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**RESIDENTIAL LIFE**

Information Packet for  
2020-2021

Desk Manager  
Selection Process

### **Desk Manager (DM) Job Description**

Each hall desk or apartment area desk (except for Walker Avenue Apartments) is managed by a resident student Desk Manager. The DM supervises desk staff, distribution of mail, key control, and guest check-in. The DM also assists with management of community/meeting facilities, payroll of desk staff, and desk staff training.

A full job description and a list of job responsibilities for this position are available at the end of this information packet.

### **Application Requirements**

Applicants must have a 2.50 cumulative GPA to apply for the position. Successful candidates must maintain a 2.50 cumulative GPA and a 2.25 spring semester GPA and must maintain a 2.50 cumulative GPA and a 2.25 semester GPA for each semester while in the position.

Applicants must be undergraduate students for the 2020-2021 academic year. Applicants who are enrolled in a combined BS/MS program are eligible to apply if they have not yet received their bachelor's degree.

You must be in good conduct standing, which means you cannot be on Disciplinary or Residential Life probation to start the position. You must remain in good judicial standing to continue in the position once hired.

Applicants must also have attended UMBC full-time for at least one semester by the application deadline. Prior experience living in the residential communities is preferred, but not required. If you have worked previously as a paraprofessional for Residential Life but are not one currently, you are eligible to apply through this application process if you meet all other application requirements.

**Your application must be completed in full or you will not be able to continue in the selection process.**

### **Compensation**

As a DM, you will receive a single room either in an apartment or in a residence hall. You will also receive the Terrific 12 meal plan. If you would like a larger meal plan you will be responsible for the difference in price. You will also receive a \$275 stipend each semester.

If you have questions regarding compensation, please contact the Selection Committee.

### **Questions?**

For any questions regarding this selection process or the DM position please contact [ResLifeSelection@umbc.edu](mailto:ResLifeSelection@umbc.edu)

### **Application Process**

The final deadline for applications is January 13, 2020 at 11:59pm. The following completed documents are needed to apply: résumé, application, two recommendation forms.

### **Selection Timeline**

Final Application Deadline	January 13, 2020 at 11:59pm
Deadline for References to be Submitted	January 20, 2020 at 11:59pm
Notification of Interview Times/Locations	First Week of February
Individual Interview	February 13 & 14, 2020
Strengths Day	February 15, 2020
Individual Interview (Snow Day Back Up)	February 27 & 28, 2020
Strengths Day (Snow Day Back Up)	February 29, 2020
Decision Letters Available	Early-March, 2020

### **Application To-Do List (a.k.a. HOW TO APPLY)**

- ☐ Download this Information Packet from the Residential Life website and read it thoroughly.
- ☐ Contact the designated people to answer any questions or address concerns.
- ☐ Compose or update résumé.
- ☐ Meet with Career Services to have résumé critiqued (strongly encouraged).
- ☐ Two references must be provided on your application form. It is preferred that at least one is from a Residential Life (student staff or full-time) staff member or other professional position. Please ensure that the information provided is accurate particularly the email address as we will email your references the forms they will need to fill out. References should not be family members or those who can't speak to the qualifications needed for the position.
- ☐ Submit completed application online
- ☐ Follow up with the two individuals completing reference forms and remind them of the due date (January 20, 2020). All reference forms need to be submitted to Residential Life. Your application packet will not be considered complete until both references are delivered.

### **Résumé Help**

The [Career Center](#) (410-455-2216) offers all students assistance with needs associated with obtaining a job and starting a career, including help with résumés. You are strongly encouraged to have your résumé critiqued before you submit it as part of your application so that your résumé is representative of your academic, extracurricular, and work experiences. The Career Center offers many opportunities for applicants to have their résumé critiqued. You can go to their office during Walk In hours or you can make an appointment to see a career advisor. The Career Center is anxious to help you! Helpful tips can also be found at <http://www.careers.umbc.edu/skills/resumé>.

Standard 15-Minute Walk-In Hours are Monday – Thursday from 2:00-4:00pm and Friday 12:00-4:00pm in Math/Psych 212. Appointments must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

### **Short Answer Questions**

The Desk Manager application requires applicants to answer a series of short answer questions that are located within the application. We recommend that you type your answers into a Word document first and then place your answers into the application.

