

Summer Work & Travel



Student Handbook

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ASPIRE WORLDWIDE EXPERIENCE

Experience of ASPIRE Worldwide's Founding Organization ASSE International

ASSE International Student Exchange Programs (ASSE) was founded by the Swedish Ministry of Education. It cooperates closely with the provincial Ministries of Education in Canada. In the United States, ASSE has been designated by the U.S. Department of State as an "exchange-visitor" program and adheres strictly to all Department of State regulations. ASSE has also been approved for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET).

The history of ASSE goes back to the 1930's when the Swedish Parliament instituted an exchange program for Swedish and German students. In the post World War II era, this was expanded to include England, France, Spain and Switzerland. The U.S.A. entity was added in the 1960's, when the Swedish government's National Department of Education organized in

“ The history of ASSE goes back to the 1930's when the Swedish Parliament instituted an exchange program for Swedish and German students.”

the U.S.A. In 1976 the program was incorporated in North America as American Scandinavian Student Exchange (ASSE) to provide student exchange opportunities between the Scandinavian countries and the U.S.A. ASSE has evolved and expanded in size and scope to provide academic year home-stay programs in Canada (English and French-speaking), New Zealand, Australia, the U.S.A., Scandinavia (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland), France, Germany, German-speaking Switzerland, Great Britain, Poland Italy, Portugal, Spain, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union, Mexico, Japan, China, Taiwan, Thailand, South Africa, Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Brazil.

ASSE also provides short term homestay language study and campus programs in Europe, as well as 3-month reciprocal exchanges with France, Germany and Spain. ASSE is proud to participate in the prestigious Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Program between the U.S.A. and Germany, as well as the FLEX program (Future Leaders Exchange Program), a U.S.A. government-sponsored program that brings hundreds of students to the U.S.A. from the Independent Republics of the former Soviet Union.

In addition to all of the above, ASSE founded in the late 1989 the EurAupair Program, a not-for-profit, public benefit organization by funding it in its initial stage and applying for the original designation. Most recently, ASSE became a designated sponsor for the Summer Work Travel Program, which provides summer employment opportunities to university students in the USA, and a Trainee Program, which facilitates recently graduated professionals and specialists to spend up to 18 months training in their field in an American corporation or professional/vocational group. While the above programs are separate and completely different entities, they share a common mission and philosophy: To improve understanding among people of different countries through cultural exchange.

ASSE maintains its headquarters in Laguna Beach, California, U.S.A., an international coordinating office in Germany, four regional American offices, one Canadian, and one New Zealand office. In addition, ASSE maintains a network of affiliated organizations throughout the rest of the world with 1500 ASSE Area Representatives throughout the Americas, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, and Asia.

In several countries, ASSE has a very active alumni group, which is composed of students that have participated in past programs. The members act as Counselors, helpers, interviewers and resource people for students embarking on ASSE programs, or taking part in them. They provide a singularly effective support group when a student, far from home, or about to begin a big adventure, needs preparation help and assurance.

ASSE's primary goal is to provide exchange programs, which enable students to learn about other languages and cultures while participating in community life and helping achieve international understanding.



SUMMER WORK & TRAVEL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Work Travel Program is to offer international students like you the opportunity to immerse themselves in U.S.A. daily life through temporary employment opportunities during their summer holidays. This is accomplished by ongoing interaction with Americans at the host company, as well as other cross-cultural and social activities organized by your ASPIRE Area Representative.

Participants will also learn about U.S.A. culture and specifically the values in American business practices. On the other hand, the Americans will increase their cross-cultural knowledge of other parts of the world. The friendships formed will not only last a lifetime but also assist you in your career development upon returning home.

“... jobs that will be available ... include: amusement park attendant; banquet server; busser; clerical; cook; dishwasher; fast food server; front desk clerk; game/ride attendant; host/hostess; housekeeper; laundry; lifeguard; park services; parking attendant; porter; recreation instructor; sales; security guard; tour guide; waiter/waitress.”

The jobs that will be available are almost always unskilled, or semi-unskilled, and include the following possibilities: amusement park attendant; banquet server; busser; clerical; cook; dishwasher; fast food server; front desk clerk; game/ride attendant; host/hostess; housekeeper; laundry; lifeguard; park services; parking attendant; porter; recreation instructor; sales; security guard; tour guide; waiter/waitress.

How Will You Benefit?

- Improve English proficiency
- Experience the fun of working and traveling in the U.S.A.
- Develop entry level skills that could help your future employment. You could also receive a reference from your USA employer to include in your CV.
- Make new friends from all over the world
- Earn money to pay for your trip to the U.S.A.



What Is Included and Not Included in the Program Price

Included for all students – ASPIRE placed and self-placed:

- DS-2019 Form
- Comprehensive health, accident and liability insurance

Included for ASPIRE placed students:

- Job placement
- Assistance with obtaining a Social Security Card
- Local welcome and orientation
- Local support in the U.S.A.

Not Included:

- International and domestic airfares and other transportation (e.g. bus) to the company site
- Daily living expenses including housing and meals (housing will cost a minimum of \$350 per month.)

RULES AND CONDITIONS

1. You are between the ages of 18 and 28 and registered and enrolled as a full-time student at a post-secondary level college or university.
2. You are in good health.
3. You will obtain a valid passport and visa and comply with all vaccination and immunization requirements.
4. You will obey all U.S.A. Federal, State and Local laws.
5. Any illegal use of drugs or alcohol, or abuse of harmful controlled substances or illegal possession of drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances will be subject to your immediate repatriation.
6. You will attend orientation sessions in your home country and in the U.S.A.
7. You will carry out the duties and responsibilities of the position, which ASPIRE Worldwide has arranged. It is your responsibility to advise ASPIRE Worldwide of any significant problems, including but not limited to, your health, safety or welfare plus adjustment to the job, culture, language, etc.

Rules & Conditions

8. You agree to be an active and congenial part of the company and understand that you will receive basic entry-level work experience in addition to gaining cultural experience from the program.
9. You will comply with all company rules and respect the dress code of the company.
10. Failure to comply with program rules or giving misleading information may result in program dismissal and repatriation to home country.
11. You will cooperate fully with those supervising the program on behalf of and in correspondence with ASPIRE Worldwide.
12. You understand that the work assignment is temporary and runs for the duration of the work authorization as stated on the DS-2019 form. Students cannot change the visa to a different category.
13. You understand that the assigned Host Company holds the right to dismiss you if your work is not satisfactory. In that case, you will return home immediately at your own expense.
14. It is understood that there is generally a minimum of 3 months work commitment requirement and you agree to work the entire period as stated on the assignment agreement letter. Not working through the period indicated constitutes a violation of the agreement with the host company and may lead to your visa being cancelled and/or termination from the program.
15. You will not accept any form of assignment other than what is authorized by the assignment authorization documents.
16. You will not terminate agreement with the Host Company without consulting with the ASPIRE Worldwide staff for assistance.
17. You will respect the privacy of information learned during your work experience.
18. You agree to complete all evaluations in compliance with the program regulations.
19. You will pay for any property damages caused by yourself.
20. You will return home within 30 days of the DS-2019 visa expiration or immediately if terminated from the program for violation of sponsor rules governing the program. You cannot work during the 30-day grace period.
21. For Self-Placed students only, it is solely the student's responsibility to ensure that his/her Employer completes and returns the self-addressed Employer Verification Form to ASPIRE. Any student for whom ASPIRE does not have the Employer Verification Form returned, the student cannot be accepted to the ASPIRE program.

