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Chapter 1: Promoting Cultural Exchange

The U.S. Department of State administers the Exchange Visitor Program under the provisions of the Fulbright-Hays Act (officially the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961) in order to promote mutual understanding and peace between the people of the United States and other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange. Through these exchanges, the Exchange Visitor Program seeks to create a foundation of trust between Americans and the rest of the world. By bringing people together to share perspectives and experiences, these programs strengthen our national security and promote prosperity at home and abroad.

The Au Pair Program provides one of the most in-depth cultural exchange experiences for participants. Each year, thousands of young, international women and men get the chance to live with and participate in the family life of an American host family, participate in educational opportunities in the U.S., and engage with Americans in culturally rich activities that will increase their understanding of the United States. The expectation is that upon completion of the exchange program, participants will return home to share their experiences with family, friends and others in their country. InterExchange Au Pair USA has been instrumentally involved with the promotion of the Au Pair Program since its inception more than 25 years ago.

While the Au Pair Program is a unique childcare program, it is important to remember that this is first and foremost a cultural exchange program. Au pairs must receive the benefits of an exchange experience to the greatest extent possible. Host family responsibilities in this regard include involving their au pair in American traditions and holidays, helping her understand her new experiences, and supporting her in the adjustment to a new language and culture. Experiencing life in the U.S. is one of the biggest attractions of the Au Pair Program to young people around the world and is one of the core purposes of the Au Pair Program.
Chapter 2: Program Roles

Au Pairs

InterExchange au pairs are young adults between the ages of 18 and 26 who apply to the program from abroad and come to the United States for 12 months to live with an American host family as part of a U.S. Department of State-designated cultural exchange program.

In return for room, board, and a weekly stipend, au pairs provide childcare assistance for a maximum of 10 hours per day and 45 hours per week, and live as extended family members. As part of the requirements of the Au Pair Program, au pairs must also complete an educational component of at least six semester hours (or their equivalent) of academic credit in a formal educational setting at accredited U.S. postsecondary institutions. Host families contribute $500 toward the cost of these classes and either arrange or pay for au pairs’ transportation to and from classes.

The term “au pair” is French for “on par,” meaning that the au pair must be treated as a member of the family. As such, we expect that you will be welcomed and included in family daily life, activities and holidays, and that you will have a real interest in learning about the United States and American culture. You may also be motivated by the chance to immerse yourself in an English language environment so that you can improve your English comprehension and speaking skills.

Host Families

Host families are American families who welcome an au pair into their home for 12 months to live as an extended family member and childcare assistant. Host families must have at least one child who will remain below the age of 18 years old for the length of their program.

The term “au pair” means “on par” in French, so host families should recognize that the au pair they host must be treated as a family member rather than simply as an employee. Each host family should have a genuine interest in furthering the cultural exchange objectives of the Au Pair Program and should make every effort possible to encourage and facilitate their au pair’s adjustment to the United States and understanding of U.S. culture.

Local Coordinators

Local Coordinators, or “LCs,” are InterExchange Au Pair USA representatives in your host family’s local community. LCs fulfill many roles and have many responsibilities. First and foremost, they are responsible for monitoring the au pair and host family relationship to ensure that U.S. Department of State regulations and InterExchange program policies are being followed. Your LC will interview your host family in their home before you arrive. Your LC will also inspect the bedroom you will live in to make sure it is suitable. Your LC will contact you within 48 hours of arriving to your host family’s home and will also meet with you and your host family within the first two weeks of your arrival to your host family’s home to see how things are progressing. Your LC will remain your primary contact person throughout the program year.

At a minimum, your LC will contact you monthly to ensure that the placement is going well. As issues arise, you should contact your LC for advice and assistance. LCs also organize educational and cultural events for you and the other au pairs in your local area at least once each month. These monthly events not only allow the LC to meet with you face to face, learn about your progress and monitor your placement, but also further the cultural exchange objectives of the program.
Regional Supervisors
Regional Supervisors manage a team of Local Coordinators and provide the next level of support for host families and au pairs in the program. Regional Supervisors will contact au pairs and host families at least four times per year to make sure that program rules and regulations are being followed. Regional Supervisors may also get involved if a serious problem develops during the program year. As an au pair, you should feel free to contact your Regional Supervisor if you feel you are not receiving an adequate level of service from your Local Coordinator.

InterExchange
InterExchange, Inc. is an official Au Pair Program Sponsor designated by the U.S. Department of State since 1989. Based in New York City, we are a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting cultural exchange through work and volunteer exchange programs, including Au Pair USA. The Au Pair USA team is experienced in all aspects of the program and is available during standard office hours to answer any questions you may have.

InterExchange's other cultural exchange programs include Camp USA, Career Training USA and Work and Travel USA, all of which allow international students and young people to come to the United States. InterExchange's Working Abroad program provides opportunities for Americans looking to work, travel, learn, or volunteer abroad. The InterExchange Foundation awards grants to selected Americans to help fund their time working or volunteering abroad.

U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)
The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is a section of the U.S. Department of State dedicated to increasing mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges. These exchange programs ultimately assist in the development of peaceful relations between the U.S. and other countries. The Au Pair Program plays an important part in this mission by offering the chance for a population of mostly young women to spend time living with a family in the United States. Designated sponsors, such as InterExchange, are granted the ability to operate the Au Pair Program in partnership with the ECA. The U.S. Department of State also promulgates and upholds the program regulations and oversees the sponsors in order to maintain the highest quality cultural exchange program. All serious incidents that occur on the Au Pair Program are reported to the ECA for further investigation and analysis. Families and au pairs may also contact the ECA directly if they have an issue with the Au Pair USA program that InterExchange was not able to resolve.
Chapter 3: Participant Rights, Protections, Understanding

InterExchange makes it a priority to ensure that all our participants enjoy a safe, healthy and well-monitored cultural exchange experience in the U.S. The following information describes a baseline for conduct that our participants can expect from InterExchange and their hosts as well as their responsibilities during their visits to the United States through InterExchange programs.

**During their programs, InterExchange au pairs can expect:**

- A safe, healthy and legal working and living environment.
- Opportunities to interact with Americans on a regular basis.
- Protection of their legal rights under U.S. laws.
- Fair treatment and payment practices.
- Right to keep passport and other documents in their possession.
- Right to report abuse without retaliation.
- Right to contact the J-1 Visa Emergency Helpline of the U.S. Department of State.
- Right not to be held in a job against their will.
- Right to end their program and return to their home country.
- Right to request help from unions, labor rights groups and other groups.
- Right to seek justice in U.S. courts if warranted.

Au pairs can also expect the following support from InterExchange throughout their program:

- Emergency telephone assistance 24 hours a day at 1.917.373.0717.
- A timely response to all emails sent to aupairinfo@interexchange.org.
- Reliable sources for general program information.
- Resources and guidance to help them engage in cultural learning and American life.
- At a minimum, monthly contact and monitoring.
- Vetting and conducting due diligence to verify each host family.
- Available staff with extensive international experience.
- Available staff who can provide support for special situations if needed.
- Acting as a neutral advocate to help resolve any disputes that occur.
- Accident and sickness insurance that meets or exceeds J-1 Visa regulatory requirements.

Participates in our programs acknowledge that:

- The primary purpose of InterExchange cultural exchange programs is to interact with U.S. citizens, practice the English language, travel and experience U.S. culture while sharing their culture with Americans.
- They will abide by the laws of the United States.
- They will abide by all rules and regulations applicable to U.S. Department of State Exchange Visitor programs.
- They have not come on a J-1 Visa program seeking permanent residency or employment in the U.S.
- They are expected to follow the guidelines of employment provided by their host family.
- InterExchange is their visa sponsor. A U.S. host family is not a visa sponsor.
- Any wages earned during the programs are only meant to help defray living expenses during the programs. Earning money is not the primary purpose of cultural exchange programs.
- Host families may terminate their employment relationship with participants.
- Host families do not have the authority to cancel the J-1 Visa. Only the U.S. government or InterExchange has the authority to modify a participant’s program or visa status.
Chapter 4: Host Family and Home Requirements

Hosting an au pair is a big responsibility. InterExchange employs a number of screening and selection procedures to ensure that host families are qualified to host an au pair. These include an in-depth application, an in-home interview, identification verifications, character references, employment verification, photos, etc.

Primary Address
Your host family must have a primary residence at which you can come and go freely. Your host family cannot require you to remove yourself from this residence for any period of time while you are their au pair (for example, while the family goes on vacation). According to program regulations, this primary address must be within one hour’s drive of an InterExchange Local Coordinator. This primary address will also be recorded in the U.S. government’s SEVIS database and will appear on your DS-2019 form.

Change of Address
If your host family is moving during the program year, you must notify your Local Coordinator and InterExchange in writing before the move date so we can update our records and the government database. We must also make sure that the new address is one that is covered by InterExchange. Please send this information to compliance@interexchange.org. If the new address is not covered by InterExchange, the placement with your host family will have to be ended. You will be given the option to rematch or return home.

Shared Custody Families
In cases where parents share custody of children, hosting an au pair has often proven to be successful. In all shared custody arrangements, the au pair must have a primary residence where she spends the majority of her time and is able to come and go freely. For example, if the children stay with the host mother at the primary residence from Monday to Thursday and then with the host father from Friday to Sunday, the au pair needs to be able to maintain free access to the primary residence all week, not just Monday to Thursday.

Multiple Family Homes
- If you will be caring for the children at multiple homes, such as the home of another parent or the family’s second home, InterExchange will need to record those secondary addresses. Please discuss this with your Local Coordinator to make sure all the records are in order. The following additional requirements will also need to be met:
  - Any home where you will be working must also be inspected by the Local Coordinator.
  - If you are expected to stay overnight at this home, a private bedroom must be provided.
  - All adults living in the secondary home must have been interviewed in person by the Local Coordinator.
  - Au pairs are not allowed to provide primary care for children who are not listed on the host family’s application.

Your Au Pair Bedroom
Since you work in your host family’s home, it is very important that you have access to a private space where you can sleep, relax and enjoy your time off. Your host family must be able to provide you with a private bedroom that meets local housing requirements. This room must be yours alone and not shared with anyone else. Below are some additional requirements.
This bedroom must have a bed (and bed frame) with appropriate pillows, sheets and blankets.
This bedroom must have a door that closes properly.
The bedroom must have a lamp or overhead light source that provides sufficient light, an alarm clock and a closet or dresser where you can store clothes.
The bedroom must have curtains or another way to cover the windows when desired.
The bedroom must be well heated during cold-weather months.
The bedroom must be sufficiently cool during hot weather months.
Your room cannot be used for any secondary purpose (laundry, ironing, storage, playroom, etc.).

Your Local Coordinator will have seen and inspected this bedroom before your arrival. If the room does not meet the above expectations, please speak to your Local Coordinator about it.

Host families do not have to provide a private bathroom for you.

**Family Situations**
We believe that all loving families have something to offer and gain from the au pair program. Unfortunately, there are some situations that are problematic or unsuitable to facilitating a rich cultural exchange opportunity. Below is a list of situations that you should bring to the attention of your Local Coordinator if they occur:

- Parents who are involved in an ongoing dispute for custody of the children.
- Separated parents who require an au pair to work between two homes but are unwilling or unable to communicate freely and openly with each other.
- Families who are going through serious difficulties (health or medical issues, recent death in the immediate family, serious financial problems, pending litigation or prosecution).
- Families with which the au pair is expected to provide ongoing therapeutic or medical treatment.
- A family whose children are older than 18 years of age, or will turn 18 during the program year.
- Families in which substance abuse is suspected or is occurring.
- Families in which a parent has lost his or her license and needs you to act as a driver.

**A Note on the Spirit of Cultural Exchange**
Both you and your host family are expected to embrace the spirit of cultural exchange. That means remembering that the primary purpose of the program is to bring you and your host family together to exchange information about your differing backgrounds and learn to understand each other. If you feel your host family is not working within the spirit of cultural exchange, please contact your Local Coordinator to discuss.
Chapter 5: Your Weekly Schedule

The U.S. Department of State program regulations define the maximum number of hours that an au pair can work per day and per week. They also define the amount of time off the au pair must receive. It is a violation of the program regulations to work beyond these limits even if compensation would be provided and such an arrangement would be agreeable to both the au pair and the host family.

Receiving a Weekly Schedule

Your host family must provide you with a written schedule for the upcoming week so that you can take classes, meet with friends, or simply enjoy some personal time. This schedule should not be changed on short notice except with your agreement. If your family is not issuing you a weekly schedule, speak to them about this requirement and explain that you need to be able to plan your free time. If this doesn't help the problem, speak to your Local Coordinator.

When calculating the number of hours scheduled and worked, host families and au pairs must maintain the same “work week” throughout the program year. This means that if your schedule runs from Monday to Sunday, this same schedule must be adhered to for the duration of the program to prevent confusion.

The Au Pair USA Schedule & Weekly Planner

InterExchange provides all au pairs with the Au Pair USA Schedule and Weekly Planner during the Orientation and Training Program in New York. You must maintain accurate notes in this booklet each week. This tool is extremely useful for the following:

- Planning and writing a clear schedule before the work week.
- Documenting hours worked.
- Comparing actual hours worked to hours scheduled.
- Documenting and “signing-off” on the stipends you received.
- Tracking your used vacation days.

**Tip**

Don’t stop documenting: You may be tempted to stop using the Au Pair USA Schedule and Weekly Planner if scheduling and hours haven’t been an issue. However, you might be surprised to see that you had actually been working more than 45 hours in a week. This can lead to problems in the relationship. Keeping accurate records will help prevent this from happening.

45-Hour Weekly Limit

Host families are not permitted to have their au pairs work more than 45 hours in any workweek. This 45-hour limit is a U.S. Department of State program regulation and cannot be broken. You cannot agree to break this limit.

