

# FarmHouse International Fraternity

Director of  
House Operations Resource



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**Director of House Operations Resource**

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## THE CHAPTER AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

The FarmHouse International Fraternity has established the Chapter Award of Excellence as our minimum standards program. It is designed to recognize Chapters that are operating at the performance level outlined in our By-Laws, policies, and handbooks. The criteria for the Chapter Award of Excellence are built upon basic expected performance in the various areas of chapter operations. As an officer of your Chapter, the criteria within your responsibility are identified in the box that follows.

### 17. Public Relations (4 points)

\_\_\_\_\_ *The chapter held a special "dress meal" at least twice per calendar year with a distinguished guest (administrator, faculty member, community leader, etc.). (2 points)*

**1. Guest:** \_\_\_\_\_ **% brothers/pledges attending:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Guest:** \_\_\_\_\_ **% brothers/pledges attending:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### 18. Property Management (4 points)

(SECTION FOR CHAPTERS WITH OWN CHAPTER HOUSE)

\_\_\_\_\_ *The chapter and association have formed a working agreement for which party is responsible for repairs, upkeep, facilities improvements, etc., and both parties are aware of their responsibilities. (1 point)*

**(Attachment #19 - Include copy of chapter/association operating agreement)**

\_\_\_\_\_ *Work duties (clean-up assignments) are understood and shared by all members. (1 point)*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Every member is required to sign a housing contract or membership obligations contract. (1 point)*

**(Attachment #20 - Include sample contract)**

\_\_\_\_\_ *Employment agreements and/or job descriptions (responsibilities) are signed by chapter employees (cook, housemother, RA) and president/treasurer annually. (1 point)*

**(Attachment #21 - Include copy of job descriptions/agreements)**

## **I. Introduction**

Serving as Director of House Operations of a FarmHouse Fraternity is very similar to operating a small business. You must hire personnel, plan meals, follow local and national laws and rules, administer events, follow safety procedures, and manage financial pressures with a budget. This resource has been compiled to assist you in your important role as Director of House Operations in providing a safe, clean, and enjoyable environment for all brothers and guests. It is not intended to be all-inclusive. It is important if you have specific questions or concerns that you contact your Chapter Advisor, Association Board or the International Headquarters.

It is the ultimate responsibility of the Association to ensure that the property it owns and manages is properly maintained. Proper maintenance means a sanitary, structurally sound, regularly inspected, and safe facility. In addition, a properly maintained chapter facility is one that improves and expands as the chapter grows and evolves. The Association has made an investment in the property and structure, so they need to protect that investment. But a chapter house is unique in that it is not a true financial or real estate investment – but an investment in undergraduate chapter to provide a foundation for success and stability. Of course, the undergraduates share responsibility for proper house maintenance. The chapter is responsible for house cleanliness and individuals should be responsible for paying any damages that their actions may cause. Many Associations require a damage deposit from members living in the chapter facility. The Association should also have tenants sign leases and membership agreements holding them responsible for their financial obligations, behavioral responsibilities, and other actions while living in the facility. It's important that a good Operating Agreement is in place between the Chapter and Association outlining which party is responsible for various repairs, services, etc.

## **II. The Director of House Operations**

The Chapter House is the physical manifestation of the chapter on campus, representing the fraternity more than any other symbol. It is a home for all brothers of the chapter – not only the brothers that live there, or the actives, but the alumni as well. Ensuring that the house represents the brotherhood well and provides a haven for all members and their guests is the responsibility of the entire chapter – but it is the Director of House Operations' job to provide direction and leadership. You must ensure that the chapter treats the House with the appropriate care and respect and keep the Association apprised of all pertinent matters regarding the Chapter House.

### **Responsibilities**

- Under the direction of the Association, manage the house and grounds, supervise any staff, and purchase supplies.
- Perform or oversee all basic repairs in the facility – the superintendent of the facility.
- Set a deadline for brothers who wish to move into the chapter facility to secure a room.
- Assign cleanup duties or call general work sessions and inform the VP - Finance of any fines resulting from a lack of participation in this collective responsibility.
- Coordinate with the VP - Recruitment, Director of Alumni Relations and Social & Brotherhood Chair concerning special events to ensure that the Chapter will be in the best possible shape.
- Work with the Association and all chapter members to maintain a safe environment.
- Maintain regular communication with the Association as well as University staff in case of problems related to the physical plant (i.e. major systems, security, insurance)
- Ensure that inspections occur on a monthly basis and the house remains up to code for all appropriate regulations. Develop improvement plans from the inspection results with the Association and chapter on an agreed upon timetable.
- Coordinate security arrangements and responsibilities for vacation periods with the Association and the University.
- Work with the VP Finance and Association Treasurer to set budgets and maintenance priorities for the facility.
- Work to have the chapter and Association work together as partners.

