

Residential Education & Housing
Student Employee Performance Guidelines
The College of New Jersey
2019-20

As a student employee of the College of New Jersey's Residential Education & Housing department, Student Manager of Residential Operations, Community Advisors, House Assistants, and Desk Assistants are expected to fulfill the expectations and duties of their position as outlined in training, the respective job description, *Student Employee Agreement*, and supervisor expectations.

Although every student employee disciplinary situation is unique, this protocol will guide the supervisor and student employee through basic procedures to be followed to improve the student employee's job performance. It also details the procedures to be followed if job performance does not improve and any additional steps to be taken.

Upon occasion, student employees make mistakes and fail to fulfill duties and responsibilities. When such occurrences happen, Residential Education will seek to:

- Create a civil, safe, and healthy environment conducive to active learning and personal development. In addition to sustaining a student-centered community that appreciates, supports, and celebrates the uniqueness of each residential student;
- Outline consistent expectations for all student employees and provide consistent and timely feedback;
- Work with the student employee to improve his or her performance; and
- Evaluate student employee capacity to perform in the position and where appropriate, develop a performance improvement plan and/or place on probation (Note: a PIP may not be a suitable solution for all violations of performance expectations).

General Supervision:

Student employees will meet regularly with their supervisor to receive job performance feedback. In addition to this feedback, if student employees fail to fulfill any expectations or responsibilities stated in training, the respective job description, *Student Employee Agreement*, or supervisor's expectations, a supervisory conversation will be initiated to discuss the performance.

Situations that **MAY** result in a supervisory conversation, written warning and/or Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), include but are not limited to:

- Failure to check staff mailbox regularly or respond to work-related email in a timely manner;
- Failure to distribute information to residents in a timely manner;
- Failure to appropriately perform office duties;
- Tardy attendance for staff meetings;
- Missing a deadline;
- Missing a meeting;
- Failure to meet availability expectations as established by supervisor;
- Projecting an attitude or behavior that has a negative impact on team performance;
- Breach of confidentiality;
- Tardy attendance for duty shifts
- Failure to follow policy/crisis response protocol (Critical negligence may warrant more serious personnel action);
- Failure to complete cohort experience goals or programming requirements;
- Failure to meet job expectations;
- Continually turning in paperwork late; or
- Continually attending meetings and programs late
- Tardy attendance or missed area office shift

There are some issues and expectations will require an immediate meeting and/or investigation with supervisors. If an investigation reveals that a student employee failed to meet expectations, the student employee may be placed on a Probation status. The probationary period is designed to allow the student employee the opportunity to improve his/ her performance to remain in the position.

SOME expectations that **MAY** result directly in a Probationary Status include but are not limited to:

- Failure to meet job expectations;
- Repeated submission of paperwork late after receiving a warning;
- Repeated tardy attendance for meetings and/or programs after receiving a warning;
- Missing training session without permission of supervisors
- Tardiness to or failure to report to duty post;
- Failure to document policy violations or not appropriately addressing policy violations; or
- Failure to complete duty responsibilities;
- Failure to improve job performance or complete expectations outlined in a Performance Improvement Plan;
- Being found responsible for a Student Conduct or AGRL violation, resulting in a warning.

Unfortunately there are **SOME** issues that **MAY** result in termination. These include but are not limited to:

- Failure to fulfill *Student Employee Agreement*;
- Failure to meet job expectations;
- Failure to improve job performance or complete expectations outlined in a Performance Improvement Plan;
- Abandoning duty post;
- Being found responsible of a violation of *the Student Conduct Code* with particular attention to:
- Violation of the alcohol and/or drug sections;
- Violation of the *Student Employee Agreement*;
- An act of bias;
- Violation of Fire and Safety policies; or
- Personal abuse of another;
- Being found responsible and placed on probation for a violation of the Student Conduct code;
- Misuse of any Keys or access privileges that are granted for the purposes of performing job duties;
- Using the privileges afforded to you as a result of your position for personal gain or convenience;
- Cumulative grade point average below 2.5 (2.0 for Desk Assistants) for 2 consecutive semesters (1st semester=probation and 2nd semester=termination);
- An intentional or negligent breach of confidentiality; or
- An act that renders a staff member ineffective in their role as determined by supervisor(s).