If you need assistance with your answers please contact the [Writing Center](#) at 410-455-3126. The Writing Center is located on the first floor of the library, next to References. The Writing Center does not require appointments.

### **Information Sessions about the RA Position**

If you are interested in receiving more one-on-one information about the RA position, you can talk to a current RA or any Community Director (CD). Also, Residential Life will be offering several information sessions throughout the fall semester for you to attend to view a presentation on the positions and get your specific questions answered by our current staff members. You can ask the presenters about their own experiences and learn about each position. Attending an Information Session is not required to apply for a position.

### **Interview Tips**

Part of our selection process is an individual interview with 2-3 of our current staff members. Here are some tips you may want to consider as you prepare for your individual interview.

1. Prepare for your interview – talk to current staff, think about the questions you may like to ask, and think about the kinds of questions you might be asked as well as personal experiences you might be able to reference in your responses.
2. Be on time – arrive 5-10 minutes prior to the scheduled interview time. This will allow you to relax and gather your thoughts before beginning the interview.
3. Professional dress is preferred-- wear clothes that are appropriate in a professional setting. Cardigan sweaters, khaki pants, and button-down shirts are a few options.
4. Be prepared with questions. The interview is a great time to be with current staff and ask them questions you might have about the positions and the office!

### **Strengths Day Process**

If you have not already done so, you will need to take the CliftonStrengths assessment, provided by Residential Life. Then, you will likely be grouped with individuals you have never met before and will be asked to participate, in some activities so that our staff has the opportunity to see your skills, abilities, and tendencies when immersed in a collaborative atmosphere. Here are some things that will help you be successful in group process:

1. The Strengths Day activities are not a competition. We are evaluating you based on your participation in the group. We are not picking a winner at the end.
2. Some of the activities require group discussion, and/or opportunities for leadership. As you prepare for your group process day, be mindful of your own personality and/or leadership style and remember that you are being evaluated on your role/participation in the activities.

3. Most importantly, be yourself. We want to hire the authentic “you” because, ultimately, that is the person we are going to work with for the year.

### **What do we consider in the Paraprofessional Selection Process?**

Every part of the Paraprofessional Selection Process is important and is considered when making final selection decisions. Your past behavior within the residential or campus community is also considered. Factors we evaluate include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Your application is reviewed for completeness, accuracy, and timeliness. Your short answers are reviewed for depth of thought, coherence of message, and freedom from errors. References are reviewed and reviewers’ comments are considered.
- ☐ The individual interview is designed to judge your understanding of important concepts related to the position, your ability to put those concepts into words, and to provide examples of how you would respond in the position. Questions for each position are different, but all candidates should think about the following topics:
  - How strong communities are built
  - The impact of positive and negative student behavior on a community
  - How you help other students resolve problems or concerns
  - How you work on a team of 8 to 18 people
  - How you will handle this new commitment, should you be hired
  - How you will function in an environment that is multicultural and celebrative of difference
  - How you resolve ethical dilemmas and what the importance of role modeling is
  - The role of “customer service” in the position for which you have applied
- ☐ The group process, which is designed to evaluate how you communicate and solve problems in the group environment. Because we can only evaluate what we see you do, it is important that you are active and engaged with the group process experience. Do not feel compelled to act in a way that is not you – “acting” or “forcing it” will not help your score.
- ☐ Ways in which Residential Life or UMBC staff have seen you resolve interpersonal conflicts, positively or negatively contribute to your community, or act in groups (student organizations, on your floor, at programs or events, and so on).

### **Alternate Positions**

Every year a number of applicants are chosen as alternates. Being chosen as an alternate means that you are qualified for the position, but we did not have enough vacant positions to offer you a job at this time. Frequently, alternates are offered positions over the summer because some people who have been hired decide they are not able to take the job. Additionally, alternates can be offered positions throughout the course of the academic year. If you are not offered a position during the year, alternates are guaranteed employment for the 2021-2022 academic year. This means you do not need to reapply for the same job the next year.

As an alternate, if a position is offered to you and you choose to decline it, you will be removed from the alternate pool and must reapply if you want a position for the next academic year.

