

## **HOUSE COMMUNITY ADVISOR**

### **Job Description**

**2020-2021**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The House Community Advisor (HCA) is a member of the administrative staff of the College via the Department of Residence Life and reports to an Area Director or Assistant Director of Residence Life for their assigned area. The HCA's responsibilities require a combination of managerial and interpersonal skills aimed at developing a house environment in which individual responsibility and respect for differences are fostered and valued. The HCA is expected to act as a liaison between the residents of the house and the various service departments of the College; to work cooperatively with other house leadership; to coordinate with the house council on matters of internal governance, if applicable; and to be available regularly to students as a source of information, advice, and help.

The HCA's most direct link to the Department of Residence Life is their supervisor, who meets regularly with the HCA to provide information and support. Additionally, the Assistant Directors and the Director of Residence Life are available to the HCA, as needed. The HCA will have the additional resource of a Head Resident who will be assigned leadership responsibilities related to a subgroup of HCAs/HCs/AMs and their houses. The HCA is encouraged to be involved in other campus activities but may not hold a major College office (e.g. President of the Student Government Association, Chair of the Conduct Board, Bridge Leader, ISP Leader, Orientation Leader), nor make any commitments to student activities or organizations that would conflict with the responsibilities and time commands of the position. After personal and academic needs, an HCA's primary commitment is to their house.

The HCA is expected to fulfill the following responsibilities (as well as other tasks assigned by their supervisors):

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Make a strong effort to get to know and develop a positive rapport with each resident, and maintain a positive attitude.
- Be available as the initial contact person for residents with any problems or concerns, and respond or make referrals as appropriate.
- Support house governance, and attend house council meetings when applicable.
- Meet with the House President (HP) and other residence life staff to discuss house issues and concerns.(minimally once a month).
- Play a strong role in the day-to-day interactions of residents. Make intentional and informal connections with residents both individually and collectively.
- Serve as a leader and role model for the house community
- Facilitate peer mediation - using skills gained through Social Justice Mediation training in times of conflict.
- Connect at least once a month with your assigned HR either in a group or individual setting (for example: have a meal, go to an event on campus).
- Assess and Research the needs of the community and implement appropriate data driven programming.

#### **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING**

- Each HCA is responsible for 4-6 programs each year, reflecting the core values of Residence Life (Learning, Community through Connections, Wellness, and Social Justice).
- Consult with their coworkers, fellow house leaders and supervisor when planning and executing their house programs. HCAs must complete program evaluations once completing a program.
- Develop and facilitate two Connection programs by the end of September.
- Help disseminate information on campus-wide events and promote involvement in inclusion and equity programs and other educational opportunities at the college and within the Five College area.
- Support programs and house events organized by residence life staff and house council members.
- Consider house needs and interests and collaborate with other house leaders when developing programs.

***\*For the 20-21 academic year the programming model will be changing. This section of the job description will be updated once the model has been developed.\****

## **TRAINING, SUPERVISION, AND EDUCATION**

- Attend residence life training in August - a two-week orientation/training program before new student orientation and the start of classes - and participate in monthly in-service Trainings.
- Attend a January training to take place at the end of January term before Spring classes begin.
- Attend regular staff meetings as arranged by their supervisor (typically weekly, two-hour meetings on Tuesday evenings).
- Meet for regularly scheduled supervisory/one-on-one meetings with their supervisor.
- Participate in a formal HCA and supervisor evaluation process.
- Submit Weekly Reports to your supervisor.
- File Community Reports and other administrative paperwork as assigned by your supervisor in a timely manner.

## **HOUSE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Accessibility
  - Be accessible in the house often, especially during evening hours, house teas, and have meals with residents when possible.
  - Schedule two open hours a week (either in your room or in a house common space) where you are available to residents.
  - Learn the procedure for emergencies established by the College, communicate and disseminate these procedures to all members of the house.
- Nights
  - Nights away should be taken with the permission of your supervisor. For each night away you must coordinate with your other house staff to confirm there is adequate coverage for the house.
  - Extended time away (2 or more nights) should be arranged in advance with your supervisor.
  - Be in residence, working with the house (see social system expectations) on the nights the house has a registered event scheduled. This includes Winter

Weekend, Spring Weekend and Senior Banquet events. It is expected that the house coordinates all events with HCAs and includes HCAs in selecting dates and times for events.

