

Community Mentor Position Description and Agreement

The Community Mentor (CM) is a student staff member of the Residential Life staff within the Student Housing & Residential Life (SHRL) department within the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services. CMs are student staff who under the supervision of a Residence Life Coordinator (RLC), serve as an additional resource to residents for academic support and resources while working within a diverse community of students to foster student success in living-learning environments by building relationships, promoting engagement and leading with an ethic of care.

The primary function of this position is to provide advocacy, intervention, mentorship, and support to residential students who need assistance in achieving student success at the University of Houston through a variety of ways including one on one intervention meetings, leading academic initiatives, and introducing campus resources. In addition, the Community Mentor position serves as an Advisor for the residential community's Hall Council. There is one CM assigned to Cougar Place and University Lofts. There are two CMs assigned to Cougar Village I, Cougar Village II, Moody Towers, and the Quadrangle.

SECTION 1: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Exercise time management skills to successfully balance the CM position with academic and personal responsibilities.
- b. Create, maintain, and publicly post 10 office hours a week within the residence hall.
- c. Maintain an Outlook exchange email account and updated outlook calendar tracking hours worked (office hours, meetings, etc.)
 - i. Respond to job-related emails and/or phone communications within 1 – 2 business days.
- d. Manage keys, card access, and Keywatcher system privileges appropriately.
- e. Check designated mailbox in your residence hall office daily.
- f. Attend and participate in:
 - i. Regularly scheduled one on one meetings with Residential Life Coordinator (RLC) to discuss community and/or resident issues, staff development areas, problem solving, and performance feedback.
 - ii. Fall/Spring training and reoccurring CM meetings established by the department. Complete all online training sessions by the appointed department deadline.
 - iii. Weekly RA staff meetings.
- g. Read and be responsible for all the information contained in training and reoccurring CM meetings materials.
- h. Complete and manage weekly hall council budget reports for supervisor.
- i. Submit a weekly report consisting of verifying your weekly hours with completed and upcoming tasks, updates, and future activities.
- j. Assist RLC with student staff development and morale reviewing RA interactions documented.
- k. Perform other tasks and duties as assigned or necessary by supervisor or department.

***Note: Training and August opening weeks, there will be increased number of hours and less hours during some other weeks in the semester.*

2. HALL COUNCIL

- a. Serve as the primary Advisor for the community Hall Council.
- b. Plan in accordance with Residence Hall Association (RHA) to advertise and manage the recruitment, application, interview, and selection of Hall Council Board.
 - i. Conduct Hall Council Interviews should a vacancy occur during the academic year.
- c. Meet with each Hall Council Board member for one on one meetings.
- d. Attend weekly or bi-weekly Hall Council Board group meetings.
- e. Advise, assist, and attend Hall Council Programs.
- f. Attend and support biweekly RHA general assembly meetings.
- g. Track and manage the Hall Council Budget.
- h. Assist with the planning and implementation of programmatic events during hall council meetings.
- i. Advise Hall Council members on drafting legislation to be presented to RHA during assembly meetings.
- j. Facilitate a positive working relationship between Hall Council and the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH).
 - i. Write and encourage hall council members to write nominations for “*Of the Month*” awards.
 - ii. Nominate students for induction into NRHH.

3. ACADEMIC INITIATIVES/PROJECTS

- a. Identify and meet residential students who need additional academic support based on departmental and residential community needs.
 - i. Students who have below a 2.5 GPA to 3.0. G.P.A.
 - ii. Students identified as needing assistance by EAB Navigate, RA interactions, RLC conduct meetings, educational program attendance, or other acceptable methods.
- b. Create programs based on resources or assessment identified academic needs in support of residents’ student success.
- c. Plan and facilitate meetings with residential students to provide direct interventions to impact academic student success.
- d. Follow up with residents within two weeks after meetings and document progress (*Except for students in crisis/emergency or directed by supervisor: 24 – 72 hours*)
- e. Collaborate with Faculty-In-Residence (FIR), learning/themed communities, and other campus resources to aid in academic student success goals.
- f. Be familiar with and able to utilize university referral sources indicated in CM training, in order to assist residents.
- g. Assist residents in establishing meaningful connections with faculty, staff members and students.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & RESOURCE REFERRAL

