

# AIESEC UNITED STATES & GLOBAL CURRENT PROGRAM HANDBOOK



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## TRAINING TIMELINE \*\*\*VERY IMPORTANT\*\*\*

### BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL

1. Read the *AIESEC United States & Global Current Program Handbook*, BOTH pages of your DS-2019, and all other materials contained in your Welcome Packet thoroughly. Sign and date the bottom of your DS-2019.
2. **Submit your Program Pre-Arrival and Orientation Acknowledgement Form to AIESEC United States / Global Current:** <https://www.tfaforms.com/126563>
3. Schedule a visa appointment at the nearest US Embassy or Consulate using the **DS-160** form online - <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/forms/ds-160--online-nonimmigrant-visa-application.html> (also see page 7). Complete all necessary documents and prepare for your visa interview.
4. Attend your visa interview appointment in person and receive your J-1 visa. (Not required for Canadians)
5. Finalize your travel arrangements to the United States.

### IMMEDIATELY AFTER YOUR ARRIVAL

1. Complete your **Program Validation Form (PVF)** (<https://www.tfaforms.com/240799>) and email the following documents to [toj1forms@aiesecus.org](mailto:toj1forms@aiesecus.org) within 10 days of your arrival to the country. DS-2019 form, I-94 document, and J-1 visa with copies of the blue entry stamps.
2. Apply for a Social Security number. Please note that normal processing time is at least two weeks and can only be done **AFTER** submitting your PVF to AIESEC United States / Global Current.

### DURING YOUR PROGRAM

- Submit your Initial Evaluation form within the first 30 days of your training program.
- Submit your Mid-Point Evaluation - required halfway through your program.
- Have your DS-2019 travel validated if you plan to travel outside the continental US during your training program. See the *Traveling During your Program* section of this handbook for additional information.

### AT THE END OF YOUR PROGRAM

- Submit your **Final Evaluation** and **exit travel itinerary** two weeks (14 days) before the end date of your program.
- Contact AIESEC United States or Global Current to ensure that all your program evaluations have been received.
- Depart the US within 30 days of the program end date listed on your DS-2019.

Individuals in J status who fail to maintain their status, will start accruing unlawful presence on the earliest of any of the following:

The day after they no longer pursue the course of study or the authorized activity, or the day after they engage in an unauthorized activity

The day after completing the course of study or program, including any authorized practical training, plus any authorized grace period

The day after the Form I-94 expires; or

The day after an immigration judge orders them excluded, deported or removed (whether or not the decision is appealed).

Accrual of unlawful presence can, under certain circumstances, render the nonimmigrant ineligible for certain immigration benefits and may make them inadmissible to the United States.

Failure to validate your exchange visitor's participation within 30 days will cause the status of the SEVIS record(s) to change to No Show.

## WELCOME

Welcome to the AIESEC United States and Global Current international exchange programs. Congratulations on securing a position and embarking on this life-changing opportunity. AIESEC United States believes individuals should look for opportunities to build their global network, expand their worldview, and gain leadership skills. We believe individuals should use their leadership skills and a global perspective to increase international understanding and cooperation. Our belief is that if large numbers of individuals were to act in this way, it could be part of a solution to a more secure and peaceful world. We are happy that you will be participating in our program to help us achieve this dream.

AIESEC United States is your J-1 visa sponsor during your upcoming visit to the US as a Trainee or Intern. As an international exchange visitor through AIESEC United States, you have the opportunity to experience life in the US and gain a deeper understanding of another culture and, by comparison, your own culture. You will learn about yourself and your host country as you are faced with the day-to-day challenges of adapting to new customs and cultural norms, and you will have the chance to learn practical skills in the workplace which will contribute to your personal and professional development.

As your sponsor, AIESEC United States is responsible for ensuring that your training or internship experience complies with the US Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program regulations. AIESEC United States has been a designated sponsor of the Exchange Visitor Program since 1961, when the program was created in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange (Fulbright-Hayes) Act. "The purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program is to provide foreign nationals with opportunities to participate in educational and cultural programs in the US and return home to share their experiences, and to encourage Americans to participate in educational and cultural programs in other countries" (22 CFR § 62.1). Because of our dedication to increasing international understanding and cooperation, we seek to ensure that our participants have meaningful professional and cultural experiences while in the US.

AIESEC United States is confident that your exchange program will be exciting and that you will gain skills and experiences that will help you reach your long-term career goals. While you are here, you will make new friends and professional colleagues and share your way of life with your host community. Throughout the duration of your program, AIESEC United States is available to help you should you encounter any problems, or if you just have questions about your visa or the program. This J-1 Program Handbook provides you with important general information about the Trainee and Intern programs and life in the US, and details your responsibilities as an Exchange Visitor. Please read the entire guide and keep it in a safe place so that it is not lost. In the event that you lose your AIESEC United States & Global Current Program Handbook, contact our office to be sent a replacement.

**ABOUT AIESEC UNITED STATES** - AIESEC (pronounced "eye-sek") was founded in 1948 as a means to rebuild ties between war-torn European countries in the aftermath of WWII. At that time, Europe was in a state of economic devastation and an entire generation of leaders was lost. In 1949 AIESEC launched its first exchanges. That year 89 individuals participated in international traineeship exchanges. Today, the AIESEC association spans over 110 countries and territories across the globe, has an active network of 55,000 members, and exchanges over 13,000 individuals worldwide.

In the US, AIESEC is a non-profit organization headquartered in New York City with a student volunteer base at several universities. The Trainee and Intern Programs help US companies reach out to students, recent graduates, and young professionals from over 1,100 universities worldwide. We also help American students find work experiences abroad in any of our member countries through our reciprocal exchange programs.

**ABOUT GLOBAL CURRENT** - Global Current was established as a division of AIESEC United States to serve participants and clients that are not part of the AIESEC international network. All Global Current exchanges are made possible by and under the sponsorship of AIESEC United States.

*It's a great experience to do a J-1 Program. I learned a lot at work, I met great people, I got more open and self confident. And, I also improved my English a lot. If I could redo it, I wouldn't think twice and I would do it right again.*  
- Vanessa, Switzerland

**IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION** - If you need help or have a question regarding your program, our office is your first point of contact. Please call the AIESEC United States office in New York to speak with an AIESEC United States representative during normal office hours (9:00am – 5:00pm Eastern Time) at the following number: +1 212 757 3774. If there is an emergency situation that arises during non-business hours, we offer an off-duty hotline service at +1 332 267 2883.

The following scenarios are considered true emergencies:

- You, another participant, or your dependent are arrested
- You, another participant, or your dependent are hospitalized with a serious injury or illness
- You, another participant, or your dependent are the victim of a violent crime (call 911 first)
- You, another participant, or your dependent are stranded or need urgent help

The following problems are not considered emergencies. Please contact your AIESEC United States or Global Current Representative or the AIESEC United States office in New York during normal business hours:

- SEVIS program validation
- Loss or theft of your documents (including passport / J-1 visa, DS-2019, or Social Security card). If you have lost your passport, you must contact your home country's nearest consulate first and file a police report at a local police station. Or visit [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info\\_2009.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/info/info_2009.html) for more details.
- Loss or theft of valuables or other personal property
- Concerns about your host company or housing
- Concerns about your insurance or pending claims
- Travel validation or other need to return to your home country

**AIESEC UNITED STATES, INC.**

85 Broad St; 17th Floor; C/O WeWork

New York, NY 10004

Telephone: +1 212 757 3774

After Hours Emergency Line: +1 332 267 2883

<http://www.aiesecus.org>

**Responsible Officer:**

*Sheila Fomenko*; Email: [sheilaf@aiesecus.org](mailto:sheilaf@aiesecus.org)

**Alternate Responsible Officers:**

*Chrysalin Stanko*; Email: [chrysalins@aiesecus.org](mailto:chrysalins@aiesecus.org)

*Divya Kapoor*; Email: [divyak@aiesecus.org](mailto:divyak@aiesecus.org)

**US DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

**Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation**

**Private Sector Programs Division**

ECA/EC/D/PS -SA-4E, Room E-B001

2201 C St NW Washington, DC 20520

Telephone: (844) 300-1824

<http://travel.state.gov>

**24 Hour Department of State J-1 Visa Emergency**

**Hotline: 1-866-283-9090**

Department of State non-emergency email:

[jvisas@state.gov](mailto:jvisas@state.gov)

**EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM WEBSITE:** <http://j1visa.state.gov> – An excellent resource for all J-1 visa holders

**NON-IMMIGRANT RIGHTS, PROTECTIONS AND RESOURCES** – The WWTVPRA (William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act) outlines information for Exchange Visitors and other Non-Immigrant visa holders concerning their rights, protections and available resources. For more information, please visit <http://exchanges.state.gov/jexchanges/index.html> to download the Non-Immigrant Rights, Protections and Resources pamphlet. The pamphlet provides clear information on important issues relating to the health, safety and welfare of Exchange Visitors. If your rights are violated, please contact AIESEC United States. The following resources are also available to you:

**NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOURCE CENTER 24-**

Hour Toll-Free Hotline: 1-888-373-7888

**TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND WORKER EXPLOITATION**

**TASK FORCE COMPLAINT LINE**

(Monday – Friday 9am-5pm Eastern Time)

1-888-428-7581

## PROGRAM RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Exchange Visitor Program is currently administered by the Office of Private Sector Exchange in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. This is the organization of the US Department of State that grants designation and monitors the compliance performance of sponsors of the Exchange Visitor Program. In monitoring compliance, The Office of Private Sector Exchange provides program oversight and interpretation of program regulations that help sponsors ensure that exchange programs like your own are of the highest quality.

To meet the legal requirements for the J-1 Training / Internship Program, you were required to demonstrate in your application that you meet either of the following eligibility requirements:

### TRAINEE

- A degree or a professional certificate from a post-secondary academic institution outside the United States, and at least 1 year of **full-time** work experience outside the United States in an occupational field related to your proposed training, **OR**
- At least five years of **full-time** work experience outside the US in an occupational field related to your proposed training.

### INTERN

- Currently enrolled **full-time** in and pursuing studies at a degree or certificate granting post-secondary academic institution outside the US, **OR**
- A recent graduate from such an institution (date of graduation may be no more than 12 months prior to the program start date)

You must also meet the following AIESEC United States / Global Current requirements:

- Functionally fluent (advanced level) in both spoken and written English
- No plans to remain in the US after completing training and that you maintain strong ties to your home country
- J-1 visa application through a consulate abroad (AIESEC United States is unable to assist with internal changes of visa status)

In administering the J-1 Trainee / Internship Program, AIESEC United States is required by the US Department of State to comply with the following regulations (22 CFR § 62.22):

- Ensure that your host company has developed a detailed training or internship plan with defined objectives
- Ensure that the skills, knowledge, and competence that you gain during your training or internship are offered through a structured program of activities appropriate to and described in your training or internship plan. These activities may include classroom training, seminars, rotation through several departments, on-the-job training, and conference attendance
- Ensure that your host company and their representatives who provide instruction and mentoring possess adequate skills and are competent to provide the instruction described in your training plan, and that sufficient facilities, equipment and personnel are available to provide your training
- Ensure that continuous supervision and evaluation of your training or internship is provided by your host company.
- Ensure that your training or internship is not in an unskilled occupation or in a position normally filled by full-time or part-time employees
- Ensure that you meet the above-mentioned eligibility requirements and that the J-1 Training / Internship Program and your placement are suitable to your education and experience

The purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program, in part, is to foster the exchange of ideas between Americans and foreign nationals and to stimulate international collaborative teaching, lecturing and research efforts. The exchange of professors and research scholars promotes the exchange of ideas, research, mutual enrichment, and linkages between research and educational institutions in the United States and foreign countries. It does so by providing foreign professors and research scholars the opportunity to engage in research, teaching and lecturing with their American colleagues, to participate actively in cross-cultural activities with Americans, and ultimately to share with their countrymen their experiences and increased knowledge of the United States and their substantive fields.

**SEVIS** – The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) was implemented on January 30, 2003 and is used to track all student and exchange visitors to the US. Failure to comply with SEVIS regulations could lead to serious consequences, such as automatic termination of your program. Termination will affect your current visa and could result in denial for any future visa applications for you or your immediate family. If your program and visa are terminated, you are in the US illegally.

- You must inform AIESEC United States of your physical residential address using the **Program Validation Form (PVF)** within 10 days of your arrival to the US. AIESEC United States uses this information to report your arrival to the Department of Homeland Security and show that you are participating in good standing. If you fail to return your PVF, you will be reported to SEVIS and USCIS (US Citizenship and Immigration Services) as out of status, which results in program and visa termination.
- If you move at any time during your program, you must submit your change of address via email or send an updated PVF to AIESEC United States within 10 days of your move so that we can update SEVIS. You must also complete Form AR-11, which is the Alien's Change of Address Card. This form is available online at the following link: <https://egov.uscis.gov/crisgwi/go?action=coa>
- If you end your program early without permission granted by AIESEC United States and/or your host company, you will be reported to SEVIS and USCIS (US Citizenship and Immigration Services) as out of status, which results in program and visa termination. Contact your AIESEC United States or Global Current Representative immediately if you are considering abandoning your training program.
- If you are reported as out of status to SEVIS and USCIS, you have the option to appeal to AIESEC United States for program reinstatement. Contact the Responsible Officer for more information. You should note that there is a fee imposed by the US Government to be reinstated. This cost will be the responsibility of the trainee/intern.

**SECTION 212(e) HOME COUNTRY PHYSICAL PRESENCE REQUIREMENT** – Section 212(e), commonly known as the Two-Year Home Residence Rule, is a restriction that your home country government may request that the US place on future applications for US visas for two years after your program is complete. The intent of this rule is to ensure that you return home and apply the skills acquired during your training or internship. AIESEC United States is unable to support requests for waiver of 212(e) status. If you are subject to 212(e), this restriction will be listed on your J-1 visa.

**INSURANCE** – As a participant of the Exchange Visitor Program, you must be enrolled in an insurance policy that meets the standards required by program regulations (22 CFR § 62.14). AIESEC United States has partnered with IMG to offer a program that meets the requirements listed below. Enrollment in this insurance plan is mandatory unless an alternative agreement was made in the past between your Host Company and AIESEC United States. Please note that, if you are traveling with your spouse or other J-2 dependents, you are required to enroll them in the same insurance plan. Minimum coverage of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness

- Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000
- Expenses associated with medical evacuation to your home country in the amount of \$50,000
- Deductibles may not exceed \$500 per accident or illness
- Policy must be maintained during the entire duration of your program

For more information on your insurance plan, please refer to the brochures attached in your Welcome Email

*Read carefully all the documents provided by AIESEC US / Global Current.  
- Guillaume, France*

## YOUR DOCUMENTS

To begin your Training / Internship Program in the US, you must be in possession of all the documents discussed within this section. You will need many of these documents throughout the duration of your program, so it is important that you read and thoroughly understand this segment of the Program Handbook.

**FORM DS-2019 CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR THE J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM** – The DS-2019 is authorization to complete your training or internship assignment in the US. After reviewing your application and determining that you meet the requirements for AIESEC United States' J-1 Program, AIESEC United States will issue your DS-2019. This document identifies the duration of your program (Section 3), your "site of activity" or training location (US Address, Section 1), indicates that you are under AIESEC United States' sponsorship, and is required at the time of your visa application. It is very important that you keep this document safe. **\*\*\*You must have this document with you when you travel to the US\*\*\*. AIESEC United States' replacement fee for lost DS-2019s is \$100.**

**FORM DS-7002 TRAINEE / INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT PLAN (TIPP)** – The DS-7002 is your official training or internship plan, which includes a description of your program and details the specific program objectives, tasks, and the methods of evaluation for each phase of training. This document is required for your J-1 visa appointment. Please familiarize yourself with the details in this document as you may be required to discuss the contents during your visa appointment.

**I-901 SEVIS FEE TRANSACTION RECORD** – SEVIS tracks all J-1 and F-1 visa holders during their visits to the US. All applicants for these visa types pay a fee that helps to cover the cost of the tracking system. Your I-901 SEVIS Fee Receipt is proof that you have completed your payment, and is a required document at the time of your visa application.

*As your sponsor, AIESEC United States will provide you with a DS-2019 form, an I-901 SEVIS Fee Transaction Record, an original Host Company Acceptance Letter, and the DS-7002 your host company completed. These items are included in your Program Welcome Packet.*

**J-1 Visa** – The J-1 Visa is a non-immigrant visa granted to authorized visitors who are participating in exchange programs under the sponsorship of an organization like AIESEC United States. The J-1 Trainee and J-1 Intern Visas are authorized and granted by US Consulates and Embassies for the purpose of professional training or gaining experience in a specific area of specialty or study. The maximum duration of a J-1 Trainee Visa is 18 months. The maximum duration of a J-1 Intern Visa is 12 months. Please note that AIESEC United States does not have the authority to grant visas, only the designation to issue the necessary paperwork which allows you to apply for the J-1 visa.

**You must apply for a J-1 visa before entering the US.** Procedures for visa application vary at each US Consulate and Embassy. It is best to contact your nearest Consulate or Embassy for frequently updated information regarding visa requirements and application procedures, visit <http://usembassy.state.gov> for a link to the nearest visa post.

It is important that you plan your visa appointment in advance of your travel. (Canadian participants, please see the special notice at the conclusion of this section). Regulations require that all visa applicants must appear in person for an interview before a visa can be issued. Interviews are typically available by appointment only and are scheduled through the consular section. **The appropriate contact information and the procedure for making a visa appointment are available at each Embassy's or Consulate's website.**

Participants are required to complete the DS-160 form to schedule their appointment – <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/forms/ds-160-online-nonimmigrant-visa-application.html>

**APPLYING FOR YOUR J-1 VISA** – AIESEC United States has provided the following documents that are required for your visa application:

- DS-2019
- DS-7002
- I-901 SEVIS Fee Transaction Record
- Company Offer Letter

In addition to these items you must also complete the online visa application (DS-160) via the US Embassy's/Consulate's website and present the following at the time of your visa appointment:

- **A PASSPORT** – Must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the end date of your Trainee / Intern Program.
- **AN ADDITIONAL PASSPORT PHOTO** – Photo must measure 2 inches by 2 inches and be on a white background.
- **PROOF OF INCOME AND TIES TO YOUR HOME COUNTRY** – You must demonstrate your financial stability and permanent ties to your home country or country of permanent residence. Your Company Acceptance Letter may provide your proof of income during your program if you will be earning a stipend during your program. Other acceptable documents are bank statements.

**VISA FEES** – Non-immigrant visas to the US require an application fee that covers the costs associated with manufacturing, processing, and printing the visa. The current fee is \$160 and is mandatory. Some applicants may be required to pay an additional visa issuance fee, depending on their country of origin. Visa issuance fees are based on “reciprocity,” or the amount of money another country charges citizens of the US for a similar visa. For a schedule of fees, visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/fees/fees-visa-services.html>

**VISA VALIDITY** – Depending on current policies at your local US consulate visa post, the expiration date reflected on your J-1 visa may not match the program dates in Section 3 of your DS-2019. Many visas are valid for a shorter time period than the duration of exchange programs. This discrepancy is normal and does not affect your training or internship program unless you find it necessary to travel outside of the continental US after the expiration date on your visa. Please see the *International Travel* section (page 27) for further information.

Please note that you may not enter the US more than 30 days before the program start date on your DS-2019.

**FORM I-94 ARRIVAL-DEPARTURE RECORD** – available online at this link: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>

Information regarding your arrival and your program will be recorded on this document by a USCIS agent when you pass through immigration inspection upon arrival. This document is very important to your program. It is needed for your Social Security application and will be retained by USCIS when you depart the US. Each time you enter the US on your J-1 visa, your information will be updated.

**SPECIAL NOTICE FOR CANADIAN CITIZENS** – Canadian citizens are not required to apply for a visa prior to traveling to the US. (“Landed Immigrants” must apply for a J-1 visa prior to arrival). At the time of immigration inspection at the US border or other point of entry, you must request permission to enter the US with J-1 Visa status. You must also request a Form I-94. You will not be issued a visa. Be sure to inspect your documents before leaving immigration inspection. The notation “J-1, D/S” should be written clearly on your I-94, and your DS-2019 should be signed by the immigration official. If you do not enter the US on your J-1 visa and/or fail to get an I-94 card, you will not be legally able to train or intern in the US with your host company.

*Travel Tip: Make a photocopy of your passport and J-1 visa before you leave your home country. After your arrival to the US, make a photocopy of your Ds-2019 form. Keep all of your documents in a safe place. In the event you lose your original passport or other documents, the photocopies will be very important while you wait for replacements.*

*Make sure you start the procedures for the visa on time!*  
- Eveline, Belgium

*Be very patient regarding the visa process.*  
- Thiago, Brazil

*Keep all the required documents handy and always keep a copy of passport and ID in case of emergency.*  
- Yukun, Japan

## YOUR COMMITMENT

When you applied for the AIESEC United States Training or Internship Program, you received a Company Offer Letter and DS-7002 Trainee / Internship Placement Plan (T/IPP) which contained important information, including a detailed description of your program and responsibilities, as well as information on your stipend, housing, transportation, and activities available through your host community. These documents will be a reference tool throughout your program, so it is important that you have access to a copy of your T/IPP and accompanying materials. If you did not get any of this information from your host company, please contact our office directly for these details.

**MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TRAINING OR INTERNSHIP** — Your training or internship opportunity allows you to challenge yourself and learn what you are capable of doing while experiencing personal growth and life in the US. Your host company in the US benefits from your international perspective and the skills you develop during your program. Host companies offer traineeships and internships with a certain set of expectations. When you accept an offer, you are joining your host company's team and making a commitment to complete your program to the best of your abilities by fulfilling your training or internship agreement, accepting regular feedback from your training supervisor, and participating in each day's activities with enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.

Flexibility and teamwork are keys to a pleasant work environment. It may take several weeks for you to become completely comfortable in your training environment but the following tips will help make your transition easier:

- Be respectful and courteous to your supervisor and colleagues. Extend the same courtesy and kindness to your host company's clients and customers.
- Be on time every day. Arriving 5 – 10 minutes earlier than your scheduled start time is considered favorable and allows you extra time to prepare for your day.
- Dress appropriately for your workplace. The American workplace is often less formal than its international counterparts, but each company's policies are unique. Typically, more professional office environments require business attire. Look to your supervisor and colleagues for cues on what is considered appropriate.
- Focus on your training or internship during the day. Socializing is common in the American workplace, but should be brief. You will have time to get to know your colleagues during breaks and will have the opportunity to develop personal relationships away from the work environment. Personal matters should be attended to on personal time.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- Be prepared for the unexpected. You may occasionally be asked to take on extra tasks or responsibilities that are outside of your program plan.

*Ensure clear contact with your supervisor such that all accommodations and transport issues are resolved prior to arrival.*  
- Eric, Canada

*Research American corporate culture and see how it fits one's personality and thereby learn to a certain extent what to expect once the program starts.*  
- Balaji, India

*Make the most of your internship by asking questions on what you do not understand. Always be friendly and interested. Try to make the most of the city you are staying in by researching beforehand on things to do and see.*  
- Martina, UK

As in any other work environment, you may encounter challenges during your training or internship. If a problem arises, or if you have concerns about your progress, your training or internship plan, or your relationships with your colleagues, approach your supervisor in a calm and polite manner to talk about the problem you are experiencing. If your host company is not fulfilling basic conditions of your program or does not provide the experiences you expected, it is important to talk to your training supervisor about the problem. If your concerns are not resolved, please call your AIESEC United States or Global Current Responsible Officer/Alternate Responsible Officer or your AIESEC Local Committee Representative for assistance.

As a trainee or intern, you have most of the same rights as any of your colleagues at your host company. For more information on your specific rights as a J-1 Trainee or Intern, please visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/temporary-workers.html> to download the Non-Immigrant Rights, Protections and Resources pamphlet. Contracts are not typical for American employers. This means that employers may hire or fire staff “at will.” The benefits that you are offered through your host company may not be those you are accustomed to in your home country. Each host company’s policies toward vacation, sick leave, and insurance vary. It is best to speak to your supervisor regarding the benefits for which you are eligible.

**WORKPLACE SAFETY** — According to the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA), all American employers are required by law to provide a workplace free of recognized hazards that could cause illness or death. Trainees and interns must comply with safety and health regulations practiced by their host companies. If you feel that something about your workplace is unsafe or dangerous, speak to your supervisor. All host companies are required to offer Worker’s Compensation Insurance as you will see noted on your DS-7002.

If you are injured during the course of your program at your host company, you must speak to your supervisor immediately and inform your AIESEC United States Representative. You may be entitled to Workers Compensation Insurance for treatment of your injury. If so, your host company or entity affording the coverage is responsible for paying for medical care related to your injury. If you feel that you have been asked by your supervisor to perform tasks that you feel are dangerous, contact your AIESEC United States Representative or your Global Current Responsible Officer/Alternate Responsible Officer.

**DRUG TESTING** — Host companies have the right to request and require all employees, including trainees and interns, to undergo drug testing. Some host companies may require that you complete drug testing prior to your acceptance as a trainee or intern, or before your arrival to the US. Testing positive for drugs is sufficient grounds for termination of your program and your immediate return to your home country.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION** — Sexual harassment and racial discrimination are both serious matters in the US and violate Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1965, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin. Most American organizations and workplaces also prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination characterized by unwelcome sexual advances or attention, request for sexual favors, or other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature. Both sexual harassment and racial discrimination create intimidating, hostile, and offensive work environments, and interfere with employees’ performance. If you feel that you have been the victim of sexual harassment or racial discrimination, speak to your supervisor, or contact your AIESEC United States /Global Current Representative for assistance. Complaints of sexual harassment or racial discrimination filed against you by your host company colleagues or members of AIESEC United States are grounds for disciplinary action and could be sufficient grounds for termination of your program and your immediate return to your home country. Wilberforce Pamphlet: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/temporary-workers.html>

As a program participant, you are subject to the laws of the US and policies of AIESEC United States. Failure to comply with the following guidelines can result in termination of your training or internship program:

- You must remain with the same host company through the duration of your program.
- You may not change host companies.
- You must train full-time (at least 32 hours per week) during your program.
- You may not accept a second job in addition to your training or internship.
- You may not be enrolled in a university or school to take courses that offer credits toward a degree. You may, however, enroll in classes (dance/arts, languages, etc.) for personal enjoyment or further enhancement of your experience in the US. Should you choose to enroll in extracurricular classes, they should not in any interfere with your training or internship program.
- Participants who are, or who become pregnant during the course of the program are eligible to complete their training provided that they produce proof of insurance to cover obstetrical care within 30 days of confirming the pregnancy.

In the event a J-2 dependent becomes pregnant during the course of the program, similar proof of insurance must be provided within 30 days. **The insurance plan offered through AIESEC United States does not cover pregnancy.**

**TERMINATION OF YOUR COMMITMENT** - In the event that you are unable to resolve problems that are affecting your program, AIESEC United States and Global Current are available to help in discussions with your supervisor. **It is urgent that you speak with your AIESEC United States or Global Current Account Manager or a Responsible Officer before you make a decision to break the terms of agreement with your host company.** You should never leave your traineeship without the express written permission of AIESEC United States or Global Current. If you leave your host company without this permission, you will be reported to SEVIS and USCIS as out of status, which results in program and visa termination.

On rare occasions, trainees or interns are fired or dismissed from AIESEC United States' program due to uncooperative or inappropriate behavior. If you are fired, you must contact your AIESEC United States Account Manager or the Responsible Officer immediately to discuss the issues at hand. In the event that you are dismissed by AIESEC United States, you will be reported to SEVIS and USCIS as out of status, which results in program and visa termination.

**UNEXPECTED TERMINATION** – Trainees and interns whose training periods are terminated prematurely by the host company for reasons beyond the control of the trainee or intern are eligible to continue their programs at another host company in the US. The following conditions apply:

- You must secure your own position
- The second program may not go beyond the end-date on your original DS-2019
- The second program must be in the same field as your original training or internship
- No applications for extension of the second program will be accepted
- Full program fees will be assessed to the second host company – please contact AIESEC United States or Global Current for exact fees
- All paperwork (Host Company Application, Form DS-7002 Trainee / Internship Placement Plan (TIPP) , and Company Acceptance Letter) and payment must be submitted to AIESEC United States within 30 days of the termination from your original program

**EXTENDING YOUR COMMITMENT** – Traineeships can be extended to the maximum duration of 18 months. Internships can be extended to the maximum duration of 12 months. If you are participating in your program and find that you are in need of an extension, have your supervisor contact AIESEC United States or Global Current to request the Extension Documents. All requests for extensions will be evaluated. If your request is approved, completed paperwork, \$1,000 extension fee and the applicable health insurance fee (payable to AIESEC United States) are due at the time the extension is processed. For AIESEC US Participants, the fee is \$500 + the difference in Exchange fees. Either you or your host company is responsible for this fee.

**30-DAY TRAVEL PERIOD** – At the conclusion of your program, you are allowed to remain within the US for up to 30 days after the program end date on your DS-2019. This “grace period” is optional, but is an excellent time to take advantage of sightseeing and travel opportunities within the Continental US. You **cannot** travel to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, or any other country during this time as immigration inspection is required for re-entry to the US. You are expected to return to your home country on or before the final day of this grace period. If you elect to take advantage of this travel period, you must extend your insurance to cover the remaining duration of your stay. For more information on extending your insurance coverage, please contact your AIESEC United States or Global Current representative.

Please note that you may neither intern/train during this grace period nor may you earn income of any kind. The grace period is strictly for the purpose of traveling in the US or taking care of personal matters.

*Time manage and prepare for all possible contingencies.*  
- Siddanth, Australia

*Get all available information about your host company, its activities and about anticipated work in this host company.*

- Pavel, Russia

## GETTING STARTED

You are now ready to embark on an exciting experience with your Host Company and community! At this time, you should already be in regular communication with your host company and/or your AIESEC Local Committee to confirm your arrival plans and make housing arrangements. Though you are probably ready to begin your assignment immediately, there are a few additional program rules and procedures that you must follow before you can officially begin your training program.

**ARRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES** – When you arrive at your point of entry in the US, you should expect to present your passport and program documents to US Immigrations and Customs agents who are stationed at the airport. (If you are a Canadian citizen, you will be requesting J-1 status at this time). **You will be allowed to enter the US no more than 30 days prior to the start date of your program as it appears on your DS-2019. AIESEC United States recommends you take advantage of this. Arriving early will permit you time to settle in, apply for your social security number, find housing, etc.** You will be asked to complete a Customs Declaration Form (Form 6059B), and will likely be asked many questions regarding the nature of your visit to the US. You should expect that Customs officials will open your baggage and inspect the contents, so be sure to declare any food products, any items you have purchased outside the US that are not for your own specific personal use (this includes gifts for friends or family), and any “duty free” goods purchased during your travel. You will not be asked to itemize your personal clothing, toiletries, or small electronics. Wait patiently and cooperate with all US Immigration and Customs requests. These officers are performing important duties that help maintain the general safety of the US. Your respect for their responsibilities is appreciated.

**VALIDATING YOUR PROGRAM** - You must inform AIESEC United States of your physical residential address by completing and submitting the Program Validation form (PVF) **within 10 days of your arrival to the US** (Your PVF can be completed here: <https://www.tfaforms.com/240799>). AIESEC United States uses this information to report your arrival in SEVIS and to the Department of Homeland Security. This action shows that you are participating in good standing and are ready to begin your program. If you fail to report your US residential address, you will be reported to SEVIS and USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) as out of status, which results in program and visa termination. Please scan and email to – [J1Forms@aiesecus.org](mailto:J1Forms@aiesecus.org). \*If you have not located a permanent residence you may list a temporary residence or hotel with room number until your residence has been located.

The following items must accompany your completed PVF:

- Photocopy of your DS-2019 with consular signature
- Photocopy of your I-94 document - <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/recent-search>
- Photocopy of your J-1 Visa
- U.S. Date of Entry Stamp

**\*If you move at any time during your program, please send us a new PVF with your updated address. Please send this within 10 days of relocating to your new address. We will instruct you accordingly.**

**EMPLOYMENT DOCUMENTS AND TAXES** – Though you are an international trainee or intern at your host company, your host company requires that you complete the same documents as American employees. These documents are required by the US government and concern your eligibility to train and receive your stipend. All positions that offer stipends or other compensation are considered paid. If you are paid by an employer abroad, you may not be obligated for income tax withholdings. Please speak with your supervisor to confirm.

For all participants receiving stipend payments from a US source, a portion of your earnings will be withheld from each of your paychecks for your income tax contribution. Many states and some cities also withhold income taxes. As a trainee or intern, you will pay some, but not all, of the taxes that a US citizen or resident is required to pay.

Please note that AIESEC US or Global Current staff cannot answer specific tax questions as they are not qualified tax experts. Please contact your host company HR department or a tax professional with any questions that you may have.

**PARTICIPANTS PAY •**

- Federal Income Tax
- State Income Tax
- City Income Tax

**PARTICIPANTS Do NOT PAY •**

- FICA (Social Security and Medicare Tax)
- FUTA (Federal Unemployment Tax)

You will need to complete the following documents for your host company prior to beginning your training or internship:

**FORM I-9 EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY FORM** – This document is related to your work authorization and is required of all US citizens, residents, and visa holders at the time they begin employment or training. Though a representative from your host company will most likely provide assistance as you complete this document, the following are helpful hints:

## SECTION 1

- Write your address. If you have not yet secured permanent housing, enter your host company's address.
- Write your Social Security number (if it has been issued).
- Check the box "an alien authorized to work until \_\_\_\_\_." (The end date in Section 3 of your DS-2019 should be entered here).
- For the "Alien # or Admission #," enter the admission number that is on your Form I-94.

See the example below for an illustration of Section 1

Section 1. Employee Information and Verification (To be completed and signed by employee at the time employment begins.)			
Print Name: Last	First	Middle Initial	Maiden Name
Smith	John	D	
Address (Street Name and Number)		Apt. #	Date of Birth (month/day/year)
123 Main Street		101	04/01/1985
City	State	Zip Code	Social Security #
Anytown	NY	10000	000-00-0000
<b>I am aware that federal law provides for imprisonment and/or fines for false statements or use of false documents in connection with the completion of this form.</b>		<b>I attest, under penalty of perjury, that I am (check one of the following):</b> <input type="checkbox"/> A citizen of the United States <input type="checkbox"/> A noncitizen national of the United States (see instructions) <input type="checkbox"/> A lawful permanent resident (Alien #) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An alien authorized to work (Alien # or Admission #) _____ until (expiration date, if applicable - month/day/year) 06/30/2013	
Employee's Signature		Date (month/day/year)	

## SECTION 2 (LIST A)

See the Example below for Section 2.

The information concerning your I-94 should match the information from Section 1 exactly.

Section 2. Employer Review and Verification (To be completed and signed by employer. Examine one document from List A OR examine one document from List B and one from List C, as listed on the reverse of this form, and record the title, number, and expiration date, if any, of the document(s).)				
List A	OR	List B	AND	List C
Document title: Passport & I-94				
Issuing authority: United Kingdom				
Document #: 000000000000				
Expiration Date (if any): 10/10/2020				
Document #: 000000000000				
Expiration Date (if any): 06/30/2013				
<b>CERTIFICATION:</b> I attest, under penalty of perjury, that I have examined the document(s) presented by the above-named employee, that the above-listed document(s) appear to be genuine and to relate to the employee named, that the employee began employment on (month/day/year) _____ and that to the best of my knowledge the employee is authorized to work in the United States. (State employment agencies may omit the date the employee began employment.)				
Signature of Employer or Authorized Representative		Print Name	Title	
Business or Organization Name and Address (Street Name and Number, City, State, Zip Code)			Date (month/day/year)	

**FORM W-4 EMPLOYEE'S WITHHOLDING ALLOWANCE CERTIFICATE** — This document is used to determine the correct amount of income tax that should be withheld from your stipend. The instructions below should be followed exactly so that you avoid being over-taxed or having to pay additional taxes at the end of the year when you file your income tax declaration form. Do not use the standard instructions provided on the form because they do not apply to “non-resident aliens.” (*IRS Publication 519 US Tax Guide for Aliens, 2009, Withholding on Wages*). As a J-1 trainee or intern, you are considered a non-resident alien, and follow only these instructions:

Line 4 (c) ☒ Check “single” marital status (even if you are married)

Sample Form W-4 (2023)

<b>Form W-4</b> Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service		<b>Employee's Withholding Certificate</b> Complete Form W-4 so that your employer can withhold the correct federal income tax from your pay. Give Form W-4 to your employer. Your withholding is subject to review by the IRS.		OMB No. 1545-0074  <b>2023</b>
<b>Step 1:</b> <b>Enter</b> <b>Personal</b> <b>Information</b>	(a) First name and middle initial		Last name	(b) Social security number
	Address			Does your name match the name on your social security card? If not, to ensure you get credit for your earnings, contact SSA at 800-772-1213 or go to <a href="http://www.ssa.gov">www.ssa.gov</a> .
	City or town, state, and ZIP code			
	(c) <input type="checkbox"/> Single or Married filing separately <input type="checkbox"/> Married filing jointly or Qualifying surviving spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Head of household (Check only if you're unmarried and pay more than half the costs of keeping up a home for yourself and a qualifying individual.)			
Complete Steps 2–4 ONLY if they apply to you; otherwise, skip to Step 5. See page 2 for more information on each step, who can claim exemption from withholding, other details, and privacy.				

**FILING YOUR TAX RETURN** — As a trainee or intern receiving a stipend, you are considered a wage earner in the US and **must** file a Federal Income Tax return in order to receive any money withheld from your stipend that is due back to you. You may also be required to complete a State Income Tax return. Tax returns must be filed on or before April 15 for the previous tax year (January 1 – December 31). If you are training during two different calendar years, you must file taxes twice. Failing or refusing to file your tax return is against the law. If you fail to file your tax return, you will receive no refund of your withholdings, and could face difficulties on future visits to the US.

**FORM W-2** — This form is your official wage and tax statement. It is typically available from your employer by January 31<sup>st</sup> for the previous calendar year. This statement details your total stipend and the amount of taxes withheld during the calendar year, and is important for filing your taxes. If you are training in the US during two different calendar years, you will receive a W-2 for each year. If you do not receive your W-2 by February 15, you must request a replacement form from your host company.

IRS Form 8843 Statement for Exempt Individuals and Individuals With a Medical Condition

If you wish to file independently, you may obtain the Form 1040NR-EZ and other appropriate instructions and documents through the US Internal Revenue Service at <http://www.irs.gov>.

**SOCIAL SECURITY** – In order to receive your stipend in the US, you must have a Social Security card. To receive a Social Security card, you must apply for one in person at your nearest Social Security office. To find the office nearest you, call the Social Security Administration (SSA) toll-free at +1 800 772 1213 or visit their website at <http://www.ssa.gov>.

**IMPORTANT:** You must first complete a Program Validation Form (PVF) and return it to AIESEC United States so that your program can be validated in SEVIS (see page 12 for instructions); the Social Security Administration is unable to process requests for Social Security cards from Exchange Visitors whose programs **have not yet been validated**.

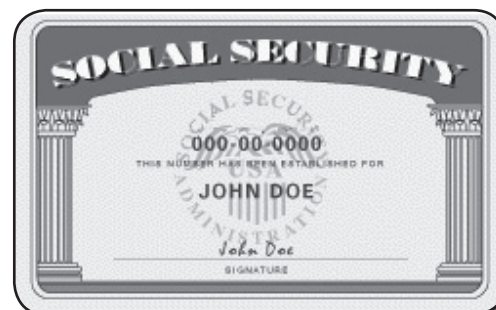
After validating your program, we recommend that you wait 7 to 10 days before applying for a Social Security number; this gives the SSA enough time to update their records with your Active SEVIS status. If you apply for your Social Security number before submitting your PVF to AIESEC United States or prior to the SSA office updating their records, your Social Security card application will not be processed and you may have to reapply.

At the time you visit the Social Security office to apply for your card, you must bring the following original documents PLUS one photocopy of each:

- Completed Social Security application (available at the Social Security office)
- Your passport and J-1 visa
- Your AIESEC United States sponsorship letter
- Your Company Offer Letter
- Your DS-2019
- Your I-94 record

After you have filed your application for a Social Security card with a Social Security agent, you will receive a Proof of Application receipt. If the agent does not offer you this receipt, you must request it. This document is necessary in the event you must contact Social Security to follow up on your application status and it also permits your host company to pay you until your card arrives.

A successful application should be processed within two to four weeks although it can sometimes take up to two months. You should receive your card in the mail 7 to 10 business days after your application is processed.



If your application is not approved, you will receive an official statement from the Social Security Statement by mail. Usually, when an Exchange Visitor's application is denied, it is because the applicant's program was not yet validated in SEVIS at the time of the application or because there is an error in the USCIS data that was recorded at the time you arrived to the US. If you receive such a letter, contact AIESEC United States for assistance in confirming your SEVIS validation. Once your validation is confirmed, you must visit the Social Security office in person again.

During the period when you are waiting for your Social Security card, your host company is legally allowed to issue your stipend. If your supervisor has questions about issuing your stipend or reporting wages, please ask them to contact the Social Security Administration or visit the following website: <http://www.ssa.gov/employer/hiring.htm>.

*Remember to complete your validation documents before you apply for your social security number.*

*- Ashleigh, UK*

*Be prepared for the first week or so to be a little disorienting and messy in terms of paperwork you have to fill out, etc. Make sure you and the employer agree to schedule extra time to get a SSN arranged, bank account set up, etc.*

*- Daniel, Netherlands*

## GETTING SETTLED

Your J-1 Trainee or Intern Program is an adventure that begins long before your arrival to the US. Though you are away from your family and home culture, your host company, new colleagues, and the new friends you will make during your program will become your family while you are in the US. AIESEC United States is available to help you through the transition process as you become familiar with your new surroundings so that you are able to begin acquiring and practicing new skills, learning about yourself, and learning about your new community.

As a new trainee or intern, you will be in an unfamiliar environment. It is important that you speak to your supervisor and new colleagues, so that you can prevent miscommunication and problems, and begin to form valuable relationships. Do your best to maintain a positive attitude about your training or internship. Within the first week of your program, your supervisor should speak with you about your host company's expectations, policies, and corporate culture. If this type of conversation is not arranged shortly after your arrival, take the initiative and speak with your supervisor about scheduling time for this type of discussion.

An important part of life as an AIESEC United States participant in the US is community involvement and volunteer work. Trainees, interns and the communities who host them benefit from continuous interaction. Getting to know your neighbors, community organizations, religious centers, community sports leagues, and participating in social activities are good ways to begin enriching your training experience. Community interaction is also vital for dependents traveling with you on J-2 visas.

**CULTURE SHOCK** – Adjusting to a new culture, environment, and your program is exciting and challenging. Every trainee or intern has different experiences during this transitional period, and many participants experience culture shock at some point during their programs. Common symptoms include:

- Homesickness
- Feelings of isolation and loneliness
- Reluctance to communicate in English
- Reluctance to adjust to your new schedule, foods, lifestyle, etc.
- Lack of energy and motivation
- Depression
- Excessive sleeping
- Insomnia

The greater your involvement in community and company activities, the quicker you will become comfortable in your new environment. Seeking comfort in and sharing stories, foods, and music from your home culture can also be helpful. Culture shock is normal and temporary, but may be serious. If you are experiencing culture shock and having difficulty adjusting to life in the US, contact your AIESEC United States representative for assistance.

**PERIODIC EVALUATIONS** – AIESEC United States and Global Current are dedicated to increasing international understanding and cooperation through meaningful programs and cultural experiences. In order to monitor your progress and welfare, and to ensure the continued quality of the training and internship programs we sponsor, AIESEC United States conducts periodic program evaluations at the beginning, mid-point and conclusion of your program. You will be asked to complete all of these evaluations.

Evaluation forms are questionnaires to be completed by you and your immediate supervisor. The information collected will be used to assess the quality of your program and to improve the programs and services offered to future AIESEC United States participants. AIESEC United States will contact you via email to provide instructions and links to the appropriate forms, and will provide you with a reasonable date by which you and your supervisor must complete the evaluation process. According to AIESEC United States policy and US Department of State exchange program regulations, all program participants are required to participate in the evaluation process. If you have any questions regarding evaluations, evaluation forms, or program requirements, contact your AIESEC United States or Global Current Responsible Officer/Alternate Responsible Officer.

*Do not have any prejudices and enjoy every single moment.*  
- Zineb, Morocco

## LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

Though your training or internship program is the primary reason for your stay in the US, an important part of cultural exchange is the opportunity to experience life in the US and share your culture and unique international perspectives with your colleagues and local community. The following section of the AIESEC United States & Global Current Program Handbook includes useful information regarding American culture and social norms as well as explanations and guidance concerning public services, laws, safety, and expected expenses, including housing and utilities.

**AMERICAN CULTURE** – The US is traditionally referred to as a “melting pot.” The United States’ 300+ million citizens come from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds. The influences of the different cultural groups that settled America and the new customs brought by waves of immigrants have created a country with diverse traditions, multi-ethnic cities, unique neighborhoods, and distinct state and regional characteristics. Though there is no single disposition or custom that can be defined as uniquely “American,” the following characteristics of American culture are a general guide for common traits you will encounter during your training:

### PERSONAL EXPRESSION AND PERSONAL SPACE

- Americans tend to be frank and candid, and do not often hide their thoughts or opinions
- Americans tend to be friendly and outgoing, even with strangers or people they are meeting for the first time
- A hand-shake is the most normal form of mutual greeting, especially between men. Kissing is viewed as an intimate activity, and is not widely accepted as a form of greeting, except between family members or very close friends.
- Americans tend to prefer more personal space in social interactions, and place greater physical distance between themselves and conversation partners than is common in other countries
- Though many Americans are politically active, it is generally considered impolite to discuss politics unless in familiar company
- Americans tend to consider discussions of salary and other earned income very personal. Most American workplaces have policies that prohibit discussion of compensation.

### WORK WEEK AND LEISURE TIME

- Americans tend to work more hours and take less vacation time per year than their cohorts in other developed countries. The typical American work week is 40 or more hours long, and the average amount of available annual vacation time is 10-15 days. Some American companies include sick time and personal time with this vacation period, and some offer 3 to 5 additional days for these purposes.
- Americans tend to hold hard work and productivity in high regard.
- Americans tend to treat time as a commodity. Time is earned, spent, wasted, budgeted, used, and accounted and charged for. Americans tend to live at a fast pace, and are often impatient because of their perception of time. Do not take impatience personally. Everyone is in a hurry. This is especially true in larger cities and the northeastern US.

Work activities and leisure activities are normally separate. Americans tend not to “mix business with pleasure.” Though the American workplace is relatively social, interactions at work tend not to be personal. Intimate relationships between coworkers are usually seen as inappropriate, and in some workplaces, may be prohibited.

### INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS

- Americans tend to be politically and socially insular, and are often not aware of other cultures and geography. Do not mistake this insularity as disinterest in you or your culture. Most Americans are very curious about and interested in other cultures, and are eager to learn about foreign customs.
- Americans tend to travel to other countries less than citizens of Europe. This is due in part to American vacation policies, but also to the extreme distances and expense that is required to travel internationally. Typically, Americans travel within the US and other countries of North America.
- The US does not have an official language although English is the only language spoken by most Americans. Those who speak other languages typically do so away from work and only with friends and family unless their foreign language skills are a portion of their work responsibilities. You should note that Spanish is widely used in some parts of the country.

**PERSONAL HYGIENE** — A professional and clean appearance is very important to most Americans in many office environments. While you are in the US, it is important to follow common personal hygiene practices.

**BUSINESS HOURS** — Normal business hours for most workplaces and small businesses in the US are from 8:00am or 9:00am to 5:00pm or 6:00pm with one hour for lunch between 12:00pm and 2:00pm. In addition to a lunch break, most employers offer two 15 minute breaks during the day. Most stores and shops are open until anywhere from 6:00pm to 9:00pm and do not close mid-day. Some supermarkets and convenience stores are open 24 hours. Unlike in many other countries, most stores are open on Sunday, although they generally open later in the morning (approximately 11AM) and close by 6PM.

**SALES TAX** — Sales tax is added to the marked price of most goods and services at the time that you pay for them. Sales tax revenues are used by states, counties, and cities to improve schools, public transportation, and other services. The tax percentage varies from state to state, but is usually 5% to 9% of the total price of your purchase. Some localities have no sales tax at all.

**TIPPING (GRATUITY)** — In the US, it is customary to “tip” servers between 15% and 20% of the total price of a meal, excluding sales tax. At most restaurants, a standard gratuity in this range is automatically added to the total for parties of 5 or more people. If you have received service of reasonable quality, you are expected to tip, because you are directly paying a portion of your server’s salary for the time they have spent with you. (In most states, the minimum wage for tipped service positions is \$2.13 per hour + tips received). If you have not received good service, leave a smaller tip. Similar gratuity practices apply to bartenders, taxi and car service drivers, hair stylists, manicurists, and other service industry occupations. If you are unsure about tipping, ask.

**LAWS — Best-known U.S. laws and regulations:** <https://www.usa.gov/laws-and-regulations>

**Alcohol Consumption:** <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/overview-alcohol-consumption/alcohol-facts-and-statistics>

While you are in the US, you are subject to the same laws that American citizens and residents must follow, even if certain behaviors may be legal and acceptable in your home country. It is important that you familiarize and educate yourself with the laws that will affect you in the city and state where you will be living during your program. If you are unsure about a law or appropriate behavior, ask your friends or trusted colleagues. Failure to follow US laws may result in termination of your program. The following are general guidelines concerning illegal or inappropriate activities:

- The legal drinking age in the US is 21. You may not purchase or consume alcohol in any state if you are under 21 years of age, nor may you purchase alcohol for anyone who is under 21 years of age.
- Driving after drinking alcoholic beverages is illegal. Open containers of alcoholic beverages in moving vehicles and consumption of alcohol in public places, other than in restaurants and bars, is also prohibited.
- Possession or use of illegal drugs or substances is a criminal offense. Many medications are considered “controlled substances” in the US and can only be obtained with a registered prescription at a pharmacy, and possession of such medications without a prescription is illegal.
- Loud conduct and conversation in public places between the hours of 11pm and 7am is considered “disturbance of peace,” and is not permitted. This includes parties and social events.
- Threatening or touching another person in a manner that person finds undesirable is not acceptable. Unwanted sexual attention is considered sexual harassment and is illegal, as is having a sexual relationship of any kind with a minor.
- Damage to or theft of property that is not yours is illegal.
- Sleeping or camping in public places is not allowed.
- Hitchhiking and asking for rides from strangers is prohibited (and dangerous).

**DRIVING** — If you or your host company have made transportation arrangements that require you to obtain a US driver’s license, you must contact the Department of Motor Vehicles for the state where you will be completing your training program to determine any requirements you must meet in addition to completing a driving exam. In addition, the DMV is the best source of information on local traffic laws that may affect you during your program. In many states, the use of a mobile phone while driving is illegal.

**SMOKING** — Americans are not generally tolerant of smoking, so it is very important to be respectful of your surroundings. Smoking in all public buildings and most other public places is prohibited. In some cities, private businesses like bars or restaurants may have designated smoking areas. In many states, bars and restaurants have strict policies against smoking. If you are unsure of whether smoking is appropriate in your present environment, ask someone nearby.

Vaping: <https://publichealthlawcenter.org/resources/us-e-cigarette-regulations-50-state-review>

In some states and municipalities, marijuana is legal for medical or recreational use, however possessing, buying, or selling marijuana is considered a federal crime.

If you are arrested, you must treat law enforcement authorities with respect. Disorderly conduct can make a bad situation worse. According to US law, you have the right to be represented by an attorney. If you are unable to afford an attorney, the court will provide one. Ask your attorney for legal advice. AIESEC United States cannot provide you with legal advice or retain an attorney on your behalf. Depending on the reason for your arrest or the severity of the crime committed, AIESEC United States may elect to terminate your program. If your program is terminated, you are expected to return home immediately, unless you have been instructed by an attorney that you have retained, or who has been appointed to you, to remain in the US pending court procedures.

**SAFETY—** Despite the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the US is one of the world's safest countries, even if the crime rate in some locations are somewhat higher than that of other countries. In many cities, community organizations together with law enforcement have been successful in fighting crime commonly affecting inner-city neighborhoods, such as drug trafficking, prostitution, theft, vandalism, and gun violence. Though statistics show that crime has declined over the past decade, you must do your part to keep yourself safe.

Always stay alert and aware of your surroundings. Keep your belongings in a firm grasp, and never expose large amounts of cash in public. If someone tries to rob you, don't resist. Give up your property, not your life. If you are attacked, try to get a good look at the attacker, report the crime to the police, and describe the attacker as clearly as possible. Your actions can help others from becoming victims. If you are attacked at your J-1 program location, inform your supervisor and your AIESEC United States representative immediately. It is unlikely that you will be the victim of crime during your stay in the US, but caution, common sense, and your instincts will help to prevent potential problems.

#### **On Foot**

- Show that you are calm and confident, and that you know where you're going
- Obey traffic signals and use only designated crosswalks
- Whenever possible, walk with a friend
- Avoid "shortcuts" and stay on well-travelled and well-lit streets
- If you are at work late into the evening, ask a colleague or security guard to walk you to your car or transit station
- If you think that someone is following you, cross the street or change your direction to walk toward an open store, restaurant, or well-lit home.

#### **On Buses and Subway**

- Use only well-lit, busy stops and stations
- Stay alert! Don't sleep. Stations and trains often attract pickpockets.
- Watch other passengers who exit with you. If you feel uneasy, walk to a place where there are other people.
- If someone harasses you, don't be embarrassed to tell an authority figure
- Use the emergency alarm only when absolutely necessary.