- Maintain Community Standards
  - Know, understand and follow college policies and help other students understand their rights and responsibilities as members of the community.
  - Ensure that, as a student staff member, you uphold the policies of the college.
  - Address violations of college policy and complete the required documentation.
  - When necessary utilize Campus Police as a resource.
- House Administration
  - Communicate regularly with the other residence life staff members and HP and work with the House Council on matters of internal governance. This may involve attending additional meetings. It is expected that these dates and times will be discussed in advance.
  - Serve as a communication link between students and the administration by posting and announcing information.
  - Meet biweekly with your fellow house HCA.
  - Assist with the housing assignments processes and other assigned tasks.
  - Support Building Services by reporting house damages and helping educate residents on how to place work orders.
  - Complete Health and Safety room inspections as directed by the Department.
  - HCAs receive an annual programming allowance. HCAs must either work with their supervisor to make programming purchases or submit receipts for reimbursement. Receipts and paperwork for reimbursements should be submitted to their supervisor no more than two business days after the purchase is made.
  - Work with the other residence life house staff (including your assigned HR) to identify, publicize and staff 5 hours of house trunk room duty during the last week of spring classes and finals.
  - Provide access to the trunk room for residents who request access at least 24 hours in advance.
- Keys
  - HCAs are responsible for house trunk keys and neighborhood office keys.

## **CAMPUS BREAKS**

- Complete tasks associated with Fall opening (including checking students in, identifying "no shows", etc.), Winter closing, and Spring closing. HCAs must stay in their house until the day after the conclusion of final exam period in the winter and the day after commencement in the spring in order to complete closing duties.
- Communicate early with their supervisor about when you are planning on leaving for Thanksgiving and Spring breaks.
- Staff who are working Thanksgiving or Spring Break are responsible for closing their assigned break houses.
- Remain in residence during the full duration Senior Week. If time away is needed you are required to discuss this in advance with your supervisor and secure a contact person for the house.
- Staff that are on campus for the full duration of January term and have no other significant commitments during this time will be financially compensated for staffing

houses. Houses will be staffed on a “first come, first serve” basis as there is limited funding for compensation.

## **COLLABORATION**

- Manage written requests and call in any emergencies for Facilities Management assistance.
- Collaborate and utilize other college departments that support students.
- Assist in educating your house about the Room Selection process and help answer resident questions.
- Publicize and attend programs sponsored by the Department of Residence Life.
- Participate in Cromwell Day Events and encourage resident participation.
- And other duties assigned by the College.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Display confidentiality, discretion, and good judgment in relationship to knowledge of information in the following specific areas:
  - Personal information about specific individuals; including pertinent identification data ( student ID numbers, addresses, etc.) and information about personal circumstances.
  - Any and all information pertaining to the College or conduct cases; including students involved, the existence of community reports, discussion of existing cases, or outcomes of conduct cases.
  - Any and all additional information that is deemed confidential as determined by your supervisor.

## **COMPENSATION**

HCA's will receive the following stipend based on the number of years they have been on staff which will be disbursed via bi-weekly checks and is considered taxable wages.

First Year on staff \$4140

Second Year on staff \$4640

Third Year on staff \$5140

The HCA's compensation will be prorated if their start or end date differs from the standard contract dates.

If the staff member agrees to work during January term they will be compensated an additional \$320 (approx.) for the year.

The HCA may not hold a second campus job, regardless of whether or not they receive financial aid. The HCA may supplement their earnings with spot jobs and off-campus positions, after discussion with their supervisor.

The HCA must file I-9 and W-4 forms with the Student Payroll Office prior to employment. The HCA's paychecks will not be issued if these forms are not completed.

## **CONTINUATION**

The HCA must sign the Contract for Employment for Residence Life Student Staff Members. The HCA must be a full-time matriculated student at Smith College throughout the period of employment and must maintain a 2.5 cumulative GPA and not be on academic probation.

The HCA will be terminated (removed from their positions) at any time as a result of:

- Violating the College's alcohol or drug policies
- Harming, endangering or threatening to harm another person.

The HCA's employment may be terminated at any time as a result of the following conditions:

- Violation of College policy,
- Failure to comply with the conditions of a warning or probation as issued by their supervisor,
- Failure to meet basic job expectations,
- An unsatisfactory job evaluation,
- Withdrawal from the College.

Resignation should be discussed with their supervisor. In the event of resignation or termination, the HCA will vacate their assigned room and return all keys to their supervisor or Clark Hall within 72 hours. Staff members who leave their position mid-year may not continue to live in the same house in which they were a staff member at the discretion of their supervisor. The Assistant Director will re-assign the former HCA to a new room.

**Continuation of the appointment, remuneration, and benefits of the job is dependent upon satisfactory job performance and student status with the college.**

### **Important Financial Note**

These stipends may affect the HCAs financial aid allotment. Because financial aid packages differ from student to student, any student interested in the HCA position should contact Student Financial Services for information about how the financial aid package may be affected. No student - whether on aid or not - may hold more than one "permanent" job on campus. This means that you cannot hold a second campus job; however, you may supplement your primary earnings with spot job earnings. The limitation of one primary job per student is to insure equity and opportunity among all students at Smith and has no bearing on whether you are on financial aid or not.