

RESIDENT ASSISTANT POSITION

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The following guidelines have been established to clarify the Resident Assistant (RA) conditions of employment. It is important to read and understand these conditions in order to successfully perform the responsibilities of the RA position. Failure to adhere to the following conditions of employment may jeopardize an RA's employment status. RAs will be required to sign a Statement of Understanding prior to each academic year or period of employment. This document is reviewed and updated annually, but is subject to change at any time. Any changes will be communicated to RAs through Resident Directors (RDs) and Community Directors (CDs).

I. PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT AND TIME COMMITMENT

- A. RAs in all communities except South Campus Commons are employed for a period of one academic year, beginning in August and ending in May. South Campus Commons RAs are employed for a 12-month period, beginning in May and ending the next May. Specific dates for beginning and ending employment will be determined and communicated by Community Staff.
- B. The RA position requires an average 20-hour per week commitment.
- C. A two-semester commitment (Fall and Spring) is required. A 12-month commitment (May-May) is required for RAs working in South Campus Commons.
- D. To ensure successful work performance and support RA availability, accessibility, and visibility, commitments beyond the RA position (student teaching, internships, second jobs, student leadership positions, etc), must have prior approval by the RD (or the CD in the absence of the RD). The Department of Resident Life generally limits such combined commitments to 10 hours per week. Because student teaching places high demands on the Student Teacher's time, new Resident Assistants may not student teach during their first year in the position.
- E. RAs, with the guidance of the RD, will plan a schedule that will allow for a reasonable amount of availability in their units during the period of employment.
- F. Peak work periods require additional work hours, especially at Openings and Closings. RAs must be available prior to and following Openings and Closings (including Break periods) to assist the Department staff in completing administrative tasks associated with check-in and check-out procedures.
- G. RAs in all Communities may be required to work during vacation break periods when residence halls are open. RAs in South Hill, North Hill, Leonardtown, South Campus Commons, and Elkton Hall are required to work during the Thanksgiving, December/January, and Spring Breaks.
- H. To provide accessibility and availability to residents, RAs must discuss and gain prior approval from the RD for absences away from campus greater than 24 hours.
- I. RAs are required to attend staff meetings (2-hour weekly time commitment, beginning no later than 8:00pm). Meeting days and times will be decided by your supervisor at the beginning of each semester. Most staff meetings take place Wednesdays from 7 - 9 pm. Any changes to this will be based on staff members' academic schedules only. Non-academic commitments will not be considered.
- J. See Section III (Training) for additional time commitments that are related to training.

II. COMPENSATION

- A. All RAs are required to live in the residence halls.
- B. All RAs receive remission of room, board, basic telecommunications, and basic cable fees as compensation.
- C. The value of room and board is not taxable income and is not subject to income tax withholding, social security, Medicare and FUTA taxes because room and board is provided for the convenience of Resident Life and the University; the meals are provided on-campus, and living in the residence halls is a condition of the RA's employment and an essential factor in the RA's ability to perform your duties.
- D. The University does not provide tax advice, and any questions regarding individual tax returns should be sought from a tax professional before filing an income tax return.
- E. RAs should investigate the impact the RA position compensation may have on their financial aid package. Federal law requires that the University consider the value of the compensation received by RAs as a resource. Therefore, the Office of Student Financial Aid must take into consideration the amount of the RA benefit when determining eligibility for additional need-based aid.
- F. As stated in the On-Campus Housing/Dining Services Agreement and/or the South Campus Commons Lease, the Department reserves the right to move residents (including RAs) from one space to another to meet its responsibilities to student health, safety, and well-being; maintain, operate, or renovate facilities; establish a special interest house, floor unit, or section; convert rooms for occupancy by other genders; consolidate residents for reasons of assignments, security, or closing; or to accommodate other staffing/community needs.



III. TRAINING

- A. Selected RA candidates are required to register for and successfully complete "Groundwork", a non-credit, blended-learning training course in the Spring Semester prior to employment. In special cases, an RA may be employed while taking Groundwork. Candidates and RAs must have a 2.60 cumulative GPA at the beginning of the spring semester in order to take this course.

NOTE: There is an alternative non-credit, blended-learning model being considered that would require less time. This would include online video content, four 90-minute discussion sessions, and the Common Ground Dialogue Program. The video content and discussion sessions would be held from mid-February to Spring Break and the Common Ground Dialogue program would be held following Spring Break.

