

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF POSITION

### Community Assistant - 2018-2019 Academic Year

I understand that the vision of the University of Mississippi Department of Student Housing is essential in the development of each residential student. In order to achieve this vision, we support our mission, core values, and educational priority.

It is the Department's Mission to provide secure, supportive, and comfortable communities, designed to contribute to the personal and academic growth of each residential student. We value integrity, respect, communication, service, and learning in the accomplishment of our mission.

Our educational priority is that through transformational and purposeful experiences, students living in residential communities at the University of Mississippi will become engaged scholars and responsible citizens.

Community Assistants work with students and other Housing personnel to promote a socially, culturally, and educationally enriching experience for students that supports this mission, these values, and this educational priority.

#### **POSITION REQUIREMENTS:**

- Sophomore (second year) standing – prior to appointment period beginning, a CA should have completed at least two post high-school full time semesters
- Full-time Matriculated status – full time is defined as being enrolled for at least twelve (12) hours of coursework in a program at the University of Mississippi
- Maintain at time of application and throughout appointment period at least at 2.75 cumulative residency GPA.
- Enrolling in at least 12-17 credit hours, with any hours beyond 17 being approved in writing by the Area Coordinator of their Area and also the Associate Director (or his/her designee).
- Have no continuing record of University conduct action at the time of appointment of at any time during the appointment period as a Community Assistant.

**APPOINTMENT AND IMPORTANT DATES:** See Important Dates calendar.

**APPOINTMENT:** The term of appointment is for two academic semesters (or one semester if the appointment is made in the middle of an academic year), usually beginning no more than three weeks prior to the official opening of the residence halls in the fall and ending when the AC/CC/GCD of the assigned building deems that duties associated with closing the building are complete. CAs will be available to close the buildings before vacation breaks. Dates and times are provided in the "CA Terms of Employment".

Placement of a CA to a specific building and floor is completed by Residential Learning based on the needs of the community. While unlikely, Residential Learning retains the right to change your housing assignment at any point during the year.

**Each year, there will be a rehiring process for CAs who may seek to return for the following year. A decision will be made at that time if reappointment will be offered. Reappointment to the position is not guaranteed.**

**REMUNERATION (SALARY and BENEFITS):** Remuneration for the Community Assistant position is a private room (when possible) and a Semester value package. Each CA will receive a choice in how they want the compensation for their services to be paid. The exact breakdown of these choices will be provided on the "New, Returning, or Residential College Compensation Package Form", and will consist of options that allow the CA to choose scholarships to cover room cost and meals (if applicable) or to receive the entire stipend as paid compensation. Each CA is expected to select the package of their choice and return the completed paperwork to Housing within **THREE (3)** days of beginning work. If the CA does not meet this deadline, they will receive the entire stipend as paid compensation, and no portion of their compensation package will be allocated for room or meal scholarships.

Stipends will be paid on a bi-monthly basis beginning August 15<sup>th</sup> (if all appropriate paperwork is completed prior to arrival), otherwise August 30<sup>th</sup>, and ending May 31<sup>st</sup>.

Regardless of location on campus, CA rooms will be charged at the same rate. The rate is based on a "contemporary" double space per semester/year, whatever that rate may be deemed approved by the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) of Mississippi. The CA can elect to have this charge covered by room scholarship. If they do not select the scholarship option, they are responsible for the cost of the room. In either case, the room charge will appear on the student's Bursar Account.

It is possible that a designated CA room would be needed for use as temporary housing at the beginning of each semester. Should a student be temporarily assigned to a CA room, every effort will be made to relocate the student as quickly as possible.

**INSURANCE OPTION:** The University and Department of Student Housing will offer as part of the Community Assistant Position comprehensive health insurance coverage that complies with standards outlined by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Available coverage may be declined by the CA upon providing proof of qualifying coverage from an alternate source. The CA will be auto enrolled in this program and is responsible for providing proof of alternate insurance if declining coverage. The CA will be responsible for a portion of the insurance premium cost associated with this coverage and will be responsible for payment of said premiums in the event of accepting offer of coverage.

