



2024-2025 Resident Advisor (undergraduate and graduate)

Appointment Description¹

The Resident Advisor (RA) position (undergraduate and graduate level) is a student leadership role and is part of the Office of College Houses and Academic Services (CHAS) at the University of Pennsylvania. The RA strives to create a positive environment by fostering a sense of community within the college house system and providing help and assistance to students. The RA works closely with residential students and positively influences student development. The RA also partners with the House to develop a residential environment conducive to academic and personal growth. This is accomplished through providing opportunities for student engagement and involvement, developing supportive relationships with individual residents, and educating students on their rights and responsibilities as identified in the Code of Student Conduct and other University policies. It is essential that all RAs are viewed as credible, positive role models that abide by the University and CHAS policies and procedures, the RA Appointment Description & Agreement, and the housing contract. The RA is expected to behave in a manner that is professional and attuned to the goals and objectives of CHAS and Penn, both on and off campus.

TO BE SELECTED AS AN RA:

1. Be a full-time, matriculated, and confirmed University of Pennsylvania undergraduate/graduate student. Undergraduates must be at least of sophomore standing by the time they begin as an RA. RAs can not possess a full-time employment position on or off campus.
2. Be in good standing with no active sanctions with any University offices including but not limited to: CHAS, the Title IX Office, and the Center for Community Standards and Accountability.
3. Be willing to limit other commitments that may interfere with the ability to meet the expectations of the RA appointment without the advance approval of the House Director/CHAS. This includes student involvement, clubs, and employment.
4. Undergraduate RAs must maintain a minimum of 2.5 Cumulative GPA/2.5 Semester GPA and Graduate RAs must be in good standing in their academic program.
5. Demonstrate interest in programming and event planning, and interacting with a diverse populations of students.
6. Display experience in leadership roles and/or participation in community service.
7. Demonstrate critical thinking skills, including problem-solving and crisis management.
8. Demonstrate a desire to engage with undergraduate students in a residential environment.
9. Demonstrate organizational skills and the ability to meet expectations efficiently, independently, and in team settings.
10. Possess effective interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills.

APPLICATION, SELECTION, AND ASSIGNMENT PROCESS:

RA applications are available online at <https://www.collegehouses.upenn.edu/join>. Graduate and undergraduate students interested in serving as an RA must complete an application and meet all the requirements for the role. Applicants are then informed whether they have been selected for interviews by individual College Houses. Final selection and assignment decisions are made based on several factors, including the individual College House need, as well as applicant's strengths.

LIST OF THINGS RAs ARE EXPECTED TO DO: *This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Based on the needs of the house there may be other expectations set forth by the House leadership. If that happens, RAs will be advised in advance regarding what is expected of them.*

Student Development & Community Engagement

1. Create a residential environment to support academic success, self-exploration, and encouragement.
2. Serve as a resource person and make appropriate referrals while promoting full cooperation with all University offices.
3. Engage with all community members to learn more about them, identify their needs, and determine how to involve them in the House and University community.
4. Assist new students in their orientation to the House and to the University.

¹ This Appointment Description is subject to change.

5. Develop and implement various methodologies that keep residents informed of programs, events, and activities, as well as CHAS or University information.
6. Foster a sense of community that encourages a sense of belonging as a member of the floor, the House, and the campus by organizing a variety of community engagement activities and programs.
7. Alert students regarding information and resources concerning the House, CHAS, and the University as appropriate.
8. Facilitate the completion of roommate/suitemate/apartment agreements as outlined by the House and follow up as necessary.
9. Complete programming activities for the House as required, including submission of program activity reports, surveys and evaluations.
10. Maintain a schedule that assures regular interaction and availability with residents in order to facilitate community development and respond to student and community needs.
11. Utilize the community building dining allocation to eat with residents. Participate in House dining and dining-related activities to build strong relationships with residents and strong communities with floors, suites, or sections.
12. Participate in RA selection as needed and defined by the House and CHAS.
13. Facilitate and manage specific Program Communities within the House at the direction of the House and CHAS.

