

**NYU**Residential Life  
and Housing Services

# RESIDENT ASSISTANT

2021-2022

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## 1. ROLE OVERVIEW

The Resident Assistant (RA) is a paraprofessional who lives in an undergraduate or graduate residence hall. The RA is a leader and resource for the residents in the community -- largely focusing on community development, being a referral agent and intellectual leader within the hall with a primary purpose of creating a sense of belonging.

RAs support the office's commitment to creating inclusive communities and they incorporate the office's vision, mission, and values into their role. RAs model behaviors we seek to encourage in all NYU students: being inquisitive, engaged, kind, empathetic and solution-oriented both inside and outside the residential communities. RAs provide leadership to residents and help to create and maintain an accepting, respectful, and friendly atmosphere that stimulates student learning and development. The primary goal of the RA is the development of an environment conducive to the academic and personal growth of residential students. The RA reports to the Residence Hall Assistant Director (RHAD) and/or Residence Hall Director (RHD) with some functional supervision by the Residence Hall Resource Manager (RHRM).

## COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS

The Resident Assistant role in 2021-2022 may continue to look different than in previous years on account of COVID-19 which is still very much part of our daily lives. Since the health and safety of our community is of paramount importance to us, we may need to maintain a reduced-density student housing model for fall 2021.

In addition to the potential lower density, a portion of personal interaction, team meetings, one-on-ones, and community development may still occur virtually. Guidance on this will be shared as we get closer to the start of the fall semester. There will of course be times when encountering others may be unavoidable (e.g.: passing by residents in hallways, sharing an elevator, encounters while serving as RA@Home and on community walks, etc.) and RAs are asked to do their best to adhere to physical distancing and other guidelines. In addition, RAs will be expected to role model and practice physical distancing, wear face coverings and the provided personal protective equipment as well as promote infection control and prevention behaviors including hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, as directed by the university.

Those who agree to serve may be asked to assist differently if there are institutional changes as a result of COVID-19. Those selected to serve must be adaptable and comfortable with ambiguity as role needs may evolve.

## 2. QUALIFICATIONS

The following qualifications must be met in order to serve in the role.

- **Commitment to community:** RAs must demonstrate strength of character, good judgment, flexibility, responsibility, involvement and commitment to student life and the University.
- **Course Load:**
  - **Undergraduate RAs** must carry a minimum of 12, but no more than 16, credit hours per semester. Exceptions for course loads over 16 credit hours must have prior approval of the hall supervisor. Any Undergraduate RA in the final semester before graduation may carry fewer than 12 credits, but no fewer than 6 credits.
  - **Graduate RAs** must carry a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester. Graduate RAs in the final semester before graduation may carry fewer than 9 credits.
- **Class Standing:** RAs must be full-time junior, senior or graduate students with at least two years of full-time college experience.
- **Grade Point Average:** RAs must hold a cumulative 3.0 GPA throughout the time of application and appointment. If an RA's cumulative GPA falls below the 3.0 requirement they will be placed on Academic Probation and will have one semester to reach the minimum requirement or will be released from the role.
- **Selection Process:** RAs must successfully complete the information session, application, and selection process.
- **University Standing:** RAs must be in good standing at New York University prior to and throughout the role.

## 3. COMPETENCIES + LEARNING GOALS

The following competencies will be developed by serving in the RA role intended to enhance personal, academic, and career success.

- Administrative skills
- Assessment and technology
- Community development
- Conflict management
- Creating a sense of belonging for others
- Equity, diversity and inclusion
- Interpersonal relationship building
- Leadership development
- Peer helping
- Problem-solving
- Resource referral
- Self-awareness and self-care
- Teamwork
- Time management

The following are learning goals we have for those who serve in the RA role.

### LIFE SKILLS

1. Acquire and develop interpersonal skills to productively communicate and collaborate with a variety of stakeholders including peers, professionals, colleagues, and residents in a variety of environments.
2. Develop strong problem-solving skills to assess needs, develop and execute plans to address those needs, manage challenges that arise, and evaluate successes and failures.
3. Acquire tools to navigate and adapt to changes within various environments in order to manage present circumstances as well as strengthen self-efficacy.

### MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

1. Understand perspectives by integrating personal narrative with others' experience and knowledge.
2. Explore new ideas and viewpoints to widen personal perspective.
3. Engage with the community respectfully to enhance knowledge and deepen perspective.
4. Manage conflicting ideas and narratives when engaging across differences.

