

Shattuck International House Resident Community Advisor (RCA) Job Description

The Resident Community Advisor (RCA) is the primary liaison between residents of Shattuck International House and the administration of the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH). RCAs report directly to the Director for Student Affairs in the Office for Student Affairs. In general, RCAs follow, enforce and support all Harvard University, HSPH and Shattuck House policies. They also monitor such policies at Shattuck House and act as role models for Shattuck House residents

A. Requirements

Applicants must be HSPH students who have completed at least one year of school at HSPH prior to being an RCA. Applicants must be dedicated to serving the students in Shattuck House and to building community there. Applicants must have excellent interpersonal, communication (oral and written), problem-solving and conflict resolution skills. They must demonstrate initiative, dedication, creativity, enthusiasm, and the ability to work effectively with a multicultural student population. In addition, applicants must have strong organizational skills, be detail-oriented, have the capacity to plan and coordinate events, and be familiar with the Boston area for planning and suggesting activities outside of Shattuck House. Applicants must be professional, mature, timely, responsive, and able to remain calm and supportive under pressure and to deal with conflict.

B. Training

RCAs are required to attend the orientation/training session designed and facilitated by the Director for Student Affairs along with the Operations Office at the beginning of his/her contract. This training may be scheduled for early summer and/or early fall. RCAs must attend meetings (typically monthly) and various other training programs scheduled through the Office for Student Affairs. RCAs are also expected to meet regularly (at least monthly) themselves to plan events and determine on-call schedules.

C. Performance Evaluations

Mid-way through the academic year, the Office for Student Affairs will complete performance evaluations for the RCAs. Shattuck residents will be asked to evaluate the RCAs. RCAs will meet individually with the Director for Student Affairs to review the results of the evaluation.

D. Move-in

During move-in, Resident Community Advisors (RCAs) will help the Operations staff with the distribution of lease packets and keys, showing residents to their apartments, explaining key regulations and other issues, and providing tours of Shattuck House and the neighborhood.

E. Orientation

Resident Community Advisors (RCAs) will welcome new Shattuck House residents and orient them to Shattuck House, HSPH, the Longwood Campus, Harvard University and Boston. RCAs will also advise new Shattuck House residents with regard to personal safety and security.

Along with the Office for Student Affairs and Operations Office, RCAs will hold a meeting with all Shattuck House residents at the beginning of the academic year to go through introductions, duties and

responsibilities, and contact information. At this meeting, RCAs will distribute a needs assessment survey to residents.

F. Resident Programs

RCAs will plan and present programs for residents in an effort to provide academic support, promote community development, increase knowledge and awareness about aspects of public health, and broaden resident understanding of social and cultural issues. RCAs should occasionally include other HSPH students in the events and activities that they plan, so that they can link Shattuck House residents with the broader HSPH community. It is expected that the RCAs plan events each month. This event planning includes, but is not limited to, summer events for the entire school/summer program. For each event, RCAs are expected to inform the residents at least one week ahead of time, make flyers, and send out reminders when the event is near.

It is expected that the RCAs will conduct a needs assessment to get input from residents on what types of events and activities they find of interest three times per academic year (e.g. early fall, before winter break and spring). At the end of each term, RCAs will re-evaluate resident needs and make changes if necessary for the following term. Needs assessments can be done through online surveys, door-to-door meetings and/or house meetings. The RCAs will maintain and update the wall calendar in the mail room showing upcoming events as well as send out monthly “save-the-date” e-mails to residents highlighting planned programming for the month ahead.

RCAs should also monitor the environment inside and around Shattuck, and send out reminding emails to residents in case of issues regarding policies or procedures (mail packages, garbage, personal things in common area, noise, clothes left in laundry room), environment changes (bad weather, construction projects near Shattuck), and other issues as appropriate .

G. On-Going Resource Information

Knowing where to go for what they need or want makes the lives of Shattuck House residents more manageable and enjoyable. RCAs will provide updated information to residents about various HSPH and Harvard University services, agencies and programs, as well as more general information on the Boston region. RCAs will design, prepare, distribute, and/or post notices of Shattuck House events at least one week in advance of the event. Email(s) should also be sent to residents advertising the event.

There are bulletin boards in the mailroom at Shattuck House that contain information on Shattuck House events/news as well as events of interest in and around HSPH, Harvard University, and the Boston metropolitan area. RCAs should be responsible for maintaining the photo and event boards in the mailroom. Residents may hang photos and the RCAs may post information regarding upcoming events on these bulletin boards as well. The bulletin boards will be regularly updated by the RCAs.

H. Emergency Assistance

RCAs must assist in emergency situations, and must contact the appropriate office (either or both of the Operations Office and/or the Harvard Control Center) in the event of a facilities or operational emergency. RCAs should contact the Director for Student Affairs regarding student life issues.

RCAs will be on call from 3pm through 7am Monday through Friday, and 24 hours on the weekend and holidays*, as scheduled on a rotating basis. At the beginning of each term, RCAs should submit an on-call schedule to the Director for Student Affairs and the Operations Office and notify them of any

changes. When on call, RCAs must carry a 24-hour cell phone at all times, to ensure that they can be reached in the event of an emergency. When on call, RCAs should never turn off the cell phone, must be within the immediate Boston area, staying overnight in the building, and must respond promptly and professionally to any calls that they receive.

RCAs should check their email and respond to residents' concerns as soon as possible and definitely within 24 hours.

*RCAs will organize a holiday schedule. One RCA must be on-call and on-site for each holiday break period (e.g. Thanksgiving, Winter Break and Spring Break). This should be decided by the RCAs and Director for Student Affairs on a rotating basis.

I. Relationships with Residents

Residents arrive from all over the world to live at Shattuck House and attend HSPH. Becoming acclimated to a new environment can be challenging. Language and cultural norms are sometimes problematic. Residents may feel isolated and homesick.

RCAs must address the needs and concerns of residents. RCAs should establish on-going relationships with Shattuck House residents so that they can assist them with various academic and personal issues, making referrals to other HSPH resources as appropriate, addressing their Shattuck concerns, and getting feedback about Shattuck events. RCAs should be visible and accessible to residents and should actively promote community development within Shattuck House and HSPH.

RCAs should also summarize students' concerns and report them to the Director for Student Affairs during their monthly meeting or more frequently as appropriate.

J. Conflict Resolution

From time to time, conflicts may arise between Shattuck House residents. The RCAs will engage in initial efforts to problem solve and resolve concerns for residents who are having difficulty resolving conflicts in living situations (for example, conflicts about noise or cleanliness). RCAs will also be expected to make referrals to other HSPH resources as appropriate and as suggested by OSA and Operations staff.

K. Adherence to HSPH and Harvard University Policies

RCAs are role models for Shattuck House residents and must conduct themselves in a responsible and professional manner at all times. RCAs must follow, enforce and support all Harvard University, HSPH, and Shattuck House policies. RCAs must also monitor Shattuck House residents' compliance with all Harvard University, HSPH, and Shattuck House policies and must report any failure to comply to the Director for Student Affairs and/or to the Operations Office, depending on the nature of the issue.

L. Compensation & Vacation

RCAs will receive a 50% reduction in rent per month for a one-bedroom apartment. RCAs are also entitled to four weeks of vacation as approved by the Director for Student Affairs. Salary and benefits are not included with this position.