

Facilitation of Roommate Agreements

In many situations it will be necessary for the RA to be highly involved in facilitating roommate negotiations. In other situations, questions such as: "How did your discussion go?," "Are you anticipating any conflicts?," or "What agreements did you make?" are sufficient to start a dialogue about the process. Whichever approach the RA uses will depend on his/her style and the personalities of the roommates involved.

1. **Explain the purpose** and function of the roommate agreements are to:
 - State needs and desires of each other prior to point of conflict
 - Create mutually agreed to standards for room environment
 - Clarify IU Residence Hall Rules and Regulations (see *RPS A to Z Guide*)

2. **Explain your expectations** for their participation in this task:
 - Respect each other's needs
 - Discuss issues and feelings openly

- Expect some areas of disagreement and be prepared to compromise in those
- Say what is meant, and mean what is said
- Be positive about making the situation work
- Be committed to further communication

3. Discuss and negotiate:

- Issues that are addressed on the survey
- Areas of difference
- Potential conflicts by searching for details

4. Record what is agreed upon:

- Encourage them to be very specific - the more details they outline the more useful this tool will be to you and them
- Explain to them that it is their agreement and that they will keep a copy in the room
- Encourage them to write it...it helps in achieving a sense of ownership

5. Discuss accountability, which includes:

- Their commitment to making the agreement work
- What to do when the agreement has been violated or needs to be changed
- Your role as a resource

6. Discuss re-assessment that:

- Will occur at their request throughout the year
- Will occur at your request as problems arise