- a. Execute the Residential Engagement Model (REM) for your community.
- b. Demonstrate approachability, availability and visibility.
- c. Maintain a positive, helpful attitude and good customer service when interacting with others.
- d. Serve as active mentor connecting students to campus resources and advocate for students, helping them to get involved.
- e. Complete at least 7 to 10 interactions per week with residents.
 - i. Tabling events informing residential community of information, upcoming events, and deadlines
 - ii. Attend and encourage resident's attendance to residential and campus partner events
- f. Collaborate with RLC to assist with intentional programs to achieve student success goals.
- g. Serve as a resource and role model by being involved in the community, following community standards, excelling at job responsibilities, supporting team efforts, and excelling academically.

- h. Be familiar with and able to utilize University referral sources indicated in CM training, in order to assist residents. Assist residents in establishing meaningful connections with other residents, Center for Student Involvement's GetInvolved platform, and residential community.

SECTION 2: QUALIFICATIONS

1. Enrolled in full time coursework at the University of Houston.
 - a. Undergraduates with a minimum of 12 units and a maximum of 18 units per semester.
 - b. Graduate students with a minimum of 6 units per semester and a maximum of 12 units.
 - c. Intentions to be enrolled in more than the maximum number of hours per semester requires supervisor consultation about the time commitments required for the position, courses, and outside obligations to determine how success will be achieved and time managed in all areas.
2. Be in good academic standing at UH must be documented upon application and maintained throughout appointment. This means CMs must have, and maintain, at the beginning and throughout the appointment, the following:
 - a. A cumulative and semester grade point average of 3.0.
 - b. Prior semester grade point average of 3.0 (not including summer semester).
 - c. New CM failing to meet all criteria by the start of employment could result in termination prior to the appointment start date.
3. Demonstrate, understand, and respect people with diverse experiences and backgrounds to promote an inclusive environment within a residential community.
4. Demonstrate a high level of maturity with exceptional administrative, organizational and interpersonal skills.
5. Preferred qualifications include:
 - a. experience working with student organizations
 - b. experience living in residence halls
 - c. experience with college student populations

SECTION 3: POSITION REQUIREMENTS

1. Must be available to serve in the CM role for the full academic year and required trainings prior to each semester (early August – late May).
 - a. Appointments are made for one academic year (approximately 10 months) – early August through late May.
 - b. To be considered for this position for an additional year, the student staff member must apply for a position each year. Returning to the same position is not guaranteed and is based upon performance throughout the appointment period, performance in the application process and department needs.
 - c. Not able to enroll in Session IV summer school classes and/or other external courses that last through mid-August due to training schedule conflicts.
 - d. Failure to complete all required training by required deadlines may result in position termination.
2. The CM position is a security sensitive position. All CMs must successfully complete a background check prior to the start of employment.
 - a. Results of the background check will be reviewed and may prompt a review of the candidate's appropriateness for the position or cause the revocation of the position offer.

