

*Hamline University*  
*Residential Life Office*  
**Resident Assistant Job Description**

*The Residential Life Office, a department within Student Affairs, is an integral part of Hamline University and the lives of its students. Through its commitment to the principles of student development, the Residential Life Office encourages a living/learning environment that fosters personal, interpersonal, and intellectual growth, as well as the appreciation of diversity within the University community. Toward these ends, a trained staff of professionals and para-professionals strives to provide a self-supporting, effectively managed organization designed to meet students' needs for comfortable and secure residences.*

The Resident Assistant (RA) is a peer educator, working with residents to assist in addressing their needs within the residence hall and the University community. The position is particularly challenging as the RA becomes counsel to students and administrators alike—balancing rights and responsibilities for both the individual as well as dealing with their own pressures of personal and academic responsibilities. To support, guide, and direct those Resident Assistants, a Residence Hall Director works to create a safe, secure environment that fosters the educational mission of the University and enhances the personal development of students.

### **EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Resident Assistants must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher during their entire employment and may not be on academic probation when applying.
- B. First time RAs will be required to take the Current Issues in Student Development Course GSTD 1040 in the fall term of their employment. A passing grade must be earned in order to remain on staff for the Spring Semester. Any RAs who are hired after the official add date will need to register for the class the following academic year. Any RAs who will not be employed the following academic year due to graduation must make arrangements with the instructor of the class to fulfill this requirement.
- C. Work and/or participation in any organized group or team may not exceed:
  - \*Twenty (20) hours if enrolled in 16 credits
  - \*Ten (10) hours if enrolled in 20 credits
  - \*Internships for credits will be counted as outside hours.
  - \*Any requests for additional hours are to be approved by the Hall Director.
  - \*The Hall Director may require that an RA drop outside commitments based on performance.
- D. First year Resident Assistants cannot hold the following positions: Liner Editor, Oracle Editor, or student teaching due to time commitment restraints. Returning Resident Assistants may hold the above positions with prior approval from their Hall Director. At no time may an RA be on the HUSC executive board or be an SOS Leader due to time commitment restraints.
- E. Resident Assistants may not study abroad during their employment. They must be on campus all three terms (Fall, Winter (J-Term), and Spring). Academic leaves will only be considered during Winter (J-Term) term. No more than 3 RAs per staff will be allowed to be gone from the building for the month of January. These requests will be handled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Requests made on applications will be given priority over those that have not been previously indicated.
- F. Resident Assistants must participate in all four Spring Meetings (exceptions made only for class attendance), held:
  - **Thursday, March 16 from 11:30 to 12:30**
  - **Thursday, March 30 from 6pm to 8pm**
  - **Sunday, April 16 from 6pm to 8pm**
  - **Monday, April 24 from 6pm to 8pm**

- G. New Resident Assistants must complete all parts of the Spring Internship by April 28.
- H. Resident Assistants must be present for all of Fall Training. **Tentative dates are Aug 21<sup>st</sup> - September 1st.**
- I. Resident Assistants must be able to attend staff meetings, which will take place **Monday evenings between 5-7pm.**
- J. Resident Assistants may be gone from the buildings no more than twelve (12) nights per semester with prior approval from the Hall Director. Nights off are defined as any night when an RA will not be in the building by 2am. This number includes any holidays when halls are open.
- K. Resident Assistants must successfully pass the State and/or Federal background check.
- L. Applicants who have a judicial file in any area of the campus will be reviewed by the Residential Life Professional Staff for employment.

## **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

A Resident Assistant works as an advisor to individual students, an advisor to student groups, and an assistant in the general management of the residence hall(s). A Resident Assistant assists students in developing a residential community in the living unit. Staff and students work cooperatively to identify student needs and respond to the needs through a variety of activities and programs. Specific responsibilities will depend on the needs of the particular hall or area to which he or she has been assigned. A Resident Assistant is a member of the Residential Life staff and is directly responsible to the Residence Hall Director. Under the supervision of the Residence Hall Director, the Resident Assistant will fulfill the general requirements and responsibilities of this job description and in the Resident Assistant Employment Agreement.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### *Administrative*

- Be on duty for the residence hall(s) on a rotating basis, in emergency situations, or in the absences of regular staff.
- Complete administrative tasks as designated by the Residence Hall Director (room condition forms, work orders, community development logs, survey questionnaires, incident reports, duty log, program planning tools, etc.)
- Assist in opening and closing the building at the beginning and end of each semester and at vacation periods. Resident Assistants will be the last to leave before vacation and the first to return after vacation. Some staff members in each residence hall will be required to remain during the periods when classes are not in session but the residence halls are open including Thanksgiving, Fall Break, and Spring Break.
- Attend weekly staff meetings.
- Meet weekly with your Residence Hall Director for individual meetings.
- Complete functional assignment (determined by Hall Director, usually 1-2 hours per week).

### *Availability and Approachability*

#### Availability

- Be visible and available to residents, especially during evening and weekend periods.
- Indicate to the residents that you are willing spend time with them. If a student wishes to speak with you when you are busy, arrange another time when you can talk.
- When you are not available, let students know whom to contact should a problem arises.

