

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CHAPTER HOUSE OPERATIONS

#### BITS AND PIECES OF ADVICE FOR HOUSE DIRECTORS

- No matter how “cool” you are, students will always listen to other students first.
- Sometimes NO is the best answer.
- You cannot be a good mentor to anyone without building a solid relationship first.
- Give students ownership of the project and/or process.
- Listen to both sides of the story.
- Challenge the process.
- Sometimes you just have to laugh at it all.
- Everyone loves recognition.
- When it stops being fun, move on.
- Give students the freedom to fail, no matter how hard it is to watch.
- Choose your battles.
- Don’t neglect your personal life.
- Have an open door and an open heart.
- Advise, guide, but never decide.
- You have two eyes, two ears, and one mouth; use them in this proportion and in this order.
- Hold students accountable for their words and actions.
- Just because you have seen it, done it, or confronted it before doesn’t mean the students have.
- Empower others to do their jobs; do not micro-manage.

- If you only affect one student, you are a success.
- Challenge is the best catalyst for change.
- Never lower your expectations to meet those of your students.
- You cannot change patterns of behavior overnight.
- Always act in accordance with your expectations.
- Remember that students are in the process of growing and learning.
- That which does not kill you will make you stronger.
- Students will go the extra mile if you do.
- Learn every member's name and use it often.
- Every encounter you have with students is a teachable moment.
- Keep a personal file of thank-you notes that you have received to review during the dark moments.
- Self-disclosure is good...but only to a point.
- People hear what you say but believe what you do.
- Do what is right/ethical and those actions will most likely address liability concerns.
- Being a house director is not a popularity contest.
- Create professional and personal support networks.
- A lot of things will happen over which you have no control—worry only about the things you can control.
- The dynamics of the house change every time one new person moves in or someone moves out.
- The dynamics of the leadership of the chapter change each time a new officer is elected.

## OPENING THE CHAPTER HOUSE

1. Meet with chapter officers and the alumni/ae board to determine the opening dates.
2. Check that all lights are working, both inside and outside.
3. Review the heating and cooling system operation procedures, and ensure that qualified personnel have inspected all equipment.
4. Prepare a list of vendors and repair company phone numbers.
5. Have emergency numbers posted by every phone.
6. Inspect the kitchen and public areas of the house to ensure that they are properly cleaned.
7. Post safety rules and procedures in appropriate places.
8. Have a key check-out list ready, and have all keys ready to distribute (in some cases, this may be the house manager's responsibility).
9. Prepare and post the first week's menus.\*
10. Make sure health and kitchen inspections have been completed and licenses have been issued.
11. Arrange for lawn maintenance, trash collection, phone service, exterminator service, etc.
12. Hire all employees and conduct a training/orientation session; set up staff schedule.
13. Finalize the budget and have petty cash on hand.
14. Purchase necessary food and housekeeping supplies.\*  
\* see starting the Kitchen Operation Below

## STARTING THE KITCHEN OPERATION

1. Inventory all equipment.
2. Check to see that everything is in operating condition.
3. Inventory all food and supplies.
4. Hire all necessary personnel.
5. Clean the kitchen thoroughly.
6. Set up cleaning procedures and establish an on-going cleaning schedule.
7. Establish kitchen rules.
8. Set hours for meal service.
9. Determine the number of meals to be served and establish a budget by meal, day, month, etc.
10. Meet with chapter officers to create an annual chapter calendar that includes important events from the university calendar, major holidays, council events, community events, and chapter traditions such as game days (home and away), open house, parents' weekend, etc.
11. Establish a plan for getting chapter members' menu suggestions.
12. Plan the first two weeks' menus, and order the necessary food items.
13. Put together paperwork and/or computer programs for kitchen operations (e.g. ordering forms, inventory, schedules, etc.).
14. Have keys available for checkout.

15. Begin planning centerpieces, decorations, and treats for special occasions.
16. Attend a workshop for food handlers.
17. Choose vendors based on company reputation, quality of products, cost, ease and flexibility of ordering procedures, delivery procedures, billing procedures,
18. availability of needed items vs. minimum order sizes, service, extras (e.g. sample menus, recipes, special promotions), and knowledge of sales people.
19. Remember recruitment and exam weeks are very different from "normal" weeks.

