**Selection Process**

*Our selection process here at MSU is meant to identify the most qualified candidates. We believe our selection process is both educational and unique, providing personal development opportunities to all applicants.*

**Info Sessions**

We ask all that all interested applicants attend one of the information sessions offered prior to the application opening. These sessions will last no longer than an hour and you must stay for the entire presentation to receive credit for attending. The information session will provide more details on the application process, RA role, and provide time for you to ask any questions you may have. Attendance does not oblige you to apply for a position.

**Eligibility**

* 2.6 semester GPA and cumulative GPA
* 1 Semester at MSU
* 12 credits
* 1 Semesters of living on-campus
* Must be available to return for Fall Training by early August (typically two full weeks before school starts) OR for Spring Training by Early January (typically 5 days before school starts) \**If you cannot return by this time, please do not apply for the position. If you have special circumstances, please talk to Tristynn Morgan*
* Applicants must be in good standing (conduct, attitude, participation, & academics) with the University and University Student Housing

Freshman and Transfer students are more than welcome to apply to be an RA, even if you don’t meet the minimum qualifications, but please understand that you may be screened out and candidates meeting the minimum qualifications are given preference over those who do not.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: How do I become a Resident Advisor? What do I do and when?**

A: You are taking the first steps! Read through the entire Staff Employment site, info sessions, this document, and reach out to an RA. If you still have questions, contact Tristynn Morgan, at tristynn.morgan@montana.edu or by calling 406-994-4557.

**Q: What are the qualifications to be an RA?**

A: You must have a 2.6 Cumulative GPA, 1 semester at MSU, have successfully completed 12 credits and have lived on-campus for 1 semester at the time of hire. In addition, attendance at reach part of the hiring process such as the information session, individual interview, group interview, and RA class (if available during your hiring process) is mandatory to be considered for interview.

**Q: Do I get paid as an RA?**

A: Compensation for the RA job includes a room, inclusive of a 7-day meal plan, $100 stipend a month, and pre-loaded CatCash. RAs may work up to 5 hours at any front desk or on-campus job for an additional stipend.

**Q: Is there a credit limit for RAs?**

A: RAs must take at least 12 credits (full-time status) and may not take more than 16 without exemption as a new RA. The credit limit is 18 credits for returners. Exemptions can be made by Tristynn as deemed appropriate.

**Q: What does a typical week look like for an RA?**

A: As an RA you will have standing commitments like a weekly 2-hour staff meeting, a weekly supervision meeting, weekly and monthly programming, office hours and on-call shifts, and all-campus staff development meetings. RAs are expected to be on their floors 4 nights a week or more depending on the community's needs. Each community is different and may require different contributions from the RA, but typically RAs spend 15 hours each week attending meetings, planning, executing events, and engaging with their floor.

**Q: What are you looking for in a Resident Advisor?**

A: We are looking for students who are not only responsible, self-motivated, and able to model strong leadership, but also who are excited to help develop and support students. We are looking for students who have good time management and administrative skills but are also looking to be challenged and grow. Although not a requirement, we prefer students who are knowledgeable about MSU and living on campus.

Each candidate is evaluated not only on their application and whether or not they meet all of the minimum qualifications, but also on their ability support the mission of University Student Housing and Auxiliaries Services. Primarily, we will consider an applicant’s leadership skills, open-mindedness, ability to work in a team setting, academic major and outside commitments, discussion facilitation skills, and other criteria.

All components of the selection process are also taken into consideration. Participation in individual and group interviews, as well as during the RA class (if available) will be part of each candidate’s evaluation. It is important to remember that this process, not unlike other interview processes, is competitive. Some individuals will be offered positions, while others may not. We recommend that students focus on preparing themselves to be the best possible candidate they can be while remaining genuine in their approach. Even if you are not offered a position, we hope that this process is educational and provides personal growth opportunities.

**Q: What happens if I don’t complete part of the selection process or miss a deadline?**

A: If you miss a deadline, interview, or cannot attend or complete any part of the RA Selection process you will not be allowed to continue. This is inclusive of your online application.

