Addressing Assumptive Language in Reporting

Residential Life & Housing

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Pacific's 6th Annual Assessment Conference

Incident Report Writing

- Residential Life & Housing team members are tasked with submitting Incident Reports (IRs) to document in a third-person objective perspective the details of a situation in which:

  - An alleged policy violation may have occurred

  - A student may be in crisis, distress, and/or has been provided resources/referrals

  - A wellness check has been conducted

  - A roommate conflict/mediation may or has escalated to be concerning

  - Community follow-up may be needed to address alleged policy violations or community standards are not being upheld

Focusing in on our Assessment

Intercultural Competence

- Focused on the use of assumptive language
  - What was the language used?
  - The context of language selection?
  - Factual versus opinion-based
  - How to report on the same situation using non-assumptive language

- Engaged with writers in dialogue that unpacked implicit stereotypical representations* and socialized ways of thinking.

*Brusa A, Pesič A, Proverbio AM (2021)Learning positive social information reduces racial bias as indexed by N400 response. PLoS ONE 16(11): e0260540. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0260540

Writing Competency

- Were the 13 basics of an Incident Report adequately included and completed.
  - Rubric utilized to review for these 13 basics.
- Were reports well-written?
- Were reports concise? Detailed?
- Effectively described alleged violation and reason for documentation?

Identify IR to Review and Set Meeting

Complete Rubric of 13 Basics

Data Coding an Incident Report

Basics

Unclear Language/Confusing Perspective

Assumptive/Non-Descriptive language

Does not need to be included

Resident Assistant: First and Last Name

Date/Time Incident Report Submitted: MM/DD/YYYY at 00:00 AM/PM

Code

☐ - Basics   ☐ - Unclear language/Confusing Perspective

☐ - Assumptive/non-descriptive language   ☐ - Does not need to be included

Incident Report

On August 5, 2019, at approximately 9:30, RA Tulip received a call from someone complaining about noise. RA Tulip headed over to Calaveras Hall 124 and could hear loud music coming from the apartment; it could be heard two apartments over. RA Tulip knocked on the door and heard some people talking before the door was opened. RA Tulip introduced themselves and asked that the music be lowered. Resident Ivy Violet, who had opened the door, angrily said that it was not quiet hours. RA Tulip explained Courtesy Hours that they had received a noise complaint. RA Tulip asked for Resident Violet's ID card to collect their ID number for documentation purposes. RA Tulip asked if there were other people in the apartment. RA Tulip requested that they also come to the door to provide their ID card.

Notes

☐ **- Basics**

- Does not include the complete time (No AM/PM)
- The first time the RA is named in the report should be written fully: Resident Assistant Tulip
- Does not include who else was in apartment or what happened to conclude the incident.

☐ **- Unclear language/Confusing Perspective**

- Did not state who called and submitted complaint and complaint was non-specific
- Does not include who

☐ **- Assumptive/non-descriptive language**

- How do we know that the person was angry?

Overall Rubric

- Used to assess the two competencies
- On a scale of 1-4
- Assists in tracking performance development

Intercultural Competence
In focusing on concrete details and observations, Resident Assistants will be able to reflectively recognize their implicit biases and acknowledge areas of growth.

Outcome: Identifying Factual Details Through discussions with their supervisor regarding language choice and selection of details reported, Resident Assistants will be able to distinguish between factual reporting and opinion-based reporting.

| Resident Assistant uses lots of opinion-based language and lacks factual details to fully describe situation. Language utilized in report is very assumptive. | → | Resident Assistant used some opinion-based language and some factual details to fully describe situation. Language utilized in report is assumptive. | → | Resident Assistant used minimal opinion-based language and lots of factual details to fully describe situation. Language utilized in report is assumptive | → | Resident Assistant used only factual details to fully describe situation. |

Non-Assumptive Language & Inclusion

○ Focus Shifts to Inclusive Language: Language that avoids the use of certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people

○ Impact: Used constructively, language can reflect social and cultural diversity in a positive and **accurate** way rather than perpetuating negative stereotypes about individuals and groups.

You guys/ She, He	You All/ They, Them

○ In Practice: Utilizing People-First Language

○ Puts the person before the disability and describes what a person has, not who a person is.

