

## RESIDENT ASSISTANT 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 position. Failure to adhere to the following conditions of employment may jeopardize an RA's employment status. 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. COMPENSATION

- a. All RAs receive remission of housing, dining, basic telecommunications, and basic cable fees as compensation.
- b. 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 job duties. The University does not provide tax advice, and any questions regarding individual tax returns should be sought from a tax professional.
- c. 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.
- d. 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 unit 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.

### II. EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND TIME COMMITMENT

- a. Resident Assistants must be enrolled in an undergraduate degree granting program at The University of Maryland, College Park (UMD).
- b. 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.
- c. New and returning RAs must maintain a cumulative 2.5 GPA. See section VII. Job action, Terminations, and Resignations for job action details related to a low cumulative GPA.
- d. Once appointed, RAs must enroll for 9 to 19 credits per semester. Approval from the RD/CD must be granted prior to enrolling in less than 9 or more than 19 credits per semester.
- e. The RA position is a two-semester commitment (one academic year) with the exception of South Campus Commons and mid-year hires. South Campus Commons RAs are employed for a 12-month period, beginning in May and ending the following May. Specific dates for beginning and ending employment will be determined and communicated by the Department of Resident Life.
  - i. RA placements are based on the needs of the Department of Resident Life and are subject to change.
  - ii. The RA position requires an average 20-hour per week commitment.
  - iii. RAs in all communities may be required to work during vacation break periods.
  - iv. RAs in South Hill, North Hill, Leonardtown, South Campus Commons, and Elkton Hall are

specifically required to work during the Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring Breaks.

- f. Peak work periods require additional work hours, especially during opening and closing time periods, including opening and closing related to break periods. RAs must be available prior to and following opening and closing time periods (including break periods) to assist Department staff in completing administrative tasks associated with check-in and check-out procedures.
- g. To ensure RA accessibility and visibility, successful work performance, and human resources compliance factors, the Department of Resident Life generally limits outside commitments (student teaching, internships, second jobs, student leadership positions, etc.) to 9 hours per week. RA's must have prior approval by the RD (or the CD in the absence of the RD).
  - i. Resident Assistants who are academically bound to student teaching and/or hold internships must gain approval by the Resident Director and Community Director before the start of Fall Pre-Service training.
  - ii. 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.
- h. 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). Staff meeting times are established by community staff and RAs are required to plan academically around meeting times. Non-academic commitments will not be considered.
- j. See Section III (Training) for additional time commitments that are related to training.

### **III. TRAINING**

- a. Selected RA candidates are required to register for and successfully complete RA Groundwork in the Spring semester prior to employment.
  - i. Students must have a 2.6 cumulative GPA at the beginning of the spring semester in order to participate in Groundwork.
  - ii. In special cases, a student may be employed as a RA while taking RA Groundwork.
- b. RAs are required to attend/participate the following training and staff development activities:
  - i. Spring Orientation/Training
  - ii. Fall Pre-Service Training in mid-August; South Campus Commons RAs also attend Pre-Service Training in May
  - iii. Spring Pre-Service Training in January
  - iv. RA Selection
  - v. RA in-service development
  - vi. Weekly staff meetings
  - vii. Periodic community meetings as arranged by the Community Director or other Departmental staff
  - viii. Individual meetings and/or building meetings with the RD

### **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 staff.
  - i. Duty is assigned on weekdays between 7:00 pm and 8:30 am, and 24 hours on Saturdays and Sundays and when university offices are closed.
  - ii. RAs are required to perform duty rounds as communicated by appropriate staff (i.e. RD/CD).
  - iii. Additional duty assignments may be required at other times, i.e., Fire Watch, Homecoming, emergencies, sporting events, and other special occasions.
- b. RAs not on duty are expected to respond to incidents or situations that they observe or are reported to them. These "non duty" RAs will respond to the incident or situation, until "on duty" staff arrive, and provide a report to the duty staff member who responds.
- c. RAs are responsible for the proper upkeep of duty equipment, for example the duty bag and duty cell

phone. Loss and/or improper use may result in job action up to termination and financial responsibility.