Most companies will require students to take a drug test before starting and during employment.



Rules & Conditions

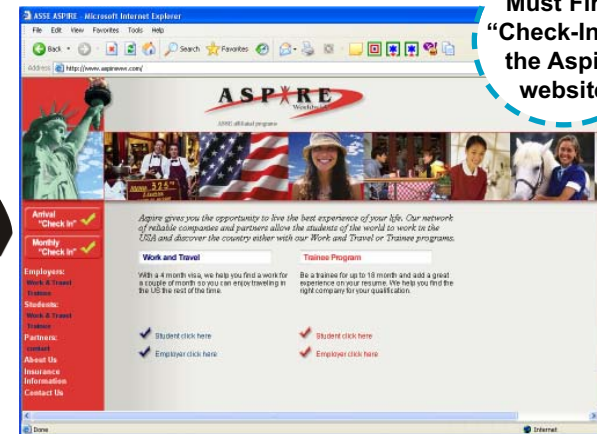
USA Immigration Law requires that you report to ASPIRE when you:

- Arrive in the USA, and
- Once a month (every 30 days) while working in the USA with your current address.

Please log on to www.aspireww.com to complete the "Arrival" and "Monthly Check-in" process.

FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN TERMINATION OF YOUR VISA AND INSURANCE COVERAGE.

You Must First "Check-In" at the Aspire website



EARLY PROGRAM TERMINATION

You must do your best to complete the program. Should you be unable or unwilling to complete the program you will be out of status for your visa. ASPIRE will assist participants to coordinate their return home. Should you not return home, ASPIRE is required to report that you are out of status, and that ASPIRE believes you are not returning home. Such actions could result in your inability to re-enter the U.S.A. in the future.



Departure

Pre-Departure

! Before you depart, make sure your Flight and Travel Information is sent to the ASPIRE office by your agent.

Make sure you know how to get to your employer's location. Your agent has this information. Please also check your job offer for directions.

* You may choose the YMCA Guest Rooms as an option, should you need overnight arrival accommodation. Please turn to page 26 for details.

DEPARTURE

LUGGAGE ALLOWANCE & PACKING



- Generally, most airlines will allow you to take two pieces of luggage, but you will regret bringing so much weight. Not only do you have to carry the luggage, but many places may not have elevators. Also, you may want to bring back more than taken. Why not try limiting the luggage to 15 kilos? Most students will be wearing a uniform so clothing needs will be minimal.
- If you plan to do any traveling while in the U.S.A., a backpack will be much easier to manage than a suitcase.
- Pack according to the season and destination.
- You may have to go a week between laundries so bring enough clothing to get through the week during the hot season.
- Do not bring valuables. There may be difficulty finding a secure place for them.

MONEY

- You should not carry large amounts of cash to the U.S.A. However, you should arrive with **at least \$500** in US currency for emergencies and unexpected costs upon arrival. Please keep in mind that it may take a few weeks before you get your first paycheck, so plan to bring at least enough money to live for a few weeks. Also, some housing may require a deposit.

Documents to Bring

- Bring most money in U.S. travelers checks only. Stolen travelers checks can be replaced, money cannot.
- Keep traveler's check receipts separate from your checks so you can more easily replace them if they are lost or stolen.
- Bring enough money to cover those expenses that will not be met by the work stipend. Having additional money sent from home can take a long time. You should consider the types of expenses that you may have upon arrival including travel expenses, lodging, food, etc. until receipt of the first paycheck. Housing costs per month could be a **minimum of \$350** and might be deducted from your paycheck.
- It is highly recommended that you open a checking account in a local bank. You will want to be given an Automatic Teller Card (ATM or debit card) to avoid carrying large sums of money. ATM cards can be used at 24-hour automated teller machines. A "PIN" or Personal Identification Number is provided for your Debit card. This number should be a secret that only you know. If someone else has your Debit card and Pin number they can take money from your account. If you lose this card notify your bank immediately. Most ATM cards can be used extensively throughout the U.S.A. Keep track of all banking records so you don't forget how much money you have spent.
- If you need money from home in a hurry, contact Western Union (1-800- 325-6000). This service makes it possible to transfer money from your home country to anywhere in the USA within 15 minutes, on any day of the week. There is a handling charge, which will vary according to the amount of money sent.

DOCUMENTS TO BRING, Some Key Items:

- Passport
- DS-2019 form
- Sponsor Letter
- Job Offer Letter
- Return plane ticket, etc.
- International student ID card
- International driver's license
- Credit Card

(Make sure you have Copies of all the above documents)

- Second pair of glasses/contacts
- Electrical current converter plug and adapter
- Medicines are very expensive in the USA so bring an extra supply of any medicine you take.

ARRIVING IN USA

I-94

During your travel from your home country to USA, you will be given a few forms by the airline to complete. Please fill them out the on the plane. One of the forms is I-94 card.

Upon arrival at the U.S. port of entry, you will present the passport, visa and DS-2019 form. After reviewing it and updating your SEVIS record with the entry information (date and port of entry), the immigration officer will stamp the DS-2019 form with entry information, and return the form to you. If you haven't filled out the I-94 card on the plane, you will fill it out now. This is an Arrival/Departure document that establishes the date and place of your arrival in the US, your visa status and the duration of your status. The I-94 is an important document that is the official record of admission and permission to remain in the US. The officer will stamp it and staple it to your passport; don't attempt to remove it. The I-94 will need to be surrendered when you leave the country. You also need the I-94 to apply for your social security number.

(See pg. 38 for a sample I-94)

! If You Are Lost
 • Please call your Area Rep.
Contact information is on your Job Offer.
In case of Emergency call:
1-888-327-7473

SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

You must check-in at the ASPIRE website www.aspireww.com before applying for a Social Security Card. You must obtain a Social Security Card (SS card) upon arrival in the U.S.A.

You can download the application form from www.ssa.gov

The number on the card serves as the taxpayer identification number and will be used for the host company's payroll. Without it, the company cannot legally issue paychecks and withhold taxes. This number is also needed to open a bank account or obtain a state driver's license. While your employer or ASPIRE Area Representative will assist you obtaining the SS card, it is ultimately your responsibility to obtain this card. It is illegal to get paid for working if you haven't yet applied for your SS card.



The following items will need to be with you upon application for the Social Security Card:

- DS-2019 Form (copy)
- Passport with the J-1 Visa and I-94 card (white slip attached to the passport by the Immigration officer)
- Sponsor letter
- If the passport is less than one year old you will need to bring with you an official government document (i.e., birth certificate, driver's license with photo) to serve as proof of age.