Performance Improvement Plans:

At any point in their employment, if a student employee appears to be struggling to meet performance expectations and fulfill their job responsibilities, the student employee may meet with their supervisor and create a plan that will outline how they must improve their performance to meet expectations. This is referred to as a Performance Improvement Plan or PIP, which will include specific and measurable outcomes. The Performance Improvement Plan is an official document that will be placed in the student employee's file. In most job action situations, a Performance Improvement Plan will be developed. Failure to meet expectations outlined in a Performance Improvement Plan may result in additional job action.

Employment Probation:

If a student employee is placed on Employment Probation, he or she will be alerted to the length of their Employment Probationary status and may be required to work with their supervisor to set up a Performance Improvement Plan. Employment Probationary status may play a role in whether the student employee is rehired for the following semester or academic year. In the event that a student employee has made substantial progress in improving performance, but has not completed all areas of the Performance Improvement Plan, a student employee's probation may be extended in order to achieve performance indicators outlined in the Performance Improvement Plan.

Academic Probation:

In the unfortunate event a student employee's cumulative grade point average drops below 2.5 (2.0 for Desk Assistants), or a live-in student employee's semester grade point average is below a 2.0, the student employee will be placed on Academic Probation within Residential Education and Housing. Academic probation ends after one semester, when the student staff member earns a semester GPA of at least 2.0 and cumulative GPA of at least 2.5. Failure to meet the required GPA after one semester may result in termination of employment. The Department of Residential Education and Housing emphasize that our student staff are students first and recognize the positions' time demands and responsibilities, especially during transition as a new employee. For this reason, new hires will not be permitted to begin their employment in a probationary status. GPAs will be checked at the end of each academic term, including summer and winter sessions.

Student employees cannot be placed on both Academic Probation and Employment Probation. Students experiencing both academic and performance issues resulting in Academic Probation and Employment Probation may be terminated. Students who are terminated solely for academic concerns may be eligible for future student employment in Residential Education & Housing.

Termination:

When the threat of termination exists, student employees can expect that Residential Education will conduct a full investigation of the circumstances. There may be times when student employees will be placed on a paid leave of absence and possibly removed from a floor or residence entirely pending an investigation of an incident and/or outcome of a student conduct proceeding. This action will apply if the nature of the alleged violation, in the view of the Professional Residence Staff, is such that keeping the student employee on their residence hall floor or in residence may place them or other residents in jeopardy. Examples of such alleged violations would be: sexual misconduct, personal and/or physical abuse, or violation of local, state or federal law. Residential Education & Housing will also alert the Student Employment Office and the Title IX Coordinator as appropriate, of the issue, investigation, and decision making process. In situations where there is a possibility of termination, the Residence Director and Associate Director of Residential Education will be directly involved in the investigation and the findings. If termination is recommended, the student employee will meet with their direct supervisor to discuss the investigation and any determinations. A student staff member terminated from the position will not be eligible for future student employment in Residential Education & Housing.

Investigation Process:

Although every student employee disciplinary situation is unique, this protocol will guide the supervisor and student employee through basic procedures to be followed to improve the student staff employee's job performance. It also details the procedures to be followed if job performance does not improve and additional steps need to be taken.

Note: Student staff employees who are accused of violating College policy may face two separate and distinct processes. The primary process is the College Student Conduct process. In this process, student employees have all of the same rights and responsibilities as other students at the College. In addition, student employees face an employment process that operates independently of the College Student Conduct process. In this process, student employees are held to a much higher standard of conduct as outlined in the Residential Education & Housing Student Staff Agreement.

Policy Violation Procedure:

If a student employee is alleged to have violated a College policy, the supervisor will refer the matter to the Student Conduct process for adjudication. If there is any reason to believe that the violation falls under the Title IX Policy, it will be forwarded to the Title IX Coordinator.

While the case is being processed, the supervisor will choose one of the following courses of action (in all cases the supervisor will consult with the Associate Director before taking action):

- The supervisor may choose to suspend action, pending the Student Conduct and/or Title IX resolution of the case. This will be done only when the best available information indicates that the pending matter (and related factors) will not interfere with the student staff member's ability to perform his or her responsibilities. This does not preclude the supervisor from taking employment action once the case has been adjudicated.

