

## Frequently Asked Questions

**1. How do I know which hall or group of halls is the best place for me?**

Consult with the Residence Hall Director staff and current paraprofessional staff about the job and differences between halls. Get out and explore different halls. Don't assume that "XYZ" hall is the only and best place for you if that is the only place you have ever lived or choose a community solely based on the Residence Hall Director or current staff.

**2. Are scholarship recipients compensated for being Resident Assistants and Inclusion Assistants?**

Scholarship recipients may receive room and board for payment as Resident Assistants and Inclusion Assistants for Residence Life in addition to other scholarships and grants they may receive. Please note that the Office of the Provost instituted a policy that limits CMU gift assistance (scholarships and grants) to not exceed the cost of attendance. Room and board provided Residents Assistants and Inclusion Assistants fits into the CMU gift assistance category, and the value of the award may be reduced so that total CMU gift assistance does not exceed the cost of attendance. Applicants with questions about how a position may affect them should contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid.

**3. Who should I choose as my references?**

Pick people with whom you have had contact through volunteering, working, or other regular interaction. They will be able to give the best reference. Good ideas for references include Residence Hall Directors, paraprofessional staff, Student Organization Advisors, Professors, and current/prior Employers. The references should be people who know you and can comment on your skills, readiness for the job, and character. Relatives, significant others, etc. are not considered appropriate references.

NOTE 1: Before you write someone down as a reference, first ask them if you can use them as a reference. This is simply professional etiquette!

NOTE 2: Reference information on you may also be obtained from advisors, supervisors, RHDs, etc. who are not listed on your application, as well as from information posted on social media and other public resources.

**4. What if I'm not sure my grades will be high enough or if I'll have enough credits?**

Because applications are due in January, you will have received your grades before the application due date. Work on your application before then even if you think your grades may not cut it. If your grades are high enough, you do not want to rush to get your application done last minute. Regarding credit hours, to be eligible for a position, applicants must be at sophomore status at the end of the semester in which they are



applying, i.e. 26 credit hours. Furthermore, you must have at least a 2.50 GPA. We do not round up.

**5. Is it true that RHD/RD staff and others may look at my social media?**

Yes. Instagram, Twitter, etc. are "in the public domain" and are used across CMU and many campuses by faculty and staff. For CMU Residence Life, role modeling responsible behavior and ability to follow and enforce university policy are important hiring criteria. Applicants are encouraged to evaluate their online profiles and postings as they decide how they want to present themselves to others. A student's online presence ideally matches the person they are.

**6. Can International students work as Resident Assistants, Inclusion Assistants, & Community Council Advisors?**

Yes. International students may work as Residents Assistants and Inclusion Assistants. International Students must not exceed 20 hours per week due to visa restrictions, so employment outside of the paraprofessional staff position is not permitted during the academic year, except during semester breaks. International students should contact the Office of International Affairs if they have questions about their visas.

**7. Do I have to sign up for Fall housing on campus in order to be eligible in the selection process?**

No. Candidates are not required to sign up for Fall housing in order to be considered for a paraprofessional staff position. Candidates who are not sure that they want to live on campus if they're not selected should wait until they are sure about where they want to live in the Fall.

**8. If I have been found in violation by the Office of Student Conduct, can I still be considered for a position?**

It depends. You must not be within one year of being placed on disciplinary probation at CMU or any other university on the day applications are due. If your probation has ended prior to the application deadline or you were placed on probation over a year prior to the deadline, then you would be an eligible candidate. Regardless, while employed, staff members will be disciplined up to and including discharge if they violate any University policies or procedures.

**9. I want to be a teacher someday. As I plan for the future, can I do my student teaching and be a paraprofessional staff member?**

We do not allow staff members to remain in the position while they are completing their student teaching or any other full-time internship due to the significant time commitment involved.

#### **10. What is involved in the Personal Statement?**

A Personal Statement document is required to be attached while applying – which should include any facts about yourself that you think are significant to the specific position for which you are applying.

We respect the personal goals, life experiences and diverse backgrounds that students bring to a position. In order for us to make the best selection, we need the most useful information from you. We are interested in any facts about yourself that you think are significant to the position. (We encourage you to expand on the information you provided in your application. However, to avoid redundancy, please refrain from re-listing activities without further explanation.) Please limit your response to between 100-500 words. You may, but are not required, to include:

- A personal experience that has helped to shape who you are.
- Any qualities or characteristics you possess that will contribute to your success as a Resident Assistant, Inclusion Assistant, or Community Council Advisor.
- A challenging situation that you have encountered and your response.

#### **11. What are the time commitments like for most staff members?**

The position, when done properly, takes around 20 hours per week. There are: 1.) Thursday evening staff meetings/departments in-services, one-on-one meetings with your supervisor, regular interaction with residents, community building activities and campus events, duty nights and weekend day-time coverage, etc.

#### **12. How do I navigate applying for both the RA and Inclusion Assistant Role?**

If you are interested in both RA and Inclusion Assistant positions, make sure to fill out an application for each position. Each position has its own process, so be sure to check the candidate timeline for all relevant deadlines and dates. You will know whether or not you received an Inclusion Assistant Position prior to Final Interviews in the RA process, which means you would not have to go through the final interview stage if you did get an Inclusion Assistant position. However, Positional Processing (RA) and Dialogue and Interview Days (Inclusion Assistant) are both parts of the process you would need to complete before Inclusion Assistant offers are made.