

The Resident Assistant

What is a Resident Assistant?

One of the first people that you will get to know outside of your fellow Freshman is the Resident Assistant for your floor. There is usually at least one per floor and per sex living on that floor. While living in the dorms is meant to be more of an on your own experience, there still needs to be some sort of support and security system available just in case you need it. A Resident Assistant is simply a student who was chosen by the Office of Residents Life to be that support system on top of all their personal responsibilities as a student and individual as well.

A Resident Assistant is usually at least a Sophomore or older student who is considered to be a friendly, open, and caring individual. It is often required that a Resident Assistant is around their floor for a good amount of time each day with their door open so that anyone can stop by to talk or ask questions. They're trained to help you out with nearly every issue you'll face as a student ranging from questions about a teacher to sexual or mental health topics. Before you moved on to campus, your Resident Assistant went through an entire training program to make sure that if they couldn't answer a question for you, they could show you exactly where to go and even help you follow through with it as well.

Where Resident Assistants usually get a bad reputation is from the fact that they have to uphold the college or university rules and policies. This usually includes but is not limited to: reporting alcohol and drug abuse, domestic disturbance, mental health issues, and noise complaints. Each night there is usually at least one Resident Assistant responsible for the safety and security of the entire building. They're the ones who report to all incidents and deal directly with the Campus Police Department if necessary. Keep in mind that if you're breaking school policy and a Resident Assistant has to deal with you about it, it's not really their choice on if it should be reported or how it should be handled as they are simply doing their job.

While not every resident becomes friendly with their Resident Assistant, it's always good to know that they're around for you. Keep in mind that if you don't feel comfortable with your Resident Assistant, you can always speak to another one that you do, so it's good to know who the other RAs are for future reference. If you have an emergency of any sort, remember that they're students just like you and have dealt with many of these situations before as both a Resident Assistant and a student. So while you are on your own, your Resident Assistant and the others in your building are available to make sure that everyone is safe and has someone to turn to if and when they need it.