Inclusivity & Leadership

1. Build an inclusive community that promotes and supports the exchange of diverse ideas and beliefs.
2. Inform and program around House and CHAS priorities.
3. Support CHAS and University efforts in inclusivity programming and practices.
4. Serve as an approachable and active community member within the floor, House, and University.
5. Serve as a representative of CHAS and the House in a positive and professional manner. (Note: RAs are not authorized to speak on behalf of the University, their House, the RA role, or CHAS to media or online mediums)
6. Demonstrate support for the House, other RAs, and residents by attending House events and by assisting with House student groups.
7. Serve as a positive, contributing member of the House team and CHAS.
8. Contribute to the House and CHAS overall by serving on committees and/or other leadership opportunities.

Administrative Tasks:

1. Execute administrative tasks in a timely manner, meeting deadlines and paperwork processes, posting flyers, designing bulletin boards, and door/floor decorations (if applicable), and reporting any facilities concerns.
2. Attend and participate in RA team meetings and meet individually with the House Director on a consistent basis to review student and community needs.
3. Timely submit all departmental paperwork, forms, and reports to CHAS/the House.
4. Maintain a cellphone and share the phone number with CHAS and the House. RAs are expected to regularly monitor their calls and text messages as well as their Penn e-mail account and to promptly respond when contacted.

Operations:

1. Assist with residential move-in periods in mid-August and January, and move-out processes in December and in May.
2. Assist in procedures for emergencies including natural disasters, medical, mental health, and facility issues.
3. Report maintenance concerns and damage to University property, including fire equipment, alarm systems, common areas and bathrooms.
4. Exercise proper care for all University property, including but not limited to duty phone, keybox, and other office items.

Student Behavior & Crisis Response:

1. Develop a sense of community that encourages residents to take ownership of the community and assume responsibilities for their actions.
2. Read and be familiar with the RA Emergency Procedures and any other material distributed by CHAS, the House, or other department administrators.
3. Respond to behavioral and crisis/emergency situations and refer situations to CHAS/the House when appropriate.
4. Document and communicate incidents in an accurate and timely manner.
5. Mediate, address, and report roommate/floor/apartment conflicts. In all such matters, consult with the House.
6. Know and observe University policies, procedures, guidelines, and publications applicable to students and serve as a role model for House residents. The RA should demonstrate behavior befitting a responsible community leader.
7. Address and report any type of behavior that is or may be perceived to be discriminatory or offensive.
8. Serve in a duty rotation. The RA duty schedule is determined by the House and in collaboration with the team. Duty is shared process and allows for flexibility for adjustments. Note: Duty includes Thanksgiving or Spring Break periods.
9. Serve as a Campus Security Authority (CSA) - <https://www.publicsafety.upenn.edu/clery> .

10. Read, be knowledgeable, and comply with the University of Pennsylvania's Sexual Misconduct Policy (<https://titleoffice.upenn.edu>), as well as the College House Policy on Consensual Sexual or Exploitive Relationships (<https://www.collegehouses.upenn.edu/policies/relationship-policy>).

Training & Development:

1. Participate in all training and development activities, including, but not limited to fall semester training in August and mid-year training in January. This may require adjusting timeframes for summer jobs, breaks, and travel/vacation plans. Expected dates are included in the RA Appointment Agreement. Participation consists of being present on campus for training and development activities, unless otherwise directed by CHAS or Penn. Request for exception can be requested through CHAS. Exceptions are reviewed and decided upon the areas of academics, University representation, and/or an emergency.
2. Regard the RA appointment as their primary leadership role during the time period defined by the RA Appointment Agreement.
3. Attend all other required RA trainings/meetings and events as scheduled. This includes weekly RA team meetings, bi-weekly 1-on-1 meetings, in- services, etc. These dates and events will be reviewed during August training and on-going.