### COMMUNITY

1. Develop and foster a community that is inclusive of and embraces the multiple identities of its members.
2. Acquire methods of facilitating interactions within a diverse community that allow members to learn, communicate effectively, and participate productively.
3. Identify and navigate problems and conflicts within a diverse community to maintain community standards and a positive learning environment.

### DIVERSITY

1. Understand social identity and how it impacts community members on a micro (self-awareness) and macro (societal) level.
2. Develop awareness of, and subsequently navigate & explore, difference within a community by considering social identities, cultural influences, and personal identities, including social justice and other actions that support identity development.

## **WELLNESS**

1. Understand and identify general wellness needs and methods to foster a supportive community.
2. Practice and role model self-care and healthy habits in order to succeed academically, personally, and in the RA role.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

1. Understand the mission, vision, and values of Residential Life & Housing Services.
2. Understand the expectations of the RA role in relation to the organization, staff, and residents.
3. Learn the processes, procedures, and resources necessary to execute role functions.
4. Explore the influence of personal & social identities on environments, interpersonal relationships, and contributions to student development.
5. Develop skills to be an effective student leader and mentor within the hall community and team, working closely with the University and supervisors to achieve the goals of the RA role.

## **4. ROLE PERIOD**

### **Full Academic Year Role**

The standard role period for RAs is one academic year, from August (9 days prior to NYU Residence Hall Opening Day) through May (Commencement Day). RAs are expected to report for training sessions prior to residence hall check-ins for both fall and spring semesters. The role period is contingent upon the successful completion of tasks, assignments and responsibilities and positive performance appraisals by hall supervisor. Upon successful completion of the standard role period, the RA may be considered to serve for an additional period if eligible. There is no expectation to serve for an additional period, but depends on outstanding service. Limited summer opportunities may be available and require application.

### **Fall Only Role, if needed**

We offer limited fall only RA roles in halls housing our Spring Cohort program. The role period is one academic semester, from August (9 days prior to NYU Residence Hall Opening Day) through the last day of finals in December. RAs are expected to report for training sessions prior to residence hall check-ins for fall semester. The role period is contingent upon the successful completion of tasks, assignments and responsibilities and positive performance appraisals by hall supervisor. Upon successful completion of the standard role period, the RA may be considered to serve for an additional period if eligible. There is no expectation to serve for an additional period, but depends on outstanding service. Limited summer opportunities may be available and require application.

### **Spring & Summer Only Role, if needed**

We offer limited spring & summer only RA roles in halls housing our Spring Cohort program. The role period is January (12 days prior to the start of NYU spring semester classes) through August (NYU Residence Hall Opening Day). RAs are expected to report for training sessions prior to residence hall check-ins for spring semester. The role period is contingent upon the successful completion of tasks, assignments and responsibilities and positive performance appraisals by hall supervisor. Upon successful completion of the standard role period, the RA may be considered to serve for an additional period if eligible. There is no expectation to serve for an additional period, but depends on outstanding service. Limited summer opportunities may be available and require application.

## **5. TIME COMMITMENT**

RAs should expect about 20 hours per week in the residence hall consisting of both virtual and in-person responsibilities. The breakdown of virtual and in-person time may alter if there are changes in guidance from State and local health authorities. These hours will be used in interactions with residents, serving as the RA@Home, on community walks that document potential policy violations that can disrupt hall harmony, one on one meetings, team meetings, at the resource center, and programming. These hours are based on the need of the hall and will include both weekday and weekend hours. Please note that the residence hall environment does encounter peak times including opening, closing and transition periods. That said, some weeks more than 20 hours may be needed whereas others there may be fewer than 20 hours, so flexibility with time is important.

- **Availability:** All RAs are expected to be sufficiently available in the hall to create and maintain the sense of belonging in the community, complete role tasks, and maintain regular contact with residents. An RA who is not scheduled to serve as RA@Home and who plans to be away from the hall for a period of three or more days must consult the hall supervisor.
- **Holidays, Emergency Closures, Breaks and Vacation Periods:** To support residents remaining in the halls during university breaks/(emergency)closures, RAs may be scheduled to serve as RA@Home for a portion of these periods. These include, but are not limited to Thanksgiving Break, Winter/Fall/Spring Breaks.

- **Meetings:** RAs must attend team meetings on predetermined weeks and times as scheduled by supervisor, or during the predetermined time of Wednesdays from 9:30pm-11:00pm if an alternative mutual time cannot be found. Regularly scheduled one on one supervisor meetings will also be scheduled.
- **First Six Weeks:** The first six weeks of the fall semester are typically a busier time in the residence hall. This time includes move-in and welcome week activities, an enhanced focus on getting to know and interact with residents, as well as facilitating enhanced programming and conducting BASE conversations.