**STUDENT LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES:** CAs are considered leaders throughout campus and looked upon to represent the University of Mississippi Student Body and provide support to all students, including those who are not in the Residence Halls. To uphold this standard at all times, CAs are expected to:

- Act with integrity, maturity, and responsibility
- Abide by all local, state, and federal laws
  - ◆ Please note: CAs are expected to inform Residential Learning (student housing) if they are convicted of any crimes which violate state or federal laws
- Abide by policies set forth in the University of Mississippi Student Handbook and the Student Housing Handbook.
- Be familiar with and enforce all University of Mississippi policies and procedures.
- Support other departments at the University of Mississippi.
  - ◆ Take initiative to positively impact the community; be a role model and make students aware of their roles and responsibilities in the community.
- Use electronic resources that are available to you as a student such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. responsibly. You must be aware that your behavior and postings on these sites is reflective of your leadership position.
- To follow the Core Values of Student Housing:
  - ◆ Integrity
  - ◆ Respect
  - ◆ Communication
  - ◆ Service
  - ◆ Learning

**EVALUATION:** CAs report directly to the Community Director/Graduate Community Director who has overall responsibility for the residence hall or a specific area. Job performance is informally evaluated throughout the year by the CAs supervisor. In the event of poor performance, the supervisor will specify the areas where improvement is needed and the conditions for continued employment. Evaluation results will be documented and recorded in the CA's permanent file. If improvements do not take place in the specified amount of time, a recommendation may be made to the Area coordinator that the CA's employment be terminated. Termination may also be recommended as a direct result of actions that are inappropriate for a CA.

**LEAVING/RESIGNATION/TERMINATION OF POSITION:** If the CA leaves the position, he or she must move out of the designated staff room and will be required to move to another hall or area. The date and time will be determined on a case by case basis. Termination from the CA position does not invalidate the Housing Agreement signed to live in the halls and CAs may still be responsible for payment of fees associated with the Housing Contract. **Requesting a release from the full year Housing Agreement is a separate appeal process.**

The Department will immediately stop all compensation upon termination/resignation. It is the former CAs responsibility to notify their supervisor if they are still receiving compensation for a job at which they are no longer employed. The former CA will be expected to pay back any and all amounts of overcompensation if this occurs.

If the reason for termination is connected to a judicial incident, the student will be subject to a separate judicial process, even though information related to the incident may also relate to employment as a CA. Status of employment is not appealable or negotiable.

**SCHEDULE OF HOURS:** The Community Assistant should schedule time to perform the necessary and specific job responsibilities as well as be available for students when called upon for emergency purposes. It is understood that a staff position in the residence halls cannot easily be translated into hours worked per day or week because of the unique nature of the responsibilities and circumstances. The position requires a genuine personal commitment and a good understanding of the nebulous nature of the actual time involved.

To meet the needs of our residents, selected halls may stay open during holiday break periods and CAs could be asked to support staffing needs. Also, because of the academic schedule and major athletic events, it is sometimes necessary to open or close all of our halls on days and time periods considered to be holidays. During these times, every effort will be made to schedule as few people as possible and to adequately run the buildings. We will first take volunteers; afterwards, your AC/GCD/CC will be as fair as possible in scheduling people to work.

**For Designated Holiday Periods,** Sufficient staff will be required to staff the residence halls during the holiday weekend when the building community is officially open. For all other weekends during the academic year, at the discretion of the Area Coordinator or departmental leadership, one half of the staff of each building, or staff sufficient to run building operations, will be required to staff the building.

**For Duty:** the CA is required as part of the position responsibilities to perform a function commonly referred to as "on duty". This means that the CA is periodically the primary first-response contact during emergency and crisis situations within an assigned residential area and has responsibilities for responding appropriately and as trained to resolve. While on duty, a CA may not leave the residential area (unless specifically outlined by supervisor) from the time the scheduled duty period begins until the time the scheduled duty period ends (typically: daily 5:00 PM until 8:00 AM the following morning; weekends 5:00 PM until 5:00 PM the following

afternoon). Holidays or times when the university is closed are considered like a weekend for the purposes of duty coverage. Duty coverage is determined at the discretion of the supervisory team within a residential area. A supervisor may schedule multiple duty personnel if necessary to cover the needs of the residential community. A CA could be asked to perform duty functions even though it may not be their assigned duty night (including but not limited to performing duty rounds, writing reports, assisting with emergency or crisis situations, checking emergency equipment, etc.). Absences or switches while on duty must be approved by a supervisor of the residence hall where the CA serves. Unapproved absence from the area during scheduled duty is grounds for position review and possible termination.

