As you know, plans are proceeding for opening the MTSU campus for the Fall semester. Many of our health and safety precautions will focus on our need to reduce density on the campus: in our classrooms, for student activities, in our dining areas, and, of special interest for this communication, in our MTSU residence halls.

**WHY IS REDUCING DENSITY IN THE RESIDENCE HALLS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT?**

Although scientists continue to learn more about this coronavirus each week, it is clear that transmission of the virus is possible even before symptoms have manifested; that transmission occurs through droplets that are breathed or coughed into the air; and that the longer one is exposed to the droplets, the more likely it is that transmission of the virus will occur. We have also seen that dense residential environments of all kinds, ranging from cruise ships to nursing homes, seem to have higher-than-typical levels of COVID-19 illness.

Our challenge, therefore, is to understand how we can work together as a community to meet housing needs in the attempt to maximize the health and safety of all of our students. We cannot guarantee complete safety. However, both the CDC Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education ([https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html)) and the Tennessee Pledge Access Guidelines for Higher Education ([https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19-economic-recovery/higher-education-guidelines.html](https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19-economic-recovery/higher-education-guidelines.html)) recommend that campus residence halls move toward single occupancy housing as the option that offers the greatest level of safety for students who choose to live on campus.

Based on those recommendations from both our federal and state public health experts, we believe that several changes will need to be made to the way we typically operate the on-campus residence halls and apartments.

- **We are not going to allow on-campus housing to fill to 100% occupancy.** Instead, we are going to reduce occupancy to ensure that every student is assigned to a private or single bedroom.
- **We understand that many students and families may wish to reconsider their initial decisions about housing.** We would like to encourage sophomores, juniors, seniors, graduate students, and any student that has a local alternative to consider living in off-campus housing or at home with their family.
- **All students planning to live in MTSU on-campus housing should be aware that we are going to initiate new social distancing polices for apartments and residence halls, which will include restricting outside visitors from entering residence halls and student apartments, so to help reduce the possibility for the introduction of the virus into those living areas. In addition, community areas such as lounges, practice rooms, and study rooms may be closed so as to meet social distancing guidelines.**

### FOR STUDENTS CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE RESIDENCE HALLS
(BEASLEY, CORLEW, CUMMINGS, DEERE, GRACY, JUDD, MARY, MCHENRY, NICKS, REYNOLDS, RUTLEDGE, SCHARDT, SIMS, SMITH)

- **All students currently assigned to any of our residence halls will have their license agreements for 2020-21 cancelled. (PLEASE NOTE: This does not apply to our on-campus apartments. Please see the section “For students living in Scarlett Commons and Womack Lane,” found later in this memo, if you are currently assigned to those two areas.)**
- **After cancelling all current residence hall assignments, we will then allow new freshman students previously assigned to the halls to indicate if they wish to be reassigned to a private/single space at the new rate.** We expect that we will be able to accommodate 1,272 students in private/single spaces at the single/private room rate. As of June 5, 2020, 1,201 freshmen students had completed their housing
applications, so we expect to be able to accommodate all freshmen currently assigned to the residence halls in private/single rooms, if reassignment is requested. Please see the chart, below, for specific details on single/private room rates.

- **Priority for reassignment will be given to new freshmen, who will be adjusting to their first semester of college life. We encourage local freshmen to consider living at home so as to allow us additional space to house freshmen coming from outside of commuting distance.**
- **We cannot guarantee you will be assigned to a single room in the same building and/or floor that you originally selected. We will make every effort to keep as many students as possible in or near their original room assignment.**
- **To initiate your request, please login to the MT Housing Portal (https://www.mtsu.edu/living-on-campus/) and submit your reapplication request and signed contract.**
- **The MT Housing Portal will officially open on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.**
- **Students who do NOT submit a reapplication to a private/single room for the 2020-21 academic year by July 1, 2020 will have their $350.00 prepayment refunded in full after that date.**

**FALL 2020 & SPRING 2020 TERM RESIDENCE HALL RATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rutledge</td>
<td>Single/Private</td>
<td>$3,001.00</td>
<td>$3,001.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyon Complex (Mary, McHenry, Monohan Complex (Reynolds, Sbardt), Smith, Sims, Beasley, Judd, Gracy, Cummings, Corlew, Deere, Nicks</td>
<td>Single/Private</td>
<td>$3,290.00</td>
<td>$3,290.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FOR STUDENTS CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO SCARLETT COMMONS AND WOMACK LANE**

- There will be **NO CHANGES made to the confirmed housing assignments of students living in Scarlett Commons or Womack Lane apartments for 2020-21.** If you wish to remain in your current Scarlett Commons or Womack Lane apartment assignment, you do not need to take any additional action.
- Alternatively, if you wish to cancel your apartment assignment and receive the full refund of the $350.00, please send an email to housing@mtsu.edu by July 1, 2020 with your name, M#, and statement of your cancellation for the academic year (Fall 2020-Spring 2021).

Although we remain firm in our belief that all students benefit from living on-campus, in this extraordinary academic year that is approaching, we have had to make decisions about who most needs to live in the limited spaces we will make available on-campus. It is clear that the students with the greatest need for on-campus housing will be first year students who are adjusting to their first semester of college life. While we sincerely regret this disruption to your carefully laid plans for the fall semester, no one could have predicted the impact of COVID-19 a year ago, when we first began accepting applications for housing for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The True Blue Pledge honors honesty, reason, and the ability of our students to be givers. We urge each of you to live up to the True Blue spirit by taking a hard look at your individual circumstances to determine if you can live at home or another off-campus location so as to benefit another student who does not have that option. We are going to do our very best to look out for you, and we now ask that you also look out for each other. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. If you need additional information, please e-mail housing@mtsu.edu.