Once you receive the letter stating you are an alternate, you must let Residential Life know that you are accepting the position. If you accept the alternate position, you will need to attend all Spring semester and August training sessions and take the Psych 215 class in the fall semester.

### **Spring & Fall Training**

It is mandatory for all applicants who are hired and who accept the position to attend training sessions throughout the year. If you are hired, the first new paraprofessional training session will be held in April. This session will introduce you to the position and let you know more of the expectations that Residential Life has for you. You will also need to attend a session in the spring to fill out payroll paperwork. There will be a new staff meeting with paraprofessionals from your new staff, as well. The Community Director of the community you will be working in will organize this meeting.

The next training will occur in August and usually begins about two weeks before freshmen move into the halls. August training is mandatory as well and you cannot be a paraprofessional for the 2020-2021 academic year if you do not attend. Training can be intense as it usually begins around 9:00am and ends in the evening but is also a ton of fun!

If you have concerns regarding mandatory training sessions, you can talk to a current paraprofessional, any CD, or contact the Selection Committee.

### **Psych 215 (Paraprofessional Class)**

All Desk Managers who are hired or chosen as alternates need to register for Psych 215. This is a mandatory class for all paraprofessionals to take during the fall semester. You must pass the class with a C or better in order to continue your employment with Residential Life. More information about when the class will be offered and how to sign up for the class will be included in the letter you receive if you are hired or chosen as an alternate.

### **Paraprofessional Selection and Housing Selection**

Offers for DM positions will be made prior to the deadline to submit housing applications for the next year. If you are offered a position and plan to accept it, you must submit your housing application by the deadline. If you plan to live on-campus next year regardless of whether you are in the position or not, you must submit your housing application by the deadline. If you are unsure that, or know that, you don't want to live-on campus next year, do not submit an application until you are offered a position.

DMs assigned to the apartments and Harbor Hall are able to pick at least one roommate, if they wish.

For questions about how applying for a paraprofessional position will impact your Housing Selection process, contact Operations at 410-455-8832.

### **Other Residential Life Involvement Opportunities**

If you are not hired as a paraprofessional, there are other opportunities for you to get involved with Residential Life which will help to prepare you more for the next time you apply. These opportunities include:

**CC** – Each community has a CC (Community Council), which is a residential student organization that plans activities and works on improvements for the community. Contact your community director if you are interested in getting involved with your community's CC.

**RSA** – RSA stands for Resident Student Association. This group governs all of the CCs and helps to create activities and policies for residential students. There are opportunities to get involved on local, regional, and national levels through this organization. If you want more information on how to get involved in RSA, contact Paisley Martin at [paisleym@umbc.edu](mailto:paisleym@umbc.edu).

**Desk Receptionist** – Every residential community, except Walker Avenue Apartments, has a desk that is staffed by students. In the residence halls, these desks are open 24 hours a day. Desk receptionist positions are paid hourly and they must also attend mandatory training. If you are interested in applying for a desk staff position, applications will be available on the Residential Life website for the 2020-2021 academic year in March 2020.

**Summer Staff** – Every summer, Residential Life hires a number of students as conference managers, conference staff, and maintenance assistants. These students assist with summer conferences that are housed in the residential areas and with getting the buildings ready for the next academic year. If you would like to learn more about these positions please contact Residential Life at 410-455-2591.

### **About the Position Description and Terms of Employment**

The terms of the following agreements are subject to change and are updated regularly. The *Position Description* and *Terms of Employment* are provided to give you an overview of the position but are not meant to be indicative of all responsibilities related to the Desk Manager position.

## **DESK MANAGER POSITION DESCRIPTION**

The Desk Manager is a part-time paraprofessional staff member in Residential Life at UMBC and reports directly to the Community Director and ultimately to the Director of Residential Life. This position is considered to be a major student leadership position in the residential life system. The Desk Manager is responsible for the supervision of all community desk operations.

### **1. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

- a. Assist in the application, interviewing, and selection processes for desk staff positions.
- b. Provide desk staff with ongoing informal feedback about their behavior and job performance throughout the semester.
- c. Conduct at least one formal evaluation per semester for each staff person, to evaluate job performance and to make recommendations for future employment to professional staff.
- d. Develop a schedule that provides desk coverage per Departmental and supervisory expectations/direction.