**ABSENCE FROM THE RESIDENCE HALL/ APARTMENT AREA:** CAs may be scheduled for duty whenever the residence halls are open. There will be certain weekends designated as closed weekends as determined by the RL Leadership group. Closed weekends are time periods when all-staff are required to be on campus. For home football games, building staffs will divide duty. Thus, all home football game weekends are not closed for staff, and staff is only on duty for four home football game weekends. A rotating, staggered staff check-in will be established for each building on home football game weekends for the staff members that are on duty.

An additional expectation for CAs is that while on campus, he/she should be in the general habit of sleeping in his/her own room. This typically means that the CA should be in their hall/room by no later than 2:00am. If the CA is later than 2:00am, it will be considered to be a weekend absence. Prior to departure, approval from their supervising GCD/CC is required for any overnight absences that will occur during the week (Sun-Thurs). It is an expectation that the CA will be available to respond to crises/emergencies.

**TIME OFF:** CAs are allowed to take two (2) weekends away from the building each month, subject to approval by your supervisor. Scheduling time off is done on a first come, first-serve basis to ensure that there are an adequate number of CAs are available in the building on a given night and available for emergency or situations that may arise.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING:** The Department of Student Housing is committed to the development of its staff in areas of personal awareness and skill or ability. A variety of training activities will be offered including campus-wide programs and those coordinated by designated graduate or professional staff members.

Training for the CAs will be held prior to the opening of the residence halls in the fall. Every CA is expected to attend this training as well as participate in the departmental in-services/ communication meetings each semester and attend all staff meetings. It is expected that the CA comply with the attendance requirements of in-service/communication training offered at the hall and/or at the departmental level. Additional training will take place in January prior to the halls reopening. Along with monthly in- services/communication meetings throughout the semester, CAs are expected to attend other departmental functions unless they have a direct, scheduled academic conflict. Registration and taking classes for August Intersession or January Intersession is not permitted as these interfere with Fall and Spring training periods. If the class is required for on-time graduation, proof of need will be necessary for consideration. Approvals for requesting a consideration under these terms and relating to training or required events/activities should be sent through supervision chain and will ultimately be approved by the Associate Director for Residential Learning.

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** While the University cannot tell a CA what to post on their personal social network profiles, please keep in mind that these are open public forums. CAs should be aware of the message that they are sending and represent themselves as well as the department professional at all times.

All social media for the department, residential communities, and residential facilities will be established and administered by the Assistant Director for Marketing (exception: Facebook groups for particular floors, in which the Assistant Director for Marketing must be included). The Assistant Director for Marketing must be informed about and included as an administrator in all groups that are created. Facebook groups must be deleted no later than the last day of classes in spring semester.

**CLASS LOAD/GPA:** A community assistant is permitted to take a full class schedule; however, an extraordinarily heavy credit load is discouraged. Undergraduates may not take more than 18 credit hours per semester. Graduate students may not take more than 9 credit hours per semester, unless approved in advance by the Associate Director for Residential Learning prior to registering for classes. Carrying incompletes which influence one's academic load may be considered in excess of what an individual may comfortably handle in conjunction with a Community Assistant position. Exceptions to these recommendations must be put in writing and submitted to the Associate Director for Residential Learning (or his/her designee) **prior to registration.**

Failure to maintain fulltime status may result in a position review and an inability to remain employed as a CA. Unless in their last semester of attendance during which the requirements for a degree will be fulfilled, CAs must appeal to the Associate Director (or his/her designee) in writing to continue their appointment if they are registered for fewer than 12 hours.

While the number of credits carried is one measure of time demand, the Community Assistant must also realize the constraints imposed by the hours required in fieldwork, student teaching, studio or laboratory work, and similar circumstances. Lengthy absences during the day or evening may conflict with the general responsibilities of the position. The anticipation of these circumstances should be discussed with the AC/GCD/CC. It is generally advised that CAs not student teach the first semester of the position.

**CA's must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.75. Any CA whose GPA falls below this minimal academic expectation will be faced with probation and then termination if the GPA does not improve to the required 2.75 after one semester.**

**OTHER COMMITMENTS AND EMPLOYMENT:** CAs are encouraged to participate in campus and community activities; however, no commitment should interfere with responsibilities of being a student in good standing at the University of Mississippi or with the responsibilities of the Community Assistant position. CAs are expected to participate in selected events sponsored by the Department of

Student Housing. Some selected events include Welcome Week and Visitation Days, which occur throughout the year.

