



## PETITIONING TO TERMINATE A ROOM OR BOARD CONTRACT

### HOW THE PETITION PROCESS WORKS

- 1.) Set up a meeting with the Assistant Dean of Residence Life to discuss the petition process. You will be advised on how to write an effective petition that clearly states your position.
- 2.) If you are on financial aid, check with the financial aid office to determine how living off campus will affect your financial aid package.
- 3.) Prepare a petition using the tips below and tips provided from your meeting with the Assistant Dean.
- 4.) Submit your petition to the committee by turning it in to the Residence Life Office in Eliot 101.
- 5.) Do not sign an off campus lease or make other contract obligations until you hear back from the committee. The committee takes about two weeks to make a decision.

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**If your petition is approved:** Your contract with Reed will be terminated and you will be free to make other commitments. Once your petition has been approved and you have moved out of the dorms, you will be reimbursed on a prorated basis for room and board costs.

**If your petition is denied:** You will still be legally bound in your contract with Reed, and financially obligated for the cost of room and board. This means that even if you sign a lease off-campus and move out of your room on-campus, you will still be held responsible for paying for your on-campus housing.

**Appeal procedure:** You can appeal the board's decision if you feel there are additional circumstances that were not considered in your original petition, but please understand that it is possible that your petition will still be denied. Appeals should be submitted to the Residence Life Office in Eliot 101.

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### TIPS FOR WRITING A PETITION

The committee normally does not interview or meet with students. Therefore you need to write a well thought out letter that explains why you need to break your housing contract or why you need to remain on campus but break your board contract. Below are some tips that will help you preparing your petition.

- ❖ Explain in detail how your circumstances have changed since you signed your room and board contract, and the reason why living on-campus is no longer a viable option for you.
- ❖ Explain in detail what solutions you have tried to make on-campus housing work for you.
- ❖ If your reason for petitioning is medical you must provide documentation that is clear and explains exactly why you must not live on-campus and how living off-campus will fulfill your needs.

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### YOUR HOUSING CONTRACT AND THE RCRRRG

It is important to understand and remember that room and board contracts at Reed are legally binding, just like off-campus leases. Once you sign a contract with Reed you are bound by its terms unless your petition is approved. Please note that the effective dates of the contract are listed on the contract, to be read and understood when you read the terms of the contract and sign it.

Please familiarize yourself with the termination information in the Reed College Residential Rights and Responsibilities Guide (RCRRRG). The RCRRRG and the housing contracts can both be found on-line and are available for your reading pleasure.

As stated in the RCRRRG: "After the contract cancellation deadline of June 1 has passed, students may petition the Housing Petition Committee to be released from their housing contract. The committee will consider a petition for contract termination only when conditions exist that originated after the residence hall contract was signed, and over which the student has little or no control. Due to the college's policy of generally meeting full financial need, financial hardship is not normally considered to be an exceptional circumstance."