**Q: What if I am offered a “Pool” position?**

A: A “pool” position means that while we feel you are a hirable, we don’t have position available for you. As pool candidate you are highly encouraged to attend the pool meeting at the end of the process. Pool candidates who attend meetings are then considered to fill any position that becomes available. Candidates who are pooled can choose to remain in the pool, which stays active for the following semester until the end of the next hiring cycle when a new pool will be determined. All pooled candidates who wish to be considered for the Resident Advisor role must reapply and go through the hiring process in order to be offered a position that starts on the traditional timeline.

**Q: What if I don’t get selected for a position?**

A: You are welcome to reapply during our next selection process. If being a leader on campus and in your hall is still important to you, we encourage you to seek out other opportunities to continue to be involved such as RHA (Residence Hall Association) and the front desk staff.

**Q: If I am applying for an RA Position, do I need complete a Housing contract as part of the Returner Priority Selection Process?**

A: No, in order to be considered as an applicant, you do not have a housing application on file. However, if you would still like to live on-campus regardless of your success in the RA selection process you are more than welcome to.

**Q: Can I hold a job on/off campus if I am a Resident Advisor?**

A: As an RA, you can hold a job on or off campus. If you choose to work on campus, you can work no more than 5 hours a week. For those who want to work off campus, things to take into consideration include, part of the RA position is establishing and continuing a presence in your community throughout the year. Between classes, meetings, and floor events, this can become difficult to do if you also hold another job whether on and off campus. Restrictions may be applied if engagment or involvment on the floor are deemed inefficient.

**Q: If I am an RA, will I have a roommate?**

A: As an RA, you will not have a roommate, unless there are extenuating needs in overflow housing. As part of your compensation, you are awarded a single room and board. Staff in our apartments area will share a unit but still maintain a single room within it.

**Q: What if I am not living in Bozeman, but wish to participate in the RA Selection Process?**

A: If you are currently not living in Bozeman please contact the Area Coordinator of Staff Training and Selection, currently Tristynn Morgan, tristynn.morgan@montana.edu, explaining your situation and the reasons why you are not able to fully participate in the selection process. Sometimes accommodation can be provided, but it most cases, it cannot. Each case will be evaluated individually. Participation in all of the process is still required including in-person group interviews.

**Q: Can I be involved in athletics, band, student organizations and other activities and still be an RA?**

A: These activities or programs tend to take you away from your primary role as an RA, which is to be visible and engaged in your floor/community. Your level involvement and participation in these activities will need to be discussed with the Area Coordinator of Staff Training and Selection, as well as with your home supervisors, and will require special permission. While we encourage our RAs to be well-rounded, and connected within the hall and MSU community, your involvement in these extracurricular activities may limit your perceived social time, and/or might have to shift due to your responsibilities as an RA. As you decide whether or not to accept a position, please consider the level of involvement you want to have in extracurricular organizations and programs. We hire students as RAs based on their commitment to and understanding of the RA expectations and related responsibilities. If you have questions or concerns, be up front with your commitments and ask sooner rather than later.

**Q: Are transfer students or international students eligible to apply?**

A: As long as you are currently enrolled at MSU, and meet the minimum qualifications, you are eligible to apply. If you have lived at a different university or in a group housing setting (such as the armed forces) that time counts! If you feel you would make a good candidate for the RA position, but don’t meet the minimum qualifications, please email the Area Coordinator of Staff Training and Selection, Tristynn Morgan - tristynn.morgan@montana.edu, explaining your situation, which qualifications you are concerned about and any other questions you might have.

**Q: What if I have already applied to be an RA before?**

A: Because some time has passed since you last applied, it is important you reapply, providing updated information.

**Q: Can I choose which building I am placed in? When I apply to be an RA, can I specify which floor I want? When do I find out about RA Placement?**

A: Placement is determined by the Area Coordinator of Staff Training and Selection as well as our professional housing staff, many factors play into not only a hire decision, but also RA placement. We evaluate the dynamic of each staff and look at supervision style of each Residence Hall Community Director, to ensure that the staff we establish will be successful. Ither factors include current open positions, building and community needs, and growth areas of the candidate. During the RA process you will have the opportunity to tell us where you would like to work and if you qualify for any special living options. RA hiring and potential placement decisions will go out at the end of April or early November.