10-Hour Daily Limit

You are not allowed to work more than 10 hours in any one day. Work hours include any time when you are responsible for the care of the children or are engaged in tasks related to the children’s care, such as cleaning their rooms, making their meals or snacks and doing their laundry. It also includes time when you are acting as the responsible adult while the children sleep. This 10-hour limit is a U.S. Department of State program regulation. You cannot agree to break this limit.
### Time-Off Policies & Regulations

**Full Weekend Off Per Month**
Please record date of required monthly full weekend off.

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**Vacation Days Per Year**
Au pairs earn one vacation day for each full month they work, starting after the first 30 days of work, for a total of 11 vacation days.* Please keep track of your vacation days by recording the dates below:

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* Since au pairs are scheduled to work 5.5 days per week, the U.S. Department of State-mandated two weeks of paid vacation equals 11 days of vacation (5.5 days x 2 = 11 days).

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### Weekly Summary
**Week of: April 18-24, 2016**

**Monday:** Annie had a hard time getting up, so we were 5 minutes late for school. I wrote a note for the teacher.

**Tuesday:** Finished the children's laundry for the week! Melissa helped me fold!

**Wednesday:** Helped Annie with her Social Studies homework. Things seem to be improving!

**Thursday:** Jake came home with a permission slip for you to sign. Had a hard time getting him to do his math homework assignment?

**Friday:** Annie and Melissa had a great time playing princess in the backyard, but Annie might be coming down with a cold.
Chapter 6: Limits on Au Pair Responsibilities

As you settle into your new role with your host family, please remember that there are some limits on the type of childcare you can provide.

**Active and Passive Childcare**
Your responsibilities will include both active and passive forms of childcare. Active childcare is when you are interacting with and directly supervising a child. Passive childcare is when the children are playing independently, watching TV, or sleeping while you serve as the responsible adult in the home and point of contact. It is important to understand this distinction while acknowledging that both active and passive childcare are considered on-duty time in terms of tracking hours.

**Child-Related Housekeeping and Pitching in as a Family Member**
In addition to active and passive childcare, you can perform light housekeeping duties that are directly related to the children. These duties may include cleaning the children's bedrooms, making their beds, doing their laundry and putting their clothes away. This can also include cleaning up areas of the home that the children have been using as a play area or cleaning up the kitchen after the children eat. This must not include general housekeeping that is either related to your host parents or other adults living in the home. You cannot solely be responsible for general cleaning of the common areas of the home. For example, vacuuming the living room each week would not fall within the scope of your work. That said, as a member of your host family, you can be expected to “pitch in” by taking a turn vacuuming along with the other adults in the home. This also means you can help out by taking turns emptying the dishwasher or helping clean up after a shared meal. Your host family must not expect you to act as a general housekeeper for the family.

**Home Orientation Period**
The day you arrive at your host family's home is a day of rest for you. The Home Orientation Period begins the day after you arrive at your host family's home. During the first 3 days of the Home Orientation Period, you are not permitted to be left as the sole responsible adult childcare provider for your host children, even for a limited time. A parent or other responsible adult must stay home with you while you assist with childcare during the first 3 days in the home. This applies to both active and passive forms of childcare. These limits during the Home Orientation Period apply to you whether you have just arrived and traveled from the Orientation and Training Program in New York City or if you have previously been placed with another host family and have just rematched with a new host family.

**Children Younger Than Three Months Old**
You are not allowed to be the sole adult childcare provider to any child less than three months of age. This means that a parent or other responsible adult must stay home with you while you assist with childcare for an infant under three months of age. This limit applies to both active and passive forms of childcare.

**Children Under Two Years of Age**
An “Infant Qualified” au pair is one who has at least 200 hours of verified experience with children younger than two years old and is open to such a placement. If you do not have this qualification, you cannot match with a host family who has children under 2 years of age.
**Expecting Parents**
If a new child under the age of two years old will be joining your host family during the program year you will need to be an “Infant Qualified” au pair in order to match or stay with that family.

**Special Needs Situations**
Host families who identify as having children with special needs (i.e. emotional, physical or psychological special needs) are required to match with an au pair who has experience with special needs individuals. In these cases, the au pair will have to specifically identify her prior experience, skills or training in the care of special needs individuals. The host family will be required to acknowledge that it has reviewed this information and would like to proceed with the match. We recognize that this is a complex issue, so it is up to the host family to identify whether or not their children have special needs in the context of childcare, and whether or not the chosen au pair has the appropriate qualifications to address said special needs.

**Medical Responsibilities**
You cannot perform the sort of duties that a home health care attendant, visiting nurse, or occupational therapist would perform. You cannot be responsible for the administration of any medical or therapeutic treatment, except as is reasonable in an emergency situation.

**Pet Care**
Some families have pets that need care and attention. As a contributing family member, you might volunteer to help out with caring for pets, but this cannot be a part of your official work responsibilities. If you are unable or unwilling to contribute to this aspect of family life, your host family will need to make other pet care arrangements. We recommend that you have a conversation with your host family about their pet care situation before you arrive at their home.
Chapter 7: Your Time Off and Vacation

Your au pair year should provide you with enough free time to travel, meet local friends, and participate in the cultural exchange aspects of the program outside of the home. Time off will also allow you to relax, recharge and return to the family refreshed.

In order to make sure that you have this time available, the program regulations define the minimum amount of time off required for au pairs each week, month and year. It is very important that you receive all of the time off to which you are entitled.

Au pair work hours, time off and the weekly stipend are some of the most important aspects of the U.S. Department of State's program regulations. If InterExchange learns of any suspected violations of these regulations, we will directly address the allegations with the au pair and host family. If the alleged violations are found to be true, InterExchange reserves the right to remove the au pair from the host family home immediately. We are further required to report any violations of these regulations to the U.S. Department of State.

One Full Day and One Half Day Off Per Work Week
You must be given at least one full day and one half day off each week. Please see the following descriptions:

**Full Day Off:** A “full day off” means that from the time you wake up on your day off until the time you wake up the next day, you are not required to perform any active or passive childcare duties. A “full day off” is not the same as just having a 24-hour window of free time.

**One Half Day Off:** Since you can be scheduled to work up to 10 hours per day, a “half day off” means that you work no more than one five-hour shift on that day. A “half day off” is not the same as having a 12-hour window of free time.

One Full Weekend Off Per Month
A full weekend off means that from early Friday evening until Monday morning, you are not required to provide any active or passive childcare. Full weekends off should always be scheduled in advance. Please discuss which weekend should be your full weekend off with your host family each month.

Two Weeks of Paid Vacation Time
You are also entitled to receive two weeks of paid vacation each program year. As your work schedule is for a maximum of five and one half (5.5) days per week, the total vacation time you are entitled to is 11 individual work days per year (5.5 x 2).

Requesting and Recording Vacation Days
When you want to take a vacation or day off, you should discuss this with your family with enough time for them to make other childcare arrangements. It is best to start this discussion as soon as possible. You must take all of your vacation days during the program year. Your Au Pair USA Schedule and Weekly Planner has a section in the front of the book in which to record the days you are taking as vacation days. Vacation days cannot be applied to you retroactively. For example, if your host parent stayed home from work on Monday, the family cannot claim on Tuesday that Monday was a vacation day for you.
# Time-Off Policies & Regulations

## Full Weekend Off Per Month

Please record date of required monthly full weekend off.

*Example: 4/9/2016-4/10/2016*

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<tr>
<th>Month 4:</th>
<th>Month 10:</th>
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<th>Month 5:</th>
<th>Month 11:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Month 6:</th>
<th>Month 12:</th>
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</table>

## Vacation Days Per Year

Au pairs earn one vacation day for each full month they work, starting after the first 30 days of work, for a total of 11 vacation days.* Please keep track of your vacation days by recording the dates below:

*Example: 6/10/2016*

1. ________________ 7. ________________
2. ________________ 8. ________________
3. ________________ 9. ________________
4. ________________ 10. ________________
5. ________________ 11. ________________
6. ________________

*Since au pairs can be scheduled to work 5.5 days per week, the U.S. Department of State-mandated two weeks of paid vacation equals 11 days of vacation (5.5 days x 2 = 11 days).*
Vacationing With Host Families
If you are performing childcare duties during a family vacation, then you are not using vacation days; you are still working. However, if you have no duties during the family vacation, that time can count as vacation days. Please take note that all program rules and regulations, including those regarding your accommodations, still apply during a family vacation. Therefore, you must have a private room and access to at least three meals a day.

Time Off for Cluster Meetings
Cluster meetings are monthly events organized by your Local Coordinator for you and other au pairs in your area. These events may be cultural, social or educational in nature. These events are an important part of your program experience in the United States.

Your work schedule must accommodate these meetings. Meetings are usually scheduled during typical “off” hours, but if you find that they are scheduled at inconvenient times, please speak to your Local Coordinator about your concerns. Your host family is expected to provide, facilitate or assist you with arranging transportation to attend the meetings. If this means that you will drive the family automobile to the meeting, the cost of fuel should be paid by the family. While these meetings sometimes involve activities with a cost attached (bowling, for example), your host family is not required to pay for these activities.

Time Off for Classes
You are also required to complete an educational component as part of your program requirements. Your host family should work with you to find classes that meet the requirements and fit your work schedule. Your host family should expect that your work schedule might have to accommodate these classes.

Sick Days
During the course of the program year, you may need to take time off to deal with personal medical needs or illness. These days off should not be counted as vacation days and your stipend cannot be reduced because of missed work days. If you are seriously ill, please seek medical help and contact your Local Coordinator.

The 30-Day Travel Period
According to the terms of your J-1 Visa, upon successful completion of the program, you are entitled to make use of a travel period of up to 30 days. During this time you may travel in the U.S. to gain a better understanding of the country. Since your J-1 Visa and DS-2019 form will have expired by this point in the year, you will not be able to leave the U.S. and re-enter during this 30-day travel period. For this reason, we advise that you use this time to explore the U.S.

It is also strictly forbidden for you to engage in any employment during this 30-day period. Working during this period is a violation of the terms of the J-1 Visa and the immigration laws of the U.S. This prohibition includes working for your host family by providing childcare or other tasks in return for room, board or wages.
Chapter 8: Your Stipend

The Au Pair Weekly Stipend
The weekly stipend that you will receive from your host family is determined by the U.S. Department of State. The weekly rate is currently a minimum of $195.75 per week. Your host family must pay you at least this amount, regardless of the number of hours you work during the week. The stipend is also paid in full during your vacation days. Your host family must maintain a consistent pay schedule so that you can budget properly and rely on the stipend. The stipend is not paid for the time spent at the Au Pair USA Orientation and Training Program.

Recording Au Pair Stipend Payments
Stipend payments should be recorded in your Au Pair USA Schedule and Weekly Planner and initialled and dated by both you and your host family each and every week. This may feel unnecessary when you and your host family are cooperating effectively and everyone is happy. But, as an employment arrangement exists between you and your host family, everyone is advised to keep diligent records.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEKLY SUMMARY</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Hours Scheduled: 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hours Worked: 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did au pair receive at least 1.5 days off? YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host Family Initials: J.E.D.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your stipend is subject to taxation at the end of the calendar year. You will receive information about this requirement at the Orientation and Training Program and when tax season approaches. Your host family should not withhold any tax amounts from the stipend payments as you will resolve this yourself at the end of the year.

Calculating the Weekly Stipend
The amount of the minimum weekly stipend is set by the federal government. This is determined by calculating the federal minimum wage (currently $7.25 per hour) for 45 hours per week. This equals the gross amount of $326.25 that you earn each week. This amount is then reduced by 40% to account for the room and board that your host family provides for you, equaling the current minimum weekly stipend of $195.75.

In this calculation you can see that your room and board are an important part of your compensation. As mentioned already, the room must be private and outfitted with necessary items. "Board" is defined as a minimum of three meals per day. These meals do not have to be prepared for you, but there must be enough food available to meet a reasonable three-meals-per-day requirement.

As the employer, payment of the minimum weekly stipend is the sole responsibility of the host family. InterExchange is not responsible for and will not pay the stipend under any circumstances.
As the employer, the host family must be aware of and comply with any state and/or local laws that apply to the relationship between the host family and the au pair. InterExchange makes no representations about the applicability of state or local laws to the relationship between the host family and the au pair and has no responsibility for enforcing applicable state or local laws, if any.
Chapter 9: Placement Monitoring

InterExchange is tasked with monitoring the au pair and host family placement to make sure that things go as smoothly as possible during the program duration. In order to effectively monitor the placement, we will need to contact you and your host family on a regular basis. It is important that host families and au pairs assist in this process by responding to our queries in a timely manner. Below is a list of the required contacts you should expect from InterExchange, your Local Coordinator and your Regional Supervisor.

Contact Information
It is very important that InterExchange and your Local Coordinator have up-to-date information about how to contact you. If you change your email or telephone number, please share this information with your Local Coordinator and email the changes to aupairinfo@interexchange.org.

Host Family-Au Pair Placement Agreement
After you match with your family, you will be prompted to complete an online agreement in Passport that describes your duties and responsibilities.

48-Hour Contact
Once you arrive at your host family’s home, your LC will reach out to you by telephone during the first 48 hours. This contact is meant to establish communication between you and your LC so that you know whom to contact in the event of a problem or emergency.

Two-Week Meeting
After you arrive at your host family’s home, your LC will schedule an in-home meeting with you and your family within the first two weeks of the placement. During this meeting, your LC will ask questions, complete a report and discuss how your placement is going so far.

Monthly Contacts
Your LC is required to have monthly contacts with both you and your host family. These communications are required by the U.S. Department of State. This contact can be in person at the cluster meeting, via email or via phone. You are expected to respond to your LC in a timely manner.

Cluster Meetings
Monthly cluster meetings are organized by your Local Coordinator for you and the other au pairs in your community. These meetings are an important way for you to connect with others in the local area. Each month, you will participate in varied events that provide educational, cultural and social opportunities. These activities add to the richness of your cultural exchange experience. Cluster meetings also offer you the opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns you may have. It is extremely important that your host family provides you with the time to attend these meetings.