#### Approachability

- Know all the residents on your floor/area. Try to be aware of and respond to their social and academic concerns.
- Provide students with opportunities to talk about themselves, their interests, and their ideas.
- Initiate informal conversations with students where they congregate.

- Respond to personal concerns and difficulties of residents of both an individual and group basis.
- Consult with your Residence Hall Director on problems or situations that might require prolonged or professional attention.

#### Personal Interaction

- Demonstrate effective listening skills: listen attentively; demonstrate understanding; focus on feelings; give feedback when appropriate; explore alternatives; and show genuine interest.
- Develop a good rapport with residents: be personable and friendly; join them for meals; get to know them as people; and be comfortable talking about yourself.
- Treat personal conversations confidentially.

#### Intervention in Problem Situations

- Offer support and ideas on how to responding to problems.
- Encourage students to accept responsibility in dealing with others and follow up on situations brought to your attention.
- Offer yourself as a mediator as needed.
- Intervene on your own initiative when the circumstances warrant it.
- Be consistent.
- Seek all sides of a story before suggesting a solution.
- Consider and weigh extenuating circumstances.
- Handle situations objectively, without favoritism or bias.
- Contact the Residence Hall Director as needed and always inform them of problem situations in a timely manner.

#### **Commitment**

- Cooperate with the Residence Hall Director and other RAs in supporting staff decisions.
- Show a positive attitude towards the residence life program at Hamline as well as actions taken and programs implemented at the University by demonstrating initiative, dependability, and responsibility.
- Be aware that you are identified as a role model and a representative of The Office of Residential Life and Hamline University, both inside and outside the hall and University.
- Demonstrate a commitment to helping others learn about issues of diversity through your actions and efforts as a Resident Assistant.
- Whenever possible, participate in planned and spontaneous staff activities to help promote staff unity by getting to know staff members on an informal basis.
- Fulfill the requirements of in-service training sessions and Fall & Spring Training.

#### **Communication and Referral Source**

- Keep the Residence Hall Director up-to-date on what is happening on your floor/area; provide feedback to your HD on your perception of the hall environment, staff interactions and job performance
- Keep students informed about the University and happenings on campus by posting signs, using bulletin boards and holding regular floor meetings.
- Be familiar with university policies, Residential Life policies, and the room and board services contract.
- Be familiar with “helping services” such as Safety and Security, Career Development Center, Counseling and Health Services, Financial Aid, and Academic Services. Make referrals when necessary.
- Utilize the Residence Hall Director as a resource to help and assist in problem resolution and referral.
- Be helpful to students seeking information or assistance.
- Keep the HD up-to-date regarding your academics so she or he may offer support and assistance.

### ***Community Development***

- Strive to develop a sense of community among residents of your floor by building on the foundation provided by New Student Days and assist students in developing an environment that fosters self-responsibility and respect among members of the hall community.
- Seek to develop a community which fosters an appreciation and education of diversity through programs, activities, and the day-to-day interaction among members of the community.
- Show a positive attitude towards the Residential Life program as well as towards actions taken and programs implemented at the University by demonstrating initiative, dependability, and responsibility.
- Work with residents to develop a written outline of community expectations also known as the Community Charter.
- Be familiar with and be able to explain Residential Life policies and procedures, University policies, and the Residential Life judicial process. Comply with and enforce the rules and regulations; refer violations to your Residence Hall Director.

### ***Dining Service Liaison***

- Refer residents with special dietary needs to the Director of Dining Services.
- Maintain order and control in the dining center in emergency situations.
- Report Dining Services issues to a manager or director.

### ***Maintenance and Facilities***

- Encourage an awareness of and consideration for housekeeping staff and physical facilities among floor members. Discuss the concern for facilities and ask students to take responsibility for the condition of the building.
- Confront students when acts of vandalism or damages occur to Residence Hall property.
- Report damages and needed repairs to the HD as soon as possible.
- Follow-up with student maintenance request forms that have been submitted by your residents.

### ***Programming***

- Support the programming goals of the Residential Life Office by completing programming requirements. This will involve efforts to initiate, plan, and organize opportunities for students to develop a sense of community, enhance academic development, challenge their personal growth and seek to experience and appreciate a diverse society.
- Seek student suggestions and serve as a coordinator, motivator, and resource person in encouraging and assisting residents of the floor through the planning and development of programs and events.
- Delegate responsibility when necessary or appropriate.
- Attend and be active in floor/hall programs and hall government.

### ***Safety and Security***

- Educate students on the need for safety and security. Be certain students understand the possible consequences of safety violations.
- Be familiar with the building fire alarm system and familiarize residents with building evacuation and other emergency procedures.
- Post evacuation routes and emergency numbers.

## **COMPENSATION**

Compensation for the Resident Assistant position is a single room, half board plan (19 meal), local phone service (except long distance), call waiting, caller ID (only if your phone is capable of this), cable TV, internet hookup, and para-professional training.