- e. Compile and verify payroll information from the time log.
- f. Maintain all forms and supplies required for the daily operation of the desk.
- g. Conduct desk staff meetings at least once every two weeks for scheduling, on-going training and development, and any other desk-related issues.
- h. Monitor the distribution and forwarding of mail to ensure that it is being done in a timely manner that conforms to Departmental and supervisory expectations, as well as applicable laws.
- i. Review printed "Operations" reports to ensure they are accurate and assist in making changes as necessary.
- j. Oversee the maintenance and upkeep of the lobby and desk areas.
- k. Open and close the desk each semester, and at each break period. This requires working before and after established times to ready the desk or to close.
- l. Assist in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of desk staff training prior to the beginning of each semester.
- m. Attend community staff meetings called by Residential Life professional staff and staff development training sessions as required.
- n. Monitor the public relations and information aspects of the desk operation including behavior in the lobby area.
- o. Ensure that desk staff enforce policies related to access to the community and visitation, as appropriate for assigned community, and inform the CD of any concerns.
- p. Post RA duty schedule at desk and train desk staff in use of duty system, including RA call-in procedures.
- q. Maintain the lobby lost and found system.
- r. Assist the Community Director in the coordination and implementation of check-in and check-out.
- s. Perform related duties as assigned by the Community Director/Assistant Community Director.
- t. Approach students of all racial/ethnic, religions, physical ability level, gender, age, and sexual orientation differences with an attitude of respect, fairness, and equity.
- u. Encourage and maintain a community atmosphere where the rights and responsibilities of residents are held in high regard.
- v. Help students develop an atmosphere conducive to study, rest and harmonious group living.
- w. Encourage and assist residents in adhering to University and residence facilities rules and regulations. The DM is responsible, along with residents, for enforcing University and Residential Life rules and regulations.
- x. Interpret, explain and help resolve conflicts related to environmental concerns.
- y. Maintain keys/access cards according to departmental expectations and directions.

## 2. AS A MEMBER OF THE RESIDENTIAL LIFE STAFF

- a. Be responsible for providing a high quality of service to residents and guests.
- b. Be fair and consistent in following the established rules, regulations, and procedures.
- c. Be a good role model for other students.
- d. Work within the system to maintain a high-quality desk operation for students.
- e. Refer students to appropriate people when they require assistance that you cannot provide.
- f. Perform other duties as needed by Residential Life.



## **TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

### **I. AGREEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- A. This agreement commences on the date published by Residential Life as the first day of Fall pre-service training (usually a date in mid-August) and concludes on the date published by Residential Life as the staff release date. Residential Life reserves the right to change the training dates with a minimum 30 days' notice.
- B. This agreement includes such dates and responsibilities as listed below:
  - 1. For DMs assigned to "Eight-month" communities, this agreement does not include Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring Breaks. The DM may not remain in their community during excluded periods.
  - 2. For DMs assigned to "Nine-Month" communities, this agreement includes all holidays and breaks that fall within the duration of the agreement. "Nine-Month" staff must manage desk operations for the duration of their agreement, including Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring Breaks.
- C. If the semester is extended due to inclement weather or any other reason, the DM will fulfill their responsibilities until the official close of the semester.

### **II. REMUNERATION**

- A. "Eight-Month" DMs remuneration during the agreement is a single room and the Terrific-12 meal board plan (which cannot be reduced). Room and board plan is provided only when the University is officially in session (Fall and Spring Semesters).
- B. "Nine-Month" DMs remuneration during the agreement is a single room and the Terrific-12 meal board plan (which cannot be reduced). Room provisions cover Fall, Winter, and Spring semesters. Board provisions cover Fall and Spring semesters as well as Winter Session.
- C. Meals are provided for DMs during Fall and Spring staff training and during the closing period.
- D. The DM must reside in the residence hall/apartment complex to which they are assigned as a condition of employment.
- E. A stipend of \$250.00 will be awarded twice each semester, regardless of the length of service as a paraprofessional. If the staff member is hired after the start of the semester the stipend will be prorated. This stipend may not be awarded if the staff member is terminated or resigns before completion of duties each semester.