Read all instructions BEFORE you fill out the application. A few tips include:

1. Use your employer's address as your mailing address. Address it to the attention of the Human Resources Office.
2. For question #3 (Citizenship), check the box labeled "Legal Alien Allowed To Work."
3. For question #8 (Mother's Maiden Name), write your mother's family name before she was married.
4. You can leave #8B and #9B blank.

If you lose your Social Security Card, you should be fine, as long as you still have your Social Security number (or a photocopy of the card) in a safe place.

All Social Security Cards are processed through the National Office in Los Angeles, California. The application could take up to 20 working days. Request a temporary certificate (Form SSA-5028) upon application. This temporary certificate doesn't have a number, but is proof that you have applied for the card. The host company should be able to use a provisional number until the Social Security Card arrives. To check on the status of your Social Security Card, you may call the US Social Security Administration without charge 1-(800)-772-1213 or visit their website at www.ssa.gov.

International Students And Social Security Numbers



Are you temporarily in the United States to attend college, language, vocational or nonacademic school with a nonimmigrant F-1, M-1 or J-1 student classification? Your school may ask you for your Social Security number. Some colleges and schools use Social Security numbers as student identification numbers. If you do not have a Social Security number, the college or school should be able to give you another identification number. Social Security numbers are generally assigned to people who are authorized to work in the United States. Social Security numbers are used to report your wages to the government and to determine eligibility for Social Security benefits. **Social Security will not assign you a number just to enroll in college or school.**

Do you plan to work?

If you want to get a job on campus, you should contact your designated school official for international students. This official can tell you if you are eligible to work on campus and give you information about available jobs. Also, your school may approve certain limited off-campus employment, as permitted under Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations. **If your school has authorized you to work either on or off campus, and you meet Social Security's eligibility requirements described in the next section, you can get a Social Security number.**

How to apply for a Social Security number

Applying for a Social Security number and card is free. When you apply for a Social Security number at a Social Security office, you must complete Form SS-5, *Application for a Social Security Card*, and provide the necessary documents. All documents must be either originals or copies

certified by the issuing agency. We cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents. Here are some examples of the documents you must bring.

Age

A birth certificate is generally the best evidence of age, and must be presented if it is in your possession or can easily be obtained. If not, we can consider other documents, such as your passport or a document issued by DHS, to prove your age.

Identity

We must see a document other than your birth certificate that shows the name you want on your Social Security card. We prefer a recently issued document with a photograph, such as your passport, or a document issued by DHS.

Immigration status

We need to see the DHS document, I-94, *Arrival/Departure Record*, issued to you when you arrived in the United States showing your lawful immigration status. If you are an F-1 or M-1 student, we also need to see your I-20A-B, *Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status*. If you are a J-1 student, we need to see your DS-2019, *Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status*.

Eligibility to work

If you are a J-1 student, you must provide a letter from your sponsor. The letter should be on sponsor letterhead with an original signature that authorizes your employment.

(over)

How long will it take to get a Social Security number?

We must verify your documents with DHS before we assign a Social Security number to you. We will assign you a Social Security number and issue a card within two weeks of receiving the verification from DHS. Most of the time, we can verify your documents quickly with DHS online. If your documents cannot be verified online, it may take DHS several weeks to respond to our request. We are working closely with DHS to reduce these delays.

Do I need a Social Security number before I start working?

We do not require you to have a Social Security number before you start to work, but the **Internal Revenue Service** requires employers to report wages using the Social Security number. While you wait for your Social Security number, your employer can use a letter from us stating that you applied for a number. You can also give your employer a copy of the fact sheet, *Employer Responsibilities When Hiring Foreign Workers*.

Contacting Social Security

For more information and to find copies of our publications, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov or call toll-free, 1-800-772-1213 (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778). We can answer specific questions and provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day.

We treat all calls confidentially. We also want to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some telephone calls.



TAXES

All ASPIRE Summer Work and Travel students must pay State, Federal and Local taxes (approximately 10-12%). However, they have the right and opportunity to complete forms obtained from the Internal Revenue Service so that they can get most of the taxes refunded to you after the end of the tax (calendar) year that you worked.

Taxes you will not have to pay:

- Social Security
- Medicare
- Federal Unemployment

When you receive your first paycheck, check to make sure that the 3 above taxes have not been taken out of your paycheck. If you do see any deductions under the word “FICA”, “SS” or “Soc Sec”, or “Medicare or Med”, or “FUTA”, then the employer has made a mistake. You should speak to the employer about this since the law is different for J-1 students and the employer will often be unaware that you are exempt from these three taxes. You may have your employer contact the ASPIRE Worldwide office for clarification. Go to <http://www.irs.gov> for Internal Revenue Service Publication 519 which tells about this exemption in Chapter 8, Social Security and Medicare Taxes: Students and Exchange Visitors. Or contact Taxback.com for free help.

W-4 FORM

When you begin your job, the employer will ask you to complete a W-4 form (Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate) to ensure that you are not over-taxed. Your employer will use the information on this form to determine how much tax should be withheld from your paycheck.

If you do not fill out your W-4 form properly, you may have to pay more tax in the future. The following instructions on filling out your W-4 form are from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Publication 515 (rev. 12/97) “Withholding of Tax on Nonresident Aliens and Foreign Corporations.”

- Check/tick only “single” marital status on line 3 (even if you are married or divorced).

- Claim only one withholding allowance on line 5, unless a resident of Canada, Mexico, Japan, Korea or a U.S. National.

- Request that an additional tax of \$7.60 per week be withheld on line 6. If the pay period is two weeks, request that \$15.20 be withheld instead every two weeks. This will protect you from owing money to the government at the end of your stay. This is special for you because you are an exchange visitor with a J-1 visa and therefore considered a non-resident alien.

“ If you do not fill out your W-4 form properly, you may have to pay more tax in the future.”

- Do not claim “Exempt” withholding status on line 7.

TAX REFUNDS

All individuals who earn income in the U.S.A. are required to file a tax return after the end of the calendar year. Your tax return will reflect your actual earnings for the previous year, the amount of taxes you paid and the total amount of taxes owed or refunded. To file your taxes you will need your W-2 and Form 1040NR-EZ.

At the beginning of the year following your summer work program, the host company will send you a W-2 (required by law to mail it to you by February 15). Before the end of your program, provide the host company with a self-addressed envelope so that he/she can mail you your W-2. This form summarizes your earnings and amount of taxes withheld from you the previous calendar year. AW-2 is usually composed of four copies: Federal copy, State copy, Local/City copy and Employee copy.

Upon receiving your W-2 form, you will fill out a 1040NR-EZ (Non-Resident Aliens with no Dependents) tax form. You can obtain this form (with instructions – don’t forget those) at the United States Embassy in your home country or on the Internet at <http://www.irs.gov>.