Quarterly Contacts
Quarterly contacts are surveys sent out four times per year by your Regional Supervisor. These surveys give host families and au pairs the chance to provide essential feedback to the program. InterExchange takes feedback from these surveys seriously, and appreciates the chance to improve our program and the experiences of our host families and au pairs.
Au pairs must complete their quarterly contacts surveys in order to comply with U.S. Department of State regulations.

**Annual Program Audit**

You may receive a request to participate in an audit conducted annually to ensure compliance with the procedures and reporting requirements set forth by InterExchange and U.S. Department of State regulations. If you do receive such a request, we kindly ask that you follow the instructions provided and respond in a timely manner.
Chapter 10: Your J-1 Visa and Important Documents

Au pairs come to the U.S. on a class of non-immigrant visa called the J-1 Visa. The J-1 Visa class is reserved for U.S. Department of State-designated cultural exchange programs.

Au pairs come to the U.S. on a class of non-immigrant exchange visitor visa called the J-1 Visa. The J-1 Visa class is reserved for U.S. Department of State-designated cultural exchange programs. Below are some of the terms of the Au Pair J-1 Visa:

- Au pairs agree to take part in a 12-month program with the option to extend their program one time for an additional six, nine or 12 months.
- Au pairs cannot engage in any paid employment while in the U.S. other than with their host family.
- Au pairs must register for and complete the educational component of their program.
- Au pairs can only work a maximum of 45 hours per week and 10 hours per day.
- Au pairs must adhere to the program rules and regulations.

As an au pair, you will have several important documents that work together to allow you to enter and work in the U.S.

The DS-2019 Form
The DS-2019 form is a U.S. government document that spells out the “Duration” and “Status” of the foreign national named on the form. In your case, the form will initially state that you are participating in a program for a duration of 12 months and have the status of “Au Pair.” This form alone does not grant you permission to enter the U.S. (this permission comes from the J-1 Visa), but it defines your status while in the U.S. and the duration for which that status is valid. InterExchange will create the DS-2019 for you.

The DS-2019 form includes your name, date of birth, country of birth, program begin and end dates, site of activity in the U.S. (your host family’s primary address) and SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) ID Number. The DS-2019 form is reviewed for accuracy and signed by InterExchange’s Responsible Officer (RO) or Alternate Responsible Officer (ARO) before being sent by courier post to you overseas along with a pre-departure packet of information.

You must take this DS-2019 form to your visa interview at the American Consulate or Embassy in your country. If your J-1 Visa application is approved, the consular officer will sign the DS-2019 form.

You will have to carry and show the DS-2019 form when you first enter the U.S. to begin the Au Pair Program and also each time you travel abroad (including Canada and Mexico) and need to re-enter the U.S. The following are times when you will have to receive a new DS-2019 form:

- If you lose your DS-2019 form, please contact InterExchange for a replacement form immediately.
- If you extend your program, we will create a new DS-2019 form that reflects the new program dates. This new form should be stapled to the previous form and always used together.
- If your host family is moving to a new address, you must notify InterExchange so we can print a new DS-2019 form reflecting your new address.
U.S. Department of State
CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EXCHANGE VISITOR STATUS (J-NONIMMIGRANT)

1. Surname/Primary Name: Mustermann
   Given Name: Erica
   Date of Birth: 04-11-1992
   City of Birth: Köln
   Country of Birth: Germany
   Citizenship Country Code: DE
   Citizenship Country: Germany
   Gender: Female

   Program Number: P-0-12345
   Program Official Description: AU PAIR

3. Purpose of this Form: Begin new program; accompanied by number (0) of immediate family members.

4. Form Covers Period:
   From: 09-21-2015
   To: 09-21-2016
   Exchange Visitor Category: AU PAIR
   Subject Field Code: 19.0709
   Subject Field Code Remark: None

5. During the period covered by this form, the total estimated financial support (in U.S. $) is to be provided to the exchange visitor by:
   - Wages paid by host family to au pair: $10,119.00
   - Personal funds: $200.00
   - Totals: $10,319.00

6. Alternate Responsible Officer: Mary Jones
   Name of Official Preparing Form:
   100 Wall Street, Suite 301
   New York, NY 10005
   Title: 212-924-0446
   Address of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer: Telephone Number
   08-18-2015
   Date: 2015-08-18
   Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

7. Statement of Responsible Officer for Releasing Sponsor (FOR TRANSFER OF PROGRAM):
   Effective date (mm/dd/yyyy):
   Transfer of this exchange visitor from program number sponsored by
   to the program specified in item 2 is necessary or highly desirable and is in conformity with the objectives of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended.

8. Preliminary Endorsement of Consular or Immigration Officer Regarding Section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and PL 94-305, as Amended (see item 8 on page 2): The Exchange Visitor in the above program:
   1. Subject to two-year residence requirement.
   2. Government financing and/or The Exchange Visitor Skills List and/or PL 94-305 as amended.

9. Exchange Visitor Certification:
   I have read and agree with the statement in item 2 on page 2 of this document.

DS-2019
07-2011

Sample DS-2019 Form
The J-1 Visa

The J-1 Visa is a sticker adhered to a full page inside an au pair’s passport. The J-1 Visa is the document that grants permission to enter the U.S. to start or continue the au pair program. You should be aware of two pieces of information printed directly on the J-1 visa.

1. Expiration Date: This is the last day that you can re-enter the U.S. with a valid DS-2019 Form and Sevis Status. After this date, you will not be allowed back into the U.S. even if your program status is still valid, as seen on your DS-2019 form. The expiration date is not the last date that you can be in the U.S. or work as an au pair in the U.S. That is determined by the program end date on the DS-2019 Form, not the J-1 Visa sticker.

2. Entries Status: Each visa will have an “M” or an “S” printed in the “Entries” section. These letters represent either “Multiple” entry status or “Single” entry status. If you have a “Single” entry status, you cannot leave and re-enter the U.S. to continue the au pair program. If you have a “Multiple” entry status, you can leave and re-enter the U.S. to continue the au pair program as long as your Sevis Status remains in good-standing.

The J-1 Visa alone does not grant the ability to work in the U.S. That permission comes from the combination of the DS-2019 Form and the J-1 Visa. Furthermore, an au pair can remain in the U.S. with an expired J-1 Visa as long as her DS-2019 for is still valid.

Sample J-1 Visa

The Visa Interview Appointment: All au pairs need to apply for a J-1 Visa and attend an in-person interview at the American Embassy or Consulate in their home country. The scheduling and interview processes differ from country to country, and sometimes even within the same country. You should schedule your interview as soon as possible in order to receive the visa in time for the scheduled arrival date. You will be given very clear information about the process and will be helped along by InterExchange’s agent in that country.

In most cases the interviews are very short. The consular officer will most likely want to assess whether you have sufficient English skills to participate in the program. The officer will also want to determine if you have sufficient ties to your country that will ensure your
return upon the program’s completion. We cannot guarantee that every au pair candidate will be granted a visa.

Once you receive your J-1 Visa and signed DS-2019 form, you are ready to travel to the U.S. on your scheduled arrival date using the international flight provided by InterExchange.

**The I-94 Admission Record**

If you are coming to the U.S. by air or sea, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer (CBP) will record your arrival electronically. We recommend that you access and print your electronic admission record (I-94 record) by visiting www.cbp.gov/i94 and entering the required information as it appears on the travel document you used to enter the United States.

If you cannot access your electronic I-94 arrival record online or your admission to the U.S. was recorded incorrectly, you may have to visit a local CBP Deferred Inspection Site or Port of Entry (POE) to have your I-94 record corrected. To locate the closest CBP Deferred Inspection Site go to: www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/toolbox/contacts/ports/

For more information about the electronic I-94 admission record please visit the I-94 Frequently Asked Questions section here: www.cbp.gov/i94 (See FAQ tab at top.)

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**Your Passport Stamp**

A CBP officer will also provide you with an admission stamp, usually on the same page as your J-1 Visa. The admission stamp includes:

- The date of admission (your arrival date)
- Class of admission (J-1)
- Admitted until date (D/S)
The admission stamp is very important. Please make sure that your passport is stamped correctly and inform the CBP Officer if there are any errors.

Sample Admission Stamp
Chapter 11: Social Security Cards

In the United States, a Social Security card is issued with a nine-digit Social Security number (SSN) to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and temporary (working) Exchange Visitors by the Social Security Administration. Although its primary purpose is to track individuals for Social Security purposes, the Social Security number has become the standard national identification number for taxation and other identification purposes.

Your Social Security number is unique to you and will never expire. Should you enter the U.S. on a future work or study program, your Social Security number would remain valid, so please keep your number and card in a safe place. Do not allow others to use your number. Protect both your card and your number to prevent misuse.

You will also need a Social Security number to apply for opening a bank account, to apply for a U.S. driver’s license, and to register for educational courses.

To apply for a Social Security number, you will need to visit a Social Security Administration Office near your host family. We recommend waiting 5-10 days after you arrive to your host family before applying for your Social Security Number, as it takes a few days for information to be updated in the Social Security Administration’s database. To find an office near you, visit: http://ssa.gov/locator/

Most Social Security offices are only open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and are busiest between the hours of 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Try to avoid going during this time, if possible. When applying for a Social Security number, please bring the following items with you:

- Your passport, including your J-1 Visa
- Your DS-2019 Form
- Your I-94 Arrival/Departure printout or card
- Your ‘Dear Social Security Officer’ letter

Read all instructions before you fill out the application. If you have any questions or lose your card, please call the Social Security Administration’s toll-free number: 1.800.772.1213. Or, visit their website at: www.ssa.gov. For more information on applying for a Social Security number, visit: www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/

Here are some tips:

- Use your host family’s address as your mailing address.
- For the question regarding CITIZENSHIP, check the box labeled “Legal Alien Allowed To Work.”
- You can leave the questions regarding your mother and father’s social security numbers blank.
- The wait time to get your card will be 4-6 weeks, so be sure to keep your receipt letter, which is proof that your application has been given to Social Security.
Chapter 12: Preparing for your trip to the U.S.

Improve Your English Language
A vital part of your cultural exchange experience is being able to interact with and talk to people in the U.S. Speaking English will be the most important tool for you to be able to fully engage and learn about American customs and practices. It is a good idea to practice English as much as possible before you arrive in the U.S., as it will help you adapt more quickly.

- Take English language classes before the start of your program.
- Find a native English conversation partner.
- Watch English language television or movies; listen to English language radio broadcasts; read English language newspapers, books or magazines.
- Take English lessons online or using apps.
- Complete the online Child Development Training and Child Development Training Workbook.
- Read the Childcare Guide and complete the Childcare Test.
- Complete your Culture Project.
- Watch the Know Before You Go online orientation program.

What to bring

- **Your passport, J-1 Visa and DS-2019 Form:** You cannot get into the United States without these items, so make sure you have them in a carry-on bag.
- **Driver's license:** Bring your international driver’s license and/or foreign driver’s license with you and be sure to pack it in your carry-on luggage. Keep a copy in a safe place.
- **Copies** of each of the above documents kept in a separate bag, just in case you lose the originals.
- **Dictionary:** A good bilingual dictionary is essential.
- **Pictures:** Photographs of your family, friends and your hometown to show your family.
- **Items from your home country:** Pictures, arts & crafts, recipes or small, locally made gifts are always nice to share with people in the United States.
- **Toiletries:** You can buy most of these once you arrive in the U.S., so just bring enough for one week. Liquids in your carry-on luggage must be in 3 ounce (88 mg) bottles.
- **Medications:** If possible, you should bring enough for the entire program year. You should pack in your carry-on luggage and bring a copy of your prescriptions.
- **Small gifts for your family:** It is a good idea to bring some small gifts for your family and especially your host children. They will surely appreciate it!
- **An extra pair of prescription glasses:** This will be very important in the event that your glasses are damaged or if you cannot have your contact lens prescription filled while in the U.S.
- **An open mind:** Be prepared for things to be different.

What to Leave at Home

- Expensive jewelry and family heirlooms.
- Anything you might be afraid to lose or that might get stolen.

Do not overpack! Since you will be in the U.S. for a year, it may be difficult to consider packing lightly. But remember that you will surely want to do some shopping while you are in the U.S. and acquire new items. You'll have to take these home at the end of the program so you'll need some space in your luggage.
Chapter 13: Your Arrival to the USA

International Flights
Your international flight to New York City will be arranged and paid for by InterExchange Au Pair USA. You selected a departure city in home country when you filled out your au pair application. InterExchange will try to arrange the best possible flights in order to minimize long layovers. However, we are limited to the flights available at the time of booking. You will receive your flight information approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to your scheduled arrival date.

Baggage Fees
Please note that you will be responsible for any baggage fees. Please check with your airline after you receive your ticket to learn about relevant baggage fees.

Travel Documents
When you travel to the U.S., make sure you have your DS-2019 Form, passport and J-1 Visa available for review. Do not pack these in your checked luggage. During your flight, you will give you a Customs Declaration Form (Form CF-6059) to complete before the end of your flight. You must also write your U.S. address (host family address) on this form. You must also declare items of value that you are bringing into the U.S. Personal items, such as clothing, portable electronics and toiletries do not need to be declared on this form. You may be required to pay a duty, or tax, on certain items. Also, some types of goods, including most agricultural products, may not be brought into the U.S. For more information about items you must declare or prohibited items, please visit www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors.

Clearing Customs and Border Protection
After you arrive to the U.S., you will immediately go to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to request admission to the U.S. To help make the process easier, please tell the CBP official that you are a J-1 Exchange Visitor when presenting the following documents for inspection:

- Your valid passport, including your J-1 Visa
- Your DS-2019 Form
- Your CF-6059B Form

You might also have to provide InterExchange Au Pair USA's contact info. Please carry the following information with you just in case it is requested:

InterExchange Au Pair USA  
100 Wall Street. Suite 301  
New York, NY 10005  
1.212.924.0446 | aupairinfo@interexchange.org

Your arrival will be entered into a United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) database, and you may also be fingerprinted and photographed. Once CBP's inspection is complete, the officer will stamp your passport with the date of admission, class of admission, and the time frame you are authorized to stay in the U.S. The officer should write the letters “D/S” as the time frame; this means “Duration of Status.” The duration of status includes the program dates listed on your DS-2019 Form, plus 30 days of travel/personal time immediately after your program end date. Though rare, the officer may write an actual date instead of “D/S”. This then becomes the date by which you are required to leave the U.S. Notify InterExchange immediately if this occurs.
We recommend you access and print your electronic arrival record (I-94 record) by visiting www.cbp.gov/i94. You will keep this printed copy with you when applying for important documents like your Social Security number or other forms of identification in the U.S.

**Problems Entering the U.S.**
The best way to ensure a smooth entry into the U.S. is to have all of the appropriate forms completed and ready to present to CBP, be friendly and patient in line and with the CBP official, and answer their questions honestly. If you do encounter any problems though, please provide CBP with InterExchange Au Pair USA’s contact information so that they can contact us.
The Au Pair USA Orientation and Training Program consists of online courses, written work, and in-person training workshops. All aspects of this Orientation and Training Program must be complete before you can travel to your host family home to begin your childcare duties. If we determine through the Orientation and Training Program that you are not appropriate for the program, InterExchange Au Pair USA reserves the right to cancel your participation in program. Therefore, it is important that you try your best to learn and participate throughout the Orientation and Training Program.

**Childcare Guide, Childcare Test and Culture Project**

Au pairs receive a *Childcare Guide* in the pre-arrival packet. You must read the *Childcare Guide* completely and answer all of the *Childcare Test* questions at the back of the book. Bring your completed *Childcare Test* with you to New York. At the end of the *Childcare Test*, you will find instructions on constructing a Culture Project. You must finish your Culture Project and bring it to the U.S. to share with your host family. This will take several hours to complete, so make sure to give yourself enough time.

**Online Child Development Training**

All au pairs must watch and complete the eight hours of online *Child Development Training*. This training is broken into four units, each covering a different stage of child development. Throughout the training there will be online quizzes that you must successfully pass in order to advance. Please be sure to give yourself enough time to complete this training.

You will be registered for these online courses after you are matched with a host family. You will also receive a *Child Development Training Workbook* with your pre-arrival packet. You must complete this workbook while you watch the online *Child Development Training* program. When you come to New York, we will collect this workbook from you.

**Online Know Before You Go Orientation**

The *Know Before You Go* online orientation must also be completed before you arrive to the United States. You can find this online orientation on Passport under the Resources tab. The *Know Before You Go* program will take at least two hours to complete so set aside the right amount of time. This orientation offers a more general explanation of what you will experience before and after departing for the United States.

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**IMPORTANT**

Your participation, performance and completion of all online trainings is monitored by InterExchange. If you do not complete any portion of these trainings, you will not be permitted to take part in the program. If the scores on your quizzes indicate that you are not learning the material covered, we will also have to cancel your scheduled arrival. The deadline to complete these trainings is one week before your departure date.

**New York City Orientation and Training Program**

Another important component of your training is the in-person training in New York City. You will arrive to New York City on a Tuesday and will begin the in-person training Wednesday morning. The training sessions will take place all day Wednesday and Thursday. During this in-person training you will complete an intensive program that includes CPR Certification. A representative from InterExchange will meet you at the hotel and check you in if you arrive
between 12:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. If you arrive outside of those times, instructions and materials will be left for you at the reception area.

**Accommodation**
During the New York Orientation and Training Program, you will stay at a hotel in midtown Manhattan in New York City. The hotel is in a very safe location near Times Square and is very well maintained. You will share a hotel room with one or two other au pairs so that you each have your own bed.

**Daily Schedule**
The Orientation and Training Program lessons begin on Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m. sharp and finish at 6:00 p.m on Thursday. Friday is generally a travel day for au pairs.

Here is a breakdown of the Orientation and Training schedule:

**Tuesday:** Arrive and check-in to the Orientation and Training Program. If you arrive earlier in the day, you can meet the InterExchange Representative at the hotel. He/She will give you your materials and instructions for the following day. If you arrive after 8:00 p.m. you will pick up your room key and materials from the front desk of the hotel. Be sure to check the schedule so you know what time the lessons begin in the morning. It is very important to arrive before the beginning of all lessons.

**Wednesday:** This is a full day of training! In the morning, program rules and regulations are discussed in detail. You will hear about how your insurance works, how to record your schedule, and keeping track of your cluster meetings. Workshops are also devoted to American culture and dealing with culture shock. In the afternoon, you will engage in lectures and workshops on child development and your role as an au pair in a U.S. household. You will hear information on communication in America, driving the host children, American parenting styles, bonding with your host family, and more.

**Wednesday Evening:** You may choose to take part in an optional New York City cultural walking tour led by InterExchange's preferred licensed tour guide. This is a great opportunity to learn about one of the great American cities. The price of the walking tour includes a subway ride and dinner. This is always a highlight for au pairs!

**Thursday:** Thursday's lessons focus on safety. You will learn about CPR, accident prevention, first aid and what to do in an emergency. You must practice the CPR technique on both adult and infant-sized mannequins using a fully hands-on learning technique. At the end of the program you will be CPR certified by the American Health and Safety Institute for infants and adults. This certification is valid for two years!

**Thursday Evening:** We will give you your instructions for onward travel and a personal explanation of where you need to go and when you need to leave the orientation hotel. InterExchange will print transportation itineraries for you and go over them with you in person. In some cases, au pairs are picked up on Thursday evening after 6:30 p.m. by host families who live in the New York City area.

**Friday:** You will check out of the hotel and set off on your domestic travel to your host family's home. The remaining au pairs will travel on to their host families by plane, train or bus. You will have a 24-hour emergency phone number you can use if any problems arise. In some cases, au pairs are picked up by host families in the greater New York City area on Thursday evening.
**Meals and Entertainment**

Au pairs are provided breakfast on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Breakfast on Friday at an American diner connected to the hotel. Lunch and dinner are not provided by InterExchange, but au pairs are provided with a list of inexpensive options in the neighborhood. Most au pairs also take part in a New York City cultural walking tour on Wednesday evening after lessons finish, which includes dinner. Au pairs are given detailed instructions on seeing other sights in their free time such as Times Square, the Empire State Building and the Statue of Liberty. The primary purpose of this time in New York is to actively take part in the Orientation and Training Program, but au pairs are free each evening to experience this great American city.

**Domestic Travel or Pick-Up**

InterExchange will arrange your domestic travel from New York City to your host family’s home community at the end of the Orientation and Training Program. This travel may be by plane, bus, train or car depending on where your host family lives. On the last day of the Au Pair USA Orientation and Training Program, our staff will work with you to make sure you understand your domestic travel arrangements. Families in the New York area often pick their au pairs up directly from the Orientation and Training Program.
Chapter 15: Settling in with your Host Family

After an international flight, an intense Orientation and Training Program, and, finally, travel to your new home, you will probably be tired, excited to meet your host family, and maybe a bit nervous.

The First Three Days
The day you arrive at your Host Family’s home is a travel and rest day and should not be considered work or training. The next day begins your three-day Home Orientation Period. During this time, you cannot be left as the sole responsible adult in charge of the children. You should use this time to acclimate to your new home, learn the specifics of your new role and discuss your expectations for the year.

Home Orientation Handbook
We have designed a Home Orientation Handbook in order to help you and your host family establish expectations and prevent misunderstandings throughout your program year. The Home Orientation Handbook covers many topics that we encourage you to review in detail.

Local Coordinator Arrival Contacts
Your LC will be in touch with you and your host family during the arrival process in the form of two required contacts. The first contact will be during the first 48 hours after you arrive at your host family’s home. During this contact, your LC will telephone or visit you to make sure that you are settling in well. Your LC will answer any questions you have and let you know about the next cluster meeting. The second required arrival contact will be the Two-Week Meeting. Your LC will schedule a time to visit your host family’s home again and meet with you and your host family. During this meeting, your LC will address any issues or questions that have come up since your arrival. Your LC will also remind you and your host family of the key regulations related to hours, pay and time off. Your LC will also explain how to use the Au Pair USA Schedule and Weekly Planner and how these documents can prevent any misunderstandings.
Chapter 16: House Rules, Privacy, and Respect

You are in the country to care for your host children, take classes, and experience American culture. You will want to make new friends, go out at night and otherwise have a social life. For that reason, it is not reasonable or beneficial to expect you to stay home with your host family all the time.

Since it is their home, your host parents may establish house rules such as "curfews" (the time you must be home) and guest policies. They have the right to determine when you can and cannot have friends over to the house. It is important to make sure that you clearly understand these guidelines and agree to follow them.

Your host family, other au pairs and other host families will expect you to respect their privacy. As a member of the host family you may become aware of information that the family considers very personal. You may also overhear information about au pairs or other host families. It is extremely important that you keep this information confidential. You should not share this information or gossip about others.

You should discuss the family's rules about taking pictures of the host children. Many families are sensitive about this topic and want to control images of their children. If your family is ok with you taking photos of the children, you should still not post those photos to any social media platform or share them without talking to your family about it. For example, if you wanted to send photos to your family back home, please ask your host family first.

It is also very important that you protect your host family's privacy by not inviting people they do not know to their home without discussing it with them first. Furthermore, do not share your host family's address with strangers and do not share any access codes or the locations of spare keys. Your family needs to feel that they are completely secure in their home.
Chapter 17: Tips to Succeed as an Au Pair in the U.S.

Understanding what is required of you in your host family will make the adjustment to your new home easier. Your host family is going to expect a high level of commitment to your tasks and responsibilities. Keep the following practices in mind when starting your program:

- Always be on time! Punctuality is very important and repeated lateness can lead to a loss of trust.
- Be open minded about how Americans raise their children. It may be very different from how you were raised. Remember, you are in a different country so things will be different.
- Dress appropriately for the job.
- Communicate frequently with your host parents. Many misunderstandings are simply due to a lack of communication.
- Be flexible. Working with your host family to find balance and good compromises will be an important part of a successful year together.
- Be patient. You may feel that the American culture and language are overwhelming at first, but with time, you will learn and understand more.
- Practice your English as often as possible!
- Remember to relax. Adjusting to your new home, host family and responsibilities does not happen quickly. Understand that it may take weeks to settle in and feel comfortable.
Chapter 18: Your Au Pair Duties

Program regulations and InterExchange policies inform the sort of duties you can and cannot be asked to do. These regulations are in place to preserve the cultural exchange aspect of the program and protect au pairs from exploitative conditions. It is important to remember that you are a cultural exchange participant and childcare provider, not a housekeeper.

Appropriate Work
You can do work that is related to childcare for up to 45 hours per week, 10 hours per day. Appropriate tasks include:

- Organizing activities and supervising play.
- Helping with homework and studying.
- Dropping the kids off and picking them up from school, music lessons, sports and playdates.
- Preparing meals for the children.
- Washing the children’s laundry.
- Cleaning up the children’s bedrooms and play spaces.

Inappropriate Work
It’s important to note that you may not be required to do work that does not pertain to your children. Some examples of inappropriate tasks are:

- Doing host parents’ laundry.
- Preparing meals for host parents (as part of your duties - should your host family take turns making meals and you wish to join, this is a great opportunity for cultural exchange).
- Housework such as regular mopping floors, dusting, cleaning windows, vacuuming, etc.
- Caring for the family’s pet(s).
- Office work or any sort of task related to a host parent’s business.
- Doing the regular grocery shopping for the whole family.
- Running numerous errands for the host parents unrelated to the children (such as buying presents, picking up dry cleaning, taking the cars for repairs, etc.).

Pitching In
While general housekeeping work is not your responsibility (unless it is related to the children), you are expected to “pitch in”, or help out, around the house as a member of the family. You should be prepared to help out with some basic chores that any family member would help out with such as unloading the dishwasher, taking out the trash, taking a turn vacuuming, getting the mail, etc. These chores should be equal to what the other adults in the family do, not just your responsibility.
Chapter 19: Caring for Your Host Children

As an au pair, you want to be able to provide the best care possible for your host children. Your host parents want to know that their children are engaged in activities that they find enjoyable and stimulating. Each family will have slightly different expectations of the day-to-day activities their children should be involved in. Therefore, it is important to continually communicate with the parents about their expectations.

Here are some ideas to consider:

**Brainstorm child-friendly activities:** Ask the parents to help you brainstorm a list of suitable activities and games that your host children like. Write the instructions if you do not know the games or set a “game time” for everyone to play so that you can learn them.

**Search online:** The internet is full of ideas for fun activities for children of all ages. Find some good websites where you can learn age-appropriate games and activities that your host children will enjoy.

**Ask other au pairs:** Au pairs who have been on the program for awhile are a great resource for ideas. Talk to your friends about the best activities that they use to keep their host children engaged, learning, and having fun.

**Learn the family priorities:** Ask your host parents what they consider to be the priorities for their children’s care. This discussion will give you insight into the family’s values. Talk about what activities or behaviors can reinforce these priorities.

**Preparing a Daily Plan:** Children do best in a well-ordered and predictable environment. As much as possible, daily routines such as waking up, departures, mealtimes, activities, nap times, etc. should be done consistently. Daily routines also offer children a sense of stability and a feeling of warmth and caring from their caregivers. Your challenge is to develop appropriate routines for children that give them a sense of consistency and security, yet remain flexible to the individual needs of each child and unexpected challenges. The best way to ensure that you are providing the sort of childcare that your host family is seeking is to work directly with your host family to create Daily Plans.

Here are some questions to consider when creating a Daily Plan:

- Who wakes up the children? What time?
- Who feeds the children breakfast?
  - What are their choices for breakfast?
  - Do they get to choose their breakfast, or should you choose for them?
  - Do the children clean up after themselves?
- What are some example activities that you can do with the children until lunchtime?
- What is the lunch routine?
  - What are the children's options for lunch?
  - Do they get to choose their lunch or will you choose?
  - Are packed lunches needed? What are some typical packed lunches?
- Is there a scheduled nap time? Should they be woken up at a certain time?
- Would today be a good day for outdoor activities?
- When and for how long can the children watch television?
- What programs, channels, and videos can they watch?
- What activities should they not be doing during this time period?
Using this information, work with your host family to write out a detailed plan for the day. Ask for feedback and suggestions so everyone feels involved and on the same page. Set a time to check-in during the day to update the parents on how things are going.

**Do a Daily Debrief:** At the end of the day, have a debriefing session where you discuss what parts of the daily plan worked and what was a challenge. Use this information to make changes to the daily plan. Keep this routine of “plan before” and “debrief after” until you have a good understanding of what is expected on a daily basis.

**Some Additional Topics to Consider:**

**Playdates:** Your host family cannot require that you care for children other than your host children.

**Meals:** Ask your family to explain what they consider appropriate foods for the children. If you are unsure, ask them how to prepare these foods. Make sure you have a number of possible meals that you can make.

**Discipline:** Spend time discussing the way discipline should be handled. Discuss clear examples of children’s bad behavior. Ask the parents what they expect from you in each case. Remember, you may never physically discipline the children by hitting, spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, or yanking the children. If your host family asks you to do any of these, contact your Local Coordinator immediately.

**Adjustment Period:** The first 30 days are considered an adjustment period, as you will need some time to acclimate to your family and your new job - not to mention the food, weather, culture, language, and maybe even the time zone! We ask that you be patient during this time. Be sure to keep in contact with your LC and discuss your progress; your LC can offer advice if you are having any troubles.

**Weekly Check-ins:** Set aside a time each week to discuss the important job of providing the best possible care for your children. Having weekly meetings will provide a forum to discuss the great things that have happened during the previous week. It will also allow you the chance to raise any current or ongoing challenges. Limit the meeting to one hour or less so that it doesn’t become too time consuming. Prepare your topics in advance and always attend the meetings. Despite everyone’s busy schedule and the fact that everything seems to be going well, we still advise that these meetings are scheduled in advance and take place regularly.

**Weekly Check-in Topics:**

- **Positives:** What is improving? Let your family know that you are dedicated to continually learning and doing a better job.
- **Challenges:** Discuss what you are finding difficult about the job. Work together to try to find solutions or techniques to deal with issues. Provide an update at the next meeting on these points.
- **Concerns:** If you have any concerns about the children’s behavior or your role as an au pair, discuss this with the family.
- **Cultural Questions:** Living in a new country brings uncertainty, so use this time to discuss what has surprised you so far. Discuss upcoming events and holidays, their significance and how the family will celebrate.
Chapter 20: Educational Component and Requirements

The educational component is an important part of your program requirements as well as a great opportunity to get involved in American life outside of your host family home. You are able to choose your own classes according to your interests but you must complete the educational requirements in full before the end of your program year.*

NOTE
*If you wish to extend your au pair program, you have to complete your educational requirements before submitting your extension application. This means you will have less than 11 months to complete your educational requirements due to the extension application requirements set by the U.S. Department of State.

What are the Educational Requirements?
As part of your au pair program, you are required to register for, attend, and complete at least six semester hours of academic credit, or their equivalent, at an accredited U.S. post-secondary educational institution. If the classes are non-credit, you must complete courses totaling at least 60 hours of class time. To offset the cost of this requirement, host families are required to provide up to $500 toward the cost of these classes.

What is an Accredited Post-Secondary Institution?
A “post-secondary” institution is one that offers at least a one-year program of college-level studies. An “accredited” institution is one that is officially recognized by a regional or national accrediting commission. To verify whether a school is acceptable, please submit a Class Pre-Approval Form through Passport before you sign up for a class to make sure it is valid. You can access the form here as well: https://apusa.wufoo.com/forms/class-preapproval-form/

Acceptable Classes
Classes that take place at an accredited post-secondary institution are acceptable as long as they are academic in nature and conducted by an accredited college, university or community college for academic credit. Adult learning schools, community schools, churches, etc. are not acceptable for this. Again please submit a Class Pre-Approval Form through Passport before you sign up for a class to make sure it is valid.

Unacceptable Classes
Under the current regulations, certain types of classes would not count towards the completion of the educational requirements even though they may be organized by accredited post-secondary institutions. You can take these sort of classes for your own benefit using your own money, but they will not count towards the educational requirements that are part of the program regulations. For example, online classes are not permitted, regardless of the organizing institution. Furthermore, classes that are vocational in nature are also not acceptable. Again please submit a Class Pre-Approval Form through Passport before you sign up for a class to make sure it is valid.

Here are examples of classes that are not acceptable:

- Any online classes
- Hairdressing classes
- Bartending classes
- Modeling classes
- Yoga classes
- Dance classes
- Cooking classes
- Swimming classes
- Car repair/automotive classes

**Transportation to Classes**

Host families are required to provide or facilitate the Au Pair’s transportation to the educational courses, which may include paying reasonable costs for local transportation and/or fuel expenses. For example, if you will drive the family automobile to class, the cost of fuel must be covered by the family. If you will take public transportation, then your family must reimburse you for this expense. This arrangement continues until you complete your educational requirement, even if the $500 education allowance has already been spent.

You are expected to select educational opportunities that are within a reasonable distance from your host family’s home. If you specifically want to enroll in a course that is farther away from other, more local class options, then it is fair for your host family to discuss having you contribute to the cost of transportation. This should, however, be discussed and decided upon in advance of your signing up for your class so you can make an informed decision about taking the class. Your LC will be happy to assist you and your host family to come to a fair decision about what a reasonable expense should be.
Chapter 21: Dealing with Culture Shock

Culture shock is described as the anxiety, feelings of frustration, alienation and anger that may occur when a person is placed in a new culture. Many of the ways people behave in the U.S. may seem odd or uncomfortably different from those of your home country. Being in a new and unfamiliar place can be challenging even for the experienced traveler, and some feelings of isolation and frustration are totally normal. Participants experience culture shock to varying degrees; some hardly notice it at all, while others can find it very difficult to adapt to their new environment. Many may not attribute their problems to culture shock. Whatever the case may be, understanding these issues and why they happen will help you.

What is culture shock?
When moving to a new country everything is unfamiliar; from the weather, language and food, to the fashion, values, and customs. Culture shock is a normal part of a cultural exchange program. Experiencing culture shock shows that you are aware of and experiencing the differences between your home country and that of the American culture. Some au pairs go through serious culture shock and others may not experience these differences at all. Everyone adjusts to new environments and culture in their own ways.

There are four stages when adapting to a new culture. Some people go through the process quicker and with less stress, while others go through the stages slower and find it difficult to adjust to the differences.

Stages of Culture Shock
Stage 1: The Honeymoon – Initial euphoria and excitement

- You feel you are able to handle anything, some characteristics include:
  - Excitement about new sights and surroundings.
  - Engaging in tourist-like activities in the host culture.
  - Intrigue with both similarities and differences between the American culture and your home culture.
  - Lots of interest in learning, very motivated and open-minded.

Stage 2: Anxiety | Culture shock – Frustration and hostility towards differences

- The novelty of the American culture has worn off. Your feelings in this stage may include:
  - A focus on the differences between your new culture and your home culture in a negative way.
  - Stereotypes and/or prejudices surface.
  - Small issues feel like big issues; you become overly stressed out by small problems and feel helpless, annoyed and frustrated.
  - Homesickness; missing your family and friends from home.

Stage 3: Adjusting – Finding humor and perspective

- In this stage, you decide to make the most of your experience. You may also have the following reactions:
  - Increased familiarity with the new culture, its logic and values.
  - A return of your sense of humor about differences.
  - Recognition that you like some parts of the American culture better than that of your home country.
  - Deeper learning about life abroad.
  - Questioning of your previous assumptions about the world.

Stage 4: Acceptance – “Feeling at Home” and Adaptation

- You now exhibit a newfound appreciation towards certain aspects of the new culture, and critique others. Common reactions at this stage include:
  - Feeling at home in the “foreign” country.
  - Feeling a sense of understanding and association with the new culture.
  - No longer being negatively affected by differences in culture.
  - Living, studying and working to your full potential.
  - Feeling satisfaction in adjusting and surviving your time living abroad.

Ways to Deal With Feelings of Culture Shock:

- Make plans for keeping in touch with family and friends. Having a set time to talk to friends and family can help you get through a difficult week, but don’t rely on it too much.
- Find excitement and enjoyment in sharing your experiences. Update your friends and family with all your exciting adventures.
- “Dive” into your host culture fully and wholeheartedly. There is no better way to adjust than to dive right in!
- Keep an open mind; it is natural to have preconceived ideas and beliefs that come into question while abroad. You will learn much more if you keep an open mind to new experiences.
Join a recreational sports team or athletic activity! Joining a team sport helps you meet new people and exercising in general boosts your body's happiness.

Get to know other au pairs and local students in your classes.

Remember, the low periods in the year will pass.

Learn as much as you can about your host culture. The more you know, the more you appreciate the differences and similarities.

Keep a journal or scrapbook. Record your impressions of new experiences and the transformations that are occurring within you. You will have something fun to read later in life to reflect on your time abroad!
Driving is an essential part of American life. The majority of our host families have cars and will need their au pairs to be strong drivers. We encourage you to practice driving as much as possible before you depart your home country. Even the best drivers will need to spend time getting used to driving in the U.S.

Host families might not remember that driving in the U.S. involves different rules, signs and customs than in other countries. You may have learned to drive on the opposite side of the road while sitting on the other side of the car. You are probably also familiar with kilometers and kilometers per hour, not miles and miles per hour. Even the cars themselves can be very different. American cars tend to be larger than the cars you may be used to driving. In other words, even if you are a great driver, you will probably face challenges driving in the U.S.

For the safety of everyone involved, you and your host family should invest significant time and effort to help you become accustomed to driving in the U.S. As with most aspects of the program, the more time and effort that everyone invests in the beginning of the placement, the more successful the rest of the year will be.

You and your host family should begin by devoting 30 to 60 minutes per day to driving practice. While each au pair will become accustomed to driving according to a differing timeline, we recommend spending at least 10 hours practicing driving with your host family. If this is not possible, your host family is advised to enlist the services of a driving instructor.

Getting Familiar With Your Host Family’s Automobile
There is a lot of information to go over with your host family before you even move the car from the driveway. Review the following basics a few times to make sure you can find what you might need before you are ready to start driving:

› Turn on and off the turn signals, windshield wipers, lights, emergency blinkers, etc.
› Adjust the mirrors so that you can see properly.
› Adjust the seat so that it is positioned properly.
› Find the horn!
› Buckle and unbuckle your seatbelt, the children’s seat belt, etc.
› Find the gas gauge and ask when it is usually time to get more gas.
› Find the heating and A/C and learn how to set it.
› How does the trunk open and close?
› Lock and unlock all the car doors from the driver’s seat and then from outside the car.
› Open and close the different windows from the back seat. Is there any danger of children unlocking the doors themselves or getting fingers caught in the windows?
› Is there a garage door opener?

Discuss How Things Should Be When the Children Are in the Car With You
› Where do the kids sit in the car? Do they always sit in the back seat?
› Practice using the seat belts if the kids don’t buckle themselves in.
› Is there a car seat? Practice using it with a doll or teddy bear before moving on to practicing with your host children.

Discuss the Dangers of Distracted Driving and Your Expectations
› Discuss the laws and your host family’s expectations regarding cell phone use.
› Discuss what you should do if the children are crying or misbehaving and causing a distraction.
Discuss what to do if the phone rings while you are driving.

Again, there is no danger in going over these basics too many times. You will need time to become familiar with a new vehicle. If you will be driving more than one vehicle, go through this routine for all vehicles.

**Practicing Driving**
When you are ready to get behind the wheel, be patient and start slow. Spend time driving around quiet neighborhoods with your host parents, stopping and starting, turning right and left, speeding up and slowing down. Drive the same set courses that your host parents demonstrated before venturing to more difficult situations. Explain what you are doing while you drive. If you make a mistake, remain calm and be receptive to constructive feedback from your host parents.

As you improve and become more comfortable behind the wheel, drive further from home and on different types of roads with your host parents still in the car. Practice turning on and off the windshield wipers even if it isn’t raining. Practice turning the lights on and off even if it isn’t dark. Any good driver needs to know how to find these things without thinking about them, so there is no such thing as too much practice.

Remember, learning to drive in a foreign country is a daunting experience for anyone, so please understand that it may take some time for you to get comfortable with it. If you struggle after extensive training, or if your host parents do not have the time to devote to this level of instruction, they may want to hire a professional driving instructor for you.

**Challenging Conditions**
You may not have much experience driving in snow and ice so it is best to avoid this. If it is necessary that you drive in these conditions, make sure your host parents train you for enough time to have you feel comfortable and confident. Never drive in conditions with which you are not comfortable.

**State Driver Licenses**
If you are unsure if you need a state driver license where your host family lives, consult with your host family, your LC, or that state’s Department of Motor Vehicles. Go to your state’s Department of Motor Vehicles to get a free booklet on the driving laws in your state. When you begin driving, keep this booklet in the car to have on hand at all times. Most, but not all, au pairs arrive with an international driver license, but many states require that au pairs obtain a state driver license. Regardless of what your state requires, we encourage you to get a state driver license.

**Auto Insurance**
Go over auto insurance details with your host family so you understand what is covered. Learn where the insurance information is located in the car.

**Car Seats and Safe Driving**
Ask your host family how to correctly and safely use children’s car seats, and have them teach you about safe driving with children in the car. Know what to do if you are distracted by the telephone or text messages while driving, and what to do if the children become unsettled while you are driving.
Other Car-Related Issues
Understand your host family’s rules about car maintenance, gasoline payments, and curfews. Be aware that attitudes about drinking and driving may be different in your home country. While we clearly and repeatedly stress the dangers and illegality of drinking and driving before and throughout your program, it’s important that you discuss this with your host family as well. Please note that InterExchange has a zero tolerance drinking and driving policy, and you will be removed from the program in the instance that you have been drinking and driving.

Accidents
In the event of a car accident, find out if anyone involved is injured. If someone requires medical attention, or to report the accident, dial 911 from any phone. 911 is the free direct number for emergency services with the local police anywhere in the U.S. If possible, do not move your car until the police arrive and are able to assess the accident scene. While waiting for the police, exchange the following information with the driver of the other car:

- Name, telephone number and license ID number.
- License plate number, model and year of the car.
- Registration number and expiration date.
- Name of the insurance company and policy number.

If there are any witnesses, ask for their names, telephone number and address in the event of insurance problems. If you have a phone with a camera, take pictures of the damage and accident scene. If you have hit a parked car, you must leave your name, phone number and license plate number on a piece of paper and put it under the windshield wiper, so they may contact you. Also write down the car’s license number and model of the car.

Failure to leave your information or report the accident is considered a crime.

You are responsible for any fines for moving violations or parking tickets. Failure to honor these fines may impair your ability to get a visa to the U.S. in the future.

Accidents While Driving On Duty
In the case of an automobile accident that occurs while you are driving while on duty, your family is responsible any costs associated with damages and repairs. However, you are responsible for all fines or tickets you receive.

Accidents While Driving Off Duty
In the case of an automobile accident that occurs while you are driving while off duty, you will be responsible for half of the repair bill or insurance deductible up to a maximum of $500. If the repairs to the car should total more than $1,000, you are still only responsible for $500. For example, if the repairs are $600, you will pay $300 and the family will pay $300. If the damages are $1,200, you will pay $500 and the family will pay the remaining $700. Your host family must share the repair receipts or estimates of damages to the car with you.
Your host family should understand that, with few exceptions, you will need access to the family car to enjoy the social and cultural opportunities that will help make your au pair year enjoyable. If a potential host family does not live in a city where public transportation is the norm, you should discuss the family’s expectations for your use of the family car while on or off duty. A family may not want to have you drive the children as part of your childcare duties, but you should have the freedom to drive the car to social activities and classes and for other personal reasons. Communicating needs and expectations regarding your use of the car will lead to a successful relationship, so please discuss driving in detail while interviewing with potential host families.
Chapter 23: Seeking Medical Assistance

Since you will be in the United States for 12 months, there is a good chance that you might need to see a doctor during your time here. For that reason, please read the following information so that you can be sure to get the best care possible while in the U.S. at the lowest cost possible.

Accident and Sickness Insurance
InterExchange arranges your accident and sickness insurance for the program duration. The insurance provided will always meet or exceed the U.S. Department of State regulations, but will not be a comprehensive health insurance plan. At times, InterExchange may offer different policies to au pair participants. The insurance you will be provided will cover both non-emergencies and emergencies.

- **For non-emergencies.** You must have a regular doctor whom you can see for non-emergency accidents and illnesses, like a cold or sore throat. You will need to call your doctor and schedule an appointment whenever you are feeling unwell.
- **For emergencies.** You should only visit urgent care centers, hospitals or emergency rooms if there is an actual emergency, such as a broken bone, serious cuts that require stitches or serious burns. Urgent care centers tend to be less expensive than hospital emergency rooms. Costs for using emergency rooms for non-emergency illnesses can be up to 75 percent more expensive, so generally, you will only visit a hospital emergency room if you are facing serious injury or a life-threatening illness. You should find a local urgent care center so that you know where to go when you need assistance.

Before You Arrive in the U.S.
Here are some steps you should take before you leave your home country and travel to the U.S.

- Familiarize yourself with your insurance policy, using the brochure provided and paying special attention to the insurance policy’s exclusions (things not covered).
- Be sure to understand the maximum amounts of coverage, the services/procedures that are covered, deductibles, copays, co-insurance, etc.
- Have an annual medical exam before coming to the U.S. Your accident and sickness insurance does not cover routine annual exams.
- Accident and sickness insurance does not cover dental costs, so have a dental exam and any work done before coming to the U.S.
- If you wear glasses or contacts, have a vision exam before come to the U.S. You should bring a recent vision prescription with you in case you need to order more contacts or new glasses during your program.
- Accident and sickness insurance does not cover pre-existing conditions (e.g., diabetes, asthma, etc.). If you require regular care for ongoing conditions, you must make arrangements to cover the associated costs yourself whether through a more comprehensive health insurance policy or through your own funds.
- Print out your insurance card and information.

After Arrival in the U.S.
Once you arrive in the U.S. you should take the following steps to familiarize yourself with the U.S. medical system and your options for care.
Find a regular doctor before you need one.
   Use the insurance policy website to find doctors near you.
   Contact the offices and ask if they are accepting new patients.
   Ask if they accept your insurance policy.
Find and record the addresses of the Urgent Care Centers and Emergency Rooms near you.

After you are settled in the U.S. if you feel that you need medical attention, follow the procedures below.

**If you have a non-emergency**
   You will need to call your doctor and discuss your symptoms.
   You will schedule an appointment with the doctor’s office.
   When you visit the doctor’s office, bring your insurance card with you and be prepared to pay any co-pay or co-insurance fees.
   Keep records of all receipts and paperwork from your medical visits.
   In order to receive reimbursement, you must submit a claim form for each incident or visit to a doctor/hospital in a timely manner.
   Make copies of all receipts and claim forms before sending them to your insurance provider.
   Send your claim form as soon as possible after your visit. Even if the doctor sends a bill to our insurance provider, you must submit a claim as well in order to receive reimbursement.

**If you have an emergency**
   Bring your insurance card with you and be prepared to pay any co-pay or co-insurance fees.
   If you are going for emergency care by yourself, try to go to an urgent care center rather than an emergency room, if possible. They can provide you high-quality emergency care but at a lower cost.
   If you require an ambulance, you will be taken to the nearest emergency room.
   Keep records of all receipts and paperwork from your medical visits.
   In order to receive reimbursement, you must submit a claim form for each incident or visit to a doctor/hospital in a timely manner.
   Make copies of all receipts and claim forms before sending them to your insurance provider.
   Send your claim form as soon as possible after your visit. Even if the doctor sends a bill to our insurance provider, you must submit a claim as well in order to receive reimbursement.
   Notify InterExchange of any illness or hospitalization that causes an interruption in your program (missing days) or requires regular follow-up and treatment.

If you have any questions about your insurance policy, please contact the InterExchange head office in New York at aupairinfo@interexchange.org or by calling 1.800.AU.PAIRS (1.800.287.2477).
Chapter 24: Traveling Domestically and Internationally

Traveling in the U.S.
You are able to travel domestically in the United States while on the InterExchange Au Pair USA program. If you plan to travel outside of your local community, you should contact your LC to discuss the plans. There are some restrictions that apply.

Travel Outside the Cluster
You are only allowed to travel outside of your host family's geographic location, domestically or internationally, for a maximum consecutive period of 30 days. This includes traveling alone or with your host family. If you have any questions about this requirement, contact your Local Coordinator or InterExchange headquarters.

Limits on Time Spent Outside the U.S.
While you may travel outside of the U.S. during your original program year, the intent of the program is for you to experience American culture through living in a host family’s home and community; therefore, extended travel outside of the U.S. of more than 30 days with or without your host family would not be in the spirit of the program and is not permitted.

Traveling Internationally
Please note that if you wish to travel to another country with or without your host family, you need to research all the visa requirements of the countries to which you are traveling and ensure that you are able to re-enter the U.S.

Most au pairs are able to travel internationally and re-enter the United States during the initial au pair year, but not during their extension period or 30-day travel period. Whether or not you are eligible to travel abroad and re-enter the U.S. during the program year depends on two pieces of information printed on the individual J-1 Visa in your passport.

- **Entries:** The first piece of information is located on your J-1 Visa in the section titled “Entries.” If this section is marked with an “M,” then you are eligible to enter the U.S. multiple times within the J-1 Visa’s dates of eligibility. If this section is marked with an “S,” then you are only permitted a “single” entry into the U.S. You used this single entry to get into the U.S. to begin the program; therefore, you would not be able to leave and re-enter the U.S. during your time on the Au Pair USA program. Please note that very few au pairs receive single-entry visas.

- **Expiration Date:** The second piece of information to check on the J-1 Visa is the Visa Expiration Date. This is the last day the visa holder can enter the U.S. to continue the Au Pair Program. Any attempts to extend this date have to be made in person at an American Embassy or Consulate outside of the U.S.

Other Requirements
It is your responsibility to research the visa requirements for travel to countries outside the U.S., including Canada and Mexico. You should do this by contacting the Consulate of the country you plan to visit.

What to Take When You Travel
Anytime you travel to another country, including Mexico and Canada, you should take your passport, DS-2019 Form, your I-94 arrival record, your insurance information, and your Local Coordinator and InterExchange contact information.
You must also have your DS-2019 form signed and “Travel Validated” by a designated member of the New York staff. This validation is usually done at the Au Pair USA Orientation and Training Program in New York, but it is up to you to ensure this has been completed. Without this signature, there may be difficulty re-entering the U.S.

**International Travel During the Extension Period**

International travel during the Extension Program is neither simple nor straightforward. Even though extension au pairs will have an updated DS-2019 form that reflects their new program dates, they will most likely have a J-1 Visa in their passport that expired during the first program period. Therefore, if you extend your program and travel abroad during the extension period, you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. unless you have secured a new visa while abroad.

In order to secure a new J-1 Visa to use during the extension period, you would have to schedule a new visa interview appointment at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate outside of U.S. borders and pay any relevant fees. There is no guarantee that this visa request would be approved. While it happens infrequently, we have experienced a few cases where an au pair’s visa was not approved and the au pair was not allowed to return to the U.S. to continue the program.
Chapter 25: The Extension Program

If you are on track to successfully complete your initial program period, you are eligible to apply for a one-time program extension of six, nine or 12 months. This one-time extension is subject to InterExchange's pre-approval and requires the U.S. Department of State's final approval. In order to be eligible for this extension opportunity, you must be on track to complete your program's educational requirements by the 11th month (not 12th month) of your program year.

In order to help facilitate a possible extension, InterExchange sends emails to host families and au pairs four months prior to the scheduled end of their program. Host families and au pairs should then take three steps:

1. **Discuss** - Is extending the right move? Would it be beneficial to both parties? Are you on track to complete your educational requirements in time?

2. **Decide** - Create a plan that works for everyone.

3. **Extend or Return home** - If you'd like to extend with your current host family or a new family, you will need to submit a request through Passport.

**Extension Request Process**

To extend your program, you must go to the “Extension” tab in Passport and follow the instructions. You will need to upload proof of completion of the educational requirements. Do not press submit until you have uploaded this information. Also, pay attention to the Extension Request Deadline on your Passport Dashboard.

**Extension Application Deadline**

If you wish to extend your program for an additional six, nine or 12 months, you must submit your Extension Request to InterExchange at least 45 days before the end of your Au Pair Program year as it is recorded on your DS-2019 form. Applications that are received by InterExchange after this deadline will not be processed. You can see your Extension Application Deadline by logging in to your Passport Dashboard.

**Extension Application Processing Fee**

The U.S. Department of State charges a non-refundable Extension Application Fee (currently $367). InterExchange Au Pair USA will pay this fee on your behalf once we have pre-approved your Extension Application. We will invoice your host family (in the case that you are extending with your current family) for this fee regardless of the approval or denial of the application by the U.S. Department of State. If you are not planning on staying with your current host family, then you are responsible for paying the Extension Application Fee using the link on the Extension Application. This fee is non-refundable.

**Extension Request Pre-Approval**

Once you have uploaded your proof of completing your educational requirements and have submitted your extension application, InterExchange will review your application. We will assess whether your educational proof is sufficient. If any of this information is incomplete, we will not submit your application to the U.S. Department of State. It is your responsibility to verify that your information has been received by InterExchange.
Au pairs who wish to extend must complete the same educational requirements before submitting their Extension Application. This means that the au pairs will have less than 11 months to complete the requirements, since proof of completing these requirements must be submitted along with the Extension Request. The regulations on this are very clear and the U.S. Department of State will not make exceptions.

**Extending With Another Host Family**
While most au pairs extend the program with their current host family, there are some instances when an au pair will ask to be matched with another host family during the extension program. We will evaluate these requests individually. In these cases the au pair is responsible for paying the $367 Extension Application Fee, which is non-refundable for any reason.

**Approved Extension Requests**
Once your Extension Request has been approved by the U.S. Department of State, InterExchange will print an updated DS-2019 that reflects your new program dates. You must keep this new DS-2019 form together with all previously issued DS-2019 forms.

**Extension Period Insurance**
InterExchange will also extend your insurance for the duration of the extension period. If you purchased Premium Insurance, InterExchange will continue this insurance at no additional cost to you.

**Extension Program Period**
During the extension program period, all program regulations remain the same. You are required to complete the educational requirements and adhere to all program regulations. You are eligible for the same weekly stipend and time off each week and month. Vacation time and educational stipend requirements are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extension Length</th>
<th>Paid Vacation Days</th>
<th>Educational Stipend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-month extension</td>
<td>5.5 days</td>
<td>$250 to complete 3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-month extension</td>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>$500 to complete 6 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-month extension</td>
<td>11 days</td>
<td>$500 to complete 6 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**International Travel During the Extension Period**
International travel during the extension period is neither simple nor straightforward. Even though you will have an updated DS-2019 form that reflects your new program begin dates, your J-1 Visa will most likely have expired during your first program year. Therefore, if you travel abroad during the extension period, you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. unless you have secured a new visa while abroad.

