

**NYU**Residential Life
and Housing Services

RESIDENTIAL LIFE ASSISTANT

2021-2022

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1. ROLE OVERVIEW

The Residential Life Assistant (RLA) is a paraprofessional who lives in an NYU residence hall serving as an administrative and community development support to professional staff and as a referral agent and intellectual leader within the hall. The RLA is an integral member of the NYU Residential Life & Housing Services (RLHS) team who must possess good judgment, a strong sense of responsibility and a thorough understanding of the requirements of operating a full service-residence hall program. The RLA reports to the Residence Hall Director (RHD).

COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS

The RLA 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 on call and on community walks, etc.) and RLAs are asked to do their best to adhere to physical distancing and other guidelines. In addition, RLAs 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:** RLAs must role model and demonstrate strength of character, good judgment, flexibility, responsibility, involvement and commitment to student life and the University.
- **Enrollment Status:** RLAs must be a full-time graduate student in a degree bearing program and must carry a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester. An RLA in the final semester before graduation may carry fewer than 9 credits with hall supervisor permission.
- **Grade Point Average:** RLAs must hold a cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average at New York University throughout the time of application and appointment.
- **Selection Process:** Preference is given to students enrolled in the Steinhardt Higher Education graduate program. Initial RLA interviews occur at the Higher Education Program Recruitment Day. If all RLA roles cannot be filled with students enrolled in this program the office will accept resumes from other interested NYU graduate students thereafter.
- **University Standing:** RLAs must remain in good standing at NYU throughout the appointment.

3. COMPETENCIES + LEARNING GOALS

The following competencies will be developed by serving in the RLA 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 RLA 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 RLA role.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

1. Understand the mission, vision, and values of Residential Life & Housing Services.
2. Understand the expectations of the RLA 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 RLA role.

4. ROLE PERIOD

The standard appointment period for the RLA role is from approximately August 1st to May 31st (10 months). RLA's will coordinate exact move in and move out dates with supervisors. 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 RLA 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.

5. TIME COMMITMENT

RLAs should expect 25 regularly scheduled hours per week in the residence hall. These hours will be scheduled based on the need of the hall team and will include both weekday and weekend hours. Please note that the residence hall environment does encounter peak times. That said, some weeks more than 25 hours may be needed. When this is the case supervisors will reduce hours in a non-peak time to balance out hours. Class schedules and other academic requirements will be taken into consideration when office hours are scheduled. A flexible academic schedule is likely to best complement the scheduling requirements of the RLA role.

- **Availability:** The RLA is expected to be sufficiently available in the hall. RLAs planning 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, RLAs may be scheduled to serve on call for a portion of these periods. These include, but are not limited to Thanksgiving Break, Winter/Fall/Spring Breaks.
- **Meetings:** RLAs 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.
- **Time Away:** Each RLA is allowed ten (10) business days for vacation during each academic year. If additional time away is requested RLAs may rearrange scheduled hours, with a supervisor's advanced approval, to accommodate. RLAs must obtain prior permission from their supervisor to use vacation days.

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 RLA 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 duties 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.

Community Development:

- Be an active member of the hall community;
- Provide opportunities for meaningful interaction with team members and residents;
- Assist team members and students in academic, social and personal matters through resource referral;
- Contribute to community life in the residence hall and serve as a positive presence in the building;
- Provide guidance and support and role model behaviors of a responsible community member;
- Provide mediation, if necessary, in escalated roommate conflicts;
- Be available to team members and residents as a resource, providing residents with information regarding university activities and events through individual contact and group information sharing;
- Assist in the coordination of team development activities;
- Coordinate residence hall large scale programs and office theme weeks;
- Assist in tracking and communicating programs with residents via email, social media and hall postings;
- Assist in the advisement of the hall council and the elected executives, attend weekly meetings and programs, facilitate one on one meetings, support the Inter-Residence Hall Council (IRHC);
- Attend advisor roundtables to further develop advising skills and understand best practices;
- Oversee student conduct cases as assigned which may include cases involving noise violations, first time alcohol offenses, fire safety violations, possession of prohibited items, guest policy violations and others;
- Facilitate a section of RA Selection;
- Attend Residential Life and Housing Services monthly professional development meetings;
- Support Faculty Fellows and Faculty Affiliates where appropriate;
- Support Department events and initiatives as needed;
- Participate in on-duty and/or on-call rotational coverage during scheduled evenings;
- Engage professional staff on duty for guidance and support as needed;
- Know, communicate, enforce and abide by existing University and Residence Hall policies and procedures;
- Know and be prepared to enact all emergency and crisis procedures;
- Know protocols regarding student and community health and safety;
- Keep supervisors informed about all issues and concerns on the floor(s);
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality while working in coordination with University team members;
- Assist with the student conduct process by submitting timely online incident reports to document situations.