## CLOSING THE CHAPTER HOUSE

1. Instruct residents to remove all personal items by date/time.
2. Dispose of all perishable food and supplies.
3. Ensure that the entire house is cleaned.
4. Inform city and/or university police and the Fraternity/Sorority Life Office of the name, address, email, and cell phone number of the person responsible for the house, as well as the contact information for emergency situations. Be sure to inform them of special situations (e.g. construction, summer rentals, meetings, etc.).
5. Set furnaces on 55 degrees; set air conditioning units to 90 degrees.
6. Leave all utilities on.
7. Disconnect refrigerators, freezers, ice machines, soda machines, and personal refrigerators.
8. Unplug TVs, radios, computers, stereos, etc.
9. Empty all indoor garbage containers.
10. Tightly secure all outdoor garbage containers and arrange for a final pickup.
11. Store or secure valuable articles such as silver, artwork, and televisions.
12. Store outdoor furniture and other portable items.
13. Turn on timers for outside lights.
14. Set alarms where applicable; replace batteries as appropriate.
15. Collect all keys from residents, cooks, and others.
16. Arrange for mail holding and/or pickup.
17. Set answering machine for house phones.
18. Leave blinds, curtains, and drapes open/closed.
19. Stop newspaper delivery.
1. 20. Lock all windows and doors.

## SAFETY CONCERNS

1. Schedule regular inspections every three months with the house director, chapter president, house manager, and an alum representative. Use a written checklist to ensure consistency.
2. Pay attention to traffic areas, particularly doorways, railings, stairways, halls, carpeting, floors, and windows. Regular inspection of fire escapes to make sure they are clear of obstacles is essential.

3. Schedule and know how to do fire safety inspections.
4. Work with the city fire department and house manager to schedule regular, assisted fire drills.
5. Connect the fire alarm system directly to the fire department.
6. Secure fire escapes to prevent unauthorized entry.
7. Schedule regular cleaning, service, and inspections of all kitchen equipment, especially stoves, deep fryers, exhaust hood filters, and fire extinguishers.
8. Schedule and know how to do the biannual health inspections.
9. Restrict access to dangerous areas such as roofs, furnace rooms, and fuse boxes.
10. Keep the house locked at all times. Require guests to knock: the only exception should be during social events when door monitors are greeting guests.
11. Install deadbolts on all doors.
12. Lock all ground access windows.
13. Install outdoor lighting; floodlights in front and security lights in back are the best way to deter chapter house vandalism and arson.
14. Greet unescorted strangers. Confront everyone, even students, and ask if you can help them.
15. Designate "key" alumni/ae and give them keys so they can check the house during vacation periods.
16. Keep a photo inventory of valuable items.
17. Have heating and air conditioning equipment inspected and serviced annually. Develop a written maintenance program for changing furnace filters, light bulbs, exit lights, etc.
15. Make sure the parking lot is well-lit.
16. Check the credentials of salespersons, vendors, repairmen, and delivery people prior to admittance into the house.
17. Do background checks on kitchen and cleaning staff.

18. Have the fireplace and chimney cleaned periodically. Do not use flammable liquids to start the fire, keep the fireplace enclosed when in use, and keep combustibles clear of the hearth.

19. Limit the use of extension cords and portable heaters.

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

### SUGGESTIONS

Have a ransom box—any items left in public areas are placed in the box, and members must pay one dollar to get them back.

When checking out tools, require a driver's license as a deposit to ensure the items are returned.

Give the tool box to the house manager.

Keep a feminine product emergency kit in fraternity guest bathrooms and also in sorority guest bathrooms during recruitment.

Keep hand sanitizer handy.

Tool boxes are just ways to make life easier. Create your own based on the needs of your house and the chapter. Keep the boxes in secure places and use for emergencies or when time is of essence. It is not the house director's job to provide these items for the members' personal use.

### GENERAL TOOL BOX

- masking tape
- super glue
- wood glue
- Elmer's glue
- graph paper
- construction paper
- jumper cables
- hot glue gun
- double stick tape
- ice scraper/de-icer
- gas meter wrench
- scissors
- flashlight
- fire extinguisher
- hammer
- screwdrivers (large and small; regular & phillip's)
- electrical tape

- fuses
- batteries (extra batteries)
- nails
- tacks
- extension cords
- soap or candle wax (for tight drawers)
- toothpaste or putty (for holes in walls)
- plunger
- small saw
- duct tape
- picture-hanging hooks
- coil of very thin wire
- fishing line
- yardstick
- retractable tape measure
- safety-edge razor blade or x-acto knife
- paint brush
- small chisel
- pliers (regular and needle nose)
- WD-40