### **III. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

- A. The DM is limited to an academic load of not less than 12 nor more than 19.5 credit hours per semester at UMBC (Fall and Spring Semesters) while a staff member. DMs cannot be enrolled at other campuses.
- B. All DMs must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 and a minimum semester GPA of 2.25.
  - 1. Should a newly hired DM or Alternate DM not meet this requirement at the end of the spring semester of their hire they will lose their placement and will not be able to take part in training or be eligible for the DM position during the period of this agreement.
  - 2. Should a current DM fail to maintain this standard, they will be placed on Residential Life academic probation.
- C. DMs are permitted to be on academic probation once at any time during their employment within the DM position. If they fail to meet grade requirements twice, they will be removed from the position.
- D. Should the DM's grades/number of credits enrolled in decrease significantly below the requirements she or he may be removed from the position immediately.

- E. Should the DM's cumulative GPA fall below a 2.50 they will be removed from the position.
- F. Should the DM be placed on academic probation while on performance probation they will be removed from the position.
- G. All DMs must take Psychology 215 during their first Fall semester in the position and receive a grade of C or better. Failure to do so will result in loss of the position at the end of the Fall semester.
- H. All DMs must be undergraduate students or in process of completing a BS/MS program.

#### **IV. OTHER EMPLOYMENT & ACTIVITIES**

- A. As a DM and student, each DM must put personal limits on their time that facilitate acceptable performance.
  - 1. DMs will complete the *Request for Outside Employment and Other Activities Form* at the beginning of each semester of employment.
  - 2. In addition to the DM position, DMs should have no more than 45 hours of commitments per week, including academics, other employment and extracurricular activities.
  - 3. Supervisors can choose to not approve a *Request for Outside Employment and Other Activities Form* based on prior performance issues or concerns about commitments.
- B. The DM's primary employment responsibility is to the DM position. All other non-class activities must be requested in writing and approved in advance by the Community Director. This includes, but is not limited to, involvement in intercollegiate/club athletics, student teaching, co-op experiences and organizational leadership positions. Secondary employment of any kind, on or off campus, is strictly limited and must be approved per the above process.
- C. During their first semester of employment, new DMs may not join a fraternity or sorority.

#### **V. ONGOING STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

- A. All staff must attend, and successfully complete training prior to the start of each semester opening or as assigned by their supervisor.
- B. Each DM is expected to attend a weekly community staff meeting.
- C. Each DM is expected to attend any special/emergency meetings which may be called by Residential Life or by the Community Director.
- D. Each DM is expected to attend periodic staff development sessions held during the academic year.
- E. Each DM is expected to attend at least one formal evaluation session per semester with their supervisor. In addition, the DM should meet with their supervisor on a minimum of a biweekly basis for the purpose of mutual and ongoing feedback.

#### **VI. RULES, REGULATIONS AND UNIVERSITY POLICY**

The DM is expected to abide by all laws, local, state, and federal, and to abide by the rules and regulations of UMBC and Residential Life.

#### **VII. ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS**

- A. Maintaining confidentiality is a serious issue of employment that is an ethical and legal must. Breaches of confidentiality may injure the student and may result in liability to you and the University plus a loss of credibility to Residential Life. Maintaining confidentiality includes:
  - 1. The DM shall not repeat, transmit, or give individual opinions to other students, visitors, staff members, or share information provided by one employee or student within the Office regarding sensitive and/or confidential material with another except to the extent that it is necessary to complete specific tasks that have been assigned.
  - 2. The DM shall not remove, duplicate or make electronic or paper copies of any materials from the Office except that it is necessary to complete specific tasks that have been assigned.

3. The DM will not access any data or information from any computer or filing system unless directly authorized by their supervisor and will use that data or information only to carry out their assigned task(s).
4. The DM shall not copy or share any images of other students gained through access in databases.
- B. The DM will have access to keys/cards which grant them access to rooms within residential communities at UMBC, specific offices, and/or other rooms within the University. The DM understands that they are to use the keys/cards only within their official capacity as a staff member of Residential Life.
- C. Residential Life and UMBC reserves the right to keep and utilize any pictures and videos of staff. Residential Life will use these pictures/videos in publications and recruitment efforts. In addition, the DM's names may be posted in publications from the Office.
- D. The DM should not speak on behalf of the department, or their position, to media. Staff are free to share their thoughts and opinions with media, including on-line, that are not connected with their staff position.
- E. The DM should recognize that they represent UMBC and Residential Life in various ways, including through social media. The DM should be conscious of their actions and ensure that they are appropriate.