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 updates regarding the community with supervisor;
- Participate in online, distance and in-person training and team development sessions throughout the year;
- Serve three scheduled hours per week at the hall resource center;
- Serve as an advocate for and a representative of the residence hall by communicating concerns to the RHD and other building team members;
- Understand the needs of and act as a liaison between the RLHS and residential students;
- Participate in on-going training and team development sessions throughout the year;
- Assist the Housekeeping and Facilities staff in identifying facilities in need of repair or attention;
- Participate in other University, Departmental and building activities as assigned;
- Assist in the preparation of hall for opening and transitions;
- Abide by and be knowledgeable of Residential Life and Housing Services policies;
- Serve on a Residential Life and Housing Services committee;
- Provide additional coverage in the office or Resource Center when needed.

8. TRAINING + DEVELOPMENT

Training and development programs are important to the effectiveness, success, and strength of the RLHS community. The Professional Training Committee oversees training and development aimed to provide RLAs with important skills and competencies aligned with the core learning goals (outlined in section 3). Virtual and in-person offerings will be provided.

9. DATES

Below is a list of the important dates related to move-in, training, development requirements, and move-out for your term as an RLA. Additional important dates will be shared by supervisors.

SUMMER 2021

- Mid summer
 - RLAs are directed to select a meal plan
 - RLAs and supervisors coordinate a move-in date for mid to late July
- August 2, 2021
 - RLAs begin role
- Early to mid August
 - RLAs train in hall and centrally

FALL 2021

- August 20, 2021
 - RAs move-in
- August 22-26, 2021
 - Fall Training
- August 27, 28 & 29, 2021
 - Move-In for Fall 2021 residential students

SPRING 2022

- January 21-22, 2022
 - Spring RA Training
- May 4, 2022 from 6PM to 9PM
 - RLHS Year End Celebration
- May 18, 2022
 - Academic Year RAs last day in role
- May 31
 - RLA last day

10. FEEDBACK + APPRAISALS

Residential Life & Housing Services staff members are committed to facilitating learning, growth, and development of all team members. Professional team members provide training, development, supervision, mentorship, feedback and support. To achieve the goal of personal growth and individual success, RLAs 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

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 on call nights
 - In-hall training
 - RLA 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
- On call start/end time and expectations
- Incident report procedures and expectations
- Lock-out policies
- RLHS policies and procedures
- Appraisal forms and timeline

12. MEALS, HOUSING + STIPEND

In addition to an invaluable experience in peer leadership and teamwork, RLA's receive a housing grant and a meal plan grant for the length of their service as well as a stipend.

HOUSING PLACEMENT

RLAs 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).

STIPEND

RLAs receive a \$10,000 stipend to be paid in 10 \$1,000 installments. RLA's are eligible to apply for an \$1,100 professional development grant to apply toward attending a professional conference.

MEAL PLAN SELECTION

As an RLA, 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+. RLA's 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 RLA's will be sent information on meal plan selection early-summer.

FINANCIAL AID IMPACT

RLAs receive a grant equal to the cost of housing charges and a meal plan as well as a stipend. Receipt of these funds 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 RLA candidates will be required to view a video entitled Understanding the Paraprofessional Role & Financial Aid to better understand potential impact.

13. STATEMENTS

ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUG USE

RLAs 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 RLA's ability to exercise sound judgment or serve as an appropriate role model. RLA's 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

RLAs 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. RLA's 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

RLAs 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

RLAs are not allowed to date residents.

SENSITIVE INCIDENTS

The RLA 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, RLAs may encounter a sensitive situation while working with residents, while serving on call and on community walks. While we cannot guarantee that an RLA will never encounter an issue, we have created a layer of professional support that should address these situations. Individuals applying for the RLA 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 to discuss these important issues in anticipation of applying for the RLA 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 RLAs 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.