

Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind – Dormitory Student Handbook (K–12)

Table of Contents

Introduction and Overview	
Behavioral Expectations and Dormitory Code of Conduct	
Packing Guidelines and Personal Belongings	
Communication with Parents/Guardians	
Check-In and Check-Out Procedures	
Visitation Policies and Procedures	
Daily Schedules, Curfews, and Lights-Out	
Cell Phones, Electronics, and Internet Use	
Health Services and Medication Management	
Room Cleanliness and Shared Living Responsibilities	
Conflict Resolution, Discipline, and Positive Behavior Support	
Safety and Emergency Procedures	

This handbook is a supplement to the 2026–2027 Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind Student Handbook, focusing on residential life policies for K–12 students. It applies to all dormitory residents of the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind and is designed to ensure a safe, inclusive, and enriching dorm experience for Deaf and Blind students alike. We are committed to creating a safe, accessible, and respectful environment for all, where information is shared in formats accessible to every student (e.g. sign language, verbal, Braille or large print as needed). Students and families should read this handbook together and keep it for reference.

Introduction and Overview

Welcome to residential life at Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind! Living in the dormitory is an exciting opportunity for students to learn independence, build friendships, and practice life skills in a supportive setting. Our dormitory staff (also known as Residential Advisors or Houseparents) act as caring 'substitute parents' during the week. They are there to help students with daily routines, answer questions, and ensure everyone's well-being. Dorm staff are trained in both Deaf and Blind communication methods and strive to meet each student's needs.

This Dormitory Handbook outlines specific policies and expectations for dorm life. It is meant to supplement the main Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind Student Handbook, not replace it. All school-wide rules still apply in the dorms, and at no time will school policies be overridden by dorm rules. Rather, these guidelines clarify how general school rules are applied in residential settings. By following these policies, we can maintain a positive home-like environment that supports academic success, personal growth, and a sense of community.

Dormitory Program at a Glance:

Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind provides a weekday residential program. Students typically arrive on campus Sunday evening (or Monday morning) and return home on Friday after school. Dormitories are closed on weekends and holidays, so all students go home during those times (exceptions are made only for school-sanctioned events like out-of-town athletic competitions). While on campus, students receive free meals, structured supervision, academic support, and access to health services. The dorms are separated by age and/or gender for safety and comfort, but all follow the same rules and schedules. Our goal is to make the dorm a safe 'home away from home' where every student—Deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or DeafBlind—feels included and supported.

Behavioral Expectations and Dormitory Code of Conduct

Living in a dormitory community requires cooperation, respect, and responsibility. All residential students are expected to follow a Dormitory Code of Conduct that aligns with Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind's school-wide behavior principles (often summarized as the "ROAR" values: Responsibility, Organization, Achievement, and Respect). Below are key behavior expectations specific to dorm life:

Respect for Others:

Expectation	Looks Like
Treat roommates, dorm-mates, and staff with courtesy and kindness at all times.	Speak and sign with kindness, using respectful language. Offer help when needed.
Show respect for peers, staff, and property.	Listen to others, maintain personal space, and care for shared property.
Bullying, teasing, or hurtful language (spoken, signed, or written) is not tolerated.	Address any issues calmly, using positive communication methods. Stand up for others if necessary.
Be patient and inclusive when communicating.	Practice active listening, show empathy, and respect others' ways of communicating.
Get a Deaf student's attention with a gentle tap or flashing light.	Tap on the shoulder or flash a light to gain attention. Wait for acknowledgement before speaking.
Identify yourself to a Blind student when you enter a room.	Use verbal cues or introduce yourself verbally if entering the room.
Celebrate a culture of respect and understanding across our diverse community.	Encourage positive interactions, embrace differences, and create an inclusive environment.

