

# Vandalism Response Protocol

## Overview and Philosophy

At John Carroll University, we recognize that every on-campus student is a key member of their residential community and has the opportunity to engage others and contribute to its success. Part of this community membership requires being challenged to high standards of personal behavior and responsibility. (ASACCU, Best Practices) Being responsible is not simply the acceptance of one's actions and taking ownership over personal behavior, but "includes evaluating the situation morally, discerning, deciding, and taking action." (Dean Brakley, S.J.) As individuals living in community, residential students are expected to consider their personal behavior in the context of others, before acting.

### **Community Responsibility and Respect**

Living in community is a truly educational experience. By interacting with people of different backgrounds and interests, students form rich and lasting relationships with one another. These bonds will help them on their journey of becoming men and women for and with others.

The residential community consists of students, live-in professional staff, and members of the Facilities and Housekeeping staffs. Respect for each member of the community and the role that they play brings about the creation of an environment that is conducive to academic, social, and emotional success. Vandalism, disrespect of community members, and physical damage to the facility can impact this environment and disrupt the success of the community.

### **Defining Vandalism Terms**

*Vandalism* is defined as any intentional behavior which causes damage, when that behavior violates policy, or is reckless or negligent, in that a reasonable person would know that engaging in that behavior could cause damage. It is the willful or malicious destruction, defacement, or damage of public or private property.

*Community Damage* is defined as any damage that affects the greater residential community or impacts the everyday needs of residential students. When unattributable to an individual for responsibility, the community is ultimately affected by being responsible for this damage.

*Accidental Damage* is defined as any damage caused in the course of an activity in that a reasonable person would not know that engaging in that behavior could cause damage. Failure to report accidental damage will be treated as vandalism.

*Acts of Vandalism or Community Damage that are of a bias nature will be reported through the Bias Reporting System.*

## **Understanding Vandalism**

The Office of Residence Life's creation of the Vandalism Response Protocol is steeped in our identity as a Jesuit Catholic Institution but also is influenced by data and informed by research:

### **Institution Specific Student Feedback**

In the 2015-2016 Residential Student Feedback Survey, students responded to the following question:

When anonymous acts of vandalism and intolerance occur, the responsible party is often unknown. If you knew who was responsible, what would most likely motivate you to come forward with information about the incident?

33% Responded: "As a member of the community, it is my responsibility to come forward, so I don't need an incentive."

26% Responded: "Ability to keep your identity anonymous (known to administrators, but not known to fellow students)."

These were the top two responses, pointing to a recognition that a majority of students view it as a responsibility to come forward, but that students are not always comfortable being identified as those who report.

### **Research Informed**

"The Residence Hall Vandalism Problem: A Model of Examining Destructive Behavior"

- o Six categories of vandalism presented by Cohen (1968):
  - Acquisitive vandalism
  - Tactical vandalism
  - Ideological vandalism
  - Vindictive vandalism
  - Play vandalism
  - Malicious vandalism
- o Common factors among vandals
  - Men
  - Freshmen
  - Drinking alcohol prior to incidents
  - Generally seem satisfied with the quality of life in residence halls and at the university
  - Lived on campus with most acts happening within their own hall
  - Under some form of personal stress (most frequently from relationships with members of the opposite sex)

- o There is equal possibility that an individual will engage in any of the six types of vandalism acts
- o Vandalism is usually a spontaneous act arising from group interaction and situational factors

#### “Vandalism in College Residence Halls: The Picture From Archival Data”

- o Previous research found that vandalism was more likely in larger residence halls with a great proportion of first-year students where more TV viewing occurred
- o Aggressive acts are more likely to occur in areas where density is likely to increase like stairwells and hallways
- o School violence is likely to increase when a school’s facilities are outdated
- o If wear and tear is not addressed, more vandalism could be expected
- o Vandalism is more likely to happen in residence halls with a higher proportion of men than women
- o Consider ways to subdivide the halls into smaller units
- o Designs that promote getting to know one’s neighbors appear to help lower vandalism costs

#### “Reducing Vandalism in Residence Halls”

- o Calls for a comprehensive approach to vandalism control
- o Project PRIDE (Promoting Responsibility in Damage Education)
  - Three main goals:
    - Increased communication between building staff and custodial staff
    - Increased student awareness of vandalism in the halls and how communities are held responsible through community billing
    - Increased student behaviors which demonstrate pride in their living areas
  - Vandalism control needs to be an on-going conversation
    - E.g. weekly agenda item at staff meetings
  - RDs meeting weekly with custodial supervisors
  - Work orders need to be reported and attended to in a timely fashion
  - Publically advertise when damage occurred and how much will be charged
  - Keeping track of how long floors go without incidents of vandalism
    - Rewards associated with this idea

### Learning Outcomes

As a result of the student(s) participating in the Vandalism Response Protocol, we expect they will learn:

- To advocate for their interests and the community
- To report acts of vandalism, bias, and/or damage

- To share information about incidents of vandalism
- To utilize available resources to attain a resolution

### Response Protocol

The Vandalism Response Protocol will begin when an act of vandalism is reported to the Office of Residence Life. This report may come from any member of the residential community, but traditionally comes from a Resident Assistant, a Housekeeper, or a Facilities staff member. All damage should be reported to the Resident Assistant or JCUPD immediately. Quick response to damage may avoid possible safety hazards. After the incident is reported, the following will occur:

- An **investigation** will begin involving photos of the damage, talking to individuals in the community in an effort to identify those responsible, and a review of access technology such as card access system reports and video surveillance
- **Clean-up and repairs** to secure the facility, ensure safe passage around affected area, and to begin evaluating any long term maintenance response needed
- A **community notice** and request for information will be sent via email to all affected members of the community. This notice includes an anonymous tip line for those who wish to not be identified
- A **visible posting** for the community on the site of the incident identifying that vandalism or bias occurred, damaging the facility. The visible posting will remain in place until permanent repairs are completed
- An **investigation report** will be completed and entered into the conduct process if an individual(s) is identified as responsible or comes forward
- Should the vandalism not be attributable to an individual(s), the cost of **community damage** will be **divided** among the residents of the community evenly according to the housing contract and deducted from the remaining housing deposit at the end of the academic year or time of departure of the student from housing (semester)

This series of events outlined in the protocol will take place as time allows, as the course of an investigative process may take variable amounts of time. The Office of Residence Life is committed to transparency and will send the community notice within one business week of the vandalism report.

#### *Continued or Repetitive Acts of Vandalism*

Should a repetitious or pattern of vandalism affect a particular community, the following steps may be taken after the Office of Residence Life reviews the situation:

- Increased Presence of JCUPD Officers in the Community
- Increased Presence of Residence Life Staff in the Community
- Locking of Wings/Hallways/Community Space to reduce traffic
- Mandatory Community Meetings
- Ban on Guests to Community Space

### **Vandalism and Community Damage Excerpts from Housing Agreement**

6.03 Damages that occur to public areas (e.g. restrooms, lounges, study rooms, etc.) that are not attributable or chargeable to a specific individual or group shall be equally shared by the residents of the living area where those damages occur

JCU may assess charges against the security deposit for damage to or loss of JCU property, both in student spaces and in public areas

### **Proactive Work and Intervention**

Annual work is done to intervene with vandalism and disruptive behavioral decisions that affect the facility and community.

By creating collaborative bonds between staffs within Residence Life, Housekeeping, and Facilities, we work to have information shared about those working within the residence hall to establish a connection between student members of the community and those whose labor each day allows for a developmental environment. Staff in all departments are trained and expected to provide high levels of customer service with students and to engage with them to develop a strong community rapport.

Additional proactive work areas planned:

- A commitment to transparency in sharing the Vandalism Response Protocol with the greater JCU Community
- Making resources available to students, faculty, staff, and community members around incidents of vandalism
- Ensuring a rapid repair response to any vandalism of defaced area in order to continue to keep facilities at a high level of quality
- Continuing to identify target risk areas for improvement to reduce likely zones of vandalism
- Incentives to Provide Information
- Pride in Community Activities, Programming, and Identity Development
- Stop, Pause, Think Before you Act campaign during Safety Week each Fall Semester
- Monthly meetings between Area Coordinators and Housekeeping Supervisors
- Continued installation and use of cameras in common area locations and continued installation and use of the Card Access System

- Tracking of Vandalism Free Zones and rewarding associated with these areas

### Website Resources

- Posting of Vandalism Protocol
- Example Letters to Community
- Timeline for Community Damage Billing
- Posting of Damage Reports for Information
- Posting of Damage Cost Guidelines
- Example of Visible Posting “Hate Happened Here”, “Destruction Happened Here”

### FAQs:

- *How will Community Area Damage Billing be assessed?*
  - Community Area Damage is assessed from the investigations and work orders listed as “vandalism” that took place in common spaces and are not able to be attributable to any particular individual(s). This is applied to the student housing deposit first, before being assessed to the student account
- *If I report information related to an incident of vandalism, can I do so anonymously?*
  - Yes you can report anonymously through the JCUPD Anonymous Tip Line below:
 

**24-Hour Tip Line: 216.397.1515**

**Submit online tip**

The JCUPD has established a confidential tip line for members of the John Carroll community to provide information regarding unlawful behavior on campus. Individuals with information can call **extension 1515**, or, if off campus, **216.397.1515**, and leave their tip.
- *Is there a reward for providing information related to vandalism?*
  - Depending on the level of damage associated with the vandalism, a reward may be offered for information as determined by the Office of Residence Life. This information would be shared in the **Vandalism Notice and Request for Information** email
- *What can I do to help stop vandalism?*
  - You can become involved in the community and get to know the staff working in the Residence Halls. In addition, if you know information regarding an incident of damage or vandalism, please advocate for your community and contact your Resident Assistant or report to JCUPD

- *Are there ways to be proactive against issues of bias and vandalism?*
  - Yes, become involved with programs or activities and continue to self-educate around issues of bias and intolerance. In addition, offer feedback to the Office of Residence Life on the Vandalism Response Protocol
  
- *How do I report vandalism?*
  - You can report via email to [jcureslife@jcu.edu](mailto:jcureslife@jcu.edu), submit a work order, call x1234 or 1-216-397-1234 for JCUPD, or by talking with a member of JCUPD or the Residence Life Staff such as your Resident Assistant