### **Selecting a Director of House Operations**

The choice of a Director of House Operations should include the following criteria:

- A self-motivated Brother who has a strong sense of organization and is a stickler for details.
- A responsible, respected Brother who is cognizant of lease-maintenance agreements, and displays some practical knowledge of or ability in handling carpentry/electrical/plumbing problems.
- A Brother who is capable of keeping the Chapter's public room areas clean on a day-to-day basis and can organize/delegate/motivate the Brothers for work/clean-up functions.

### **III. The Association**

The primary role of the Association is to protect the greatest source of continuity and financial stability for the undergraduate chapter – the House. Chapter membership turns over every four years, but the Association remains constant, with members having a long-term perspective and commitment to the proper care of the chapter and its facility. The Association is the “board of directors” to preserve the significant investment of money, real estate, time put into the chapter by alumni and actives over the years. This “board of directors” usually has five to 12 alumni members, each elected on an annual basis or otherwise, and each responsible for running one aspect of the day-to-day affairs of the corporation. It is highly recommended that the Association have undergraduate representation.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Hold title to the facility and ensure all legal and financial obligations for the property are met.
- Develop long-range plans for the House and establish a timetable for implementation.
- Set priorities for the Association and help the chapter develop its priorities.
- Analyze the long-term structural and financial needs of the chapter facility.
- Foster an active relationship with the chapter and other alumni.
- Provide continuity to chapter through liaison with its Chapter Advisors.
- Recruit and educate new alumni volunteers.
- Communicate regularly with all chapter alumni.
- Be positive role models.
- Collect and disburse Association funds in a timely manner.
- Plan and implement capital improvements on time and on budget.
- Keep Association positions filled with capable alumni.

#### *Relationship with the Chapter (from Housing perspective)*

- Analyze the financial needs of the chapter and identify workable financial goals.
- Assist in establishing firm financial criteria for chapter operations, reviewing budgets.
- Review chapter collections, debt, disbursements, and assist with collections as needed.
- Review risk management, and assist with enforcement as needed.
- Review safety policies and issues, including fire and health codes for the facility.
- Recommend guidelines to ensure steady, perpetual operations.

#### **IV. Property Management**

The chapter facility is the greatest financial asset of the Association/Chapter and must be operated as any commercial property would be. It must be treated well to ensure that it can be inhabited by many generations of students to come or sold for a good price that will enable the Association to build/purchase an even better facility.

##### *Chapter Facility Expectations*

The most important element in keeping the chapter facility in good condition is how the undergraduates conduct themselves while in the facility. They should be expected to treat the home of the chapter with care and should have guidelines for how to do so:

- All members are expected to act as gentlemen and live according to FarmHouse values. Respect and care should be shown at all times towards guests and all members. Each member is responsible for the conduct of his guest.
- The chapter facility and furnishings will be utilized in a manner consistent with the purpose for which they were designed.
- No alcohol or illegal drug use will be permitted on or within the chapter facility/property.
- No smoking should be permitted with the chapter facility.
- Articles will not be taken from a room without the owners consent.
- Individuals will be charged the cost for repairs of damage that they have caused. Damage that is not attributable to an individual shall be billed to all chapter members.
- Chapter should institute quiet hours each evening/overnight to instill atmosphere conducive to high scholarship and sleep.
- No one is allowed on the roof.
- All members will participate in keeping the house clean. House cleaning duties to be divided evenly amongst members, with a set time required for duties to be completed.

##### **Inspections**

The Director of House Operations and a representative from the Association should walk through the chapter facility with a checklist at least once a month (See Section 5). A complete inspection should be done at the beginning and at the end of each academic term. While the focus of the Director of House Operations' inspection will often be for items that are in need of repair, it is important to be aware of local building and safety codes. Any items that are in disrepair and would be grounds for a possible fine from a building inspector or, more importantly, pose a security hazard for tenants should be addressed immediately. After those items have been addressed, you will need to develop a list of priorities and determine how they fit into the budget with the Association.