- B. RAs are required to attend the following training and staff development activities:
 - a. Spring Orientation/Training
 - b. Fall Pre-Service Training in mid-August; South Campus Commons RAs also attend Pre-Service Training in May
 - c. Spring Pre-Service Training in January
 - d. Weekly staff meetings
 - e. Periodic in-service sessions as arranged by the Community Director or other Departmental staff
 - f. Individual meetings and/or building meetings with the RD
 - g. Fall Welcome and Opening events

IV. STAFF DUTY

- A. Each RA is required to provide on-duty coverage of their building/area. Time commitments for duty coverage will vary by Community and/or staff, but duty is assigned from between 7:00 pm and 8:30 am, and 24 hours on Saturdays and Sundays and when university offices are closed.
- B. RAs are required to perform duty rounds as communicated by appropriate staff (i.e. RD/CD).
- C. Additional duty assignments may be required at other times, i.e., Fire Watch, Homecoming, emergencies, sporting events, and other special occasions.
- D. RAs not on duty are expected to respond to incidents or situations which they observe or which are reported to them. These "non-duty" RAs will respond to the scene of activities for which there is a reasonable expectation that harm to individuals and/or significant damage to or loss of property may occur, remain on the scene until "on duty" staff arrive, and provide a report to the duty staff member who responds.

V. POSITION EXPECTATIONS

- A. RAs must fulfill Community-specific position responsibilities as communicated by appropriate staff (i.e. RD/CD).
- B. RAs must successfully perform the general requirements of the position as documented in the RA Position Description and the Statement of Understanding documents developed for specific Communities/sides of campus.
- C. RAs must abide by the guidelines presented in the secondary relationships document.

VI. REAPPOINTMENT DECISIONS

Decisions regarding reappointment to the RA position in succeeding years are contingent upon the successful completion of duties while employed, and are based upon performance evaluations which are conducted throughout the academic year and during the summer programs. In addition, reappointment decision factors include, but are not limited to, academic performance/standing, plus financial and disciplinary status with the University.

VII. TERMINATIONS AND RESIGNATIONS

- A. Job action, up to and including termination, may result at any time due to an RA's failure to adhere to the stated conditions of employment and/or to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities outlined in the RA Position Description, and/or to perform specific Community related duties as required.
- B. RAs who are terminated or who resign may be ineligible to live in the unit where they served as an RA.
- C. RAs who plan to resign should provide the RD/CD with a minimum of two weeks notice. If possible, more than two weeks would be greatly appreciated.
- D. RAs who resign or are terminated must make all necessary arrangements to begin to pay for room, board, basic telecommunications, and basic cable where they once received remission of these fees.
- E. RAs may appeal termination decisions to the Assistant Director for their side of campus or their delegate.



VIII. UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENT LIFE RULES AND REGULATIONS

- A. RAs are expected to abide by all federal, state, and local laws; abide by the rules and regulations of the University of Maryland, and those of the Department of Resident Life, including, but not limited to, those outlined in the On-Campus Housing/Dining Services Agreement, Code of Student Conduct, Code of Academic Integrity, Community Living Handbook, policies associated with sexual harassment, the use of alcohol and other controlled substances, etc. South Campus Commons RAs must also abide by the terms and conditions as set forth in the South Campus Commons lease, rules, and regulations.
- B. Academic Standards
 - a. All RA applicants must maintain a 2.6 or better cumulative GPA at the University of Maryland, College Park. Unless this is your first semester at the University, you must have a 2.6 cumulative GPA by the application deadline to participate in the selection process. Those in their first semester do not yet have a GPA at the University. The GPA of all eligible candidates will be checked after grades have been posted for the semester.
 - b. RAs must be a registered undergraduate student at the University. RAs must register for between 9 and 19 credits per semester. Approval from the RD/CD must be granted prior to taking less than 9 or more than 19 credits per semester.
 - c. RAs must maintain at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA while employed and to be rehired.
- C. Candidates for the RA position must be in good standing according to the Department of Resident Life On-Campus Housing/Dining Services Agreement and/or the South Campus Commons lease and remain so during the period of employment.
- D. RAs must be in good financial and disciplinary standing with the University. This includes standards set by the Code of Academic Integrity and the Code of Student Conduct.
- E. The academic, financial, and judicial standing of all RAs will be checked at the end of each semester by authorized staff within the Department of Resident Life.
- F. Resident Assistant possession and appropriate use of UMD ID Card and keys: Resident Assistants are granted additional access and permissions related to RA position responsibilities. This access must only be used within the scope of your position responsibilities. RAs are expected to
 - 1. keep your ID card and keys safe and secure
 - 2. never lend your ID card or keys to another person
 - 3. immediately report and deactivate a lost, stolen, or damaged ID card or keys to prevent use by unauthorized individuals, and
 - 4. understand that University policy prohibits the misuse or unauthorized possession of keys or access cards and making, possessing, or using any forged, altered, or falsified instrument of identification.

