

The Resident Advisor (RA) is an important member of the Housing Staff. He or she is an undergraduate or graduate student who serves a group of 20 to 30 students living in a community setting (floor, wing, quad) in a residence hall. As a staff member and a student, the RA is in a unique position.

The RA is responsible to the Residence Director, who also lives in the residence hall. Working together, the RA and the RD support and carry out the objectives, policies and procedures of Cumberland University, the Department of Housing & Residence Life.

This job description is provided to help you decide whether you wish to apply for a position. For those persons who apply and are selected as staff members, the job description will outline general duties and expectations of the position.

Recognizing that the primary role of a helping person in an academic community is an educational one, the following considerations are critical in the selection of a Resident Advisor:

- ABILITY in communication, leadership, teamwork, creativity and academic achievement.
- INTEREST in personal growth and enthusiasm for participating in staff development activities.
- WILLINGNESS to assume responsibility in the development of an effective living environment.
- ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS for the completion of paperwork and related details associated with residence hall management.

Cumberland University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

I. Qualifications

- A. Possess a motivating interest in working with students in a residence hall;
- B. Be academically classified as a sophomore or above at the time of employment (30 hours);
- C. Have lived in a Cumberland University residence hall for at least one semester (although two is preferable);
- D. Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.50;
- E. Be in good disciplinary standing with both Housing and the University;
- F. Be available to serve on the staff for two semesters or one academic year, or the remainder of an academic year (exceptions can be made, but rarely). Re-employment is contingent upon overall behavior and performance.

II. Requirements

- A. A RA must maintain an overall GPA of 2.50 during the period of employment.
- B. All RA's will be expected to attend workshop prior to the start of each semester and monthly development meetings throughout the semester.
- C. Due to the involved nature of the fall semester, a first semester RA may not participate in fraternity or sorority pledging during this time.
- D. RA's are limited to 15 credit hours per semester without prior approval from the Director for Residence Life as the position demands a large amount of time. GPA and past performance will be reviewed for the approval.
- E. The RA should maintain a professional attitude and manner while employed as a University employee for the Office of Housing/Residence Life.
- F. The RA must know and understand the philosophy of Residence Life at Cumberland University.
- G. As paraprofessional members of the Office of Housing/Residence Life staff, RA's are expected to maintain a high level of ethical standards whether the RA is on duty or not. RA's should always assist in hall matters that may arise regardless of a duty night.

III. Remuneration

The Resident Advisor position is a part-time live-in position with appointment being made on an academic semester. The Resident Advisor is subject to an evaluation process each semester which directly reflects their employment status.

Remuneration for the RA position for the academic year (August to May) shall consist of the cost of a private room. In overcrowded situations, the RA may be assigned a roommate, but the roommate will be reassigned as soon as possible.

IV. Responsibilities of the Resident Advisor

A. Time Commitment

The RA position is considered to be the RA's principal non-academic activity. Co-curricular activities should not conflict with the time needed to perform effectively as an RA through the entire year. The RA is also expected to do the following:

1. Be available and accessible to students on the floor/quad throughout the semester.

2. Be on duty as established in the staff schedule each week. Be available on scheduled weekends according to the duty schedule. **Staff responsibilities begin prior to the opening of the halls and continue through the closing of the halls.**
3. Remain on your floor in your residence hall several nights per week.
4. Assist with the personal and academic concerns of the residents and help work out any group conflicts that may arise.
5. Serve as a facilitator to encourage a cooperative and considerate group living environment. The RA is expected to build a feeling of togetherness and community by initiating personal interaction and helping to organize the floor.
6. Participate in bi-weekly health and safety room inspections with the Resident Director of your residence hall.
7. Due to the fact that availability is an important area of the RA position, the RA is expected to limit his/her time away from campus and the hall to two (2) weekends per month.
8. In the event of an emergency, RAs serve as building runners and must assist residents in safely and quickly reaching the designated areas while remaining calm and collected to support the needs of the residents. RAs must participate in all residence hall emergency drills.
9. Remain in the hall until all students have left for a vacation period and be back when the halls open after a vacation period. **Permission to leave early or return late must be cleared through the Resident Director and the Director for Residence Life and done a minimum of 1 month in advance.**
10. Serve as a resource person about the campus and Residence Life. Most of all, the RA is expected to be a person who cares about people and attempts to make the residence hall a worthwhile place to live.

B. Advising

The RA should be aware of appropriate referral options for students in need of personal help. When faced with such concerns, the RA is expected to:

1. Demonstrate an ability to listen to others and reflect an attitude of empathic caring and support.

2. Discuss all situations of a referral nature with the Resident Director.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of referral options within the University. Whenever appropriate, the RA should first utilize the professional Residence Life Staff as a referral option.
4. Informs the Resident Director of living situations (incidents, needs, behavioral changes, and unknown whereabouts of members) through individual conferences, unscheduled conversations and staff meetings.

C. Programming

The RA is expected to promote an atmosphere for individual and group development by organizing programs in the residence hall. In providing a learning environment and growth opportunities, the RA is expected to:

1. Help provide programs relative to the specific needs of his/her floor through personal group discussions.
2. Encourage student interaction with faculty and other members of the University community by helping initiate programs involving faculty and other campus resources.
3. Contact resource people and aid in the development of special interest programs.
4. Plan and attend scheduled floor and hall activities insofar as schedules will permit. These activities could include intramural sports, social events, floor meetings and educational activities, etc.
5. Communicate regularly with floor representatives concerning their activities and those of the floor.
6. Conduct programming as set forth by the Office of Residence Life.

D. Training

The effective RA must be involved in the educational opportunities provided and designed to develop the behavioral skills necessary for meeting the job expectations. The RA is, therefore, expected to:

1. Read the Resident Advisor Manual and refer to it as needed.
2. Complete the fall and spring semester staff training programs held for newly selected RAs and returning RAs. This special training is provided to ensure the RA is more effective in the position as well as providing considerable opportunities for their own personal growth.
4. RAs may be required to participate in additional emergency training outside of the fall and spring semester staff training.
3. Attend all staff personal development seminars as required and hall meetings throughout the year. Other staff development opportunities will be offered within the hall and are crucial to the smooth functioning of the halls; participation is strongly encouraged.

E. University Policy - Community Concern

The RA is expected to support and enforce University policies and regulations. He or she is to report disciplinary matters to their Resident Director, or the Director of Residence Life in the event that the Resident Director is not available in a timely manner. Other Housing Staff members are prepared to support and counsel the RA as he/she performs his/her duties.

In functioning within the physical and social environment of the hall, the RA serves as a model for others. The RA must assume responsibility for creating an environment in which optimum personal and social growth may occur. In order to maximize the effects of the hall environment upon student development, the RA is expected to:

1. Encourage by example, the principles of individual responsibility and respect for others' development.
2. Know and understand the rationale for University and Residence Life policies and procedures. Explain, support and follow the regulations and policies outlined in the University Student Handbook and the Rights and Responsibilities for Cumberland University Residents.
3. Respond in a constructive and helpful manner when confronted with behavior or infractions which disrupt the environment. All University violations must be documented for discussion between the resident and the Director of Residence Life.