- The supervisor may choose to take an interim action, pending the resolution of the Student Conduct and/or Title IX process. This can be done when the pending matter (or related factors) interferes with the student staff member's ability to perform his or her responsibilities or causes a hostile educational environment for another student, as per Title IX. It can also take place when the student employee accepts responsibility for his or her actions, and appropriate employment action is agreed upon by both the supervisor and the student employee.

The supervisor may take additional or more severe employment action once a case has been adjudicated. The supervisor may choose to take permanent action regardless of the student conduct resolution of the case. This can be done in cases where the circumstances are extremely clear, the violation is deemed to be very severe and/or the incident (or related factors) substantially interferes with the student employee's ability to perform his or her responsibilities. The student conduct decision may influence the employment decision, but there is not necessarily a direct correlation between them. This means that a student may not be found in violation through the College student conduct process, but employment action may be taken regardless.

Failure to Meet Job Expectations Procedure:

If a student employee is failing to meet expectations as stated in their job description, *Student Employee Agreement*, supervisor's expectations, and/or training expectations, the supervisor will:

Step 1: Meet with the student employee to discuss the specific job performance issue in question.

Step 2: Make every attempt to meet or communicate with the student employee as soon as possible after the issue or no later than a week after a specific incident occurs or when the supervisor is notified of specific incident.

Step 3: Follow the general supervision guidelines to determine if the specific performance warrants a conversation, warning, probation, or termination.

Step 4: If necessary, will conduct an investigation and gather necessary information. The supervisor will remain neutral during the process, gathering information but not yet coming to a conclusion of the student employee's role or determination of outcome. If the supervisor has become involved in a situation prior to the investigation, then the Assistant Director will conduct the investigation.

Step 5: Discuss with the student employee specific issues of concern and hear his or her side of the situation.

Step 6: If the issue could rise to the level of probation, supervisor will consult with his or her supervisor and Assistant Director. If the issue could rise to the level of termination, supervisor will consult with his or her supervisor, Assistant Director, and Director of Residential Education. The Director of Residential Education will consult with the Student Employment Office for possible termination situations.

Step 7: Meet with student employee and discuss one of the following:

- Conversation: Discuss issue and ways for improvement;
- Warning Letter: Discuss issue and ways for improvement, followed up by letter for file;
- Performance Improvement Plan: Issue, ways for improvement, timeline for improvement with measurable actions to be followed up by the supervisor, a completion date, as well as input from student employee;
- Probation: Issue Performance Improvement Plan, end date for Probation, as well as future job action if Performance Improvement Plan is not complete and/or another violation occurs.
- Termination: Discuss that action could result in termination and an additional meeting with Assistant Director will be necessary.

Step 8: Follow up, in writing for warnings, PIPs, and probation, to the student employee, the content of this discussion, specific action steps to be taken, deadlines for accomplishing the action steps, the sanction determined by the supervisor as appropriate and a date to reconvene with the student employee to discuss their progress should all be included in this documentation. All documentation should be copied to the appropriate Assistant Director and to the staff member's personnel file in the Department of Residential Education and Housing and in Student Employment Office.

Step 9: If the issue could rise to the level of termination, the supervisor and their Associate Director will meet with the student employee to discuss investigation findings, impacts on position, and termination. If termination is determined to be the necessary course of action, the Associate Director will work with the student employee to determine an appropriate date to move out of their student staff room.

Appeal Process:

Reasons for appealing can be based on a process review, information review, sanction review, bias of professional staff member rendering the original decision, or new information. An appeal based on a process review is to determine whether the original investigation and decision process had irregularities in procedure. An appeal based on information review is to determine if the information presented in the investigation was sufficient to establish a violation. An appeal based on a sanction review is to determine whether the decision was appropriate for the violation. An appeal based on a bias of professional staff member rendering the original decision is to determine if the nature of the bias could have affected the outcome of the meeting. New information review is to consider new information, sufficient to alter a decision or facts not brought up in the original investigation because such information was not known to individuals at the time of the investigation. Deference is given to the original decision unless error, bias, or substantial new information has been presented. Appeal does not automatically result in a new investigation, but might result in a review of current information presented. An appeal needs to be in written form and include above reason (process review, information review, sanction review, or new information) for appeal with all necessary information.

