walls, ceilings, and roofs must be reasonably weather proof, watertight, and rodent proof.
- Units must be clean and fit for human occupancy

- All stairways, approaches, and entryways shall be safe to use and capable of supporting people
- The landlord must keep all provided and law-required appliances, air conditioners and other facilities in good working order
- If your unit was built prior to 1978, your landlord must inform you of any lead-based paint hazards. Landlords should also provide you with materials educating you about the hazards of lead-based paint.

Tenant Responsibilities:

- Pay rent and utility bills on time
- Give written notice to the landlord when you are ending the lease or repairing the unit. Notices should be sent certified mail with a return receipt requested. Be certain to check your lease to determine how much notice is required; typically it is 30 days, but it can be up to 60 days. If rent is due on the first of the month, state law requires that written notice be given on or before the first of the month.
- Keep the unit clean and safe in compliance with the local city housing codes.
- Use facilities in a reasonable manner.
- Dispose of all garbage in a clean and safe manner.
- Be responsible for any damages done to the unit by you, the tenant, or your guests.
- Respect your neighbors' property.
- Give the landlord written notice of any needed repairs or problems with the unit.
- Abide by all apartment complex or community neighborhood association agreements, expectations, and guidelines.
- Request in writing that your deposit be returned within 14 days of vacating the residence. (The landlord must comply with either the return of the deposit or a list of expenses and reasons for not returning all or part of the deposit.)



HOUSING CODES

Minimum Housing Codes:

The City of Seward zoning regulations and the Landlord-Tenant Act require landlords and tenants to comply with the community's minimum housing codes concerning health and safety. For example, in addition to the number of occupants, the layout of the property should be considered to assure that all sleeping rooms have required emergency egress.

If you have concerns that your landlord has not followed through on their obligations regarding health and safety issues, and you have made and documented a good faith effort to work with your landlord regarding repairs, etc., contact the Inspections and Zoning Office (402-643-4869) for enforcement of Seward's minimum housing code. An investigator will examine the problem and the landlord will be contacted with a deadline for compliance.

Uniform Fire Code:

Another code with regulations that sometimes catch new apartment dwellers off guard is the Uniform Fire Code. This is Seward's locally adopted Fire Code and among other things, it prohibits the burning of garbage or refuse within the City limits.

Additional Seward City Code information can be found at:

<http://www.cityofsewardne.com/building/plans/citycode/citycode.htm>

Renter's Insurance:

When you move into a rental facility, **the owner of the property carries insurance for the physical structure only** and not for your personal property. You may want to look into purchasing renter's insurance. Many times auto insurance carriers provide a discounted rate if you already have insurance with them. The average cost of renter's insurance is around \$200 per year or about \$16 a month. Most policies cover repair or replacement of your personal property if damaged, destroyed, or stolen as a result of various types of peril—fire, lightning, windstorm or hail, explosions, smoke, vandalism, theft, damage by glass, electrical surge damage, and water-related damage. When you fill out your application for renter's insurance, it will ask you to itemize your belongings and approximate value. It is important to be honest here since it will determine the amount of coverage you need. It is also a good idea to document your belongings with photographs or video.



Unit Entry:

Your landlord is legally able to access your apartment/house to inspect it, to make repairs, to show it to future tenants or prospective buyers, or in the case of an emergency. The landlord (except in the case of an emergency) must give you 24-hour notice of the intent to enter your unit.

Getting Connected (Utilities):

Chances are you will be responsible for some or all of your utilities. Here is a list of some of the utility companies that serve Seward:

Cable:	Time Warner Cable. . . . 800-248-8823
Electricity:	Seward Electric Dept. . . .402-643-3151
Garbage:	Garbage Company. . . . 402-643-2054
	Ron's Refuse, Inc. 402-475-3392
Internet:	Windstream 402-643-3600
Natural Gas:	Black Hills Energy. 888-890-5554
Telephone:	Windstream. 402-643-3600
Water:	Seward Water Dept. . . . 402-643-3433
Recycling:	A number of private recycling services and refuse haulers provide curbside recycling service. In addition, Seward maintains a drop-off recycling center at 340 South 7 th Street (402-643-3003)

Moving:

When you move into your new rental property, make sure that you carefully fill out the form that states the condition of the property. This information will be essential to you when you move out and the rental company wants to charge you for a scratch on the floor that you know was there when you moved in. Protect yourself by going over your new home and writing down every mark, scrape, or dent. Take a digital camera with you to snap photos of things you might find in dispute when you move out. Make sure that both you and your landlord sign your Inventory and Condition Report. Then give a copy of this information to the rental company and keep a copy for yourself in a safe place.