## V. Additional Resources

### Resource Directory

It is important to keep this list updated with all pertinent contact information (Mobile phones, e-mail addresses, etc.) so that your successor does not have to re-invent the wheel each time a constituent needs to be contacted. You should make sure this information is posted at various locations in the house and kept in your officer notebook, the chapter database, with the Association, and anywhere else pertinent.

- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Utility companies (Electric, Gas, Water, Telephone)
- Insurance Company (Property Insurance and FRMT Liability Insurance)
- Association President
- Vendors & Maintenance Companies
  - Grounds (Paving, Concrete, Landscaping, Roofers, Security)
  - Interior maintenance (Appliances, Flooring/Carpeting, Fire Extinguishers, Fire Alarm, Furniture)
  - Contractors (Carpenters, electrician, plumber, exterminator, Painters, Glass Repair, HVAC)
  - Trash Removal (this can be the biggest obstacle to being a good neighbor, take it seriously!)
- City Building Inspector's Office
- Chapter Advisor
- University Housing Office
- City Health Department
- University Security Office
- FarmHouse International Office

**Sample Inspection Checklist**

<b>Site—Overall</b>	<b><i>Condition</i></b>	<b><i>Comments</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Curbs/Sidewalks	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Parking Areas	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Areas	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Trash containers	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fences/Gates	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Signage	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Lighting (Interior)	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Lighting (Exterior)	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Cleanliness	_____	_____

<b>Building—Overall</b>	<b><i>Condition</i></b>	<b><i>Comments</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Roofs	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gutters	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Windows	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Window screens	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Walls	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Stairs	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hallways	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Balconies	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Mailboxes	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> HVAC/Boiler	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water Heaters	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical system	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Basement	_____	_____

<b>Units—Overall</b>	<b><i>Condition</i></b>	<b><i>Comments</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Doors	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Carpeting	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Walls	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Ceilings	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Paint	_____	_____

- Appliances \_\_\_\_\_
- Plumbing Fixtures \_\_\_\_\_
- Plumbing \_\_\_\_\_
- Intercom \_\_\_\_\_
- Smoke Detectors \_\_\_\_\_

**Bathrooms**

*Condition    Comments*

- Doors \_\_\_\_\_
- Flooring \_\_\_\_\_
- Walls \_\_\_\_\_
- Ceilings \_\_\_\_\_
- Fixtures \_\_\_\_\_
- Showers \_\_\_\_\_
- Plumbing \_\_\_\_\_
- Windows \_\_\_\_\_

**Kitchen**

*Condition    Comments*

- Doors \_\_\_\_\_
- Flooring \_\_\_\_\_
- Walls \_\_\_\_\_
- Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_
- Appliances \_\_\_\_\_
  - Range \_\_\_\_\_
  - Oven \_\_\_\_\_
  - Refrigerator \_\_\_\_\_
  - Freezer \_\_\_\_\_
  - Dishwasher \_\_\_\_\_
  - Disposal \_\_\_\_\_
  - Dispensers \_\_\_\_\_
  - Ice machine \_\_\_\_\_
- Fixtures \_\_\_\_\_
- Plumbing \_\_\_\_\_
- Fire system \_\_\_\_\_

Fire extinguishers \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Common Areas</b>	<b><i>Condition</i></b>	<b><i>Comments</i></b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Doors	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flooring	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Walls	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ceilings	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blinds/Drapes	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Furniture	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fixtures	_____	_____

<b>Security/Safety</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Intercom _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Burglar Alarm _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Locks _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Smoke Detectors _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Battery _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hardwire _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitored _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Extinguishers _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sprinkler System _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Suppression _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fencing _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Escapes/Doors _____	_____	_____
<b>Amenities</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Laundry Rooms _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Washers _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Dryers _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise Equipment _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Pool _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Television/VCR _____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pool Table _____	_____	_____

**Sample Check-in/Check-out Form**

This is similar to an overall inspection form. However, it will focus only on items in a brother's particular room. The brother and the Director of House Operations should use the same form, with signatures indicating the agreed-upon condition of the room. At the end of each term, or minimally year, the form will be updated and reviewed. This will ensure that it is easy to note any changes in the room accordingly and assess any fines or damage bills as may be required.

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