Once you have completed the form, mail it to:
 United States Internal Revenue Service Center
 Philadelphia, PA 19255 USA

If you overpaid the government, they will issue you a check. However, if you did

Sales Tax

not pay enough taxes, you must pay the government the balance. *You must file your tax return no later than April 15.*

If you have difficulties filing your Form 1040NR-EZ, you can contact TAXBACK.COM. Taxback.com is an Irish company that provides full tax services to work & travel students like you.

If a tax refund is due to you, Taxback.com will charge you 14% of your refund for processing your taxes. Taxback.com can be reached at:

TAXBACK.COM

3304 N. Broadway Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60657 USA

U.S. Free phone: (888) 203-8900, Fax: (312) 873-4202

Website: www.taxback.com/us

E-mail: info@taxback.com

SALES TAX

When making purchases, please keep in mind that what you see on the price tag is not always what you will pay at the sales register. States (and some counties and cities) will have sales taxes that are added onto the price of the purchases. Sales taxes will differ from state to state. The items that are taxed will also differ from state to state. For example, some states place a tax on clothes while others do not. New Hampshire is one state without any sales tax. The U.S.A. does not refund sales taxes.



Support Network

SUPPORT NETWORK For ASPIRE Placed Students

For the Summer Work Travel Program, ASPIRE Worldwide will draw on ASSE's long history of offering student exchange programs and its belief that strong local support leads to successful participants experiences. Area Representatives will be responsible for the Summer Work Travel students in his/her area. The Area Representative is the most important link in the chain connecting all the individuals that make up the ASPIRE community. He/she is not only the most visible to the students and companies, but his/her judgment is the most critical to the success of the program. Given that these individuals work from home and live in the area where you will be placed, their proximity brings needed support and structure to the program. Minimal requirements for these volunteer ASPIRE Area Representatives will include, but are not limited to:

- Provide post arrival orientation meeting for the student
- Be the key local contact for the company
- Provide a liaison role between the company and the student
- Visits with students at host company
- Provide student with support and resources as needed
- Conduct evaluations to measure quality and areas needing improvement

Note:
• In order for the Aspire Area Rep. to contact you, it is your responsibility to make sure he/she (as well as the program office) has your contact information.

WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

911 Call 911 for the police, fire department or an ambulance. Make sure you answer all questions clearly and carefully. Do not be afraid to approach the police at any time. If you are lost and see a policeman nearby, ask for directions. They will more than likely be able to assist you.

When dealing with the law authorities, ASPIRE Worldwide will provide verification of your status to law enforcement officials, but you will be expected to pay any fines or face any charges you have incurred. To avoid problems, take the time to learn the state and local laws for the city in which you are residing, e.g., minimum drinking age, traffic regulation, and drug enforcement policies. If you are accused of having committed a crime, the best advice in most circumstances is to talk to ASPIRE Worldwide or a lawyer before you answer any questions.

PROBLEMS – WHO TO CONTACT

You should always speak with your company supervisors first to solve problems that may arise. Because these individuals are busy, make an appointment to speak with him/her. If your supervisor is not responsive, speak with the manager or Human Resource Director. If this fails and you have been placed in your host company by ASPIRE, the ASPIRE Area Representative should be contacted. If you are unable to resolve your problems totally, the ASPIRE Worldwide Office at 1.888.3ASPIRE (1.888.327.7473) can be contacted.

! If you want to quit your job, you must call ASPIRE FIRST.

What is not an emergency?

- General information about jobs and housing
- Social Security and tax problems
- Employee/employer concerns
- Loss of DS-2019 form and/or I-94 form
- Loss of passport
- Basic legal information
- Change of flight – contact airline directly
- Homesickness
- Disliking job

“Always speak with your company supervisors first to solve problems that may arise.”

What is an emergency?

- Death
- Medical Mental Health emergency
- Victim of a crime
- An arrest

HEALTH CARE & INSURANCE INFORMATION

**Policy No. 07001 0827 Maximum sums insured in USD
SITE claims Service 277 Lower Cliff Dr., Laguna Beach CA 92651 USA**

Claim forms can be downloaded from the ASPIRE website, under Insurance Info.

All participants in the Summer Work Travel Program will receive prior to departure Insurance Information including claim forms. In summary, the policy will provide all participants with the following:

• *Medical Treatment – Unlimited*

If you need medical treatment due to an illness (a medical condition diagnosed as an illness), accident (a sudden and unforeseen event directly causing bodily injury), or assault (sudden and unforeseen external violence by another person directly causing bodily injury), costs deemed by the insurance company to be necessary and reasonable in relation to the treatment of your medical condition are covered for your entire stay abroad, except for psychiatric treatment which is covered for up to a maximum of 60 days of the stay abroad, the 60 days of coverage begins on the day of diagnosis. Chiropractic care and physical therapy require advance written referral from a medical doctor.

SITE CLAIMS SERVICE (top of page) MUST GIVE APPROVAL IN ADVANCE FOR ALL HOSPITAL TREATMENT AND FOR ALL OTHER EXPENSES LISTED ABOVE IF THE COST MAY EXCEED 1,500 USD. CONTACT YOUR ASPIRE AREA REPRESENTATIVE ABOUT PRE-CERTIFICATION.

Health certificates, vaccinations, routine medical exams, sports physical exams, eye exams, glasses, contact lenses, preventative care, acne (unless treated with antibiotics), treatment of pre-existing conditions, treatment of medical conditions related to pregnancy, lack of menstruation, mental illness, or use of alcohol, sedatives, narcotics, or other intoxicants are not covered.

Also not covered – injuries caused while participating in games or competitions

when representing a national or local athletics organization or club, injuries that occurred while working, or injuries caused while: mountaineering, parachuting, bungee jumping, hang gliding, parasailing, scuba diving, participating in martial arts, racing with motor driven vehicles, motorboats or horses, occupational hazards, suicide or attempted suicide, criminal act committed by you or act of aggressive violence initiated by you, or costs due to means of transport having to change route because of your medical condition.

• **Emergency Dental Treatment – 400 USD**

Costs up to 400 USD in the aggregate for the insurance period are covered **only** for treatment necessary to temporarily alleviate acute dental pain.

Pre-existing conditions are not covered.

• **Return Ticket – up to 2,500 USD**

Ticket to return to host country and home again at program end if a parent / sister / brother has died or you had to return for medical treatment in your home country and are going back to the host country to complete your stay. The ticket/booking must be authorized by or booked and paid for by us.

• **Disability – 100,000 USD or Death – 50,000 USD**

A lump sum compensation if your bodily functions are permanently lost or reduced solely due to an accident or assault. The maximum compensation corresponds to 100% disability and the payable amount is a portion of the maximum sum corresponding to the degree of disability, which is established according to the International standards of the Insurance Industry. A lump sum compensation and home transportation if you die solely due to an accident or assault. Compensation for disability or death due to contamination by bacteria, virus or other contaminated substance or illness or defects or sickly changes in your health condition or following from injuries excluded from coverage for cost of treatment are not covered. Death or disability commencing later than 3 years from the accident or assault will not be paid for

• **Theft, Robbery, Damage to Personal Property – 4,500 USD**

We will pay for the less expensive alternative of a) repair of or b) market value of the damaged property if your personal property is stolen and we are provided with a copy of the police report, or if it is damaged by fire, storm, traffic accident, or catastrophe. For this purpose, market value is defined to mean the purchase price of a new item less an amount based on the age of the stolen/damaged



property.