## 6. OUTSIDE/ADDITIONAL WORK

Participation in leadership roles and work experiences are an important part of one's educational experience. When choosing if you'll engage in outside/additional work opportunities it is important to ensure your academic program is prioritized first and that your RA role expectations can be successfully met. It is important that any outside/additional work be discussed with a supervisor so they can assist in offering support on time management and balance.

## 7. CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

### RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to the list below, other tasks will be assigned as needed by the hall supervisors. RAs must be adaptable and comfortable with ambiguity as role needs may evolve. The responsibilities listed will be achieved both virtually and in-person as directed by supervisors. RAs are encouraged to review the Residential Life Paraprofessional Handbook for more comprehensive protocols and responsibilities.

#### Community Development:

- Create an environment, while partnering with residents, that promotes health, safety, infection control and prevention behaviors including hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, adheres to physical distancing guidelines, and excludes large in-person gatherings;
- Create an environment that promotes academic growth, personal responsibility and community accountability through one on one interaction, floor meetings, programs and BASE conversations, both virtually and in-person;
- Implement social, educational and academic programs as directed by supervisor, both virtually and in-person;
- Assist residential students in academic, social and personal matters through resource referral;
- Provide guidance, support and model appropriate behaviors as a responsible community member;
- Support faculty initiatives including in-hall Faculty Fellows in Residence (FFIR) and Faculty Affiliates (FAs);
- Support and promote the mission of hall council and the Inter-Residence Hall Council (IRHC);
- Keep residents updated on University happenings through individual contact and group information sharing;
- Serve as RA@Home on scheduled evenings, weekends, emergency closures, breaks and holidays;
- Serve 3 hours a week on designated collateral assignment or on resource center coverage;
- Engage professional staff for guidance and support as needed;
- Provide support for University mediation procedures in roommate and community conflicts through facilitation of roommate/community meetings and referring students to other mediation services;
- Serve as a liaison between floor residents and supervisors and other building team members and keep supervisors informed about happenings in the community;
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality while working in coordination with University team members;
- Know, communicate, enforce and abide by existing University and Residence Hall policies and procedures;
- Know protocols regarding student and community health and safety;
- Know University/community resources and make appropriate referrals;
- Assist with the student conduct process by submitting timely online incident reports to document situations;
- Submit program reports and other data in support of program effectiveness and learning outcomes assessment.

#### Administrative:

- Participate in team meetings on predetermined weeks and times as scheduled by supervisor, or during the predetermined time of Wednesdays from 9:30pm-11:00pm if an alternative mutual time cannot be found;
- Participate in regular one on one meetings and provide email updates regarding the community with supervisor;
- Participate in online, distance and in-person training and team development sessions throughout the year;
- Assist with the completion of residential living agreements;
- Assist the Housekeeping and Facilities team members in identifying facilities in need of repair or attention;
- Assist with the facilitation of fire drills each semester;
- Participate in other University, RLHS and building activities as assigned;
- Assist in the preparation of the hall for opening and transitions.

## 8. TRAINING + DEVELOPMENT

Training and development programs are important to the effectiveness, success, and strength of the RLHS community. The Paraprofessional Training Committee oversees training and development aimed to provide RAs with important skills and competencies aligned with the core learning goals (outlined in section 3). Virtual and in-person offerings and descriptions are listed below.

- **Onboarding Requirements**
  - **Orientation Kick-Off**
    - Building Leadership Team welcome message, including a video introduction to RLHS, introduction of community members, inclusive community development strategies, role expectations and examining your part in creating a sense of belonging on campus.
    - Ongoing summer opportunities to meet fellow new RAs
  - **Online Training Modules:**
    - **FERPA Training:** an introduction to the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) rules and rights set in place to ensure privacy of student information.
    - **NYU Active Threat Preparedness Training:** provides instruction on ways to prepare for and react to an active threat on campus.
    - **RLHS Policies:** identify and interpret the RLHS policies, understand your role in supporting students, and understand the steps in the student conduct process.
    - **Fire Safety:** RAs must know the RLHS fire safety policies and evacuation protocol. This online training will demonstrate fire safety hazards in residence halls and help you understand your role in promoting fire safety to keep your community safe; you will learn specific building protocol from your BLT.
    - **Action Zone Bystander Intervention:** RAs learn how to be an active bystander.
- **Fall Training 2021:**
  - team kick-off with Building Leadership Team and 2021-2022 RA team to learn more about the community you will serve as an RA.
  - RAs are trained on specific role-related responsibilities and skills including (but not limited to) community development, identity, inclusion, protocols, conflict management, cultural competency, and peer helping skills in addition to training on COVID-19, health and safety.
- **Spring Training 2022:**
  - Role-specific training opportunities offered based on collected RA assessment data.