**Q: When are the information sessions? Are they mandatory?**

A: You must attend an information session in order to be eligible to apply for an RA position. Times and locations will be updated on residence hall social media as well as the Staff Employment. You must only attend one and it need not be in your current residence hall.

**Q: What if I can’t attend one of the RA information sessions?**

A: You will not be eligible to apply for an RA Position. If you cannot attend a session due to class obligations, please email the Area Coordinator of Staff Training and Selection, Tristynn Morgan, tristynn.morgan@montana.edu.

**Q: When and how can I turn in my application?**

A: All application materials are online. You can find the link to the application site at <https://www.montana.edu/housing/halls/employment.html>. All candidates must sign in to the application with their NetID and password. The application site will go live on October 1st and mid-January (first day of school) each year.

**Q: Do I have to submit my application online?**

A: Yes. All applications materials needed to be submitted online. If this poses a problem for you or you having difficulties submitting your materials, please email the Area Coordinator of Staff Training and Selection, Tristynn Morgan, tristynn.morgan@montana.edu.

**Q: What is the deadline for applications?**

A: All application materials must be turned in by the deadline outlined on the Staff Employment Page. Execeptions will not be made to keep the process fair.

**Q: Can I apply in my freshman year for a Spring position?**

A: You are welcome to apply as a freshman, for our midyear selection process, but understand that you may be screened out due to not meeting minimum qualifications. Applicants who meet all qualifications will be considered first. If you have questions about your qualifications, please email Tristynn Morgan, tristynn.morgan@montana.edu.

**Q: Can I apply a transfer student in the fall semester?**

A: You are welcome to apply as a transfer but understand that you may be screened out due to not meeting minimum qualifications. Applicants who meet all qualifications will be considered first. If you have questions about your qualifications, please email Tristynn Morgan, tristynn.morgan@montana.edu.

**Q: Can I apply if I was documented for violating a University Housing/Conduct policy?**

A: It is difficult to answer this question without knowing the details of the violation. This will also depend on if your sanctions have been completed and whether you are in good standing with the University and the University Student Housing Department. If you have questions please see your Community Director, or email Tristynn Morgan, tristynn.morgan@montana.edu for more information. The RA expectations does not specifically specify that you cannot have been found responsible or involved with any University violation, but please consider that as an RA it is your job to be a role model and leader for your residents. If you feel, even with your violation and after discussing the situation with your CD, that you can maintain a mentor role, you are welcome to apply for the position.

**Q: Do I already need to know how to confront people or deal with emergencies?**
A: Absolutely not! Some of our RA applicants come with experience handling emergencies and confrontations, but many do not. If you are hired as an RA, we will provide in-depth training on many topics, including emergency procedures and confrontation. However, at some point within the role it will be inevitable that you will need to assist or support a student in an emergency or confront a situation.

**Q: Do I have to stay until the hall is closed or return before the hall opens?**

A: Yes. As stated in the RA responsibilities & related expectations, all staff members are required to return before the halls open and stay until the halls close. Details of times and dates, which are specific to the school year, are listed on that year’s current Resident Advisor Critical Dates, which you will be able to review before accepting the position. At the end of the Fall and Spring semesters, RAs are required to remain in the building until every resident has checked out of the building and the building has been secured for semester closing. Situations are similar but more short term for Thanksgiving and Spring break.

**Q: How many weekends a month do I have to stay on campus?**

A: RAs are allowed 10 nights away per semester approved and coordinated with your Community Director in advance. Nights away during Critical Dates are not allowed unless approved in advance by the Area Coordinator of Staff Training and Selection. Exemptions for trainings, opening, and closing will not be granted.

**Q: What does it mean to be “on-call”?**

A: If you are “on-call” you are required to be in the building from 5pm to 8 am the next morning during the week (Sunday to Thursday), or until 5pm the next day during weekends (Friday & Saturday) or holidays. During your on-call, you will respond to resident issues, hold drop-in hours from 6-8PM in the lobby, perform rounds multiple times a night, and help maintain the security of the building. You are expected to be in the building for the duration of your on-call. On-call schedules are created by the Assistant Community Director, and RAs can request nights “off-call” or “nights away” to study for tests, hang out with friends, etc. Number of on-calls a month differ from a couple times a month to two to three times a week based on the number of RAs on your staff.