To appeal - A student employee is afforded one single opportunity to appeal a decision with Residential Education. A written appeal letter, with reasons requesting an appeal, is due to the Director of Residential Education within 3 business days of the notification of the warning, probation or termination. The Director (or designee) will investigate and respond in writing to the appeal within 5 business days of receipt of the appeal request or upon conclusion of the investigation. If the investigation cannot be completed within 5 business days, the Director (or designee) will inform the student employee of the expected timeline. After the Department of Residential Education has made their final decision, staff can appeal to the Office of Student Employment.

All Job Action letters will be placed in a student employee's Residential Education file, as well as their Student Employment file.

Every effort will be made by the supervisor to facilitate the relocation of the former student employee within a week of the decision, however on campus housing is not guaranteed. Former student employees will not be relocated during final exam period. During final exam period, every effort will be made to find a date that mutually works for all parties. The student employee retains all of his or her Student Conduct rights, including the right to appeal a decision or sanction within the College Student conduct process. However, in cases where the student employee has been terminated due to a Student Conduct finding, the supervisor in conjunction with the Associate Director will decide whether or not the student employee may stay in his or her position pending the Student Conduct appeal.

Leave of Absence

Request for Leave

There will be times when a student employee requests or is placed on a leave of absence. Student staff, in good standing, can request a leave of absence (unpaid) due to studying abroad or personal issues. Both situations will be reviewed by the Assistant Director of the student employee's assigned area. A leave requested for studying abroad, internships, etc. will be granted, as long as the staff member is in good academic, job and conduct standing. However, immediate return to the position is contingent upon an existing vacancy and job status. Student employees requesting a leave of absence due to personal issues will be asked to work with the Associate Director to establish a "Return to Staff Plan" which will outline any plans or strategies needed to help the student employee return to staff with any needed support measures to be successful. Again, immediate return to the position is contingent upon an existing vacancy and a complete file review will be completed to assure the staff left the position in good standing.

Short-Term Leave

If a student staff member needs to take a short term leave due to an injury or illness, including emotional/mental health, the student staff must provide a request in writing to their supervisor, along with supporting documentation from a relevant, licensed medical practitioner. The short-term leave request will be reviewed and approved by the Residence

Director, in consultation with the associate director, for up to a two week approved absence. Requests for more than two weeks will be reviewed on a case by case basis in consultation with the associate director. In general, any request for more than two weeks will necessitate a leave of absence for the remainder of the semester.

To Return: In all situations, except short-term leave, it is the responsibility of the departing student staff to contact the Associate Director of Residential Education & Housing in advance of their return to campus to request to reactivate their student staff file. Student staff may take up to two semesters away on a leave. If they do not reactivate after two semesters, the student must re-apply if they wish to return to the position.

In the event of a resignation from the position, the student, in good standing, must re-apply if they wish to return to the position.

Equal Employment Opportunity Office

Reporting Discrimination or Harassment

The Department of Residential Education and Housing is committed to providing employees a work environment that is free from discrimination or harassment. As such the Department of Residential Education and Housing staff will work in conjunction with the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office in “maintaining a work/educational environment free from discrimination or harassment, the College will not tolerate forms of discrimination or harassment based upon the protected categories listed below. This is a zero tolerance policy. The College reserves the right to take either disciplinary action, if appropriate, or other corrective action, to address any unacceptable conduct that violates this policy, regardless of whether the conduct satisfies the legal definition of discrimination or harassment” (<http://www.tcnj.edu/~ogc/reporting.html>).

Student Employees are NOT required to inform the Department of Residential Education of harassment that they experience and can work directly with EEO if they choose. However the Department of Residential Education & Housing are committed to supporting staff and providing resources when necessary or requested of them.