## **V. POSITION EXPECTATIONS**

- a. Refer also to position expectations in the Resident Assistant Position Description
- b. All RAs are required to live in their assigned space on campus.
- c. RAs are expected to foster a safe, inclusive, and welcoming atmosphere via community development with resident engagement.
  - i. Effectiveness is dependent on established relationships that encourage the development of a community which contributes to personal, academic, social, cultural, and professional growth.
- d. RAs are expected to promote the development of students by providing social and educational programming, fulfilling the specific community requirements as defined by their Resident Director and the Community Development Strategy. RAs will facilitate the goals outlined in the Community Development Strategy, including but not limited to, contributing to the following:
  - i. Programming & Activities
  - ii. TerpTalks
  - iii. Community Development Tools
  - iv. Bulletin Boards
  - v. Community Living Agreement
  - vi. Department sponsored programming such as Fall Welcome Events, Greenfest, and Terps Take Care, etc.
- e. RAs are expected to practice confidentiality and have an understanding of protected information under FERPA. Privacy must be maintained in relation to all conduct or student issues. The RA must keep the supervisor informed of all critical events and must not discuss these events with other students/staff unless directed to do so by their supervisor.
- f. A RA's communication (written, verbal, non-verbal, email, virtual – formal and informal, position-related and personal) is expected to be inclusive and representative of the RA as a member of the DRL staff. RAs must maintain and monitor UMD email by reading and responding promptly and appropriately to departmental communication.
- g. RAs are expected to meet all deadlines as communicated by their Resident Director or other Department of Resident Life staff.
- h. RAs must fulfill community-specific position responsibilities as communicated by appropriate staff (i.e. RD/CD).
- i. RAs are expected to abide by the guidelines presented in the secondary relationships document.

## **VI. REAPPOINTMENT DECISIONS**

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

## **VII. JOB ACTION, TERMINATIONS, AND RESIGNATIONS**

- a. Failure to adhere to the stated conditions of employment and/or to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities outlined in employment documents may result in progressive disciplinary job action which may include verbal warnings, written warnings, probation, temporary suspension, and termination. Disciplinary actions may not necessarily occur in that order.
- b. RAs who are terminated or who resign may be ineligible to live in the room, unit, and/or building 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 housing, dining, basic telecommunications, and basic cable should they choose to remain in on-campus housing.
- a. New and returning RAs must maintain a cumulative 2.5 GPA. If the cumulative GPA falls below a 2.5 the RA may be placed on job probation for one semester or may be subject to removal from the RA position at the discretion of their supervisor and Community Director. If permitted to remain in the role on a probationary status, the RA will have one semester to improve their academic performance and raise their cumulative GPA to a 2.5 or better. If after one semester, the RA's GPA is not a 2.5 or higher, the RA will be removed from the RA position. Note: RAs, including but not limited to those, who are currently on job probation or whose current GPA and academic status does not allow for the potential to raise their cumulative GPA to 2.5 within one semester may be removed from the RA position without an additional probationary status semester.
- e. Concerns about RA Position Description, Conditions of Employment, and/or Department of Resident Life policy or procedure should be directed to their direct supervisor (i.e. RD/CD). In the event an RA feels unjustly treated with regard to termination or other employment related circumstances, the RA may appeal to the Associate Director for Communities or designee. The appeal must be submitted in writing within three days.

#### **VIII. UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENT LIFE RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- a. RAs are expected to comply with all federal, state, and local laws including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), The Clery Act, Title IX, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Fair Housing Act as instructed; and University Human Resources policies.
  - i. RAs are considered both Responsible Employees under Title IX and Campus Security Authorities under the Clery Act and thus must complete required training at the start of one's employment and appropriately address and report violations of University and Department policies.
  - ii. RAs must maintain compliance of the University COVID-19 guidelines.
- b. RAs are expected to abide by policies outlined in the On-Campus Housing and Dining Services Agreement, Code of Student Conduct, Code of Academic Integrity, and the Community Living Handbook. RAs placed in South Campus Commons must also abide by the terms and conditions established by the South Campus Commons lease, rules, and regulations.
  - i. Candidates for the RA position must abide by the aforementioned policies during their candidacy status. Failure to abide by these policies may result in removal from the RA selection process.
- c. RAs are expected to abide by the University policies pertaining to possession and appropriate use of technology and resources one is granted through the RA position, which includes but not limited to one's University ID Card, residence hall keys, and access to student information.
  - i. RAs are to abide by the Division of IT technology procurement policies which prohibit University staff from using technology platforms within the execution of their position responsibilities that are not University approved.
- d. Resident Assistant possession and appropriate use of UMD ID Card and resident hall 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.
- e. Resident Assistants are expected to
  - i. Keep your ID card and keys safe and secure
  - ii. Never lend your ID card or keys to another person
  - iii. Immediately report and deactivate a lost, stolen, or damaged ID card or keys to prevent use by unauthorized individuals, and 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.

- iv. Loss of a master key issued on short-term loan shall be reported by the staff member immediately, within 15 minutes after the key or access card is thought or known to be lost.
  - v. Failure to report a lost or stolen master key, lost master keys and misuse of master keys may result in job action up to termination.
- f. RAs must be in good financial standing with the University. If one receives financial aid, they should contact the Office of Student Financial Aid to determine how the position compensation will affect their financial aid package.
- g. The academic, financial, and student conduct standing of all RAs will be checked at the end of each semester by authorized staff within the Department of Resident Life. Failure to remain in good standing may result in progressive disciplinary action.
  - i. RAs must be in good judicial and financial standing with the University.
    - 1. RAs must not be actively on housing and/or disciplinary probation
    - 2. RAs who receive an XF will be ineligible for the position