Follow Staff Instructions:

Expectation	Looks Like
Dorm staff and Houseparents are there to keep you safe and help you learn.	Students listen and follow instructions to ensure a safe and supportive environment.
Students must follow the directions of Residential Advisors and cooperate with dorm staff requests.	Students obey the staff's directions, whether it's about daily routines or special requests.
This includes adhering to scheduled times (for meals, study hour, bedtime, etc.) and any safety rules.	Students follow meal times, study hour, and bedtime routines as scheduled and obey safety guidelines.
If a staff member asks a student to quiet down, put away an item, or help with a chore, the student should comply respectfully.	Students stop talking or quiet down when asked, put away items without argument, and assist with chores when requested.
Arguing or refusing reasonable requests will result in consequences.	Students calmly accept requests and avoid refusing or arguing with staff. If there's a problem, communicate respectfully.
Respect dorm staff's authority and guidance as you would a parent or teacher.	Students show respect for staff by listening, being cooperative, and following their instructions in the same way they would for a teacher or parent.

Personal Responsibility:

Expectation	Looks Like
Students are responsible for their own behavior and the choices they make in the dorm.	Students take ownership of their actions and understand that their choices affect their privileges.
Good choices earn privileges and trust; poor choices may result in consequences.	Students make thoughtful decisions to follow the rules, earning trust and privileges, such as later curfews or extra free time.
Dorm staff will ensure that students receive the privileges or consequences that have been earned by their behavior.	Students understand that privileges are given based on behavior, and consequences follow if the rules are not followed.
This means you should take ownership of following dorm rules—if you do, you'll enjoy more freedoms; if you don't, you accept the results (like loss of a privilege).	Students follow the rules and accept the consequences of their actions, understanding that privileges are earned by good behavior.
Take care of your own belongings and be honest and accountable for your actions.	Students keep their room tidy, take responsibility for lost or damaged items, and are honest when issues arise.

Safety and Rules Compliance:

Expectation	Looks Like
All general school rules (as described in the main student handbook's conduct section) apply in the dorm.	Students follow all school rules, including those in the main student handbook, in all areas of the dorm.
This includes prohibitions on alcohol, tobacco, vaping, drugs, weapons, or any dangerous items – none of these are allowed in the dorms.	Students keep the dorm free of harmful substances and dangerous items like alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, and weapons.
There is zero tolerance for violence or vandalism: do not cause harm to others, and do not willfully damage school property or others' belongings.	Students avoid fighting, hurting others, and damaging property. They respect personal and school property.
Play fighting, roughhousing, Public Display of Affection or unsafe behavior is not permitted.	Students refrain from rough housing or playing in ways that can cause harm or injury. They follow safe, respectful behavior at all times.
For everyone's safety, they also abide by specific dorm rules like fire safety (e.g. no open flames or cooking in rooms), no running in hallways, and keeping exits clear.	Students follow safety rules like no open flames, keeping hallways clear of obstacles, and avoiding running indoors. They ensure emergency exits remain accessible.
If you are unsure about a rule, ask a dorm staff member for clarification.	Students ask dorm staff if they are uncertain about any rules to make sure they understand and follow them correctly.

By adhering to this dormitory code of conduct, students help create a friendly, inclusive home where everyone can feel secure and respected. Repeated or serious violations of dorm rules will be addressed through our discipline process

(see **Conflict Resolution & Discipline** section) and could jeopardize a student's privilege to remain in the dorm program. Our hope, however, is that all students will choose to behave responsibly and enjoy a successful dormitory experience.

Packing Guidelines and Personal Belongings

What to Bring: Preparing for dorm life means packing the right items. Below are guidelines on what students should bring with them each week (or for the term) and policies on personal items:

Clothing and Laundry:

- **7 Shirts** (school-appropriate)
- **3-4 Pairs of Pants/Jeans** (or skirts)
- **2-3 Pairs of Shorts** (if warm weather)
- **Underwear and Socks** (one per day + extra)
- **Sleepwear (PJs)**
- **Athletic Wear** (for PE or sports activities)
- **Jacket or Coat** (weather-appropriate, especially for winter)
- **Raincoat or Umbrella**
- **Indoor Shoes/Slippers** (for the dorm)
- **Labeled Clothing** (with student's name to prevent loss)
- **Bedding & Towels:**
- **Bed Linens** (Sheets, Blanket, Pillow) – provided by the school unless you prefer your own
- **Towels** (provided by the school unless you prefer your own)
- **Laundry:**
- **Laundry Bag** (for weekly laundry)
- **Laundry Services:**
- Students can use the dorm's supervised laundry time