When you move out, be sure that you know what is expected from the landlord. Ask if there is a cleaning list you should follow. Know where and when to turn in the keys, and when you must be completely vacated from the property. It is important to do a final walkthrough with your landlord to make sure things are as expected.

You will want to know when you will get your deposit refunded as well, since that money will come in handy when you move to your new place. Nebraska Statute states you should receive your deposit within 14 days along with an itemized list of any charges taken out of the deposit.

***If you have problems with your landlord, call your lawyer ASAP - the sooner the better. If you do not have a lawyer or cannot afford one, call Legal Aid of Nebraska to apply for service at 877-250-2016.

Landlord and Tenant Law Handbook:

<http://www.legalaidofnebraska.com/node/27>

Community Standards and Consequences:

In order to ensure a high quality of life for all of its residents, the Seward Police Department actively enforces the municipal codes. Those choosing to host social events in neighborhoods are expected to control the behavior of their guests or face stiff penalties.

As a Concordia student, your behavior directly affects how the community views the University. Consequently, as stated in the CUNE Handbook, violation of a local, state or federal law is also a violation of our campus code. You should expect that University disciplinary proceeding will be instituted against a student who has been or may be charged with violating local, state or federal laws.

Concordia has a strong working relationship with the Seward Police Department. As a result, the police notify us when they issue citations for loud, disorderly parties in the Seward community. These citations often include, but are not limited to citations for the following violations:

Procuring Alcohol for a Minor

1st offense \$300 - \$500 fine
Maximum 1 year in Jail and \$1,000 fine

Selling Alcohol Without a License

1st offense \$200 - \$500 fine
Maximum 3 months in jail and \$500 fine

Minor in Possession/Consumption

1st offense \$175 fine
2nd offense \$250 fine
3rd offense probation/alcohol evaluation or 7 days in jail

Open Container

\$50 fine



Other violations frequently cited at parties include: **disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, failure to disperse, and fleeing an officer.**

Reminder: the legal drinking age is 21 years of age. It is against the law to consume alcohol before you reach the age of 21.

In addition, the Nebraska Unicameral recently passed a **Social Host Liability Provision**. This provision states that people who are killed, injured or have sustained property damage as a result of the actions of an intoxicated minor, can sue the person who provided the alcohol or the social host who allowed the minor to consume the alcohol in his/her home.

Also, **Driving Under the Influence (DUI)** is an *illegal* and *extremely dangerous* choice. As such, penalties for DUI are quite severe.

Driving Under the Influence (DUI)

1st Drunk Driving Conviction

- Jail – Minimum of 7 Days up to 60 Days
- Fine – Up to \$500
- License Suspension – Up to 6 Months
- License Suspension – 1 Year (If Blood Alcohol Level 0.15 or Above)
- Alcohol Assessment / Alcohol Treatment - Possible

2nd Drunk Driving Conviction

- Jail – Minimum of 30 Days up to 90 Days
- Jail – Minimum of 90 Days up to 1 Year (If Blood Alcohol Level 0.15 or above)
- Fine – Up to \$500
- Fine – Up to \$1,000 (If Blood Alcohol Level 0.15 or above)
- License Suspension – 1 Year
- License Suspension – From 1 to 15 Years (If Blood Alcohol Level 0.15 or above)
- Vehicle Immobilization – From 5 Days to 8 Months
- Vehicle Impoundment - Possible
- Ignition Interlock Device - Possible
- Alcohol Assessment / Alcohol Treatment - Possible

3rd Drunk Driving Conviction

- Jail – Minimum of 90 Days up to 1 Year
- Jail – Minimum of 180 Days up to 5 Years (If Blood Alcohol Level 0.15 or above)
- Fine – Up to \$600
- Fine – Up to \$10,000 (If Blood Alcohol Level 0.15 or above)

- License Suspension – From 2 to 15 Years
- License Suspension – From 5 to 15 Years (If Blood Alcohol Level 0.15 or above)
- Vehicle Immobilization – From 5 Days to 8 Months
- Ignition Interlock Device - Possible
- Alcohol Assessment / Alcohol Treatment – Possible

We Agree

Concordia University, in conjunction with other Nebraska Colleges and Universities is dedicated to educating students about the use and misuse of alcohol. Accordingly, representatives of the CUNE Student Senate, along with student leaders from the other institutions, have endorsed the following pledge:

Concordia University's Student Senate agrees with Seward residents and Nebraska's state and local officials that wild parties have the potential to disrupt city neighborhoods. We want to do our part in making things better for everyone involved, and we need your help.