Age Affectional/Sexual Orientation Ancestry Atypical Hereditary Cellular or Blood Trait Color Creed Disability Domestic Partnership Status Familial Status	Gender Identity or Expression Genetic Information Liability for Military Service Marital /Civil Union Status Nationality National Origin	Race Religion Sex/Gender (including pregnancy) Sexual Harassment Retaliation (for having filed a discrimination complaint, participating in a complaint investigation, or for opposing a discriminatory practice)
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Any employee or student who believes that she or he has been subjected to any form of prohibited discrimination/harassment, or who witnesses others being subjected to such discrimination/harassment is encouraged to **promptly report the incident(s) to:**

Kerri Thompson Tillett
EEO/AA Officer
Administrative Services Building, Room 102
(609) 771-3139
Email: eeo@tcnj.edu

All concerns that are brought to the attention of the Department of Residential Education and Housing staff will be documented in an Incident Report and referred to EEO Office for further investigation. Referrals will include but are not limited to concerns with staff behavior. For additional information, please reference the EEO website (<http://www.tcnj.edu/~ogc/reporting.html>), Residential Education and Housing professional staff, or EEO professional staff.

Please note that if the form of discrimination falls under the purview of Title IX then this case may be forwarded to the Title IX Coordinator and addressed through this Office. For any questions or concerns regarding this please contact:

Chelsea Jacoby
Title IX Coordinator
Brower Student Center
609-771-3112
Email: jacobytc@tcnj.edu

Residential Education Student Employee Supervisory Complaint Procedures

The College believes that “each individual has the right to fair, unbiased, and courteous treatment in access to education, campus life, employment and services, and in grading and performance evaluations”

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~sa/handbook/studrights.html>. The College “seeks to maintain a positive learning and work environment for its students and employees. Such an environment can only exist if all members of the campus community treat each other with respect” <http://www.tcnj.edu/~academic/policy/>. Hence, The College is dedicated to maintaining an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

To ensure that a student employees’ concerns regarding his/her experiences with other staff members (not involving allegations of discrimination and harassment) are addressed in an informed and appropriate manner, the Department of Residential Education & Housing applies the following procedures:

Step One: Any student employee who feels that he or she has been mistreated by another staff member (student or professional) should first attempt to resolve any concerns informally with the respective staff member unless in doing so, the student employee fears he or she would be subject to further mistreatment.

Step Two: If the student employee’s concerns are not resolved informally (or the student employee is apprehensive about discussing concerns with the respective staff member), the employee may initiate a formal complaint with the appropriate staff member’s supervisor. The formal complaint must be submitted in writing and clearly describe the nature of the problem given rise to the complaint, the policy or procedures that are alleged to have been violated, and the action or solution proposed. The supervisor will respond to the formal complaint within 2 business days. The supervisor will subsequently conduct a thorough investigation of the complaint and issue his or her findings. Findings could result in: no action, mediation meeting, warning, written warning, Performance Improvement Plan, retraining, probation or termination from the position. (In cases where the professional staff member in question is a member of a bargaining unit, the findings of the investigation will be forwarded to Human Resources. A Human Resources representative will meet with the staff member in conjunction with the union representative to discuss allegations).

Step Three: If a student employee is not satisfied with the decision made by the staff member’s supervisor at Step Two, the student employee may appeal within 2 business days of the decision to the Director of Residential Education or the AVP of Student Affairs. The complaint and appeal will be thoroughly reviewed and findings rendered in writing within 2 business days of receiving the appeal or upon completion of the investigation. It is important to note that there are limitations, in some situations, to the amount of information that can be relayed back to the original student employee that filed the complaint about job action that might be taken with another employee.

Step Four: If a student employee is not satisfied with the decision made by the Director of Residential Education or the AVP of Student Affairs at Step Three, the employee may appeal to the Vice President of Student Affairs. The Vice President’s decision is final and not subject to further review or appeal within the College.

Please note: Complaints involving allegations of discrimination and/or harassment based on race, creed, color, national origin, nationality, ancestry, age, sex/gender (including pregnancy), marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, familial status, religion, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, or disability, should be directed to Kerri Thompson-Tillet, The College’s Director of EEO/AA and Diversity, at 609.771.3139 or via email at thompsook@tcnj.edu. Though The College’s intention is that all complaints will be resolved through these procedures, an aggrieved student may also file a complaint with any appropriate state or federal agency.

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