Toiletries and Hygiene Items:

- **Toothbrush**
- **Toothpaste**
- **Dental Floss**
- **Hairbrush or Comb**
- **Deodorant**
- **Shampoo**
- **Soap** (Liquid body wash preferred for health reasons)
- **Feminine Hygiene Products** (if applicable, such as pads or tampons)
- **Additional Considerations:**
- **Aerosol Sprays** (Avoid if possible due to asthma/allergies)
- **Travel or Full-Size Products** (choose as needed for the week)
- **Extra Toiletries** (the dorm provides basic supplies in case something is forgotten)

Miscellaneous Necessities: Don't forget any **personal necessities or devices** a student relies on. For example:

- **Assistive Devices: Hearing aids and extra batteries** (for Deaf or hard-of-hearing students), **eyeglasses or low-vision devices** for visually impaired students, and/or a **white cane or mobility cane** for blind students who use one. If the student uses a braille notetaker, magnifier, cochlear implant processor, FM system, etc., be sure to pack those and any chargers or accessories.
- **School Supplies:** A backpack with the necessary books, braille materials, laptop/tablet (if used for school), and other supplies needed for class. These should travel with the student to and from home each week.
- **Identification and Money:** Student ID card. A small amount of personal spending money can be brought for snacks or vending machines, etc., but large sums of cash are not recommended (see Personal Item Policies below).
 - o RAs will maintain accounts for elementary, middle school and students who need special assistance.

- Secondary students are also encouraged to deposit their money with the RA.
- **Optional Comfort Items:** Students may bring a small comforting item like a favorite pillow, stuffed toy, or a few room decorations (e.g. a couple of photos or a poster) to personalize their space. These should be appropriate and not offensive. Space is limited, so avoid over-packing decorations.

Personal Electronics:

- Students may bring a phone, charger, tablet, or laptop, but usage is governed by the electronics policy.
- Label all devices with your child's name and use headphones to avoid disturbing others.
- Movies and Electronic games
 - RAs have the authority to review and screen any movie or video game students bring from home.
 - For movies to be shown in the residential halls, they must be rated no higher than "PG" for elementary and "PG 13" for middle school and high school.
 - For video games, they must be rated no higher than "E" for elementary and "T" for secondary students as rated by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB).

What Not to Pack:

- Avoid valuables like expensive jewelry, gaming consoles, or large amounts of money.
- Prohibited items include weapons, drugs, alcohol, vape devices, and medications (see Medication section).
- Large appliances like TVs or fridges are not allowed unless provided by the school.

Personal Item Policies:

- **Labeling:** Label all clothing and personal items to avoid mix-ups.
- **Storage:** Students will have storage space (closet, dresser, or locker) for personal items.

Laundry & Linens:

- The school provides linens and handles regular laundering.
- Students are responsible for personal laundry, done weekly.

Meals & Snacks:

- Meals are provided in the cafeteria.
- Students may bring snacks, but they must be sealed and stored properly.
- No energy drinks or high-caffeine sodas.
- Sharing snacks should be done with caution due to allergies.

Outside Food & Deliveries:

- Outside food deliveries are not allowed without prior approval.
- Special meals for events (e.g., birthdays) must be coordinated with staff.
- Mail and packages are delivered daily, and packages are inspected.

Money & Expenses:

- Basic services are provided, but students may need pocket money for vending machines or special outings (recommended: \$10–\$20 per week for older students).
- Parents can send money through staff.
- The school is not liable for lost cash.

By following these guidelines, students will have what they need for a comfortable stay and minimize the risk of lost items or violations. Contact the Residential Life Coordinator if unsure about any items.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

ParentSquare:

- Monthly calendar and updates are posted by the 15th of each month.
- Important notices like schedule changes, holiday dates, and events will be sent through ParentSquare.
- Parents should check regularly for updates and ensure they're connected to ParentSquare.

