Communication Guidelines

Effective and open communication is both the best preventative measure and the best solution for conflicts that will almost surely arise during your tenancy. When a problem arises, the best way to resolve it is to talk with the individual(s) involved. Many times, if everyone follows a few simple guidelines, the conflict can be resolved with little or no change within the household.

Acknowledgment. Acknowledge the conflict as soon as possible after it occurs. Prompt acknowledgment enables each person involved to address the issues with clarity. Make sure that everyone involved in the conflict is present during the discussion. Parameters need to be set and agreed upon: give everyone equal time to speak, and stick to the issue at hand.

Respect. Respect for each other and each others' feelings is critical. Avoid name-calling, blaming or exaggeration. Review the resolutions together by meeting again at a designated time in the future to check in with each other on how things are going.

Third Party Involvement

Although the guidelines above may work for most conflicts that arise within a household, there are some that may require assistance from a third party. The CHO staff will help you sort through your options.

What is Mediation? The mediation process promotes communication, cooperation, and restoration of relationships by enabling the parties to communicate their information, perceptions and feelings to one another with a neutral third party present. Mediation allows individuals and organizations to maintain control of the decisions that affect their future. Mediation is a voluntary process where participants are free to explore solutions that meet their mutual needs and interests.

Mediators:
- Explore what is important to each party.
- Work toward achieving clarity for each person.
- Help those involved control the outcome.
- Allow all parties the opportunity to talk and be heard.
- Listen to everyone’s viewpoints.
- Ask questions to clarify facts and perspectives.
- Help parties write an agreement, if desired.
- Are available to anyone in the UCSB community.
- Do not make decisions for people.
- Do not decide who is right or wrong.

CHO’s Role. CHO assists hundreds of students with conflicts every year. We will help you talk through the conflict and brainstorm how you might set up a discussion of your own with your roommate(s) or with your property provider. We can help you evaluate the need for a neutral third party and determine if the other parties involved in the dispute are willing to get together for a mediation. These services are free of charge for registered UCSB students, faculty and staff. Please come to our office and pick up a mediation brochure that describes the process in more detail.

Contact us about MEDIATION

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