Friday, May 8

Dear Property Managers,

First let me say I hope that all of you are safe during these uncertain times. As you know, our world has changed drastically in recent weeks due to COVID-19. For instance, VCU has shifted courses online for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester, as well as summer courses beginning prior to July 9.

Students who reside off campus and their parents are reaching out to the Dean of Students office for assistance because they are unable to pay rent at this time. Many of these students lost their employment or experienced a significant reduction in work hours. Some parents listed as guarantors on their student's lease find themselves unexpectedly out of work. Our office meets with students to discuss their personal finances, provide guidance in creating a budget, and connect them to resources for food and other necessities.

We understand your business is undoubtedly feeling the effects of this pandemic, even as you continue to support our students. At the same time, we know that many of our students are struggling as they navigate stress caused by the uncertainty of the pandemic, changes to their routines, isolation from friends and social activities, and financial hardships from the loss of jobs and internships. When a student or parent raises concerns related to their housing, we suggest that students and parents contact the manager/landlord where they live, explain their circumstances, and try to work out a payment plan that is acceptable to both parties.

We are aware that some landlords have granted flexibility with rent payment plans, security deposits and guarantees. We are grateful for this showing of support for our students and hope others will show flexibility where they can.

For those students who continue to reside in your properties, we ask that you promote social distancing guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other relevant health and safety guidelines.

Thank you for your continued support of our students. We know that by working together, we will persevere.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions. You can follow us/see updates on our website (https://covid-19.vcu.edu/). (https://covid-19.vcu.edu/).

Best Regards,

Lisa Mathews-Alsworth
Advisor, Dean of Students Office