Handicapped Parking Crippled Autistic	Accessible Parking Has a Disability Has Autism

Outcome: Analyzing Reports

Engaging in Reflective Dialog with Supervisor

Resident Assistants are encouraged to reflect on any opinion-based reporting or potential non-inclusive language that may stem from implicit bias.

- Taking a closer look at:
  - Language used – Explore connotative definitions of phrases and adjectives used
    - Cultural Implications – Reflecting on stereotypes and micro-aggressions conveyed through language
  - Naming context and describing behavior observed (focus on situation vs personal attributes)
    - Example: "RA witnessed person A slamming doors and yelling loudly" vs "person A was angry and aggressive"
  - Utilizing Rubric to establish factual reporting ang language
  - Reflecting on alternative language to ensure factual and inclusive reporting
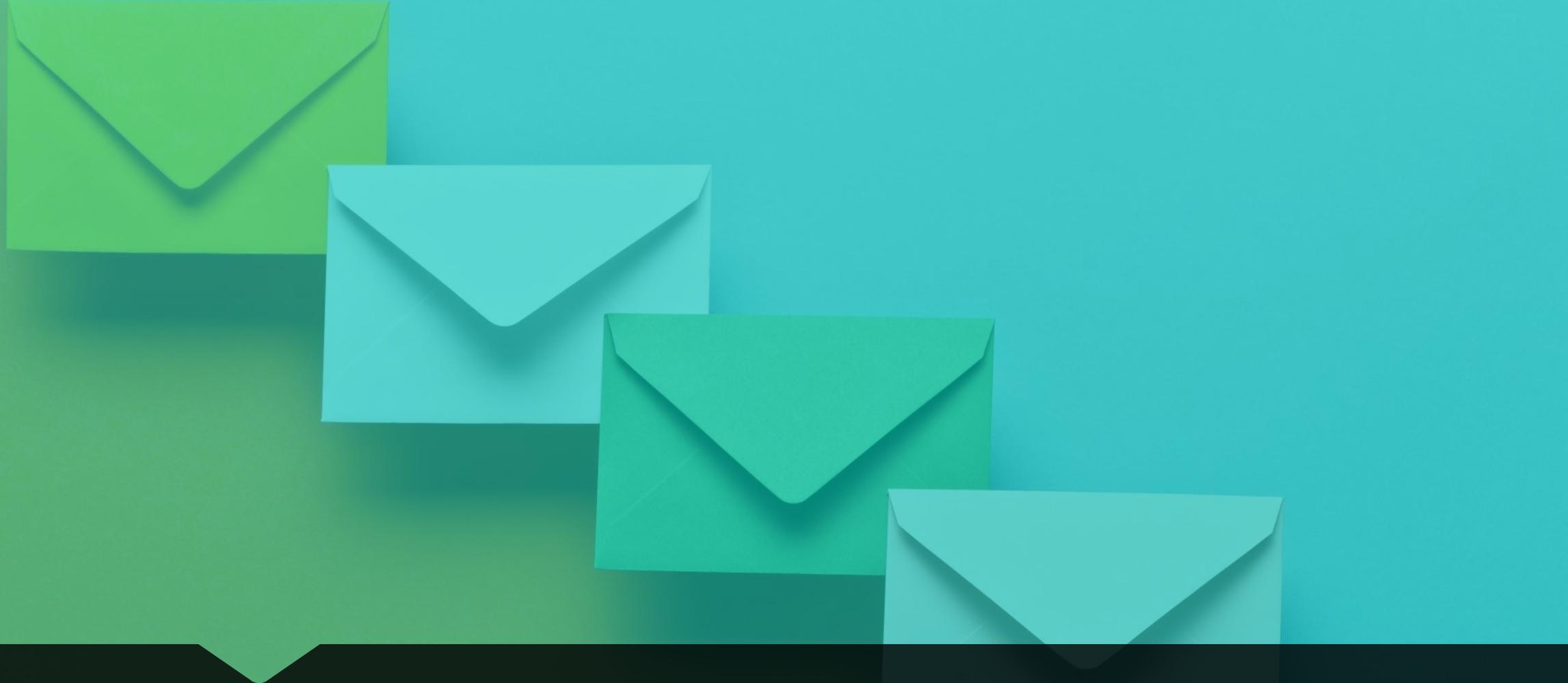
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