



Santa Clara University Campus Safety	Policy Manual
University Housing Room Searches	Effective Date: 10/15/2023

Purpose:

Santa Clara University, as outlined in the housing contract and within policy in the Student Handbook, reserves the right to enter and search University Housing rooms/residences under specific circumstances.

The purpose of this CSS policy is to provide Campus Safety staff members with guidelines for their respective duties during a University Housing room search.

Policy:

Campus Safety Services respects all community members' right to privacy. We are committed to honoring that right while balancing community safety. Campus Safety Services will conduct searches of University housing only during the circumstances outlined below.

Campus Safety may request a room search based on the reasonable suspicion that a policy/law violation has occurred. The search will only be conducted if:

- The request is approved by the Pro Staff (Resident Director) on-duty,

and at least one of the following circumstances is present:

- There is a suspicion of drugs due to strong scent in the room where the occupant denies drug presence in the space
- There is a suspicion of drug distribution, typically stemming from a report, evidence, or possession of excessive amounts of drugs, possession of materials and tools that are connected to drug distribution, or possession of drugs without a prescription, or other illegal drugs

- Noise heard that indicates the presence of alcohol, marijuana or other drugs and occupants deny possession (ping pong and glass sounds; someone yelling, “take this shot” or “pass the pipe”)
- Suspicion of weapons, typically stemming from a report or evidence
- Possible violations of law, such as theft, stolen property, or vandalism
- Concern for personal safety or life, such as an emergency medical situation or welfare check when more information is needed when a student is unresponsive

Residence Life personnel may notice any of the aforementioned and request that Campus Safety Services conduct a search on their behalf.

Procedures:

Upon requesting a room search or being dispatched to a room search request by Residence Life, Campus Safety Services personnel will do the following (not necessarily in order):

Staff Member

- Acknowledge with dispatch personnel receipt of call or intent to conduct search
- Confirm approval of room search with Pro Staff (RD) and request that RL remain on scene
- Notify CSS supervisor of intent to conduct search
- Await the arrival of appropriate number of CSS personnel, at least two, no more than four
- Knock loudly three times, identify yourself, and state purpose - “(knock), (knock), (knock), Campus Safety, open the door, we are here to conduct a room search.”
- Wait several seconds, repeat; use card key to enter room after giving student a reasonable time to open the door
- Acknowledge the resident, identify yourself by name, restate your purpose, request that he/she/they stand by with the other staff member(s) while search is conducted - “Hello John, my name is Jacob Malae, and I’m the Assistant Director of Campus Safety. We are here to conduct a search of your room. Please standby with RL staff. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have when we are through.”
- Make sure room is safe and secure prior to beginning search; do not begin until this is done
- Take photographs upon entry
- Confiscate any contraband and take photos of location found; dispose of properly
- Take photographs upon leaving
- Give resident CSS QR code information and the contact information for the Assistant Director
- Write a detailed report
- Provide report to appropriate campus partners

Dispatcher

- Acknowledge field staff member's intent to search
- Dispatch support personnel and supervisor
- Create a CAD event specifically for the room search; this will allow us to track the event
- Be prepared to contact additional resources to support the search
- Provide case number for all involved and close out event

Supervisor

- Acknowledge the staff member's intent to search
- Respond to the location
- Ensure appropriate procedures are followed
- Support staff member in search
- Address any concerns by Residence Life or resident(s); provide business card
- Repeat CSS QR code information and Assistant Director contact information
- Review report for necessary information (location, time, circumstance, who requested, who approved, result, contraband, photographs, etc) and approve
- Complete Room Search Fact Sheet, scan, and send to the Assistant Director
- Ensure campus partners are provided a copy of report by the end of shift

Safety Considerations:

All searches should be conducted with the safety of all involved parties in mind. The above-listed procedures will be followed, except during these notable exceptions:

- **Searching for a weapon** - if the search being conducted involves a suspected weapon, the resident(s) should not be allowed to remain in the room. They should be asked to remain outside with RL personnel. A separate RL employee will be invited to stay in the room to monitor the search. CSS should not begin any search until it is safe to do so.
- **Locating a suspected lab** - if CSS personnel come across a suspected drug lab, or unknown chemicals inside a room, CSS should immediately vacate the room and evacuate the floor (and possibly the building); SCPD should be notified and take over the investigation; SCFD should be notified as well; CSS should remain in a support role; all other procedures apply.
- **Evidence of a crime scene** - if at any time a room being searched appears to be a location where a suicide, homicide, suspicious death, or assault (physical or sexual) has occurred, CSS staff members should clear and secure the location, contact the Santa Clara Police Department immediately, and continue in a support role.

In each of these examples, the Shift Supervisor will be responsible for notifying the Assistant Director and Director of Campus Safety.

Campus Safety Services will keep annual statistics regarding room searches. This information will be provided to the campus community at the beginning of each school year.

Room Search Fact Sheet