Direct Dormitory Contact:

- Dorm has a phone and videophone (VP) for parent communications.
- Parents can call or video-chat during reasonable hours (before 9 PM on weekdays).
- Deaf parents can use VRS, and staff are fluent in ASL.
- For urgent matters, parents can contact the dorm supervisor at any hour.

Student Calls Home:

- Students can call home during their free time.
- A consistent call schedule (e.g., every Tuesday and Thursday at 7:30 PM) can be arranged.
- Staff will accommodate homesick students if needed.

Emergencies and Health Communications:

- Parents will be contacted immediately if there's an emergency or health issue.
- Please keep contact information up-to-date.
- Notify dorm staff if there are any changes in your child's routine.

Authorized Pick-Up and Permissions:

- Fill out a permission form to list who can pick up your child.
- Students will not be released to anyone not on the approved list without prior notice.
- Notify staff if someone new is picking up your child.
- Meetings and Visits:
 - o Parents can visit by arranging with the Residential Life Coordinator.
 - o Students are allowed to visit other students over the weekend as long as the "Weekend Visitation" form is completed and turned in by the Tuesday that precedes the weekend of the intended visitation.
- Visits should happen in common areas, not student rooms, unless accompanied by staff.
- Parents can request meetings to discuss their child's progress or concerns.

Communication Notebook (for Younger Students):

- Younger students may have a communication notebook for daily updates.
- Parents can use it to share notes or questions with staff.

In summary, we aim for clear communication and encourage parents to stay involved in their child's residential life. For questions or updates, don't hesitate to reach out to dorm staff.

Weekday Routine (Monday–Thursday)

6:00–6:30 AM – Wake Up:

- o Houseparents wake students; older students may use alarm clocks.
- o Students must make their bed, get dressed, and handle personal hygiene.
- o No lingering in bed; be on time for breakfast and school.
- o Adaptive alarms may be used for students who need extra help waking up.

6:45 AM – Breakfast:

- o A nutritious breakfast is served in the cafeteria.
- o Younger students are escorted; older students may walk on their own.
- o All students are expected to attend breakfast unless excused.

7:55 AM – School Day Begins

3:30–5:00 PM – After School:

- o Students check in with dorm staff, then participate in activities like clubs or sports.
- o Students not in activities may socialize, play outdoors, or start homework.
- o A light snack is provided.

5:30 PM – Dinner

6:30–8:00 PM – Study Hour:

- o Mandatory quiet time for homework, reading, or study.
- o Honor roll students (GPA \geq 3.2) may earn flexibility with study time.
- o No TV, music, or loud talking allowed.

8:00–9:30 PM – Free Time:

- o Relax, watch TV (appropriate content), play games, or socialize.

- o Students should shower, prepare for the next day, and pack their school bag.
- o Free time is a privilege and may be lost for behavior issues.

Curfew and Bedtime:

- o Elementary and middle school students must be inside by 8:00 PM; high school students by 8:30 PM.

Bedtime varies:

- 8:30 PM for younger elementary,
 - 9:00 PM for middle school,
 - 9:30 PM for early high school,
 - 10:00 PM for juniors/seniors.
- o No phone calls or electronics after lights-out.

Night Checks:

- o Houseparents or night staff will periodically check on students to ensure safety.
- o At least one staff member is on duty at night for any student needs.

By following this schedule, students benefit from a balanced routine that supports study, rest, and recreation. If a student struggles with the schedule, parents can discuss adjustments with dorm staff.

Cell Phones, Electronics, and Internet Use

Technology is a part of daily life, and many students have cell phones or devices. In the dormitory, we aim to teach responsible tech use and ensure that devices do not interfere with sleep, study, or social development. Our **Cell Phone & Electronics Policy** is as follows:

Responsible Use Agreement:

Every student who brings a personal phone or internet-capable device to the dorm is expected to use it responsibly. Students (and parents) may be asked to sign a **Personal Device Agreement** acknowledging the rules. Key points include: the student is responsible for their own device's safekeeping, and

Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind is not liable for loss, theft, or damage of personal electronics; misuse of devices can lead to disciplinary action.