PARTIES* When Alcohol is Present



We trust that Concordia students who choose to host guests with alcohol present will do so in a responsible manner. This includes first and foremost, that if alcohol is present - **MINORS ARE NOT!** Here are some other recommendations...

Before the Party:

- **DO NOT** post the party on social media (*facebook, twitter...*)
- Tell your neighbors you are having a party.
- Ask them to call you with concerns before calling the police.
- Ask your guests not to invite other people.
- Tell people coming what time the party ends.
- Clearly communicate that **minors are NOT allowed**.
- Seal off unnecessary rooms and secure valuables.
- Secure switches, fuse boxes, and thermostats in the house.

During the Party:

- Set the expectation that you and your guests will use alcohol responsibly and not drink to excess.
- Have one or more designated non-drinking persons watch doors, monitor guests and noise, and keep alcohol inside.

- Remind guests as they arrive what time the party ends.
- Walk around the house to check the parking, the noise level and to pick up litter.
- Use fans and vents to keep the inside cool.
- Have plenty of food and non-alcoholic drinks available.
- Keep the bathroom accessible so people don't go outside.
- Monitor guests and ask for keys if they are not fit to drive.
- Watch for signs of fights or possible sexual assaults.
- Don't let strangers or uninvited guests in.
- Without a liquor license, you can't charge for alcohol. Things like selling cups, passing the hat, asking for "contributions to the utility bill" and selling shots are all illegal.

After the Guests Leave:

- Don't let impaired people wander off, drive or walk home alone. Assure their safety with a trusted sober person.
- Make certain nobody leaves with an open alcohol container.
- Clean up the outside of your property **first**.
- Follow up with your neighbors in the next few days.

Common Reasons Police Come To A House:

- Too noisy
- Too crowded inside, so people move outside
- Fighting/Yelling
- Inebriated guests urinate or vomit outside
- Cars are parked on lawns, in neighbors' driveways, or there are just too many cars
- A gathering with minors or inappropriate behavior has been busted there before
- Property is vandalized or stolen
- The gathering gets too big

If you host a gathering and it looks like you are losing control, be proactive & call the police for help right away!

What If The Police Show Up At Your House?

- **DO NOT** run or lock the doors. This will make things worse.
- **DO** stop any music and ask everyone to be quiet.
- **DO** have someone who has not been drinking talk to officers.
- If you get a citation, **DO** go to your court date.

**(Information adapted from the UNL ASUN House Parties: A Guide by Students for Students and the NWU Off-Campus Living Guide)*

Alcohol Poisoning:

Signs & Symptoms

1. You know the person consumed a lot of alcohol.
2. The person is unconscious/cannot be awakened.
3. The person has cold, clammy, unusually pale or bluish skin.
4. The person is breathing slowly or irregularly (less than 8 times a minute or 10 or more seconds between breaths).
5. The person vomits while passed out and does not wake up during or after.

Actions to Take

1. Try to wake the person up (shout name, slap face, pinch skin) – determine the person's consciousness.
2. Check the person's breathing to evaluate for slow or irregular breaths and skin color and temperature.
3. Turn the person on his/her side to prevent choking on his/her vomit.

DO NOT LEAVE THE PERSON ALONE!