#### LAUNDRY ROOM TOOL BOX

- scissors
- flashlight (extra batteries)
- fire extinguisher
- bleach
- detergent and softener
- sewing repair kit (thread, needles, safety pins, straight pins, etc.)
- spot remover
- blackboard or message board over the washers and dryers to write the name of the person who has clothes in the machine
- spray starch
- iron and ironing board
- Goodwill box (for unclaimed items or donations)
- change machine
- clean the dryer lint filter (post a sign to remind users)
- phone number for repairman
- trash can
- extra hangers

#### "JUST IN CASE" TOOL BOX

- package mailing supplies (labels, tape, stamps)
- Fed Ex and UPS forms and flat rate mail boxes

- name tags
- light bulbs
- masking tape
- markers
- newsprint
- power plug adapters
- extension cords
- room freshener/Febreeze
- pencils, pens, paper, envelopes
- paper clips
- safety pins
- bathroom scales
- stamps (sell them; don't give them away)
- telephone book
- stapler (extra staples)
- change for a \$20

### KITCHEN TOOL BOX

- scissors
- flashlight (extra batteries)
- fire extinguisher(s)
- aloe for burns
- hand sanitizer
- baking soda
- Swiss Army knife
- recycling guide
- conversion tables
- emergency substitutes
- maps of campus and of the city
- things to do and/or places to dine locally
- rubber and disposable gloves
- emergency info related to food allergies
- kit for working with body fluids
- list of favorite restaurants in town
- phone numbers for pizza delivery places
- jar opener
- ice packs

### FIRST AID TOOL BOX

- flashlight (extra batteries)
- fire extinguisher
- emergency phone numbers
  - fire
  - police
  - poison control center



- rape crisis center
- emergency contact and medical
- information on all members
- first aid instruction book
- tweezers
- thermometer
- feminine hygiene products
- heating pad
- mouth protector for CPR
- first aid kit with band aids, ace bandage, eyewash, Tylenol, Pepto Bismol, etc.  
(students should help themselves; house directors should NOT dispense medicine)

Sample Inventory List

Room Or Category HOUSEHOLD INVENTORY Page

Item Quantity Description

(Brand, Model, Serial #, Features, Etc.)

Date

Purchased

Or Acquired

Cost/Value

When

Acquired

Appraised

Value

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appraised

Value

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appraised

Value

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Resident Emergency Information Card

RESIDENT EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD

Name (First Last)	Nickname	Birthdate	Age
Major	Yr. in School	Expected Grad. Date	
Email			

First Parent/Guardian

Name (First Last) Cell Phone  
 Address (Street or P.O. Box Number)  
 City State Zip  
 Email  
 Second Parent/Guardian  
 Name (First Last) Cell Phone  
 Address (Street or P.O. Box Number)  
 City State Zip  
 Email  
 Special Health Needs  
 Allergies  
 Medications Taken on a Regular Basis

In Case of an Emergency, Please Notify  
 Name (First Last) Cell Phone  
 Address (Street or P.O. Box Number) Work Phone  
 City State Zip  
 Local Physician Local Dentist  
 Phone Phone  
 Health Insurance Provider Number  
 Religious Information Pertinent in a Medical Situation

Car (Model Color License # University Permit # House Permit #)

House Key  
 Date Issued Room Deposit Key Returned  
 Key # Key Deposit Refund Date

Additional Information

**HOUSE DIRECTORS CAN SAVE THEIR CHAPTERS MONEY**

**FOOD BUDGET**

1. Build a strong relationship with the food vendor sales representatives.
2. Take advantage of sale items and in-season produce.
3. Check orders carefully. Don't forget to check the prices as well.
4. Allow chapter members to make sample menus to help ensure that they'll like the menu.
5. Do a food survey each term.
6. Designate specific days each week as Guest Day. Then choose entrees that are less expensive for those days.
7. Serve a hot breakfast only two times a week instead of every day.
8. Supervise the amount of food the cook is preparing to eliminate waste.

9. Watch the food that is being thrown out to determine unpopular choices.
10. Insist that the house corporation give you the dollar amount of the food budget.
11. Divide the total annual food budget by ten equal months. Then keep track of where you stand each month and plan accordingly. Tighten the budget when you're behind or enjoy special, more expensive items when you're ahead. You won't be unpleasantly surprised at the end of the year. Spend the full budgeted amount—the members deserve it!
12. Don't offer bonuses to cooks who stay under budget.
13. Learn about food purchasing options by going to trade shows and comparing prices.
14. Buy bread products at the day-old bakery.
15. Schedule fewer deliveries.
16. Get bids for food products.
17. Make good use of leftovers.
18. Check out prices at Sam's Club and other volume vendors and challenge vendors to meet those prices.
19. Purchase in bulk quantities (if you have adequate storage).
20. Alternate meat entrees with vegetarian entrees (1-2/week).
21. Keep accurate daily/weekly records of money spent.
22. Keep track of numbers of people attending meals at special events. It will help estimate the number to expect from year to year.