Allowed Use: Personal electronics can be used during designated free times:

- After school, before dinner
- After study hour, until lights-out

Not Allowed Use:

- During classes (school rule)
- During study hour/homework time
- During dinner or structured group activities
- After bedtime (lights-out)

Quiet Hours (Study Hall):

- Phones should be silenced and put away unless used for academic purposes (e.g., looking up homework).

After Lights-Out:

- No phone or device use until 6:30 AM the next morning.
- Younger students may have phones collected at bedtime and held overnight.
- High school students are expected to self-regulate; staff may secure phones if needed.

Where Devices Can Be Used:

- Phones and tablets can be used in common areas and student rooms, but be considerate of others.
- For voice or video calls, use the lounge or a private area to avoid disturbing roommates.
- Use headphones for music or videos to prevent disturbing others.
- **No device use in bathrooms** (for privacy and to avoid damage).
- Devices should not be used in the cafeteria during meal times unless allowed by dorm staff.
- We encourage students to socialize and disconnect during meals.

Electronics and Internet Use

Internet Use:

- o Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind provides internet for educational purposes.
- o Students must follow the Acceptable Use Policy: no inappropriate websites, cyberbullying, cheating, or illegal activity.
- o Personal devices using cellular data must also follow rules (no bypassing filters).
- o No explicit content, hate speech, or inappropriate media.
- o No photos/videos of others without permission, especially in the dorm.

Social Media and Messaging:

- o Be respectful online.
- o No cyberbullying or harassing others via text or social media.
- o Misuse will result in disciplinary actions and loss of phone privileges.
- o Private messages aren't monitored, but any issues will be addressed.

Respect and Obedience:

- o Follow staff instructions to put phones or devices away when asked.
- o Refusing or arguing will result in further consequences.
- o Devices may be confiscated if rules aren't followed.

Overnight and Charging:

- o Charge devices before lights-out.
- o Some dorms have a charging station; if students keep devices in their room, they must be off.
- o No using phones as alarms—alternative alarms will be provided.

Major Violations:

- o Serious misuse (bullying, illegal activity, inappropriate images) will result in the loss of phone privileges for the rest of the school year and other disciplinary actions.
- o Repeated rule-breaking (e.g., sneaking calls or watching movies late) will also have consequences.

School-Issued Devices:

- o If the school provides devices (e.g., laptops, braille note-takers), they must be used properly for schoolwork.
- o Misuse of school devices will result in similar consequences.

Telecommunications for Deaf/Blind Students:

- o Deaf students can use dorm videophones (VP) for calls, typically limited to 20 minutes.
- o Blind students can use the dorm's landline if they don't have a cell phone.
- o Calls must follow quiet hours, except in emergencies.

Cell phones and electronics are a privilege with rules to support rest, study, and positive social interaction. Students should balance screen time with responsibilities. Failure to follow the rules may result in losing this privilege. Parents, please avoid calling or texting your child during study hour or after bedtime. For urgent matters, contact dorm staff. With cooperation, we can enjoy technology responsibly.

Room Cleanliness and Shared Living Responsibilities

Living in a dormitory teaches students important lessons about responsibility, cleanliness, and cooperation. Each student has a personal space (a bed and area in a room, often shared with a roommate) and access to common areas. We expect students to take care of their own space and contribute to the overall cleanliness of the dorm. Here's what that entails:

Room and Dormitory Responsibilities

Daily Room Tidiness:

- o Make your bed, put dirty clothes in the hamper, and tidy up your room each morning.

- o Store personal items (books, electronics) neatly.
- o Dorm staff will do daily checks; messy rooms must be cleaned in the afternoon.

Weekly Cleaning:

- o Deep clean your room on a designated day (e.g., Thursday).
- o Change bed linens, dust surfaces, and organize belongings.
- o Empty trash bins regularly.
- o Participate in group cleaning sessions (vacuum, wipe down surfaces).

