We would all like to live in a safe, clean neighborhood, and like most cities, Baltimore has laws and codes that are designed to uphold standards of sanitation. If a violation of these laws and codes is suspected, inspectors are sent out to investigate. A citation or fine is issued if the inspector finds a violation. Students are affected by this if the violation occurred on the property they rent. In most cases, the landlord can legally pass on the amount of the fine to the lessees.

Students are often fined for failure to maintain their property. Unless your landlord specifically agrees to take care of any of the following, you are required to:

- Keep the grass from growing higher than 8 inches because this helps to control rat harborage.
- Keep the grounds clear of litter and debris. This includes not only the lawn, but also any adjoining sidewalks or alleyways.
- Remove snow and ice from adjoining sidewalks, steps, and alleys.
- Place household garbage in garbage cans with tightly-fitting lids.
- Remove illegal furniture from the porch. It is illegal to have upholstered furniture (sofas, stuffed chairs, recliners, loveseats) on your porch. Rats, mice and other animals will use these areas to nest. Only metal, wood or plastic “patio” type furniture is allowed on your front or rear porches and yards.

Jonathan Walter
Student/Community Liaison, JHU
443-240-4196 - liaison@jhu.edu
http://web.jhu.edu/liaison
For assistance with city, neighbor and neighborhood concerns.

Off-Campus Housing Office
Wolman Hall, Room 102 - 410-516-7961
For assistance with landlord issues and referrals to city agencies as well as general information about life off-campus. Listings for available rentals are online at jhu.edu/hds/offcampus.

Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc
410-243-6007
A local non-profit tenant rights organization. While not able to provide legal advice they are very familiar with housing code and law for the city and can help with resolving issues arising with landlords.

Central Legal Aid
500 E. Lexington St - 410-539-5340
A private non-profit law firm that offers free legal advice.

Maryland Attorney General’s Office
oag.state.md.us/consumer
The Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division has a mediation unit that can help you try to resolve a dispute with a landlord.

Baltimore City Public Services
baltimorecity.gov/services
For information about ordinances, parking permits, trash and recycling information and other city services.
For many of you, this is your first time living away from home. You are now responsible for knowing all the things about being an adult member of the community. Here are just some of the most common laws and ordinances that every student should know. This is not meant to be a comprehensive list of all laws, ordinances, rules or regulation.

Some common things that you can be arrested or issued a citation for in Baltimore:

- Possessing or consuming alcohol if you are under the age of 21.

- Using or possessing a “fake” ID. False representation of your age is illegal.

- Providing alcohol to persons under the age of 21.

- Possessing an unregistered keg of beer. It is also illegal to alter, remove, or otherwise tamper with the registration.

- Possessing or drinking from an open container of alcohol in public. DO NOT leave a party with a cup, bottle or can. This is true for people of any age, not just under 21.

- Failing to obey the lawful order of a police officer. This is a very common charge that students often find themselves facing. If a police officer tells you to do something, do it immediately. This is not the time you should pick to debate your “constitutional rights” with a police officer, especially if you have been drinking. “Failure to obey” often leads to more serious offenses such as resisting arrest or assaulting a police officer.

- Urinating in public. It’s easy to think that you’re just one person and it is an emergency so how bad could this be, right? Multiply that idea by the number of similarly minded people walking around on a given night and you can imagine what a bad situation that would be. This is your community, too. You don’t want to live in a bathroom. Depending on the incident, you could face other charges including indecent exposure.

- Disturbing the peace and/or disorderly conduct. There is a wide range of charges that can result from loud parties, yelling, screaming, playing loud music, fighting, and other disruptive behavior.

- Destroying, vandalizing or stealing property. Everyone knows this is illegal, but for some reason it is still one of the more common problems. The value of the object damaged or stolen is directly related to the level of the crime you can be charged with.

Do your part to keep the community a safe and enjoyable place to live!

If you have any questions or problems there are several places to go for assistance:

**Jonathan Walter**  
Student/Community Liaison, JHU  
443-240-4196 - liaison@jhu.edu  
*For assistance with city, neighbor and neighborhood concerns*

**Legal Aid Bureau**  
500 E. Lexington Street  
410-5395340  
*The Legal Aid Bureau, Inc. is a private non-profit law firm that offers advice.*