## 9. DATES

Below is a comprehensive list of the important dates related to move-in, training, development requirements, and move-out for your term as an RA. Please copy these dates into your personal calendar. Once dates marked as TBA are decided, they will be updated on this document and will be communicated out.

### SUMMER 2021

- RA Newsletters will be sent throughout the semester. These will contain action items, important information, and resources pertinent to the RA role.
- Mid-Summer 2021
  - Online Training Modules information sent
- August - as shared in summer emails
  - Online Training Modules must be completed
  - Fall Training reminders and information

### FALL 2021

- August 20, 2021
  - RAs may move into their academic year housing assignment
- August 22-26, 2021
  - Fall Training
- August 27, 28 & 29, 2021
  - Move-In for Fall 2021 residential students
- December 22, 2021
  - Fall Only RAs last day in role, if needed

## **SPRING 2022**

- January 21-22, 2022
  - Spring Training
- May 4, 2022 from 6PM to 9PM
  - RLHS Year End Celebration
- May 18, 2022
  - Academic Year RAs last day in role
  - Must checkout by 12PM May 19, 2022
- *SPRING COHORT RAs ONLY, if needed*
  - January 12, 2022
    - Role Training beings
  - January 19, 2022
    - Move-In Day for Spring Cohort residential students

## **10. FEEDBACK + APPRAISALS**

Residential Life & Housing Services staff members are committed to facilitating learning, growth, and development of all RAs. Professional and graduate team members provide training, development, supervision, mentorship, feedback and support. To achieve the goal of personal growth and individual success, RAs participate in formal, informal, and experiential learning activities throughout their time in the role which include:

- Facilitated team, group, and individual meetings
- Mid-semester, mid-year, and end-of-year appraisals
- Hall community feedback
- Community development planning
- Program planning, implementation, and assessment
- Reappointment interviews, if applicable

## **11. (IN)CONSISTENCIES**

Residential Life & Housing Services aims to meet our vision, mission, and values while acknowledging the unique needs of each of our residential communities. With our variety of facilities, locations, populations, architectural features, staff compositions, building sizes, and programmatic offerings, each hall will need various strategies to achieve our collective work. Below are examples of items that may be inconsistent and areas you can expect to be consistent across halls.

### **Identified areas where there may be inconsistencies**

- Team development
- Frequency of RA@Home nights
- In-hall training
- RA room/suite configuration
- Facilities management
- Team meeting dates and times
- All-hall and Thematic Engagement Community programming initiatives

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### **Identified areas of consistency**

- Housing and Meal Plan Grant
- Role profile expectations and responsibilities
- Paraprofessional handbook expectations and responsibilities
- Training dates
- Centralized training
- One on one meetings with supervisor
- Meal reimbursement dates and amounts
- RA@Home start/end time and expectations
- Incident report procedures and expectations
- Lock-out policies
- RLHS policies and procedures
- Appraisal forms and timeline

## **12. MEALS AND HOUSING**

In addition to an invaluable experience in peer leadership and teamwork, RAs receive a housing grant and a meal plan grant for the length of their service.

### **HOUSING PLACEMENT**

RAs are placed in paraprofessional rooms (that may be shared with other paraprofessionals) or apartments in their assigned hall (that may be shared with other paraprofessionals or students).

### **MEAL PLAN SELECTION**

As an RA, you will receive a dining grant to cover the cost of a designated meal plan for use when dining halls are open. The designated meal plans are the 95 Flex, 95 Flex+, 120 Flex, 120 Flex+, 175 Flex, 175 Flex+, 225 Flex or the 225 Flex+. RAs may select the 300 Flex meal plan but will only receive a grant up to the cost of the 225 Flex+ meal plan and will be billed for the excess cost. Please note if you add additional Dining Dollars or Campus Cash, this is not covered under your dining grant package and you will be billed. All RAs will be sent information on meal plan selection early-summer.