NOTE: *If an RA is unable to attend training or misses training and/or CHAS development sessions and fails to communicate as such, the RA will be held accountable and there will be consequences commensurate with the failure to meet this important expectation.*

HOUSING & DINING

The RA receives a fee-free single occupancy accommodation in their assigned House. The RA is assigned to a specific College House, according to experience, skills and House needs and objectives. Rooms are provided during the term of appointment only. Size, shape, and furnishings of rooms vary. **Furniture must remain in the room assigned as Houses do not have storage facilities.** CHAS reserves the right to re-locate and/or re-assign an RA as needed. This includes but not exclusive to: facilities projects, renovations, House RA team needs, public health concerns, etc. When such moves occur, communication with the RA will be delivered in a timely manner.

Similar to other residential students, CHAS and the University assume no liability for any injury to any person in their campus residential unit or for any loss or damage to any property contained therein. Housing strongly advises all residents to obtain appropriate medical insurance and private property insurance to cover loss or injury to person or property and to remove all valuable items from their unit prior to University recesses.

The RA is to maintain in-house residence throughout the period of the appointment. The RA is responsible to review and honor the Terms and Conditions for Housing Occupancy as listed at this link: <https://residential-services.business-services.upenn.edu/terms-and-conditions-2023-2024>.

- a) New Graduate RAs may move in 7 days prior to their graduate program orientation or the start of classes **and** only if the room is available.
- b) Returning Graduate RAs (GRAs) are allowed to stay in residence (residential location determined by CHAS) until the end of their academic term if they are still serving as an RA.
- c) ***Additional Occupants (for Graduate RAs only):*** Some rooms (as defined by having a private bathroom) will accommodate an adult with whom the Graduate RA shares a relationship, such as a partner or spouse, but facilities do not exist to accommodate a Graduate RA with a child. The Graduate RA is responsible for submitting an Additional Occupant (AO) form to register and follow the AO process. For AOs who have a Penn-affiliation, information will be reported to SRFS.
- d) A Graduate RA who is continuing as an RA from one academic year to another may remain in residence continuously until their appointment concludes.
- e) Undergraduate RAs are not eligible to reside in an RA room in a House that is designated as closed over Winter Break. They will have the ability to apply for Winter Break housing in an open building through Housing.

A dining community building allocation is provided to encourage relationship building with residents during the academic year. The dining community building allocation is not intended to meet an RA's daily nutritional needs. Meal swipes cannot be exchanged for additional dining dollars, nor be reallocated to any other individual or program, such as "Swipe Out Hunger". Information on the dining allocation will be provided in August training period and if there are any updates, throughout the year. **CHAS reserves the right to modify the dining community building allocation as needed.**

STUDENT REGISTRAR & FINANCIAL SERVICES

CHAS is required to provide a report to Student Registrar & Financial Services (SRFS) identifying all students who are serving as RAs. The housing and dining that RAs receive may be considered in evaluating financial support for graduate and undergraduate RAs. AO's information will also be reported. Be advised that RA appointments may impact individuals' financial aid packages (i.e. grants, work study). As a result, all students before accepting an RA appointment, whether new or returning, are highly encouraged to consult with SRFS regarding any potential impact. SRFS can be contacted through their website, www.srfs.upenn.edu, by email at sfsmail@pobox.upenn.edu, or by telephone at 215-898-1988.

International students with visa-related questions about serving as an RA should reach out to International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS). ISSS can be contacted through their website, <https://global.upenn.edu/iss>, or by telephone at 215-898-4661.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/EQUAL ACCESS/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Pennsylvania is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access/Affirmative Action institution. The University seeks excellence through diversity among its administrators, faculty, staff and students. The University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, or marital status. Consistent with its obligations under the law, the University will provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with a disability who require accommodation to perform the essential functions of the job. Please contact Disability Services to register at 215-573-9235 or by email at vpul-lrcmail@pobox.upenn.edu.