It is understood that after academics (specifically direct degree requirements and class attendance), the Community Assistant position takes priority over any other co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. Excessive involvement with other activities may impede one's ability to successfully manage academic performance, the commitments associated with the CA position, and personal time. As a leader, balancing commitments is important. Excessive involvement above academics and the CA position responsibilities may result in discussion with a supervisor and a CA may be asked to make appropriate choices to prioritize and balance commitments. If a CA is unable to self-balance or prioritize as outlined here, their supervisor in consultation with other leadership may ask a CA to reduce involvement that may conflict with their ability to appropriately perform the duties of the CA position.

CAs are to supply an answering machine that is connected to the phone provided and should contain an appropriate message.

CAs are required to work six (6) hours at the community desk of their respective buildings. These hours are included into their stipend amounts. CAs may work up to five (5) additional hours at the front desk of any residence halls when classes are in session. **Additionally, CAs may not accept off-campus employment during the academic year while classes are in session.** The consequences for accepting off-campus employment or other unapproved employment may result in termination from the CA position. Working another job on-campus other than an assigned community desk, without prior approval may result in immediate termination. On campus work is considered any role where compensation and pay is received through the University.

Required desk hours must be completed between the hours of 8am-5pm and will be assigned by the GA/GCD/CC based on class schedules and desk needs. This allows the required desk hours to not interfere with duty responsibilities that usually begin at 5:00 pm daily. CAs should not work desk during duty, unless they are serving to cover time in service of duty.

Due to federal guidelines, international students who serve as a CA will not be allowed to work additional desk hours.

In the event that a desk receptionist does not show up for work and a night time desk supervisor is unavailable to cover the desk, the Duty CA(s) may be required to cover the desk until an approved substitute can be found. These hours are considered part of the normal CA duties and do not qualify for additional compensation.

**CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT** - Confidentiality is an important part of being a student staff member. The CA will be entrusted with information, both organizational and personal, and will be expected to keep that information within the confines of professionalism. The CA shall maintain professional standards of confidentiality in all dealings with students and staff. CAs will not make comments in a public forum relating to their role or discuss any disciplinary, academic, or personal problem of any student with other student or staff members unless the information is relevant to the job responsibilities and in the best interest of the student(s) involved, and in no case shall a CA impart personal information in a location or manner that allows other persons to overhear.

The official representative or spokesperson for matters pertaining to the Department of Student Housing is designated by the Assistant Vice Chancellor and Director of Student Housing. The prohibition of CAs making comments in a public forum extends to public comments including all 'evaluative' comments relevant to any resident, student staff, or staff member, the University, the Department of Student Housing or position responsibilities if such comments could be deemed as being spoken in capacity as a CA, a University official or in their capacity as an agent of the institution. Consistent with this, CAs are further prohibited from speaking with any media outlet, including but not limited to interviews for class projects, campus, national, or regional media outlets where the CA could be perceived as speaking on behalf of the University, the Department of Student Housing or in their official capacity as an employee and Community Assistant.

The CA should never promise a student complete confidentiality in dealing with problems or situations. In situations where they may be a threat to someone's health or safety, the CA must seek assistance of professional staff for referral or resource information. The CA may also be asked to disclose information to professional staff members for other appropriate professional reasons, and is expected to do so.

As part of the student staff position, the CA may be part of search or interview committees for positions of employment. The CA must understand that all information regarding these searches is confidential and is not to be discussed or shared outside of the search committee meetings. The CA must understand that to do so represents a risk to the search, to his/his continued employment, and to the institution.

The student staff member must understand that failure to maintain confidentiality as outlined under this section will result in disciplinary action and/or termination of employment.

**AMENDMENT** – The University and Department of Student Housing reserves the right to amend, modify, supplement, or replace the Terms of Employment, effective upon providing written or oral notification to employees. Employee's continued employment with the University after the effectiveness of that update will be deemed to represent employee's agreement with, and consent to be bound by, the amended Terms of Employment.

**SEVERABILITY** - Each provision of this Terms of Employment and Employment Agreement is individually severable. If any provision of this Agreement is or becomes illegal, invalid, or unenforceable for any reason whatsoever, the illegality, invalidity, or unenforceability of that provision will not affect the legality, validity, or enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Terms of Employment or the Employment Agreement.