#### **VIII. BUILDING AND APARTMENT ASSIGNMENT**

The DM's room/apartment and hall/community assignment will be determined by Residential Life. Assignments may be changed depending on Residential Life needs. DMs may be required to move due to a number of circumstances.

#### **IX. REHIRE**

The DM position is for a specific period, as stated in Section I. DMs interested in serving in the DM position during the following year must reapply. DMs must meet all current expectations and exceed in some job performance areas and receive the endorsement of their current supervisor prior to being rehired to the position. Rehire is contingent upon the staff member's continued ability to meet all qualifications, successful completion of tasks, positive written evaluations by their supervisor, demonstrate a positive attitude towards Residential Life and customer service, as well as the exhibition of growth in the position. DMs that are re-hired will not necessarily receive the same placement from year to year. All hiring decisions are contingent upon the approval of the DM's direct supervisor and the Assistant Director of Residential Education.

#### **X. CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT COMPLETING FULL-TERM OF THIS AGREEMENT**

If the DM resigns or is terminated from this position during the period of this agreement the following will occur:

- A. The DM will not receive their stipend, except in cases where they have completed all tasks associated with the end of the semester.
- B. If the DM wishes to remain living on campus, and space is available, a space will be provided at their own expense. The cost of this space will be prorated based on the date of separation.
- C. If the DM wishes to move off campus, they will forfeit their housing deposit. However, the DM may receive their deposit back if the circumstances in Section 16 of the Housing License are met. Like any resident, the DM may also file an appeal to the License Appeal Board to refund part, or all, of the housing deposit.
- D. Meal plans will be terminated and prorated based on the separation date.

#### **XI. CONSEQUENCES FOR JOB PERFORMANCE CONCERNS**

- A. The DM may receive a letter of reprimand from their supervisor or be placed on employment probation by the supervisor and the Assistant Director of Facility Operations for unsatisfactory performance. If a DM is on probation and concerns with job performance continue, the DM's employment may be terminated.
- B. Prior to the time employment begins, if, in the opinion of Residential Life staff, the DM fails to maintain the minimum academic requirements or fails to adhere to a standard of behavior consistent with the DM position; the staff offer may be withdrawn.
- C. Termination from the DM position can result from breach of the DM employment agreement, breach of University or Residential Life rules and regulations, and/or from unsatisfactory performance. For example, a DM may perform extremely well and violate the terms of the DM agreement regarding grades or building/complex regulations; or the DM may abide by the agreement but not have the skills and/or motivation necessary to succeed in the position. Termination for violation of the DM agreement or for a serious performance problem may be automatic. Termination for unsatisfactory performance will generally only be considered after the staff member's direct supervisor has made efforts to point out those areas which need improvement and help the DM improve their skills and performance through personal support, guidance and regular evaluation.
- D. In all cases, the decision to terminate will rest with the Director for Residential Life. The specific reason(s) for termination will be provided in writing to the DM. The DM will also be given an opportunity to be heard regarding any concerns or questions they have regarding the termination decision. An appeal following dismissal may be submitted to the Associate Director of Housing Services within two (2) working days of receipt of written notice of termination. In all cases, where termination is being considered during the year, consultation among the DM, graduate assistant for desk operations and the Assistant Director of Facility Operations takes place prior to termination. Termination at the end of the agreement period will not require such a process since the DM agreement expires at the end of that period.
- E. A DM is immediately terminated from their position upon withdrawal, suspension or expulsion from the University. In addition, once responsibility has been assigned and a minimum sanction of Residential Life probation is given, either by taking responsibility or being found responsible by a hearing board, the DM will immediately be removed from their position.
- F. If a staff member leaves their position during the period of this agreement, for any reason, they may be required to move out of their assigned room.
- G. All training is mandatory and missing sessions can result in job action, including termination.