**Q: Will I have time for myself and to see friends in other buildings or off campus?**

A: Absolutely! The key is time management. While your commitments may have increased, it is important to find a healthy balance, remembering to take time for yourself to re-energize. You will work with your Community Director to find this happy medium. There will be times when you will have to make sacrifices for the position as it should be considered your primary out of office commitment. The Resident Advisor position is centered on student development and support, and we don’t always know when our students will require our attention.

**Q: What is the difference between an ACD and a CD?**

A: An Assistant Community Director is a full-time student and has been an RA for at least a year. ACDs work with the Community Director to help maintain, supervise and support the building/community. ACDs are responsible for advising the Residence Hall Association, their individual halls Hall Council, and responding to crisis or emergency situations in the CD's absence or in their role as Senior Staff On-Call. A CD is a full-time, professional live-in staff member who typically have a bachelor’s degree (some have master’s degrees). CDs are responsible for maintaining the building, supervising the front desk staff, RAs, ACD, and the overall program development of the building or community.

**Q: I don’t know how to confront drunk people…will I have to?**

A: As an RA, you will more likely than not experience situations involving intoxicated students, but you do not need to know how to confront these issues right now. During fall training, you will be trained for various situations including managing situations with intoxicated individuals. Support is always available.

**Q: Will I have to work at the front desk of my building?**

A: In the RA responsibilities & related expectations it states that RAs may be asked to work the desk. Most commonly, RAs will be asked to cover the desk if there are no desk clerks available or an emergency arises. All RAs are trained to work at the front desk. RAs are welcome to take shifts as desk clerks as desired or available.

**Q: How many hours am I going to have to work each week?**

A: It is hard to estimate how many hours an RA works per week, because RAs are not on an hourly schedule, and school and departmental requirements will look different every week. The workload will vary depending on resident needs, programming requirements, and emergency situations. RAs are expected to be in their communities on their floors enough to establish a positive presence and foster community. RAs who manage their time well find they work around 15 hours per week, sometimes more, sometimes less.

**Q: What is the compensation for the position?**

A: RAs receive a single room, $100 per month, and the Bobcat Gold 7-day meal plan. Extra perks include early move-in times, early registration, staff merchandise, opportunity to work with a great team of students and professional staff members dedicated to student development, and personal and professional growth experiences.

**Q: I know that by being a Resident Advisor, I will receive free room and board. Will this affect my financial aid?**

A: The RA position can affect your financial aid, but because each student’s financial situation is different. The RA role is reported to financial aid at the beginning of each semester and is shown as a scholarship that will affect your perceived need. It's important that you discuss this employment opportunity with the Financial Aid Office, 406-994-2845.

**Q: Do I have to register for selective service?**

A: Yes. As state workers you may be required to register for selective service. Federal law requires nearly all male U.S. citizens and male immigrants to register at age 18. This is managed and audited by University Human Resources. More information can be found on this website -www.sss.gov

**Q: When is Resident Advisor Training?**

A: Fall training starts in early August and goes through the beginning of the school year. This is normally two and a half weeks back from the first day of school – typically a Sunday at noon. Move-in day for RAs will begin 48 hours before the beginning of training each semester but early move-in is not required. More specifics about training and move-in times will be provided post-hire to those individuals selected to be RAs. There will be midyear training before the beginning of Spring semester too, typically beginning 5 days before the first day of school. Throughout the year, RAs will be required to attend training sessions on the week and weekends for continued development.

**Q: If I have a conflict, can I miss training or be late for it?**

A: No. Training attendance is a condition of hire. Full attendance is required. Training is several days leading up to the first day of school and covers various topics needed for a successful RA, including programming, community building, confrontation, and emergency response.

**Q: What is the RA Class?**

A: The RA Class is a component of the selection process and a one credit, upper division, leadership class that is pass fail. RA candidates learn more about the position, conflict mediation, and programming requirements as well as developing leadership, interpersonal, and administrative skills along the way. In addition, they will complete assignments and projects related to the RA position. Class attendance at all weeks is mandatory.