

**VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY KEY CONTROL POLICY  
ADMINISTERED BY FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

Facilities Management has the authority to limit the issuance of keys. This authority is under the direction of the Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Provost. That is to say, if someone requests a key, it is up to our best judgement how to fulfill the request. Facilities Management has the responsibility to maintain lock combination systems and, to that extent, contribute to building security.

**I. Key Accessibility**

The Executive Director of Facilities Management, or the Director of Facilities Services, and the FM Assistant Director for Administrative Services review all requests for keys to ensure that:

1. Keys are appropriate for the person's access.
2. Keys are not duplicate issues.
3. **No grand master or masters are issued.**
4. A fiscal agent of the appropriate department has authorized the request.
5. Records are updated immediately upon receipt.

**II. Key Issuance Procedure**

1. A department determines the areas within a building(s) to which the employee/student needs access.
2. A work request providing the following information is submitted online:
  - The name of the person(s) to be issued keys. This is the individual who will take possession of and responsibility for the key(s).
  - Date the keys should be returned. (In the case of students, this refers to non-residence hall keys, and includes part-time or visiting professors, or any temporary situation. FM requires an indication of when to expect the keys back. When/if they are not returned, FM will determine the appropriate action to be taken.)
  - Key/core numbers that need to be issued, with a description of the room use and room number.
  - Department head (or fiscal agent) approval, authorizing the issuance of keys.
  - In exceptional circumstances, with approval at the Executive level, keys higher than submasters may be issued.
3. Employee/Student is called to pick up and sign for the keys at Facilities Management.
  - Proper identification must be provided at the time of pick-up.
  - This is typically done during normal FM hours.
  - If FM normal hours cannot be accommodated by the individual, an alternate method may be arranged.
4. The Key Agreement between the employee/student and the University instructs the person to whom keys are issued **not to loan, transfer or make duplicates of the keys**, as well as the due date the keys are to be returned. The intention is to maintain a documented record of the key's possession. The employee/student is instructed to return the keys to Facilities Management at the time employment terminates or at the time they no longer have a need for them.
5. The key agreement is kept on file in FM.

6. For those few positions that are eligible for grand masters, masters, and submasters – those keys will not be issued until the completion of the stipulated probationary period. The handbook governing each classification of employee stipulates the probationary period.

### **III. Temporary Key Checkout**

1. From time to time, staff or faculty has an approved scheduled program that is to occur at a day and/or time when the building and/or room is normally locked.
2. **In anticipation of these events, using the work request system, a staff/faculty member may request a temporary key.** At the time the work request is received:
  - FM will verify that the space is scheduled.
  - Contact will be made to make arrangements for the key to be picked up during FM office hours.
  - VU photo ID will be verified before key is released.
  - The key will be returned during regular FM office hours or left at the FM office in the night drop box after hours.
3. **Keys distributed via this procedure may not be checked out nor picked up by students.**
4. **FM staff, VUPD, and Housekeeping are not permitted to unlock or lock buildings to satisfy these needs.**
5. Contractors/service vendors may also sign out keys at the FM office.
  - These must be returned each workday by 4 p.m.
  - FM Staff, VUPD and Housekeeping are not permitted to unlock or lock buildings to satisfy contractor needs.

### **IV. Method of Key Return**

1. Students: Students are reminded via communication between Facilities Management and the department in which they work that their grades, transcripts, and registration will be held if they fail to return keys by the due date.
  - This effort is coordinated with the Registrar's Office.
  - The FM Assistant Director for Administrative Services issues the "hold".
2. Staff and Faculty: Keys must be collected at the time employment terminates or at the time they no longer have a need for them. **These procedures are very important! It is against University Policy to pass keys from employee to employee, as this results in inaccurate records of current key holders.**
3. When keys are returned to Facilities Management:
  - The employee/student name, date, department, and key numbers are recorded by Facilities Management on a receipt.
  - One copy is given to the person returning the key.
  - One copy is put in their department file.
  - One copy is left in the record book.

## V. FM Maintains Records as Accurate as the Information Provided by Departments

Accurate records need to be maintained for a number of reasons:

1. When additional keys are requested for an employee/student, records of previous key issues are compared with the key request to prevent a duplicate key issue.
2. When keys are lost, the accessibility of that key series needs to be known.
3. When keys are returned, records need to be crosschecked to ensure all issued keys are returned.
4. When a security issue occurs on campus, a list of those with access to the affected area can be generated.