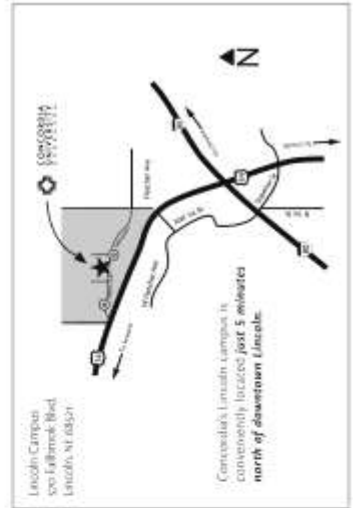
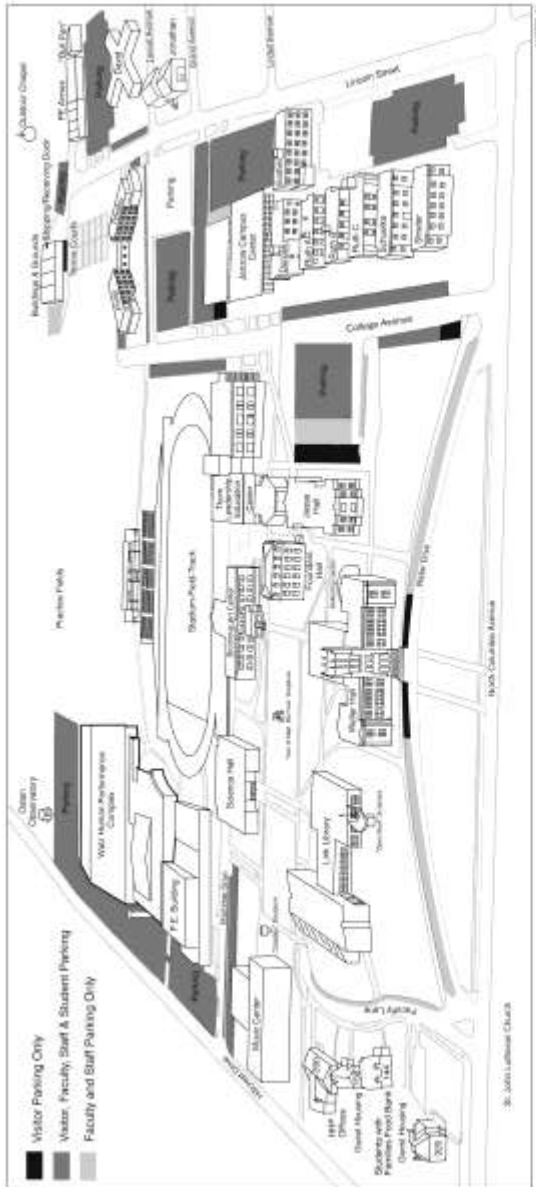
*If any signs/symptoms of alcohol poisoning exist –
call 911 immediately!*

A person with alcohol poisoning cannot sleep it off! If he/she is extremely drunk or barely conscious, it is important to continue to monitor breathing, responsiveness and skin color, **and call for help.** (see www.samspadyfoundation.org/)

**POISON CONTROL
CENTER
800-955-9119**



Concordia University - Nebraska Campus Map



Driving Directions:

- From I-80:** Take the Seward exit. Go north on Hwy. 75, 6 miles to the first stop light and turn right. Turn left at Columbia Avenue.
- From U.S. 34:** Turn north on Columbia Avenue.
- From Hwy. 45 North:** Proceed south on Hwy. 45 to H-Forest Avenue and turn left at the Concordia sign. Turn right at Columbia Avenue.

Publication was supported by a mini-grant from the Nebraska Collegiate Consortium to Reduce High Risk Drinking (www.nebraskaconsortium.org) funded by the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety.

Stay Involved!

As you have experienced, Concordia is a great place to enjoy all of the non-academic and social opportunities that college has to offer. We hope you will make every effort to “**stay connected**” to the wide range of activities that occur on our campus. We want you to attend concerts, shows, and athletic contests! We want you to participate in dances, games, intramurals, and *Spring Weekend*! Please check your email often to see what events and activities are coming up and be intentional about going to them with some of your on-campus friends to make even more “college memories”!

Seward, Nebraska



Limitation of Liability

The *CUNE Off-Campus Living Guide* is provided solely as an informational resource to Concordia students. We have made every effort to ensure that the information included is correct and current. Readers should note that no guarantee is given, nor should any be inferred with regard to the accuracy or timeliness of any material the *Guide* contains.

Concordia University shall not be liable for any damages whatsoever arising from any errors or omissions made herein.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

SEWARD POLICE
911

POISON CONTROL CENTER
800-955-9119

CAMPUS SECURITY
402-643-3033

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Medical Treatment

Concordia University Health Center (402) 643-7224
Memorial Health Care Center (402) 643-2971
Seward Family Medical Center (402) 643-4800

Seward Police

Emergency. 911
Non-Emergency. (402) 643-3002
Victim Assistance. (402) 641-2455

Campus Security

Non-Emergency (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.) (402) 643-7415
Non-Emergency (After 5 p.m.) (402) 643-3033

Concordia Counseling Office

Dina Critel-Rathje (402) 643-7398

Other Counseling Services

Lutheran Family Services. (402) 435-2910
Blue Valley Mental Health Center (402) 643-3343
Sexual Assault Crisis Hotline (800) 876-6238
Hope Crisis Center. (877) 388-4673

Student Life Office

Director of Student Life (402) 643-7411
Janzow Campus Center Top

Additional Numbers:
