

New House Numbered Houses Room-Assignment Action Plan

Email: nh-numbered-house-racs@mit.edu with questions.

House: New House – Numbered Houses

1. Please describe, in detail, your house’s updated room-assignment process for first year students. This should include details of the process over the summer and the process during REX and Orientation.

During the summer, students who are assigned by Housing and Residential Services to New House will be assigned **temporary** rooms within the Numbered Houses – Houses 3, 4, and Desmond (aka House 5). After first-year students arrive on campus, they are encouraged to attend Residential Exploration (REX) events for each of the Numbered Houses, during which they will be able to get to know each community in more detail. REX events are opportunities for each Numbered House to share information about their house’s culture, values, and expectations. Early in the week, the Numbered Houses will also be hosting **a pre-FYRE mixer** for first-year students so they have an opportunity to visit all of the houses together before exploration happens on Wednesday night.

On *Wednesday of REX week*, all first-year students in the Numbered Houses will be invited to participate in **Polar Bear Rumble**, or in-house exploration. They will join New House Exec members, including the overall Numbered House Housing Chairs, the House President and Vice President, and Assistant Director/Area Director in the New House Multipurpose Room (MPR). There, they will receive instructions on the night-of process, locations for each Numbered House, and a “passport.” Each first-year student will visit every Numbered House and spend some time at their events, so the houses can learn more about the first-years and the first years can learn more about the houses. The first-year students will receive a stamp on their passport before moving on to the next house.

Upon visiting each house, the first-years will exchange their completed passport for the code to **the Matching Form**. In the form, first-years will rank each of the Numbered Houses and provide information for permanent room assignments (e.g. if they want a specific roommate, room type preferences, etc.). They will also complete information about community and individual values (noise level, community involvement, cleanliness, etc.) and prioritize these.

When all first-year students have successfully completed the Matching Form, the Numbered House Room Assignment Chairs will work together to match students to their new houses. The top priority during matching will be to house students in their first choice house – in the event where there is not enough space for each first-year student to receive their first choice house,

housing chairs will use information about student values and priorities from the matching form and the summer housing lottery form to place students in their highest choice possible. In addition, an algorithm will be run using the same parameters to serve as a “bias check” for the hand-matching process. After running the algorithm, discrepancies may be corrected, and assignments may be adjusted.

First-years will have until *8:30 a.m. on Thursday morning* (specific time may change) to be completely checked out of their temporary rooms. They are invited to join the New House Team (GRAs, Assistant Director/Area Director, and Head of House) for **the Key Breakfast** in the MPR while desk workers reassign keys and the rooms are spot-checked for cleaning. When ready, first years will pick up the keys to their new assignment at the front desk. Upper-level students from the numbered houses will join the first-year students to welcome them to their new houses and assist them in moving.

2. How does the process allow for students who are overwhelmed to opt out of exploration and moving?

New House Exec members will be hosting **office hours** from *4 p.m. – 6 p.m. on Monday* to answer questions from both first-year students and parents about Polar Bear Rumble, the Key Breakfast, and the overall room assignment process. During Polar Bear Rumble, the overall New House Housing Chairs, Numbered House GRAs, the Assistant Director/Area Director, and New House President will be in the Multipurpose Room to answer questions and address concerns during in-house exploration. In circumstances where first-years wish to remain in their original temporary room assignments permanently, students may be allowed to opt out of in-house exploration and moving. To do so, students should inform the Assistant Director/Area Director and House President either in-person or via email by the end of the Polar Bear Rumble event.

3. What is the level of upper-level student involvement? Are the first year students being assigned through an algorithm or another way?

Upper-level New House Numbered House residents will be running REX events and sharing information with first-year students about community values, expectations, and culture. They will host individual house events during Polar Bear Rumble, with Numbered House Housing Chairs ensuring the process is ethical. Then, individual Numbered House Housing Chairs will work with the overall Housing Chairs to hand-match students to their new houses, using information from the Matching Form and the summer housing lottery. An algorithm will be run as a parallel process to provide a “bias check,” as well as to make sure students with quieter voices during in-house exploration have their needs met. Any discrepancies between the algorithm and hand-matching will be discussed and corrections may be made.

4. Please describe your house’s upper-level student room-assignment process. This description should include any information about mid-semester room switches.

Houses with open spaces will host events for transfer students over the course of the week

after Switch Lottery results are sent out. Transfers will be sent the same form used during Polar Bear Rumble and the same process for matching during fall in-house exploration will occur for transfers. Mid-semester room switches within the house will be handled by the individual house's housing chair.

5. What is the role of the AD in these processes?

The Assistant Director/Area Director will assist students in the development of a housing assignment algorithm during the summer. During REX, the Assistant Director/Area Director will be available to any students who feel overwhelmed by the process and assist in facilitating their ability to opt out of the process. The Assistant Director/Area Director will also co-host the "Key Breakfast" with house leaders and the House Team. Additionally, the Assistant Director/Area Director will be present with Room Assignment Chairs as they make final placements and help to ensure the processes run smoothly and are fair to all first-year students.

6. What forms of evaluation are being considered for assessing the effectiveness of the new process? What ideas do you have for evaluation?

The results of the hand-matching process will be evaluated against the algorithmic process and adjustments may be made. The Key Breakfast, held on the day students confirm and move, if necessary, to their final assignment will provide an informal opportunity for students to discuss their experience during REX with house leadership, the Assistant Director/Area Director, and the rest of the House Team. New House leadership will analyze data collected by Housing and Residential Services and post-REX survey. Additionally, New House leadership will draft a survey for all students who participated in REX to evaluate satisfaction and learn more about their experiences.