Shared Spaces:

- o Keep shared bathrooms and common areas clean (e.g., pick up after yourself, flush, and follow rules).
- o Clean up spills, put games back in the lounge, and tidy up kitchen areas.
- o Help with sweeping or tidying shared spaces, especially for older students.

Roommates and Respect:

- o Respect your roommate's space and belongings.
- o Keep noise and device volumes considerate if your roommate is studying or sleeping.
- o Communicate and compromise on issues (e.g., room temperature, lighting).
- o Don't tamper with others' belongings, and respect privacy.

Inspections and Standards:

- o Dorm staff will check rooms for cleanliness and safety once a week.
- o Rooms should be tidy (no trash, bed reasonably made, no inappropriate decorations).
- o If a room isn't clean, you may lose privileges until it meets standards.

Damage and Care of Property:

- o Treat dorm furniture and facilities with care.
- o Report damage immediately (don't try to fix it yourself).
- o Intentional damage will result in serious consequences, and parents may be billed for repairs.

Personal Hygiene and Cleanliness:

- o Shower regularly, use deodorant, and wear clean clothes.
- o Bedding will be washed weekly, and hygiene is important for your health and social comfort.
- o Staff will address hygiene issues discreetly if needed.

Chores and Life Skills:

- o Students will help with small chores (setting tables, sweeping, folding laundry).
- o High school students may have more responsibilities and mentor younger students.
- o Neglecting chores can result in consequences.

Staff Role:

- o Dorm staff clean common areas regularly but expect students to manage their own rooms.
- o Staff will guide younger students and schedule deep cleaning days for everyone to pitch in.

Communication with educational staff:

- o A brief dorm report regarding incidents and activities that have taken place in the dormitory to the following: Director of Residential Life; Director of Special Services; Dean of Students; Nurse Supervisor; Principals; Superintendent and the mental health counselors.

In conclusion, keeping the dorm clean and orderly is a shared responsibility. A clean environment is not only healthier (fewer pests, less illness) but also more pleasant to live in and easier for everyone, especially important for students with

visual impairments who rely on things being where they expect. We ask students to take pride in their dorm as they would like their own home. Failure to maintain cleanliness can lead to loss of privileges while consistent good upkeep might be recognized with praise or rewards (for example, the dorm may have a “cleanest room of the week” shout-out). Let’s all work together to keep our dormitory comfortable, clean, and welcoming!

Conflict Resolution, Discipline, and Positive Behavior Support

Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind emphasizes positive behavior and conflict resolution over punishment but has clear consequences for misconduct. Here’s how we handle behavior in the dorm:

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS):

- o Focus on teaching and rewarding expected behaviors, such as being respectful and responsible.
- o Rewards include verbal praise, small rewards, or ROAR Bucks for good behavior, which can be redeemed for privileges.
- o The goal is to create a positive culture where good behavior is celebrated.

Level System – Earning Privileges:

- o Students start at Level 1 and can move up by meeting expectations.
- o Levels come with increasing privileges, such as later bedtimes, more free time, and special recreational activities.
- o Negative behavior can result in demotion or loss of privileges.

Conflict Resolution:

- o Encourage open communication and mediation to resolve conflicts.
- o Staff help students understand each other’s perspectives and find peaceful solutions.
- o Physical fighting or bullying is not acceptable and will result in discipline.

Discipline and Consequences:

- o Verbal Warning: First-time or minor issues are addressed with a reminder.
- o Loss of Privileges: Students may lose privileges like phone use or recreation time.
- o Room/Dorm Restriction: Students may be restricted to their room or dorm area.
- o Behavior Report and Parent Contact: Significant issues will involve reporting to parents and administration.
- o Restitution: Students may need to clean or pay for damages caused.
- o Community Service: Students may be assigned tasks to give back to the dorm community.
- o Demotion in Level: Breaking rules can result in losing privileges and being moved to a lower level.

Serious Infractions:

- o Major violations like fighting, bullying, drug use, or theft may result in suspension or removal from the dorm.
- o School administration and parents will be involved in such cases.

