

Disability Accommodations for Housing Guidelines

Reasonable Accommodations

- Adtalem and RUSM are committed to providing equal access to on-campus housing for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with government and local laws. All accommodations requested are reviewed on an individual basis to determine what is reasonable and appropriate. Disability accommodations are deemed “reasonable” if they are necessary to ensure equal access to the same opportunities as provided to all RUSM students.
- Disability accommodations are only appropriate when there is a barrier to equal access.
- Accommodations are not considered reasonable if they are merely to improve chances of success. RUSM wants all its students to succeed. It is important to note; however, that accommodations do not guarantee success. Success is the responsibility of the student, not the institution.
- Accommodations are reasonable when they provide the student the same opportunities as everyone else. Accommodations are not reasonable if they exempt students with disabilities from the responsibilities or expectations the University holds for everyone else.

What does Access vs. Success mean when it comes to on-campus housing?

Below are some examples of requests where an accommodation may not be determined reasonable. In the following scenarios the requested accommodation may be helpful or desirable and could improve chances of success — especially when the student’s disability makes these situations more difficult. But when no student has access to the opportunity requested, the request is generally regarded as a fundamental alteration to the University housing program, and legally not considered “reasonable”.

I have anxiety or depression, and need a private space that allows me to live alone or to retreat to and decompress.

All students that elect to live in on-campus housing are assigned a single room. As such, students with a significant clinical history of limitations and need for a separate space based upon a disability do not need to request a formal accommodation for a single room in on-campus housing. All RUSM students are expected to seek out and discover places in their campus community to decompress, unwind, or process their emotions in places other than the room where they sleep. Here are several ideas:

- Take some time to enjoy the island (stroll through Bridgetown, visit Bathsheba Beach, go spelunking in Harrison’s Cave, see macaws and green monkeys at the Barbados Wildlife Reserve, or explore the island’s “seven natural wonders”).
- Get moving! Head to the Coverly Gym or the local gym, Club Fitness, for a workout. Coverly also offers a tennis court, basketball court, and an athletic field/pavilion for student use.
- Take a break and visit Coverly Square or The Coffee Bean on the 1st floor of the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Center (LESC) for a drink or bite to eat.
- Head to the Coverly Music Room to decompress using the provided instruments.
- Find a private nook in the library or other academic buildings to nestle in and read or think.

- Make use of the Prayer/Meditation Room on campus for prayer, meditation, and contemplation.
- Work with Housing staff to set up and host a Housemate Agreement meeting. They are skilled at working with housemates in a neutral fashion to help with boundary setting and expectation management to create a healthy living environment for each housemate. The students are encouraged to start this process on their own and later work with Honor Council if they experience any challenges.

I need a house to myself because I get too distracted when trying to study or do homework.

RUSM does not have 1-bedroom housing units in on-campus housing. Students living on campus are participating in a communal living experience, where they are housed with other students in a 3-to-4-bedroom house. As such, no student has access to the opportunity requested. Students who do not wish to participate in a communal living space may seek off-campus housing.

Regardless of housing assignment, it is not guaranteed to have a quiet space. Students can utilize noise-canceling headphones, white noise machines, and other devices to help reduce distracting sounds. Students may also seek out quiet places on campus and on island. RUSM provides many places on campus where you can study alone in a less distracting space:

- There are spaces in The Villages of Coverly dedicated to quiet study that are open 24/7. The Housing Department may assist you in locating those spaces.
- Private study rooms are available in the Annex of the LESC.
- Find a space in the campus library on the 3rd floor of the LESC. Study carrels are available to students who wish to utilize a less visually distracting space, as well.
- Find a classroom on campus. Classrooms rotate between quiet and group (light noise). Student Government Association (SGA) chooses classrooms and usually sends an updated list of all spaces on campus each term. Students are welcome to reach out to their rep or honor council president if they have questions about a specific classroom or other space.

I need a private bathroom because I need to have control over my space.

In typical housing, each student needs to recognize what is in their locus of control in a shared living experience. It is unreasonable to expect to be able to control an entire shared room. However, it is reasonable to expect to be able to control your own belongings and set boundaries with your housemates accordingly. All RUSM students need to learn how to share a space and set boundaries and express them with their roommates. This is an extremely valuable skill living in an intensive residential community, such as RUSM.

- Work with the Housing Department for guidance on conversation starters and boundary communicating. In addition to the wellness team, Honor Council will guide students accordingly.
- Discover [RUSM Wellness & Counseling Center](#) for tips

I need a specific housemate assignment that supports my disability or does not trigger the symptoms of my disability.

While the OSDS reviews requests for accommodation on an individual basis, it is generally the function of the Housing Department to assign housemates. RUSM reserves the right to make housemate assignments and relocate housemates within on-campus housing as necessary to carry out educational and/or administrative purposes. Although RUSM housing staff are committed to placing students in preferred living arrangements, students do not have the right to live with a specific individual. The OSDS encourages students to meet with the Housing Department to discuss any housemate questions or concerns.

I need a private bathroom to store medications and/or because I have medications I fear might be stolen.

All students are assigned a private bedroom in which valuables, including medications may be stored.

- We recommend buying a lockbox or small safe to keep tucked away and out of sight.
- Lock your bedroom door when you leave.

Housing Accommodations

If you require an accommodation to receive equal access in on-campus housing, please proceed with completion of the OSDS Accommodation Request Process. For more information on the OSDS, please visit our [main page](#).

The OSDS reserves the right to amend this guide and the process for requesting housing accommodations to ensure it best reflects relevant laws' guidance.