Guidelines for Writing Incident Statements

Remember: When writing an incident report, imagine that it would be published in a newspaper. Your individual impressions and opinions about what occurred should not be included in this document. This means that the who, what, where and when details of the incident are critical. The tips on this sheet should be helpful to ensure you are writing incident statements correctly.

### THE DO’S AND DON’T’S OF WRITING AN INCIDENT STATEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
<th>DON’T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DO write incident statements in the third (3rd) person (RA/PM Jane Doe, heard noise coming from Resident John Doe’s room…)</td>
<td>DO NOT include personal commentary such as opinions or judgements (e.g. “Resident John Doe was a jerk…” or “Resident Doe was really nice…”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO state what led to the documentation (”RA/PM Jane Doe, heard loud noise coming from down the hall…”)</td>
<td>DO NOT include any student IDs in the body of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO document what you see, hear, smell*, etc.</td>
<td>DO NOT use slang words (e.g. ‘marijuana’ instead of ‘pot’).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Never smell contents of cups or individual items in a student’s room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO include direct quotes from residents (disrespectful words, actions, etc.)</td>
<td>DO NOT simply write, “residents were rude.” Be as descriptive as that helps provide an accurate picture of what was observed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO use paragraphs to break up the narrative of events.</td>
<td>DO NOT write lengthy blocks of text. Statements will be easier to follow if you format them like you would format an essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO identify the residents and guests present of the room or space in which the documentation occurred. You may need to use the building/cluster roster to assist with identifying residents.</td>
<td>DO NOT include residents of the room who were not present at the time of the incident unless the occupants refuse to open the door or are unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO write your incident statements in a word processing application so that you may proofread and use spell check.</td>
<td>DO NOT submit an incident statement that has not been proofread for spelling, grammar, accuracy, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: If you feel like you need to include additional information that falls beyond what is appropriate to include in an incident statement, follow up with your supervisor.