In order to secure a new J-1 Visa, you would have to schedule a new visa appointment at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate outside of U.S. borders and pay any relevant fees. There is no guarantee that this visa request would be approved. While it happens infrequently, we have experienced cases where an au pair’s visa was not approved and the au pair was not allowed to return to the U.S. to continue the program.
30-Day Travel Period
If you extend your program, the optional 30-day travel period will be moved to the end of the new program period.
Chapter 26: Addressing Concerns & Grievances

We want au pairs to feel empowered to discuss problems they are encountering. If you have concerns about your placement, the program, the suitability of your host family, or your health, safety or welfare, please contact InterExchange immediately at aupairinfo@interexchange.org.

You can also refer to the document “Who Do I Contact” that you received in your pre-arrival packet of information. Here is a summary of that information again.

- If you have a problem or concern, you can start by discussing this with your host family. If they are unable to help you or if they are not the appropriate people to talk to, you should discuss the problem with your Local Coordinator.

- If you speak to your Local Coordinator about a problem or concern and this does not resolve the problem, you should escalate the concern to your Regional Supervisor.

- If you contact your Regional Supervisor and this does not help the situation, you should escalate the problem to the Participant Services Manager at InterExchange 1.917.305.5465 or aupairinfo@interexchange.org.

- The Participant Services Manager will discuss your situation with you and try to come up with possible solutions. If this is still not satisfactory, you can ask to speak to the Program Director.

- If you have tried all of these options and you still feel like your problem has not been resolved, you can contact the U.S. Department of State at jvisas@state.org.

If you are experiencing an emergency you can contact the au pair emergency phone at 1.917.373.0717
Chapter 27: Transitions

A “transition” is the process of ending the current placement so that you can try to re-match with another family or return home. A transition happens when the host family, au pair, or both ask to end the placement and look for a different arrangement. Host families and au pairs are expected to make every effort to fix any problems that arise before requesting to go into transition.

If you do go into transition, it is important to understand that InterExchange might not have another family looking to match with you. Final placement decisions belong to the family and au pair.

Pre-Transition
Families and au pairs are expected to invest significant time and effort in your initial and ongoing training so that you can succeed in your placement. If you have a concern about your placement and you have discussed it with your host family, you should contact your LC.

Your LC might be able to help mediate the situation. In this case, your LC will first discuss the problems with you to learn what concerns you have. Your LC will then listen to your host family’s side of the story. If everyone thinks that the placement can succeed, then the placement will remain and your LC will follow-up on a regular basis.

If the placement cannot succeed, you or your host family may request a transition. Once a transition has been started, the following policies and procedures will need to be followed so that a satisfactory resolution can be found.

Transition Housing
In the event of a transition, your host family is required to provide you with room and board for up to 14 days if needed. During this period, the host family may decide whether you should continue or refrain from providing childcare assistance. If you continue providing childcare, the host family must continue to pay the weekly stipend. If you wish to stay somewhere else during the transition period and your host family agrees, you must provide the name and contact information to your Local Coordinator and InterExchange’s Transition Staff.

No-Eviction Policy
A host family must never evict you (make you leave) from their home. If a host family tries to evict an au pair, the family is violating the spirit of the cultural exchange and the requirements of program participation.

Information Gathering
At the onset of a transition and throughout the process, InterExchange will seek to gather relevant information from the host family, au pair, and LC regarding everyone’s experiences. This information will be used to decide whether a rematch is likely to succeed.

Rematch Eligibility
To be eligible for a rematch, you must be in good standing with InterExchange. This includes having made good faith efforts to resolve any issues, having followed the program rules and regulations, and having acted in the spirit of the program. If there are any alleged safety concerns, this could affect your rematch eligibility. At the onset of a transition and throughout the process, InterExchange will seek to gather relevant information from the host family, au pair and LC regarding experiences with the program to date. This information will be used to assess whether a rematch is suitable.
The Rematch Process
A Transitions Specialist in the New York office of InterExchange will try to find you a new placement. The transition matching process takes place in a manner similar to the original matching process. Au pairs are put exclusively on-view with potential host families. They then have the chance to interview with host families.

Financial Obligations
As the placement with your current host family comes to an end, it is necessary to settle any outstanding financial obligations. You might owe money to your host family for outstanding telephone bills or gym memberships. Your host family might owe you money for the stipend, educational stipend and/or unused vacation time. We will ask you about these issues, and send a recommendation to guide you through this process. Ultimately, you and your host family are responsible for resolving these issues together before you leave your host family's home.

InterExchange is not responsible for determining or collecting any outstanding debts owed to either party.

Unused or Unearned Vacation Days
You will earn one day of vacation per month after the first month. If you are in transition and leave your host family before using an earned vacation day, you should receive at least $35.50 per day from your host family. Conversely, if you used a vacation day that you have not fully earned, you will be required to reimburse your host family at least $35.50 per day.

Unused or Unearned Education Stipend
You receive up to $500 for the year from your host family to complete the Educational Requirement. That means you earn $42 each month to take classes. If you go into transition and haven’t used the education stipend earned, your host family should provide the unused balance to you. If you used more educational stipend than was earned before leaving the family, you should reimburse the family for the amount over what was earned at $42 per month. If you are not continuing with the au pair program, you are not eligible for future education money from your host family.

Program Ineligibility
If an au pair is not in good standing with InterExchange or factors have come to light that call into question the au pair’s suitability for the program, InterExchange may decide that an au pair is ineligible for further participation in the program. Furthermore, there are occasions when InterExchange may decline to disclose the reason for its decision to the au pair in order to protect the privacy of those involved. If the au pair is ineligible for further participation in the program, the withdrawal policy will apply. In cases of serious program violations, the matter will be reported to the U.S. Department of State, which may conduct a more thorough investigation.

Withdrawal Policy
If you are not able to rematch with another Host Family following a transition, you must make arrangements to leave the United States. The cost of this transportation is your own responsibility regardless of the reason for the transition. Your program fees are subject to the refund policy of your international cooperators.
Chapter 28: Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when either:

- The conduct is made as a term or condition of an individual’s employment, education, or living environment or participation in the Au Pair Program.
- The acceptance or refusal of such conduct is used as the basis or a factor in decisions affecting an individual’s employment, education, living environment, or participation in the Au Pair Program.
- The conduct unreasonably impacts an individual’s employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for that individual’s employment, education, living environment, or participation in the Au Pair Program.
- Sexual harassment can take various forms. It can involve conduct such as:
  - Unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing
  - Suggestive comments or jokes
  - Sharing sexually explicit pictures, videos, emails, or SMS/text messages
  - Unwanted invitations to spend time alone or requests for sex
  - Intrusive questions about your private life or body
  - Unnecessary closeness, such as deliberately brushing up against someone
  - Insults or taunts of a sexual nature
  - Gifts or items of a sexual nature
  - Indecent exposure
  - Sexual assault, stalking or obscene communications

Such conduct, whether verbal, written or physical, may interfere with an au pair’s right to live and/or work without being subjected to an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated by InterExchange, and appropriate corrective action will be taken when warranted.

If you believe that you are being sexually harassed by anyone, follow the procedure below:

- Say “no” to your harasser. Completely change your demeanor, be direct, make it very clear that they have “crossed a line”.
- Do not smile, laugh or apologize.
- Tell your harasser verbally what behavior you object to.
- Email to your harasser describing and documenting the specific behaviors that you find offensive or threatening.
- Report the situation to your Local Coordinator immediately.
Chapter 29: Your Taxes

While InterExchange is not licensed to provide official tax advice and cannot counsel host families or au pairs in regard to tax inquiries, we do list resources on our website. We also update our blogs and send out tax filing reminders to au pairs every year.

Do Au Pairs Pay Taxes?
Your wages are included in your gross income, and you are required to file individual U.S. income tax returns. You will have to file a 1040 NR-EZ if you earn wages during the tax year. We publish information on our blog every tax season to help you file taxes.

Au Pair Tax Status
In 1994, the U.S. Department of Labor determined that the au pair stipend constitutes "wages" because an employer-employee relationship exists. Therefore, you must pay taxes on your weekly stipend, which, as of the printing of this handbook, is at least $195.75.

Social Security and Medicare Taxes
Au pair wages are rarely subject to Social Security and Medicare taxes because of the au pair's status as a J-1 nonimmigrant and as a non-resident alien.

Income Tax Withholding
Because your wages are paid for domestic service in a private home, they are not subject to U.S. income tax withholding and reporting on Forms 941 and W-2.

Income Tax Filing
You will almost always be considered a non-resident alien (NR) and will be required to file Form 1040NR-EZ to report your wages. As a non-resident alien, you are ineligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Hope Credit and the Lifetime Learning Credit. You are not a student in the United States, and therefore are not eligible to exclude your wages from gross income under the student article of any U.S. income tax treaty.

Additional Resources
Should you have any further questions, please consult the following resources:

- Internal Revenue Service website: www.irs.ustreas.gov
- Internal Revenue Service Information: 1.800.829.1040
Chapter 30: Natural Disaster and Emergency Evacuation

Your health, safety and welfare are our priority. In the event of a natural disaster such as a hurricane, flood or other extreme weather or emergency situation, you must comply with emergency procedures and follow instructions issued by your local office of emergency management. For the most current information on evacuation notices and to learn what your local area is doing to prepare for an extreme weather event or emergency, visit the website of your local Office of Emergency Management. They can also provide information about maintaining an emergency kit for such situations.

Talk to your host family to get information and guidance on how to prepare for an emergency as well. You can also find helpful resources on our website. Just click on the U.S. state you’re living in and visit the Health & Safety section: www.interexchange.org/american-culture/#states

Important Information if You Are Evacuated
It is required that you follow local evacuation instructions in emergency situations. Should you be evacuated, make sure to:

- Take important documents with you. This includes your passport, DS-2019 Form, Social Security Card, financial records, plane ticket, checks, credit cards, etc.
- Take important contact numbers and email addresses. Bring the InterExchange office emergency telephone number to call if needed: 1.917.373.0717.
- Contact your family members to let them know you are safe and how you can be reached.
- Take Student Exchange Visitor Program U.S. Department of State contact information with you. SEVP email address: SEVIS.Source@dhs.gov
- Take Department of State e-mail address: Jvisas@state.gov
- Stay in touch with your Local Coordinator.
- Always follow instructions from emergency management officials. The most important thing is to stay safe!
Chapter 31: The End of the Year

Prepare to Say Goodbye to Your Host Family
Towards the end of your program, you will probably feel anxious about leaving the life you have established in the U.S. and returning home. Your host children may have trouble expressing how they feel about the coming departure and may start to behave differently. Your host parents will have begun considering their childcare situation and possible solutions, and may be preparing for another au pair’s arrival. In short, everyone will be affected by your pending departure. Setting clear expectations on how the final weeks should go, discussing what to expect as your end date approaches, and checking in with your host family will help you navigate the final weeks in the program.

Here are some tips to make the transition as smooth as possible:

In the Last Two Months: Schedule a meeting with your host parents about six to eight weeks before your departure to talk about your expectations on how the final weeks of the year should play out.

- Discuss any items still on your “wish list” that you want to achieve before going home.
- Discuss the logistics of going home. Are you prepared to pack up everything? Do you have to ship anything home? Would you like to donate items?
- Decide on a final work day (this shouldn’t be after the program end date on the DS-2019 form). Also, discuss the date that you will depart from your host family’s home and what role your host family will play in this departure. For example, do you need a ride to the airport?
- Understand that there will be a lot of different emotions, excitement and last-minute events surrounding your departure, but your host parents are still going to depend on the high level of childcare to which they have become accustomed.
- Make a list of important dates, places and to-dos and follow up throughout the coming weeks.

The Last Few Weeks: You and your host family should make a “checkout list” a couple weeks in advance. Include detailed, specific info on the following:

- How you should leave your bedroom (remove bedding, etc.)
- What to do with your cellphone
- What to do with extra toiletries or other miscellaneous items
- Returning any borrowed items such as library books
- Cancelling any local memberships or accounts
- Getting taken off the car insurance
- Changing your address with banks, schools, etc.

Saying Goodbye
As the end of the year gets closer, talk to your host family about how you would like to say goodbye to them. We recommend organizing a special dinner or small celebration. Having a nice goodbye celebration will put a positive spin on what will be a difficult time for everyone. Don’t forget to let your host family know how much you appreciate all that they have done for you during the program!

The 30-Day Travel Period
According to the terms of your J-1 visa, upon successful completion of the program, you are
entitled to make use of a travel period of up to 30 days. During this time, you may travel in
the U.S. to gain a better understanding of the country. Since your J-1 Visa and DS-2019 form
will have expired by this point in the year, you will not be able to leave the U.S. and re-enter
during this 30-day travel period. For this reason, we advise that you use this time to explore
the U.S. rather than other countries.

**Working During the 30-Day Travel Period**
It is strictly forbidden for you to engage in any employment during this 30-day period.
Working during this period is a violation of the terms of the au pair visa and the immigration
laws of the U.S. This prohibition includes working for your host family providing childcare or
doing other tasks in return for room, board or wages.

**The 30-Day Travel Period Insurance**
You have accident and sickness insurance coverage while you are an au pair on the Au
Pair USA Program. This coverage does not cover the 30-day travel period that takes place
after finishing the program. For this reason, if you decide to travel in the United States
for any length of your 30-day travel period, we strongly recommend that you purchase
supplementary accident and sickness insurance through InterExchange. You can follow the
instructions in the End of Year tab in Passport to request and pay for this coverage.