## OVERALL KITCHEN OPERATION

1. Have a congenial staff who are willing to help keep costs down—give them ownership in decisions by allowing them to have input.
2. Review kitchen operation rules and enforce them consistently.
3. Praise the staff for work well done.
4. Meet weekly with the cook to monitor the purchases and the budget limitations.
5. Make sure that food doesn't "go out the back door" (i.e. employee and/or member theft).
6. Have a self-serve breakfast.
7. Buy cleaning and paper products on sale.
8. Install a time clock for kitchen employees.
9. Turn off kitchen exhaust fans when not cooking.
10. Use center-pull paper towels to cut down on waste.
11. Lock the kitchen.

## APPLIANCES

1. Purchase a maintenance contract and schedule preventive maintenance.
2. Solicit bids before purchasing new appliances.
3. Clean appliances thoroughly after each use.
4. Buy good quality—it will pay off in the long run.
5. Establish an annual equipment budget, and spend it!
6. Unplug appliances and equipment during the summer.
7. Unplug computers during vacation periods.

8. Keep instructions for appliances accessible.

## DINING SERVICES

1. Serve buffet style—it helps prevent waste.
2. Have housekeepers help in the kitchen and dining room after completing their housekeeping assignments.
3. Do not serve lunch on Saturday or Sunday (except on ballgame days).
4. Do not serve an evening meal on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.
5. Have a sit-down formal meal once a week.
6. Don't hire servers in a sorority; let the chapter members do the serving.
7. Purchase table linens instead of using a service.

## HOUSE MAINTENANCE

1. Get estimates on projects over \$500.
2. Ask other house directors for references on companies.
3. Hire one handyman to work one hour per day so things are taken care of immediately.
4. Schedule frequent meetings with the house manager.
5. Don't be guilty of deferred maintenance—it's more cost-effective to repair a small problem before it escalates into a larger one.
6. Change filters on a regular basis. Keep records of the dates, sizes, and locations.
7. Use a handyman for repairs instead of paying the cost for a licensed plumber.
8. Implement penalties for false fire alarms.
9. Ask the housing corporation to install ultra-low-flow toilets.
10. Purchase surge protectors, compact fluorescent light bulbs, on-off sensors, etc.
11. Suggest ceiling fans for individual study rooms.
12. Have drains cleaned in the shower stalls on a bi-weekly basis.
13. Buy cases of copier paper on sale rather than one ream at a time.
14. Recycle!
15. Use reverse osmosis water systems.
16. Schedule services (exterminator, yard work, deliveries, etc.).
17. Negotiate payback on vending machines.
18. Have chapter members stock the pop machines instead of having the company do it.
19. Charge members if there are continual problems.
20. Install water-saving devices in showers.
21. Use motion detectors for night lights in bathrooms.
22. Change smoke alarm batteries on a regular schedule.

## HOUSEKEEPING

1. Ask the housekeepers to report maintenance needs (e.g. dripping faucets, non-functioning toilets, malfunctioning doors or windows, etc.).
2. Ask the residents to fill out a "work request order" form when they recognize maintenance needs.

## VACATION PERIODS

1. Have the trash dumpster removed during the summer months.
2. Turn off phones, cable TV, internet connections, etc. during the summer (unless it costs more to have them re-connected).
3. Close the house during the summer months for maintenance and repairs.
4. Notify campus security when the house is closed.
5. Adjust the thermostats for an empty house (50° in winter and 80° in the summer).
6. Close draperies to keep out heat and sun.
7. Unplug non-essential electrical items.
8. Make sure all trash is emptied.
9. Secure all doors and windows.
10. Use night lights/timers for lighting.

## FOR THE HOUSE DIRECTOR

### HOW TO FIND A HOUSE DIRECTOR SUBSTITUTE

On that rare and wonderful weekend away, you may be required by your housing corporation to find a substitute.

Ask the housing corporation the following questions:

- a) Who is responsible for finding a substitute?
- b) What are his/her duties?
- c) What will they be paid?
- d) Who is qualified?

If you are responsible for hiring a substitute, look for names from the following:

- a) the house corporation
- b) the chapter advisory board
- c) the Fraternity/Sorority Life Office
- d) chapter members
- e) other house directors