We will not pay for theft of jewelry, photo or electronic equipment, musical instruments, antiques or works of art (valuable property) from unlocked premises or premises to which more than you have access or from vehicles, whether locked or not. We will not pay for theft of other personal property from unlocked premises or when left unattended.

We will not pay for loss or damage due to wear and tear, unsuitable packing, damage due to liquid or smearable substances in your baggage, or any superficial damages without considerable effect on the usefulness of the item.

We will not pay for loss of or damage to motor driven vehicles, vessels, aircraft, animals, or property lost or damaged when left with someone for service or repair. Passports and valuable documents are limited to 500 USD.

• **Injury to Another Person/Damage to Another Person's Property – 1,000,000 USD**

We will only pay for damages to other people's property or for another person's injuries to the extent you are required to pay for such damages/injuries under applicable tort laws. This coverage is subject to notice being given us as soon as you have any reason to believe that a legal claim may be made against you. At the very latest such notice is to be given when a claim is first made against you. You may not choose your legal counsel. We will appoint counsel for you. Bills from legal counsel not appointed by us are not covered under the insurance.

We will not pay for such damages/injuries/costs which emanate from your pursuit of business, trade or profession or from ownership, use or control of aircraft, vessel, motor driven vehicles, or real estate or from your use of deliberate aggressive violence. We will not pay for liability assumed under contract if in excess of applicable tort laws or damage to/loss of property which you have borrowed, rented or otherwise have in your care, custody or control.

• **Litigation – 30,000 USD**

This coverage is subject to pre-certification of all costs by us and the appointment of legal counsel may be made only by us. Costs incurred before our appointment of legal counsel are not covered. Subject to these provisions, we cover your lawyers or litigation costs in case you are sued. We will not pay for costs pertaining to any kind of case emanating from activities excluded under the liability coverage above. We will not pay for costs pertaining to criminal prosecution, arbitration or cases deemed by us not fulfilling any justifiable interest or purpose to you.

Insurance

• Delay – 400 USD

We will pay your necessary and reasonable costs for clothes, toiletries, board, lodging and transportation if your checked baggage is delayed by more than 12 hours or you yourself are delayed by more than 12 hours when traveling with public means of transport and the reason for the delay is technical breakdown, weather conditions, catastrophe, intervention by authorities, illegal intervention by force (hijacking) or labor conflict. This coverage is available only after you supply us with proof the claim has been made to the carrier, and will be reduced by any remuneration they may pay you.

• Assistance and Payment of Claims

If you have general questions about filing a claim or you simply want some advice, please contact your ASPIRE Area Representative or the ASPIRE Office. **Completed claim forms (with your signature) should be sent to: SITE Claim Service, 277 Lower Cliff Drive, Laguna Beach, CA 92651 USA.**

If pre-certification of costs is required (see medical treatment), please contact your ASPIRE Area Representative or the ASPIRE Office. Claims are to be made in writing by using and completing all relevant details on a proper claim form. You can obtain the claim form from your ASPIRE Area Representative. Original detailed receipts, bills, and invoices you want to claim for payment are to be submitted with your claim form. In addition, attach medical records if claim exceeds 300 USD.

You must submit a claim form in order for us to process and pay your claim. The health care provider cannot do this for you – the SITE claim form must be completed and submitted by you.

If you had medical treatment you should obtain a detailed original itemized bill stating diagnosis, treatment and period of treatment from the attending physician, signed by the physician. All claims related to someone's death are to be substantiated by a death certificate.

Theft, robbery, and assault must be reported to the local police and a copy of the report is to be submitted with your claim.

In addition you are obliged to furnish SITE Claims Service with whatever information they may require in order to process your claim.

You will be charged a processing fee of 18 USD for each illness, accident or any other individual event if all claims pertaining to that event are submitted at the same time and on the same (one) claim form. If more than one claim form is submitted for expenses and services which relate to the same event or occurrence, the 18 USD will

Safety Reminders

be charged not only for the original claim but also for each claim following the original claim. To save money - collect all bills related to one event and submit them on one form. Do not submit more than one illness, accident or other event on the same claim form. **Please do not send the 18 USD to us**, it will be deducted from our reimbursement to you and / or the care providers.

This is a summary excerpt from the insurance conditions. The complete conditions may be obtained from your ASPIRE Office or SITE Claims Service at the above address.

Where this summary differs from the insurance contract, the insurance contract conditions will prevail.

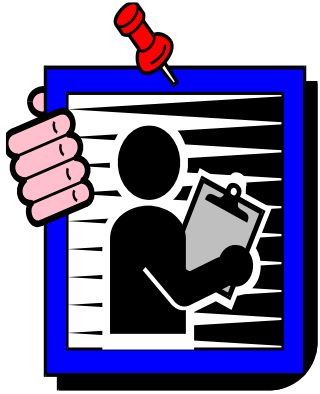


SAFETY & HEALTH REMINDERS

- Never carry large amounts of money.
- Do not go out alone at night.
- Make sure that you learn which areas to avoid at night.
- Make sure someone always knows where you are.
- Always lock the doors in the housing that has been arranged.
- Do not leave valuables around.
- Do not use drugs or associate with people who use drugs. It is illegal, and students will be arrested when caught. It is cause for immediate dismissal from the program.
- Always keep emergency numbers for the police, fire department, hospital, ASPIRE, etc. next to the phone and in purses or wallets.
- Avoid risky situations.
- Never assume it won't happen and take quick action when it does.
- Do not get into a car with somebody not known and trusted.
- Avoid areas where there is a feeling of unease.
- Do not enter a house if someone you expected to see is not there.
- Avoid confrontation – do everything possible to defuse a potentially violent situation.
- The drinking age in the U.S.A. is 21. If you are under 21 years of age beware. The laws in America are very strict concerning the drinking age. Most bars require that you show identification (ID) before you can enter. You will need to carry some form of photo ID. It is also illegal to drink alcohol on the street whether you are 21 or not.
- There are many regulations prohibiting smoking in public places. Smoking is banned on all domestic air flights, most office buildings, restaurants and public transportation. Look around before you light a cigarette. In recent years, it has become customary to avoid smoking at home or when visiting someone's home.



American Workplace



AMERICAN WORK PLACE

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Your English proficiency needs to be high enough to ensure that you can speak good conversational English so that you have a good experience and the company is also happy. If your English is inadequate, you will not have the same growth potential as those with good English. Many companies will promote students who perform well and are articulate. No promises but it does and will happen for some.

CHANGING JOBS

* If you want to change employer, you must contact the ASPIRE office first.