- b. The criminal background check form requires general personal information and all previous U.S. addresses since the age of 17. The form is submitted to the UH Human Resources Department, then to UHPD for the background check, which usually takes 1-2 weeks to complete.
3. This position is a live-in position that requires the staff member to live in the residence hall. Staff must have a signed Residence Halls Service Agreement by deadline designated by the department and maintain on campus residency in an assigned room throughout the term of employment.
 - a. Room assignments for this position are specifically to meet the needs of the community.
 - b. Depending on your community, this position will be assigned to:
 - i. a super single
 - ii. a single room
 - iii. a single bedroom within a suite of rooms sharing common space with another student staff member.
 - c. If a CM is terminated from the position, voluntarily or otherwise, the former CM will be required to move into another room/suite/apartment outside of their area/complex.
4. This position is responsible for reading, understanding and adhering to training materials, University of Houston policies, Student Housing and Residence Life policies and procedures, and any additional assigned literature, in addition to seeking clarification when necessary.
5. Must be in “Good Standing” with SHRL and the University (Conduct status with the Dean of Students Office, as well as financially and academically).
6. Maintain confidentiality of residents’ records and information as indicated in training. Any breach of confidentiality is a serious matter and may be cause for removal as a staff member from the position.
7. This position is required to report all violations of the law, Student Code of Conduct, UH policies, including the Sexual Misconduct Policy.
8. CMs may not be in the presence of any students who are violating policies unless they are intervening in the behavior. Even if a CM is not “participating” in the prohibited behavior, this bystander behavior is considered “Complicity” as listed in the Student Code of Conduct.
9. Demonstrate commitment to the SHRL mission statement in your work: *A diverse community of students, staff and faculty who foster student success in living-learning environments by building relationships, promoting engagement and leading with an ethic of care (UH SHRL Mission).*
10. Physical Activities and Requirements essential to the position include:
 - a. Climbing: Ascending or descending stairs, using feet and legs and/or hands and arms.
 - b. Talking: Expressing or exchanging ideas by means of the spoken word; those activities where detailed or important spoken instructions must be conveyed to other workers accurately, loudly, or quickly.
 - c. Hearing: Perceiving the nature of sounds at normal speaking levels with or without correction and having the ability to receive detailed information through oral communication.
 - d. Visual Acuity: The worker is required to have close visual acuity to perform an activity such as: preparing and analyzing data and figures; viewing a computer terminal; extensive reading; visual inspection involving small defects and small parts

SECTION 4: COMMITMENTS BEYOND THE CM POSITION

1. The position is a 20 hour per week commitment.

2. UH SAM. No. 02.A.34 applies to this position. Specifically, section 2.6 limits student employment to 20 hours per week during the academic year. Student staff in the CM position are not permitted to have additional student employment on campus.
3. There is an expectation the CM position is the principal non-academic activity for the student employee.
4. A full academic course load and performing the CM position is a significant time commitment. To be a successful student and then a successful CM, additional time commitments should be carefully considered.
 - a. If choosing to work a job outside the University, that position should be limited to 10 hours per week.
 - b. The CM position commitments will not be scheduled around outside employment.

SECTION 5: COMPENSATION

1. CMs are provided one room space for the duration of appointment (space to be assigned based upon community needs and availability).
2. Community Mentors shall receive a compensation package that includes a room (single room where available), a monthly salary of approximately \$500 per month and a meal plan.
 - a. The \$500 monthly salary is taxable income.
 - b. Compensation in the form of housing and meal plan is excluded from income subject to taxes as long as your position requires you live on the premises. Housing is furnished for the convenience of the University and for a substantial non-compensatory business reason, and it is a condition of employment necessitated by the proper performance of duties (SAM 03.D.06).
 - c. Please note that SHRL is required to submit your CM housing rent and meal plan compensation information to Financial Aid. Consult with the Financial Aid Office regarding the impact that this position may have on your financial aid award.
3. Meal Plans are available only when cafeteria facilities are open. When on-campus dining options are closed, the department will not be responsible for providing meals. The meal plan compensation is provided to staff members for the purpose of building relationships with residents in the dining halls during the academic year.

SECTION 6: TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- 1) Upon resignation/termination of the position, all necessary paperwork must be completed.
- 2) If the student staff chooses to resign, a letter of resignation needs to be provided to the supervisor.
- 3) Failure to meet the requirements and expectations as outlined in this document, training, and directives from supervisors may result in employment action, up to and including termination.
- 4) Should a staff member resign or be terminated from this position prior to the end of the period of employment, that individual will be relocated at their expense to another location outside of the staff area, if available.
- 5) Upon resignation/termination date, rent, monthly salary, and meal plan will be pro-rated.
 - a. Student staff position are subject to penalties associated with the departmental purchase of a meal plan. Meal plans are non-transferable, as such; resignation or termination of the position may result in the former employee being charged the remaining pro-rated amount of their meal plan.