## VI. Key Control

1. Security: There are various levels of door security to be maintained: exterior doors, corridor doors, suite doors, individual room doors, space within an individual room (closets, cabinets, files). As we move deeper into the building, locks are changed to maintain a higher level of security.
2. Establish a building system: Some buildings have had their internal use modified, and, as a result, the original key system no longer accommodates the present need. Once we correct these situations, we need to make sure we stabilize them. This includes some special accommodations to control **submaster keys for emergency only use** for residence halls, and it includes some new precautions for keys to “key doors”.
3. Maintain building system: The manufacturer generally combines mechanical locks at the time of installation. Because locks are mechanical devices, they have a finite number of combinations. Some of these combinations are reserved to the maintenance of submasters, masters and grand masters. At some point, as keys are lost or there is a failure to turn them in, locks are recombined, gradually consuming the finite limit of combinations.
4. Key Doors: The University is gradually converting buildings such that all people having access to a building will have a specific point of entrance. That point of entrance will be via a common public access.

## VII. Lost Keys (All lost keys require a University Police report)

1. In all cases, the policy action is to replace the cores.
  - An exception can only be approved at the Executive level.
  - In all cases a police report is required.
2. Absolute key loss: For these there is virtually no chance of recovery nor is there any likelihood that someone else will find the key and use it in the door to breach security. Examples are: lost at the bottom of the lake, lost down a storm drain, or lost out of town.

3. Misplaced key loss: This is the situation where a key or ring of keys has disappeared during the normal use. The individual knows he/she had the key/ring in the last few hours, he/she knows they were used, but the key/ring is missing. It is often the case the key/ring was left in the lock and someone has removed it for “safe keeping” or the key/ring is in a coat pocket or has slid from the seat of a vehicle. These usually reappear within twenty-four hours.
4. Mysterious key disappearance: This is the situation where a key/ring is typically kept in a particular location for a specific reason – the key/ring is observed missing, then returns mysteriously to its normal location. Most often the reason the key/ring disappeared is that copies were made, or a door has been intentionally unlocked for access later. This is a high security risk situation.

Departments will be billed for at least the cost of material, and in some cases, the cost of labor (straight time/overtime) for the replacement of lost keys.

### **VIII. Levels of Security**

1. An operator key opens an individual door. An individual door can be rekeyed several times depending on how many keys are on the system. (The more keys on the system, the fewer times the lock can be recombined.)
2. A submaster opens a predetermined number of “operator” keyed doors. A submaster has a smaller finite number of recombinations. If a submaster is lost, both it and all operator-keyed doors it serves, must be rekeyed.
3. A master opens a predetermined number of operator doors and would include all submasters in a building. Since the master must also work in harmony with submasters, and the grandmaster, the number of recombinations possible involving the operator/submaster/master keys are mathematically fewer.
4. A grand master opens a predetermined number of buildings. Since the grand master must also work in harmony with operator/submaster/master/grand master keys, the number of recombinations possible is mathematically fewer.

### **IX. Situations That Result from Loss of Control**

The above brief review outlines the importance of building security with regard to keys. If keys are not carefully controlled, issuance highly monitored, and key reclamation absolute, we risk:

1. The possibility of a very serious breach of security.
2. The rapid consumption of all recombinations and have to relock at \$100 per lock for materials with a 10 to 16 week lead-time; or pay \$25 for a recore.

### **X. Policies and Procedures for Replacing Student Residential Keys**

1. When a student reports, or staff becomes aware that a key is missing, a work order is issued by the Resident Learning Coordinator (RLC) to have the locks changed. This work order is forwarded to FM immediately. The RLC notes on the work order that

the student is to be charged. All keys required are noted on the work order; i.e., room door, front door key, mailbox key, etc.

2. Once the work order has been issued, the RLC e-mails the Housing Operations Assistant with the necessary information so that the appropriate charges are entered into the student(s) account through the financial system.
3. When FM completes the lock change, the keys are left with the student or the RLC (to distribute to the students if they are not present). Students must pay the charge within the next billing cycle to avoid having a delinquent account.

The student's account is automatically charged when the RLC notifies the Assistant Dean of Students for Residential Life that a key or core change is necessary. The resident hall account that FM bills for the core or key change is debited at that time.

Resident Assistants (RA) are issued keys at the beginning of each semester in order to fulfill the various responsibilities of their position. If they lose any of these keys, they are required to report this IMMEDIATELY to their RLC. The RLC may consult with the Assistant Dean of Students for Residential Life to determine if any disciplinary action and/or fees should be levied against the RA for the loss of the keys.

Each RA is issued a keytainer key, which allows access to a master key for use while on duty or when contacted to assist a student with a lock-out situation. The RA should never carry this master key with him/her. The RLC will have submaster keys for various areas within the residence hall. These keys may be signed out by the RA to assist with the opening and closing of the residence halls during various times of the year. The submaster key should be returned to the RLC immediately when the task is complete.

(This policy is also available on the Facilities Management website.)