DRESS & GROOMING

As a representative of your place of employment, appearance will matter. You will have ongoing contact with the public and companies tend to be more conservative about the image of their employees. You must have clean and neat hair, in the natural color (or close to it). Hair that is dyed may have to be changed, which can be quite expensive in the U.S.A. Male workers must shave daily and female workers should not wear a lot of jewelry, or pierced



Tipping

jewelry in excess of earrings as determined by the site supervisor. Pierced jewelry in the tongue, nose, eyebrows, etc. is not permitted. Uniforms will likely be provided for you. However, some employers have specific requirements for items that students may be required to provide. For example, generally a certain type and color shoe will be required to be worn with uniforms. You should be prepared to purchase shoes in the U.S.A., if necessary. Many jobs require employees to wear soft-soled shoes, e.g., tennis/running shoes. Because the company image is so important, you should be prepared to accept advice about how to meet the employer standards that will vary from company to company.

OVERTIME

It is sometimes possible for you to work overtime to earn more money. It will depend on the company, position and the quality of the student's work. If you are interested in working overtime, make sure your employer knows.

LAYOFFS/FIRING (ASPIRE Placed Students)

Layoffs are usually because of financial problems within the company. You will usually be given notice before this happens and you should contact your ASPIRE Area Representative immediately. If you are fired, it is usually because the company is unhappy with your performance, which could include inconsistency, not being cooperative, being frequently late or absent from work, or poor attitude. You will usually be given notice before a firing, and you should contact your ASPIRE Area Representative for assistance. In these situations, students must return home immediately.

The law says that you must be paid wages to date if you quit work. The law also regulates the minimum amount of money you can be paid and the number of hours you should work. For most jobs, the minimum is \$5.15 per hour. However, the law may vary if you are receiving most of your wages through tips or room and board. The minimum wage for employees who also receive tips is \$2.13 per hour.

TIPPING

Americans generally tip the server in the restaurant 15-20% of the restaurant bill (unless the service is poor). The same practice applies to other service providers such as taxi drivers, bartenders and hair stylists. Tipping charts are often available in drug stores or card shops to assist you in knowing what is appropriate. In many cases, people make most of their income from tips so please respect this practice.





For students who require overnight accommodation upon arrival in the U.S.A. and those who wish to travel. If you're in the New York area, we are pleased to offer the following guest room rates at the Vanderbilt & West Side YMCA.

Guest Rooms are based on availability, and advance reservations are required.

FIT Rates VANDERBILT & WEST SIDE

June 1 – August 31	
SINGLE	TWIN
\$65.00	\$75.00

RESERVATION PROCEDURE:

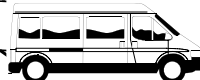
We request that advance reservations are made by calling the Reservations Sales Center at (917) 441- 8800, Monday-Friday, 9 am-5:00 pm. On weekends, or after normal RSC business hours, please contact the individual YMCA property directly as follows:

Vanderbilt (212) 756-9600
West Side (212) 875-4100

- A credit card is required in order to guarantee that the booking is held until arrival. In the event of a no-show, the credit card will be charged for a one-night no-show fee.
- If a credit card is not available, the reservation will be held until 8:00 pm, after which time, the reservation will be cancelled.
- All payments will be made upon arrival at the YMCA property, either by cash or credit card.
- Students must mention the code word **ASSE-ABROAD** in order to receive the special discounted rate.
- Upon arrival at the YMCA property, the student must present some form of identification from ASSE for validation purposes. This can be something as simple as a leaflet with the rates that are offered for this special project.
- Reservations must be canceled at least 48 hours in advance. If we receive an unusual amount of no shows, we will discontinue the arrangement unless ASSE wishes to pay for the rooms that are held.

Shuttle To and From YMCA

Shuttle buses are available from LGA, JFK and EWR airports to and from the West Side YMCA. The price is \$13 with the discount code. Discount is only available through online reservation at <https://www.supershuttle.com/webrez/Welcome.aspx>. The discount code is Y378L.



AMERICAN LIFE

HOUSING/TRANSPORTATION

Companies will in most cases provide the housing that will vary from dormitory style to shared apartments. Family stays are not available for this program, as we have found that homestays can be problematic because of transportation, odd work hours, isolation, age of students, etc. Most participants really want to live with other students for the social aspect of the program. Logistically, it makes sense to take advantage of the company housing which tends to be at or very near the work site.

The details of the housing will vary from employer to employer. In most cases, a housing deposit is required and the subsequent rent payments may be deducted directly from your paycheck through the employer. You should plan on paying a minimum of \$350 per month for housing. Some employers provide linens and some do not. Some have laundry facilities on-site and some do not. The cooking facilities may vary from site to site. Questions regarding housing should be addressed prior to arrival in the U.S.A. so that you are prepared.

We do not recommend buying a car while in the U.S.A. The ASPIRE Worldwide insurance does not cover driving a car in the U.S.A. Public transportation and the transportation provided by the employer should be used. Many students even buy a bicycle to use during their program. Hitchhiking is very dangerous in the U.S.A. so should never be done.

However, if you intend to buy a car while in the U.S.A., please understand that it is an expensive proposition that requires expenditure beyond the price of the car and gasoline, e.g., buying insurance.

TRAVEL & EXCURSIONS

Students on the Summer Work Travel Program will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of ongoing cross-cultural, sports and social activities available for the various exchange program participants in local areas that fall under the ASSE umbrella. In the event that your work schedule may conflict with some of the arranged activities, the Area Representative will provide you with lists of local social, sports and cultural activities that will help you assimilate into the American community.



All extended travel must take place at the completion of your work experience. If you wish to go by car, you must have a valid driver's license from your home country in order to drive in the U.S.A. You may also need an International Driver's License in some states, which can be obtained in your home country. To rent a car, most companies require that the driver be at least 21 years of age (many require you to be 25) and have at least one major credit card. For more information contact: www.aaa.com

The prices of different companies will vary, so make sure you ask about the following costs:

- 1) daily/weekly/weekend rates
- 2) unlimited free mileage vs. limited mileage with an extra charge per mile
- 3) drop off costs if returning to a location other than that of origin
- 4) insurance rates
- 5) fees for a second driver

Reliable companies include: Hertz, Avis, Budget, Alamo and Enterprise. For driving long distances, you might want to consider a "drive-away", which arranges the transportation of cars from one part of the country to the other. The car owner usually pays for the tolls and some fuel, and you, as the driver, are given a certain amount of time to drive it to the final destination. You must also pay a deposit that is returned when you safely deliver the car.



Look in the telephone yellow pages under the heading "Automobile Transport and Drive-A-Way Companies." You can also call the following drive-a-way companies:
AAA Driveaway & Truck Transport 1-800-233-4875
Across America Driveaway 1-310-798-3374
Auto Driveaway Co. 1-800-346-2277
Autotrail Transporters Inc. 1-800-828-9780
Autolog 1-800-432-5182

Travel by bus is a good and economical way to see the country. Greyhound is a nationwide bus company (1-800-231-2222; website: www.greyhound.com) with an extensive network giving you access to many cities. You can buy tickets individually from one city to another, or you can purchase special passes.