### **FINANCIAL AID IMPACT**

RAs receive a grant equal to the cost of housing charges and a meal plan. Receipt of the housing grant and/or meal grant may impact your other Financial Aid awards received, and we urge you to contact a counselor with the Office of Financial Aid at 212.998.4444 or fill out the webform on our [website](#). All RA candidates will view a video entitled Understanding the Paraprofessional Role & Financial Aid during the RA Information Session to better understand potential impact.

## **13. STATEMENTS**

### **ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUG USE**

RAs in Residential Life & Housing Services are expected to serve as student leaders and uphold department and university policies, as well as local, state and federal laws. There is zero-tolerance for the use of alcohol or other substances in violation of policies or laws or in a manner which puts into question the RAs ability to exercise sound judgment or serve as an appropriate role model. RAs failing to adhere to these standards will be subject to performance action likely resulting in being released from the role. For more specific information on NYU policies please visit the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website and refer to the Residential Life Paraprofessional Handbook.

### **ETHICAL STANDARDS**

RAs in Residential Life & Housing Services are required to respect the personal integrity of all residents and assure they be treated in a manner that is fundamentally fair. RAs should refrain from engaging in any behaviors, attitudes, relationships, or actions that:

- would impinge on a resident's or another paraprofessional's dignity, moral code, privacy, self-worth, and academic, physical, psychological, and/or emotional well-being;
- would seek unjustified personal gains, unfair advantage, unearned goods or services;
- would be considered harassment on the basis of gender, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, creed, nationality and/or mental disability.

New York University is committed to a policy of equal treatment and opportunity in every respect of its relations with its students, faculty and staff members, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital or parental status, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, or veteran status. This includes, but is not limited to, recruitment, hiring or appointment, selection for training, transfer, layoff, promotion, granting of tenure, rates of pay and other forms of compensation, and participation in University-sponsored educational, social, and recreational programs.

### **MEDIA**

RAs who receive requests specific to Residential Life & Housing Services policy should speak with their supervisor and will be referred to University Public Affairs before speaking with any press, including student publications; all other requests should be discussed with your supervisor.

### **RELATIONSHIPS WITH RESIDENTS**

RAs are not allowed to date residents who reside in the building where they reside. RAs may date residents who live in different residence halls.

### **SENSITIVE INCIDENTS**

The Resident Assistant role is a tremendous leadership opportunity focused on developing community and fostering a sense of belonging in the residence halls. As individuals who are focused on community building and engaging students, RAs may encounter a sensitive situation while working with residents, while serving as RA@Home and on community walks. While we cannot guarantee that an RA will never encounter an issue, we have created a layer of professional support that should address these situations. Individuals applying for the RA role should be mindful, though, that they may encounter sensitive incidents and should consider if the role is right for them. For more context on situations that may occur in the residence hall environment and for resources available to all NYU students, please feel welcome to contact the Assistant Director of Residential Wellness, at [reslife.ra@nyu.edu](mailto:reslife.ra@nyu.edu) to discuss these important issues in anticipation of applying for the Resident Assistant role.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Candidates should be aware that Residential Life & Housing Services, as well as many of the staff members employed by the office, maintains accounts on a variety of social media platforms. During the course of participation, the possibility exists that a staff member may encounter a personal profile or other information about a candidate. The office expects RAs and candidates to adhere to all local, state and federal laws and university policies as well as the office statements on ethical standards and alcohol use. Information obtained online that violates any of these laws, policies or statements may be considered during the selection process.

## **TEAM PLAYER**

Paraprofessionals (RAs, RCAs, RLAs, OAs, SAs, PAs, COIs) are indispensable members of NYU's Residential Life & Housing Services team and the greater University community. Paraprofessionals must skillfully balance their responsibilities as students while serving as effective paraprofessionals. A successful paraprofessional will value every member of the NYU community – not just fellow students, but also faculty and staff. They model the behaviors we seek to encourage in all NYU students: being inquisitive, engaged, kind, empathetic and solution-oriented, even when difficult situations or conflicts arise. Paraprofessional training, including NYU's Belonging Zone and other offerings, teaches paraprofessionals the skills of active listening, mindfulness, constructive feedback, growth mindset, and resiliency within a Beloved Community. These methodologies enable paraprofessionals to successfully build community and create cultures of kindness in residential spaces. Paraprofessionals work to continually improve the NYU student experience and it is expected that paraprofessionals provide solution-focused, constructive feedback to peers, supervisors, and office leadership. These are essential elements that paraprofessionals embrace and practice to be successful in their individual roles as paraprofessionals and in their contributions to the residence hall team.