

# Housing and Dining: Petition for Release or Exemption

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke works to ensure that our students feel supported and engaged in all aspects of their experience, including, but not limited to, their room and board arrangements. We acknowledge the correlation between supportive, on-campus living and student participation, and we value the positive impact this correlation has on retention, success, and graduation rates.

The academic achievement of our students is a top priority on our campus, and student retention and engagement are essential to achieving this mission. According to research, students living in university-provided housing do better academically and are more satisfied with their college experience than those students who commute or live off-campus.

**First- and second-year students are required to live on campus as part of our freshman and sophomore residency requirement. Those residing in a residence hall are required to hold a meal plan.** To ensure access to well-balanced meals prepared in a healthy environment, a meal plan is required for residents in the residence halls (Pine, Oak, Belk, North and Cypress). Kitchens provided in these communities are for occasional and communal needs only and are not equipped to provide meal preparation for individual students. Because they have fully functional kitchens, our on-campus apartment residents are not obligated to purchase a meal plan, but it is strongly recommended that they do so.

Housing & Residence Life and Sodexo collaborate closely with students to handle concerns such as housing accommodations and dietary restrictions.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PETITION FOR EXEMPTION AND RELEASE PROCESSES?

The **"Petition for Exemption"** process is reserved for students who meet specified qualifications to waive their dining or residency requirement. **This should be completed before signing a housing agreement.**

- If approved, the requirement for a meal plan is automatically released as well.
- If denied, the student will be bounded by the Freshmen and Sophomore Residency Requirement.

The **“Petition for Release”** process is for students who have signed either a housing or dining agreement and is reserved for students who have a **significant and unforeseen change** that occurred after the agreement was signed that prevents them from upholding their contractual obligation.

- A student can petition a release from their housing agreement, dining agreement, or both.
- If approved for a housing release, the required meal plan is automatically released.

Petitions for release or exemption, solely for the purpose of living in off-campus housing or to commute from home, will not be approved.

Any approved petitions are subject to the university’s refund policy, cancellation fees and could be prorated based on usage. **Based on the housing agreement you signed, release from your housing agreement will result in a \$500 cancellation fee.**

A release or exemption is only applicable for the academic year for which you request and must be resubmitted each academic year.

## **PROCEDURE**

Residents/applicants may complete a petition for release from their agreement or an exemption from the housing and/or dining requirement by completing the attached form(s). Release requests are then reviewed by a committee comprised of the following team members:

- Two (2) representatives from Housing & Residence Life, appointed by the Director of Housing & Residence Life
- One (1) representative from Admissions
- One (1) representative from Financial Aid
- One (1) representative from Auxiliary & Business Services

The review committee meets weekly during peak times of the year as well as on a needed basis during other times of the year. At minimum, three voting members of the review team must be present to make decisions on petitions.

A decision will be made within 10 business days of receiving your request, unless otherwise communicated. The decision will be sent to the students UNCP email address with any additional information that may be required.

A student can appeal their petition decision. Appeals are elevated to the Director of Housing & Residence Life for housing petitions and the Director of Auxiliary & Business Services for dining petitions. Their decision is final and conclusive.

## DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

Based on the justification of your petition for release or exemption, documentation and any supportive materials could be required, but is always helpful in helping the committee make a decision on your case.

The following justifications have required documentation needed. Other special needs not outlined below are on a case-by-case basis and should be supported with a detailed, descriptive reason for the request, including any supportive documentation.

*Most dining requests will fall under the "other special need" category.*

JUSTIFICATION	REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION
<b>Legally married and living with spouse</b>	Marriage license
<b>A parent/guardian with legal custody of children</b>	Birth certificate and/or supporting documentation
<b>21 years of age on or before Aug. 1 (fall semester) or Jan. 1 (spring semester)</b>	No documentation is required. The committee will review student account details.
<b>Veteran</b>	Official documentation

**Enrolled in an academic program that is offered fully online**

No documentation is required. The committee will review student account details.

**Transferring 24+ credit hours from another college or university**

No documentation is required. The committee will review student account details.

**Living at the permanent residence of parent or guardian, within the state of North Carolina, and within a 20-mile radius of UNCP**

Parental attestation letter, noting the student will be commuting from their address.

**Other special need (such as food allergies that could impact housing/dining)**

A detailed, descriptive reason for the request, attached, including any supportive documentation.