Amtrak Train Service can also be a good option. For example, the Amtrak Northeast Rail Pass allows foreign travellers to use the rail system throughout the northeast corridor from Virginia Beach north all the way to Montreal, or Niagara Falls. The purchaser can use this for unlimited stops along the way for as low as \$99 for three consecutive days of travel. For more information, contact www.shuttlebusplus.com.

LIFE & CUSTOMS

The U.S.A. is a large country with people from many different economic, social, ethnic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds. Since the founding of the U.S.A., over 60 million immigrants have arrived. Thus, stereotypes for Americans are difficult because there will always be segments of the population that do not fit the stereotype. However, there are a few characteristics that seem fairly common of most Americans:

- Time Conscious – High value on "being on time." Being late is not viewed as positive. Come to work on time.
- Assertive – Those who take initiative are respected. Take the initiative to meet people.
- Materialism – A strong respect for personal property and the expectation that one will be asked before using another's personal belongings.
- Informality – Social status does not impact how people are treated.
- Roles – Men and women have the same basic jobs. There is less of a separation based upon gender than in some other countries.



It is important to know that culture in the U.S.A. varies according to region, and how rural an area is. We recommend traveling to another part of the country to experience the difference in regional culture. The top 5 topics for American conversation are: 1) money and work; 2) movies and TV; 3) weather; 4) food; and 5) sports. These are good conversation openers.

ADJUSTING TO LIFE & CUSTOMS

Like all special experiences, you will have times that are easy and times that are difficult. All exchange students have ups and downs. These come from the excitement and the confusion of living in a new culture. Both obvious and subtle differences confront students, creating what is referred to as "culture shock."

Adjusting to Customs

The term, culture shock, was introduced for the first time in 1958 to describe the anxiety produced when a person moves to a completely new environment. This term expresses the lack of direction, the feeling of not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new environment, and not knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate. The feeling of culture shock generally sets in after the first few weeks of coming to a new place.

Symptoms:

- Sadness, loneliness, melancholy
- Crying easily
- Preoccupation with health
- Aches, pains, and allergies
- Insomnia, desire to sleep too much or too little
- Eating too much or too little
- Changes in temperament, depression, feeling vulnerable, feeling powerless
- Anger, irritability, resentment, unwillingness to interact with others
- Identifying with the old culture or idealizing the old country
- Loss of identity
- Trying too hard to absorb everything in the new culture or country
- Unable to solve simple problems
- Lack of confidence
- Developing stereotypes about the new culture
- Developing obsessions such as over-cleanliness
- Longing for family
- Feelings of being lost, overlooked, exploited or abused

Culture shock has many stages. The following stages can be ongoing or appear only at certain times. These stages are present at different times and each person has his/her own way of reacting in the stages of culture shock. As a consequence, some stages will be longer and more difficult than others. Many factors contribute to the duration and effects of culture shock. Included: individual's state of mental health, type of personality, previous experiences, socio-economic conditions, familiarity with the language, family and/or social support systems, and level of education.

Stage 1: Everything is new and fascinating. In this first stage, the new arrival may feel euphoric and be pleased by all of the new things encountered. This time is called the “honeymoon” stage, as everything encountered is new and exciting.

Stage 2: This is hard work. It is not so exciting anymore. A person may encounter some difficult times and crises in daily life. For example, communication difficulties may occur such as not being understood. In this stage, there may be feelings of dis-

Adjusting to Customs

content, impatience, anger, sadness, and incompetence. This happens when a person is trying to adapt to a new culture that is very different from the culture of origin. Transition between the old methods and those of the new country is a difficult process and takes time to complete. During the transition, there can be strong feelings of dissatisfaction.

Stage 3: Adapting is easier. This is characterized by gaining some understanding of the new culture. A new feeling of pleasure and sense of humor may be experienced. One may start to feel a certain psychological balance. The new arrival may not feel as lost and starts to have a feeling of direction. The individual is more familiar with the environment and wants to belong. This initiates an evaluation of the old ways versus those of the new.

Stage 4: A sense of belonging. The person realizes that the new culture has good and bad things to offer. This stage can be one of double integration or triple integration depending on the number of cultures that the person has to process. This integration is accompanied by a more solid feeling of belonging. The person starts to define him/herself and establish goals for living.

Stage 5: Mixed feelings about going home. Called the “re-entry shock.” This occurs when a return to the country of origin is made. One may find that things are no longer the same. For example, some of the newly acquired customs are not in use in the old culture.

Remember, the above feelings are natural and if you recognize that you are experiencing culture shock, you’ve already won half the battle. For more information on “Culture Shock” visit the following websites:

<http://www.internshipusa.org/life/culture/shock/main.html>

<http://www.esl-lab.com/shock1/shock1.htm>

<http://www.uwec.edu/counsel/pubs/shock.htm>

<http://www.cultureshockconsulting.com/>

<http://sistergoldenhair.com/uponarrival/shock.html>



TIPS FOR ADJUSTING

- Respect the host company's rules.
- Don't expect special treatment. You will be expected to work just as hard as your American counterparts.
- Treat customers with respect and a "smile."
- Work quickly and efficiently. Workers are expected to have a strong work ethic.
- Be aware of the local, state and national laws.
- Ask lots of questions to reduce unpredictability.
- Get enough sleep and eat a healthy diet.
- Take care of your personal hygiene and dress neatly.
- Lower expectations.
- Learn to laugh at mistakes, which is a positive way to approach the adjustment process.
- Keep busy and join in as many activities as possible to make friends and take advantage of the surroundings.
- Be willing to try new things: foods, sights and activities.
- Remember to say "thank you." It is a phrase used frequently in the American culture.
- Practice English as much as possible. It is the best way to improve proficiency and the comfort level of being in a foreign country.
- Communicate. No one can help a student with a problem or question if he/she doesn't speak up.
- Write down feelings.
- Talk with your ASPIRE Area Representative.
- Try to maintain a positive attitude about the experience and opportunity of living and working in a foreign country.
- Be patient. While you may feel a bit overwhelmed at first, it will all get easier in time.
- Remember, it is not better, it is not worse, it is just different!

ELECTRICITY

The U.S.A. electrical system uses 110 volt, 60 hertz (cycles). If your appliances from home use 220 volts, you will need to purchase a transformer and plug adapter that can accommodate the wattage of your appliances.

UNITS OF MEASURE

Temperature

In the U.S.A., the temperature is given in Fahrenheit. An easy way to convert Fahrenheit to Celsius is to subtract thirty from the Fahrenheit number and divide by two. While it's not totally accurate, it's close.