**Your Return Flight**
Upon successful completion of the Au Pair Program, you are entitled to a flight back to your
home country. This flight will be arranged and provided by InterExchange after consulting
with you.

Return flights must leave from an international airport near your home. If you are traveling
outside of your local area and wish to fly from a different airport, you will have to pay the
difference between the cost of the flights.

The return flight must travel to the same airport you originally departed from. In the rare case
that this was not one of InterExchange’s designated international airports, you will return
to the InterExchange designated international airport closest to your original departure
location.

If you wish to fly to a different airport, you will be responsible for the difference in price
between the tickets.

You will receive a message from InterExchange four months before the end of your program
asking for three date options for your flight home. InterExchange will try to accommodate
your top choices for return dates but ultimately we will select the best flight based on our
contracts and availability. The earlier you request your flight, the more likely it is that you will
get the return date that you want.

The deadline to submit the flight request info is 45 days before your program end date.

If you submit your flight request after this deadline, you will have to pay a late fee of $200
when your ticket is issued.

Your flight must be scheduled to depart no more than 30 days after your program end
date. Requests for flights after this date will not be honored and you will have to pay for the
cost of your flight home.
If you must change your flight after requesting a flight, you will be responsible for paying any airline change fees and price increases.

If you request a flight but do not use the flight, you will be responsible for paying the price of the ticket to InterExchange and the cost of your new flight home.

**Early Program Departures**
If you leave the InterExchange Au Pair USA program before your program end date - for any reason - you are responsible for organizing and paying the cost of your flight home. For that reason, it is very important that au pairs maintain enough savings to afford the cost of this flight.
Au Pair Program Regulations

§62.31 Au pairs.

(a) *Introduction.* This section governs Department of State-designated exchange visitor programs under which foreign nationals are afforded the opportunity to live with an American host family and participate directly in the home life of the host family. All au pair participants provide child care services to the host family and attend a U.S. post-secondary educational institution. Au pair participants provide up to forty-five hours of child care services per week and pursue not less than six semester hours of academic credit or its equivalent during their year of program participation. Au pairs participating in the EduCare program provide up to thirty hours of child care services per week and pursue not less than twelve semester hours of academic credit or its equivalent during their year of program participation.

(b) *Program designation.* The Department of State may, in its sole discretion, designate bona fide programs satisfying the objectives set forth in paragraph (a) of this section. Such designation shall be for a period of two years and may be revoked by the Department of State for good cause.

(c) *Program eligibility.* Sponsors designated by the Department of State to conduct an au pair exchange program shall:

1. Limit the participation of foreign nationals in such programs to not more than one year;
2. Limit the number of hours an EduCare au pair participant is obligated to provide child care services to not more than 10 hours per day or more than 30 hours per week and limit the number of hours all other au pair participants are obligated to provide child care services to not more than 10 hours per day or more than 45 hours per week;
3. Require that EduCare au pair participants register and attend classes offered by an accredited U.S. post-secondary institution for not less than twelve semester hours of academic credit or its equivalent and that all other au pair participants register and attend classes offered by an accredited U.S. post-secondary institution for not less than six semester hours of academic credit or its equivalent;
4. Require that all officers, employees, agents, and volunteers acting on their behalf are adequately trained and supervised;
5. Require that the au pair participant is placed with a host family within one hour’s driving time of the home of the local organizational representative authorized to act on the sponsor’s behalf in both routine and emergency matters arising from the au pair’s participation in their exchange program;
6. Require that each local organizational representative maintain a record of all personal monthly contacts (or more frequently as required) with each au pair and host family for which he or she is responsible and issues or problems discussed;
7. Require that all local organizational representatives contact au pair participants and host families twice monthly for the first two months following a placement other than the initial placement for which the au pair entered the United States.
8. Require that local organizational representatives not devoting their full time and attention to their program obligations are responsible for no more than fifteen au pairs and host families; and
9. Require that each local organizational representative is provided adequate support services by a regional organizational representative.

(d) *Au pair selection.* In addition to satisfying the requirements of §62.10(a), sponsors shall ensure that all participants in a designated au pair exchange program:

1. Are between the ages of 18 and 26;
2. Are a secondary school graduate, or equivalent;
3. Are proficient in spoken English;
4. Are capable of fully participating in the program as evidenced by the satisfactory completion of a physical;
5. Have been personally interviewed, in English, by an organizational representative who shall prepare a report of the interview which shall be provided to the host family; and
6. Have successfully passed a background investigation that includes verification of school, three, non-family related personal and employment references, a criminal background check or its recognized equivalent and a personality profile. Such personality profile will be based upon a psychometric test designed to measure differences in characteristics among applicants against those characteristics
considered most important to successfully participate in the au pair program.

(e) **Au pair placement.** Sponsors shall secure, prior to the au pair’s departure from the home country, a host family placement for each participant. Sponsors shall not:

1. Place an au pair with a family unless the family has specifically agreed that a parent or other responsible adult will remain in the home for the first three days following the au pair’s arrival;
2. Place an au pair with a family having a child aged less than three months unless a parent or other responsible adult is present in the home;
3. Place an au pair with a host family having children under the age of two, unless the au pair has at least 200 hours of documented infant child care experience. An au pair participating in the EduCare program shall not be placed with a family having pre-school children in the home unless alternative full-time arrangements for the supervision of such pre-school children are in place;
4. Place an au pair with a host family having a special needs child, as so identified by the host family, unless the au pair has specifically identified his or her prior experience, skills, or training in the care of special needs children and the host family has reviewed and acknowledged in writing the au pair’s prior experience, skills, or training so identified;
5. Place an au pair with a host family unless a written agreement between the au pair and the host family detailing the au pair’s obligation to provide child care has been signed by both the au pair and the host family prior to the au pair’s departure from his or her home country. Such agreement shall clearly state whether the au pair is an EduCare program participant or not. Such agreement shall limit the obligation to provide child care services to not more than 10 hours per day or more than 45 hours per week unless the au pair is an EduCare participant. Such agreement shall limit the obligation of an EduCare participant to provide child care service to not more than 10 hours per day or more than 30 hours per week.
6. Place the au pair with a family who cannot provide the au pair with a suitable private bedroom; and
7. Place an au pair with a host family unless the host family has interviewed the au pair by telephone prior to the au pair’s departure from his or her home country.

(f) **Au pair orientation.** In addition to the orientation requirements set forth at §62.10, all sponsors shall provide au pairs, prior to their departure from the home country, with the following information:

1. A copy of all operating procedures, rules, and regulations, including a grievance process, which govern the au pair’s participation in the exchange program;
2. A detailed profile of the family and community in which the au pair will be placed;
3. A detailed profile of the educational institutions in the community where the au pair will be placed, including the financial cost of attendance at these institutions;
4. A detailed summary of travel arrangements; and
5. A copy of the Department of State’s written statement and brochure regarding the au pair program.

(g) **Au pair training.** Sponsors shall provide the au pair participant with child development and child safety instruction, as follows:

1. Prior to placement with the host family, the au pair participant shall receive not less than eight hours of child safety instruction no less than 4 of which shall be infant-related; and
2. Prior to placement with the American host family, the au pair participant shall receive not less than twenty-four hours of child development instruction of which no less than 4 shall be devoted to specific training for children under the age of two.

(h) **Host family selection.** Sponsors shall adequately screen all potential host families and at a minimum shall:

1. Require that the host parents are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents;
2. Require that host parents are fluent in spoken English;
3. Require that all adult family members resident in the home have been personally interviewed by an organizational representative;
4. Require that host parents and other adults living full-time in the household have successfully passed a background investigation including employment and personal character references;
5. Require that the host family have adequate financial resources to undertake all hosting obligations;
6. Provide a written detailed summary of the exchange program and the parameters of their and the au pair’s duties, participation, and obligations; and
7. Provide the host family with the prospective au pair participant’s complete application, including all references.
(i) **Host family orientation.** In addition to the requirements set forth at §62.10 sponsors shall:
   (1) Inform all host families of the philosophy, rules, and regulations governing the sponsor’s exchange program and provide all families with a copy of the Department of State’s written statement and brochure regarding the au pair program;
   (2) Provide all selected host families with a complete copy of Department of State-promulgated Exchange Visitor Program regulations, including the supplemental information thereto;
   (3) Advise all selected host families of their obligation to attend at least one family day conference to be sponsored by the au pair organization during the course of the placement year. Host family attendance at such a gathering is a condition of program participation and failure to attend will be grounds for possible termination of their continued or future program participation; and
   (4) Require that the organization’s local counselor responsible for the au pair placement contacts the host family and au pair within forty-eight hours of the au pair’s arrival and meets, in person, with the host family and au pair within two weeks of the au pair’s arrival at the host family home.

(j) **Wages and hours.** Sponsors shall require that au pair participants:
   (1) Are compensated at a weekly rate based upon 45 hours of child care services per week and paid in conformance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act as interpreted and implemented by the United States Department of Labor. EduCare participants shall be compensated at a weekly rate that is 75% of the weekly rate paid to non-EduCare participants;
   (2) Do not provide more than 10 hours of child care per day, or more than 45 hours of child care in any one week. EduCare participants may not provide more than 10 hours of child care per day or more than 30 hours of child care in any one week;
   (3) Receive a minimum of one and one half days off per week in addition to one complete weekend off each month; and
   (4) Receive two weeks of paid vacation.

(k) **Educational component.** Sponsors must:
   (1) Require that during their initial period of program participation, all EduCare au pair participants complete not less than twelve semester hours (or their equivalent) of academic credit in formal educational settings at accredited U.S. post-secondary institutions and that all other au pair participants complete not less than six semester hours (or their equivalent) of academic credit in formal educational settings at accredited U.S. post-secondary institutions. As a condition of program participation, host family participants must agree to facilitate the enrollment and attendance of au pairs in accredited U.S. post secondary institutions and to pay the cost of such academic coursework in an amount not to exceed $1,000 for EduCare au pair participants and in an amount not to exceed $500 for all other au pair participants.
   (2) Require that during any extension of program participation, all participants (i.e., Au Pair or EduCare) satisfy an additional educational requirement, as follows:
      (i) For a nine or 12-month extension, all au pair participants and host families shall have the same obligation for coursework and payment therefore as is required during the initial period of program participation.
      (ii) For a six-month extension, EduCare au pair participants must complete not less than six semester hours (or their equivalent) of academic credit in formal educational settings at accredited U.S. post-secondary institutions. As a condition of participation, host family participants must agree to facilitate the enrollment and attendance of au pairs at accredited U.S. post secondary institutions and to pay the cost of such academic coursework in an amount not to exceed $500. All other au pair participants must complete not less than three semester hours (or their equivalent) of academic credit in formal educational settings at accredited U.S. post-secondary institutions. As a condition of program participation, host family participants must agree to facilitate the enrollment and attendance of au pairs at accredited U.S. post secondary institutions and to pay the cost of such academic coursework in an amount not to exceed $250.

(l) **Monitoring.** Sponsors shall fully monitor all au pair exchanges, and at a minimum shall:
   (1) Require monthly personal contact by the local counselor with each au pair and host family for which the counselor is responsible. Counselors shall maintain a record of this contact;
   (2) Require quarterly contact by the regional counselor with each au pair and host family for which the counselor is responsible. Counselors shall maintain a record of this contact;
   (3) Require that all local and regional counselors are appraised of their obligation to report unusual or
serious situations or incidents involving either the au pair or host family; and
(4) Promptly report to the Department of State any incidents involving or alleging a crime of moral turpitude or violence.

(m) **Reporting requirements.** Along with the annual report required by regulations set forth at §62.17, sponsors shall file with the Department of State the following information:

(1) A summation of the results of an annual survey of all host family and au pair participants regarding satisfaction with the program, its strengths and weaknesses;
(2) A summation of all complaints regarding host family or au pair participation in the program, specifying the nature of the complaint, its resolution, and whether any unresolved complaints are outstanding;
(3) A summation of all situations which resulted in the placement of au pair participant with more than one host family;
(4) A report by a certified public accountant, conducted pursuant to a format designated by the Department of State, attesting to the sponsor’s compliance with the procedures and reporting requirements set forth in this subpart;
(5) A report detailing the name of the au pair, his or her host family placement, location, and the names of the local and regional organizational representatives; and
(6) A complete set of all promotional materials, brochures, or pamphlets distributed to either host family or au pair participants.

(n) **Sanctions.** In addition to the sanctions provisions set forth at §62.50, the Department of State may undertake immediate program revocation procedures upon documented evidence that a sponsor has failed to:

(1) Comply with the au pair placement requirements set forth in paragraph (e) of this section;
(2) Satisfy the selection requirements for each individual au pair as set forth in paragraph (d) of this section; and
(3) Enforce and monitor host family’s compliance with the stipend and hours requirements set forth in paragraph (j) of this section.

(o) **Extension of program.** The Department, in its sole discretion, may approve extensions for au pair participants beyond the initial 12-month program. Applications to the Department for extensions of six, nine, or 12 months, must be received by the Department not less than 30 calendar days prior to the expiration of the exchange visitor’s initial authorized stay in either the Au Pair or EduCare program (i.e., 30-calendar days prior to the program end date listed on the exchange visitor’s Form DS-2019). The request for an extension beyond the maximum duration of the initial 12-month program must be submitted electronically in the Department of Homeland Security’s Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Supporting documentation must be submitted to the Department on the sponsor’s organizational letterhead and contain the following information:

(1) Au pair’s name, SEVIS identification number, date of birth, the length of the extension period being requested;
(2) Verification that the au pair completed the educational requirements of the initial program; and
(3) Payment of the required non-refundable fee (see 22 CFR 62.90) via Pay.gov.

(p) **Repeat participation.** A foreign national who enters the United States as an au pair Exchange Visitor Program participant and who has successfully completed his or her program is eligible to participate again as an au pair participant, provided that he or she has resided outside the United States for at least two years following completion of his or her initial au pair program.