- b. If a former employee resigns or is terminated from the position and chooses to live off campus, the former employee may be subject to housing penalties associated with breaking the Residence Halls Service Agreement.
- 6) Any CM can be terminated for violation of University of Houston or Student Housing and Residence Life policy or public law at any time deemed necessary.
- 7) Upon resignation/termination:
 - a. It is the CM's responsibility to meet with their direct supervisor to determine an appropriate housing re-assignment and to schedule an appointment to return supplies/materials and check out of their current assignment. Failure to return items or properly check out may result in fees assessed to the student account.
 - b. CMs also are financially responsible for any unreturned items and, if applicable, an improper check out fee – charges will be posted to the students account.
- 8) If a CM is removed from their position, they have the opportunity to appeal the decision to the Director of Residential Life in writing within two business days of the termination.

SECTION 7: COMMUNITY MENTOR ADDENDUM

In case of an emergency such as weather-related emergencies, infectious disease outbreak (pandemic), public concern, or other emergencies the department deem essential that requires full virtual engagement, CM roles and responsibilities will be temporarily modified to support the mission of the department.

Overview of the duties:

CMs are essential members of the department and play a critical role in supporting student success. CMs will work in a virtual environment with current supervisor and staff members to provide support and assist residents. CMs will support residential students whose university experience has moved online, and will focus on individual student support, advocacy, and resource referral. CMs are expected to maintain contact with the residential community by sharing resources prepared by the University of Houston and the department. CMs should collaborate with their RLC to develop a plan on the basis of their day to day activities. CMs should transition their one on one interventions to focus on general resources beneficial to the entire residential community and work with individual residents based solely on student staff or supervisor direct referral for residents who maybe experiencing academic and/or personal crisis. CMs should assist the RLC in managing the student staff needs and advocate for materials or resources needed for both staff and residents.

To be successful a CM must be committed to:

- Academic success of their residential community
- Active virtual engagement by providing resources and assistance to residents who remain in our community
- In-building crisis response and support through virtual check-ins
- Fulfilling responsibilities remotely until the conclusion of the semester

Specific Responsibilities:

- CMs are committed to student success and will continue to engage and be available to residents through electronic or video communication avenues (*text, GroupMe, Skype, FaceTime, Zoom and other forms of virtual communication*).

- CMs should collaborate with their RLC to develop a plan on the basis of their day to day activities. This plan will be specialized to individual community needs, but in general will target students struggling academically or emotionally during the emergency period.
- CMs will continue to have coaching conversations with students about their academic well-being, adjustment to the newly formatted semester, will share campus resources, university, and department updates.
- CMs will continue to submit weekly reports to supervisor every Monday by 9AM.
- CMs are required to inform and update supervisor(s) and/or other professional staff about residents who are experiencing possible emotional, physical, and/or mental health concerns.
- All Staff will participate in virtual mandatory weekly staff meetings on Wednesdays at 5:30PM. These virtual staff meetings are designed to offer specialized training to address the unique challenges residents now face.
- Supervisors will continue to conduct one on one meetings with student staff. The meetings will be held through electronic or video communication. The meetings are designed to support staff in their new and complex roles.
- Respond to all position related email(s), GroupMe and/or telephone communication within 24 hours, unless on approved time away.
- Perform other tasks as necessary or assigned.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the responsibilities of this position and believe that I can perform the duties included:

- I accept the duties of the position and will perform them as outlined.
- From time to time, position descriptions may change. If this occurs, student staff members will be provided notice in writing of these changes.
- I agree to accept additional duties as directed in training or meetings or by my direct supervisor, not explicitly listed in this document.
- If I have any individual needs or accommodations that would restrict me from performing any part of the duties, I have already requested these needs in writing with the Assistant Director for your respective area for the upcoming year.
- I understand that I may be moved or reassigned to another residence hall based on the needs of the department.

Resident Advisor Printed Name	Resident Advisor Signature	Date
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Residence Life Coordinator Printed Name	Residence Life Coordinator Signature	Date
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