Metric Conversion

- 1 mile = 1.6 kilometers
- 1 yard = 91.4 centimeters
- 1 foot = 30.5 centimeters
- 1 inch = 2.54 centimeters
- 1 liquid quart = 0.95 liter
- 1 gallon = 3.8 liters

TIME ZONES

The continental U.S.A. (excluding Alaska and Hawaii) is divided into four time zones – Eastern, Central, Mountain, and Pacific. When it is 12:00 noon Eastern Time, it is 11:00 am Central, 10:00 am Mountain, and 9:00 am Pacific. The ASPIRE office is open from 9:00 am – 5:30 pm Pacific time. This means that if you are on the East Coast, you should call our office from 12:00 noon – 8:30 pm Eastern time. The U.S.A. keeps Daylight Savings Time by turning the clocks forward one hour.

TELEPHONES, INTERNET & E-MAIL

In most areas, to dial a local number, only the last seven numbers of the phone number are dialed. If a long distance number is dialed, the number "1" is dialed followed by the area code and 7 digit number. Long distance calls (outside of your "area code") in the U.S.A. can be costly so you should investigate which types of phone card options are available where you are residing. They can generally be purchased at grocery stores and post offices. The card is a pre paid telephone card that enables you to make telephone calls at a cheaper rate than is normally available through pay phones. To use the card, dial the toll-free access number on the back of the card and then enter the account number. This will allow you to make calls anywhere in the world from any



U.S. telephone as long as the account is in good standing. A card costs generally \$10 or \$20 and can be recharged when the account gets low. The option for keeping costs low is to make calls after 5:00 pm on weekdays and on weekends.

Besides the local and long distance numbers, there are also free toll-free numbers, which will start with 1-800, 1-888 or 1-877, plus the 7-digit number.

In making international calls, there are a couple of primary options:

You pay for the phone call

1. Dial “011”
2. Dial the Country Code
3. Dial the City Code (if the city code begins with “0”, leave the “0” out except if you are calling the Ukraine, Russia and Italy)
4. Dial the phone number

You want to make an international collect call (the person called will pay)

1. Dial “01” for international
 2. Wait for the operator to come on the line
- Tell the operator: “I would like to make a COLLECT CALL. My name is _____ and I would like to speak to _____, the phone number is _____.”

Access to e-mail will need to be explored in each community. Generally, public libraries have e-mail access for students. Many companies have Internet options for their employees. Internet cafes are also easy to locate in most locations.

If the employer provides e-mail and internet access, please respect their rules and hours regarding use.

Do not download items onto their computers or surf websites with objectionable content. This will only lead to problems for the employer’s Internet server, causing your usage to be terminated.

GOING HOME

Before you return home, please remember to return your evaluation form. These forms are the only way for ASPIRE Worldwide to evaluate how good our employers are. Your feedback will help us make our program even better in the future.

Remember to give your employer the self-addressed stamped envelope for your W-2 form. Collect friends’ numbers and addresses!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About Visas Issues, Restrictions and Return Home Requirements

What type of visa do I receive?

You are a participant in an educational exchange program approved by the US Department of State and will receive a J-1 visa. Under the terms of the J-1 visa, you are allowed to work for up to 4 months at work sites approved by the sponsor. The visa does not allow you to work as a domestic, au pair, camp counselor, or in the medical field. In Nov. 1986, the US Congress passed an Immigration Law requiring employers to verify that all employees – both US citizens and non-resident aliens— are eligible to work. The company supervisor will ask to see your passport and a copy of the Exchange Visitor Visa Form called DS-2019. This was the form that served to obtain the visa. The Immigration officer will stamp it and leave it in your passport. It should remain there at all times. We encourage you to make photocopies of your passport and the DS-2019 and keep them in a separate and safe place. These are the documents that prove your work eligibility and identity. You will also be asked to sign a form (I-9) that the host company keeps in its files. The form proves that the company has verified work eligibility.

Can I leave the U.S.A. and re-enter on my J-1 visa?

During your time off, we do not recommend leaving the U.S.A. given the short time frame of the program and commitments that have been made to the employer. However, if necessary, you may leave and re-enter the U.S.A. without obtaining a new visa, provided the visa and DS-2019 form have not expired, you hold a multiple-entry visa, the passport is still valid, and you have the copy of the DS-2019 form in your possession. Before you leave the United States, however, ASPIRE must

Frequently Asked Questions

approve of your international travel and provide a signature on the DS-2019 form to show that you are still in good standing with the work program. ASPIRE staff will coordinate this signature of the DS-2019 Form if:

- Your supervisor approves of the leave in writing to ASPIRE indicating the exact date of departure and return, the reason for the leave, and that you are in good standing.
- The above is sent to ASPIRE Worldwide along with the copy of the DS-2019 form at least 15 days before the planned departure.
- You send it in a self-addressed, stamped envelope in which to return your DS-2019 form.

Can I leave the U.S.A. early?

You will sign an agreement that commits you to a certain company and time frame. If you don't fulfill the commitment that will be very disappointing to the company as they will be counting on you for assistance. Thus, there can be no refund of any kind once you are in country. If you have to leave due to an emergency, our program will do everything possible to ensure a smooth departure and transition.

Can I choose to extend my visa once arrived in the U.S.A.?

Unfortunately, no. According to the visa regulations, you cannot work more than 4 months. Plus, you have an additional 30 days in which to leave the U.S.A. for home. Many students use the 5th month to sightsee and travel. They must go home after this period. To confirm the exact dates for departure, the white card (I-94) stapled into your passport by the US Immigration officer upon entry to the U.S.A. states the length of time you are allowed to stay in the U.S.A. In most cases it will be marked "D/S." This stands for "Duration of Status." It means that you can stay until the expiration date on the DS-2019 form plus 30 days for travel providing you remain in compliance of the visa conditions. During the 30-day travel period, you may be a tourist in the U.S.A., but may not work. If you leave the U.S.A. during the 30-day travel period, you cannot be re-admitted on the J-1 visa. If you wish to stay beyond the 30-day travel period, you must leave the country and reenter on another visa (tourist, student, etc.) The ASPIRE staff cannot help with this process. To stay illegally after the 30-day extension can prevent you from receiving future U.S. visa or immigration status.

What if I lose the copy of the DS-2019 Form?

You must have the copy of the DS-2019 Form for the visa to be valid. If this is lost, ASPIRE will replace the form for a \$50 fee. A good safeguard is to always keep the copy of the DS-2019 Form in the passport and have copies put elsewhere in a safe place. If you lose your passport, please contact your nearest Embassy or Consulate as soon as possible so that they can assist you in obtaining new documentation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I change jobs/positions once in the U.S.A.?

No. You may not change companies or leave earlier than what was committed. However, if you obtain approval of the employer/human resources director there may be a possibility to change positions within the same company. If you leave the assigned company before your agreement ends, you will be in breach of the ASPIRE agreement and J-1 visa conditions and will be reported off the program and repatriated.

Can I come back to the USA on a Work Travel visa?

As long as you are eligible to be a Work & Travel student, you may repeat your participation in this program. To help us improve program quality, please fill out and return your evaluation form. This would also enable us to quickly locate your record in the future.