Support and Counseling:

- o Staff provide one-on-one support after incidents and offer counseling for emotional or behavioral struggles.
- o We use Positive Behavior Support plans and de-escalation techniques for students who need extra help.

Peer Mentoring and Leadership:

- o Older students may serve as mentors or dorm leaders, modeling good behavior and helping resolve conflicts.

In summary, our approach is to reward positive behavior, provide fair consequences for misbehavior, and offer support to help students learn and grow. We ask parents to work with us in reinforcing these expectations to ensure all students succeed in the dorm community.

Safety and Emergency Procedures

Fire Safety and Drills:

- o Fire alarms (auditory, flashing lights, or vibrating alarms for Deaf students) are in place.
- o Evacuate immediately when the fire alarm sounds.
- o Dorm staff will guide all students to the assembly point and conduct attendance checks.
- o Never re-enter the building until cleared. Misuse of fire alarms is a serious offense.
- o Fire drills are practiced regularly to ensure familiarity with the procedure.

Severe Weather (Tornado/Storm) Procedures:

- o For tornadoes or severe storms, move quickly to interior rooms away from windows.
- o Staff will guide Blind students, and Deaf students will receive visual or written instructions.
- o Remain quiet and follow instructions during weather emergencies.
- o For thunderstorms, stay indoors and avoid wired electronics.

Lockdown/Security Emergencies:

- o If a lockdown occurs, go to a secure room, lock the door, and stay quiet.
- o Follow staff guidance and do not open doors except for law enforcement or school officials.
- o Lockdown drills are practiced regularly.
- o Parents will be notified through emergency messaging.

Emergency Notifications:

- o The school uses alarms, PA announcements, and visual strobes to alert students.
- o Emergency information will be given in accessible formats for all students, including ASL and written instructions.

Building Security:

- o Exterior dorm doors are locked at night; do not prop doors open or let unknown people in.
- o Report any suspicious activity to dorm staff or campus security.
- o Security cameras monitor entrances.

Drills and Training:

- o Regular fire, weather, and lockdown drills are conducted.
- o Students are trained on how to call for help and use emergency services (e.g., dialing 911).
- o Blind students are trained on emergency exit locations, and Deaf students are familiar with visual alarm systems.

Emergency Supplies:

- o The dorm has emergency supplies (first aid kits, flashlights, water, and snacks).
- o Backup generators provide power during outages, and shelters are available if evacuation is needed.

Fire Safety Every Day:

- o No candles or open flames in the dorm.
- o Keep pathways clear and know at least two ways out of your area.
- o Report any burning smells and never tamper with fire alarms or extinguishers.

By following these procedures and rules, students help ensure their safety and the safety of others in the dorm. In case of an emergency, stay calm and trust staff to lead you to safety. Parents can feel reassured that safety measures are practiced regularly and local emergency services are involved.

Conclusion:

We hope this Dormitory Student Handbook provides a clear and helpful guide to life in the Arkansas School for the Deaf and Blind dorms. The dormitory

experience is an extension of the classroom – a place to learn independence, practice responsibility, build lifelong friendships, and create memories, all in a safe and supportive environment. By adhering to the guidelines in this handbook, students and families contribute to a positive residential community where Deaf and Blind students live together with mutual respect and understanding.

Please keep this handbook for reference. If you have any questions or need clarification on any policy, reach out to the Residential Life Coordinator or dorm staff. We are excited to partner with you for a successful school year and dormitory experience!

Important Contacts: *(For quick reference – dorm and key staff contacts)*

- **Residential Life Coordinator:** Teresa Doan, (501) 351-5752, teresa.doan@ade.arkansas.gov
- **Head Houseparent (Deaf Dorm):** Rita Jordan – (501) 909-3048
- **Head Houseparent (Blind Dorm):** Darren Thomas – (501) 561-8328
- **Health Services/Nurse:** Main line: (501) 683-4021
 - Deana Shields – (501) 658-0971, deana.shields@ade.arkansas.gov
- **Campus Security (24/7):** (501)749-3832
- **ParentSquare:** Ensure you are signed up; access via app or website for updates.