#### **In Your Car**

- Make sure you know proper entry and exit routes to any areas or neighborhoods you visit at night. If you are lost, stop at a well-lit store or service station and ask for directions.
- Do not leave any luggage, personal items, or valuables in plain view
- Never leave a child unattended, especially in the summer

**On Your Bicycle** – Though bicycling is common in the US, the culture of bicycling that exists here may not be as friendly as that of your home country. There are many bike paths in parks and recreational areas, but in most busy city areas, bicyclists share the streets with motorists. American drivers are not always accepting of cyclists or legal right-of-way, so it is important to be cautious when crossing intersections and on roads with narrow shoulders or bike lanes.

- **Always wear a helmet**
- Ride with the flow of traffic only. Riding into oncoming traffic is illegal.
- Always make sure your bicycle is in proper working order

**PUBLIC SERVICES & RECREATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS** – American cities are known for public services and recreational organizations that are available to citizens and tourists. Many of these services and organizations are free and offer valuable information and activities for adults, children, and families. Many of these services or organizations are free or offer student discounts

**PUBLIC LIBRARIES** — Your local public library is your best source for information on many subjects, and a librarian is able to help you with any questions you may have about materials or research. In addition to books, most libraries have music and films available for temporary loan, and weekend educational activities for children. Often libraries offer free internet access and consumer publications.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION** — All large American cities, most small cities, and some small towns offer public transportation, via rail, bus, ferry, or specialized transportation for disabled citizens. In large cities, public transportation is fast, regular, and typically operates 24 hours a day for most routes. Rail transportation is typically less than \$5 per day per adult, and buses are often \$1 per day. Some routes are free, and children typically ride free or at a reduced rate. Daily, weekly, and longer term passes are available at transportation terminals and some area stores. If you are unsure about the options available in the community where you will be training, ask your supervisor or your host company's human resources representative.

**POST OFFICES** — The United States Post Office is operated by the federal government. Post offices are in every city and town. Hours are usually 8:00am to 4:00pm on weekdays, and until 12:00pm or 1:00pm on Saturdays. Some postal stations in large cities have stamp machines, self-service shipping, and mail drops that remain open 24 hours a day. Mail is delivered to homes and businesses every day except Sundays and official national holidays. The current rate to send a letter via first class mail is 55 cents.

**“YELP”** — Yelp is a great internet resource to read reviews and see pictures of nearly any potential activity, food or business in your area.

**“THE YELLOW PAGES”** — The yellow pages are specialty telephone directories, or portions of standard telephone directories, and are available in every city and town in the US. The yellow pages list local businesses alphabetically by type, so that goods and services can be easily located.

**NEWSPAPERS** — Businesses and organizations often advertise products, services, and events in local newspapers. Most newspapers must be purchased from a news agent or other store, but many cities have free newspapers that are community-oriented or list classified ads only. Classified ads are advertisements for goods for sale through private individuals, such as cars, bicycles, furniture, and computers. These products are usually “second-hand,” or used, but are sometimes of very good quality, and are available for low, and sometimes, negotiable prices.

**YMCA / YWCA (YOUNG MEN’S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION / YOUNG WOMEN’S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION)** — Though the YMCA is an international organization within the US, in most communities it functions as a recreational center. Commonly known as “the Y,” the YMCA offers a variety of activities that help build healthy bodies, minds, spirits, and families through fitness programs, parent/child activities, sports, and crafts, as well as after-school and summer programs for school-aged children and young adults.

*Join a sports club or something similar. Americans tend to keep their job and their private life really separate!*  
- Joachem, Netherlands

*Try to communicate with Americans as much as possible; it is most important.*  
- Masazumi, Japan

## MANAGING YOUR MONEY

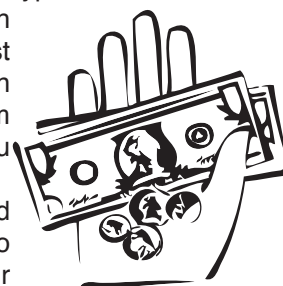
AIESEC United States recommends that all program participants receiving a stipend from a US source open a bank account to deposit stipend payments and other funds. Many American companies issue pay through “direct deposit,” rather than traditional checks. This means that your host company deposits your pay directly into your checking and/or savings account, which saves you time because going to the bank is not necessary. Direct deposit combined with the internet banking access that most large banks offer allows you to manage your funds according to your schedule and needs.

**OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT** – In order to open an account at most US banks, you must present the following forms of identification:

- Your passport
- Your driver’s license, state identification card, or other form of photo identification
- Your Social Security card
- Proof of residence – Your housing lease, or a utility bill mailed to your home address is usually sufficient
- Letter from your host company or AIESEC United States identifying you as an Exchange Visitor

Both checking accounts and savings accounts are available to program participants:

- Checking accounts allow easy access to deposit and withdraw money as needed. Checks are accepted for bills, rent, and some purchases.
- Most Americans who use checking accounts access their funds through Automated Teller Machine (ATM) cards. “Check cards” are ATM cards backed by Visa or MasterCard. Many banks issue these types of ATM cards so that you are able to use your ATM card to pay for goods or services. Payments made with check cards automatically deduct funds from your checking account. This service must be requested at the time you open your account. With an ATM or check card, you can access your bank account to withdraw cash or verify your balance 24 hours a day from any ATM owned by your bank. For an additional fee (usually \$1-\$4 per transaction) you may use another bank’s ATM or public ATM to communicate with your bank.
- Savings accounts are interest bearing accounts. Access to your cash may be limited with caps on withdrawals. However, all deposits earn a minimal amount of interest, so this may be a good option if you would like to save a portion of your stipend during your program.



Most bank accounts charge a small fee (\$3-5) each month for managing your account. You may be eligible for a no-fee student account. When you open your account, ask if you qualify. Some banks have a minimum balance requirement, but all banks charge an “overdraft” service fee of \$25 - \$30 for each transaction that takes your balance below the minimum, or creates a negative balance. Service fees add up quickly, so it is important to balance your account regularly.

**TAXES** –As Mentioned earlier in this handbook, a portion of your stipend will be withheld for Federal and State taxes. Please make sure to account for this as you work on your budget. The percentage that is withheld is determined by the total amount you will earn. Form 8843 must be completed by all participants: <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-8843>

**CREDIT CARDS** – Most Americans have credit cards because they are a convenient way to make large purchases, and are accepted at nearly all stores and businesses. If you have a credit card in your home country, AIESEC United States suggests that you bring it with you for emergency purchases during your program.

**Western Union** – This option allows you to transfer money from anywhere in the US to anywhere in your home country within 15 minutes on any day of the week. Money can also be transferred from your home country to anywhere in the US. There is a handling charge for each transaction that varies based on the total transferred. Call +1 800 325 6000 to find the Western Union nearest you and the recipient of the funds.

**Expenses to Expect-** Unexpected expenses are one of the biggest causes of stress and program difficulties for exchange program participants. In most situations, your stipend should cover the majority of your living expenses, but if you receive a small stipend or have an unpaid program, it is your responsibility to bring sufficient funds to cover your living expenses as well as any J-2 dependents' expenses. A general guide for expected basic living expenses is \$2,000 per month per trainee, and an additional \$500 per month for each J-2 dependent. All trainees and interns should arrive to the US with funds in this amount to cover expenses during the first month of training. Depending on your specific training location and your lifestyle, your actual expenses could be considerably higher.

**Housing-** Rent is typically \$850 - \$1200 per month for a 1 bedroom apartment, however in areas like San Francisco, Boston, New York City, and Washington, DC rates often exceed \$2000 per month. Larger apartments and added extras, such as washing machines, dishwashers, and other building amenities increase the rent. If your host company has not offered you housing as a portion of your training agreement, it is your responsibility to secure housing for the duration of your program. AIESEC United States can generally provide you with housing leads or ideas for temporary housing, but we cannot make your housing arrangements or sign a lease or contract on your behalf.

Apartments can be found easily through word-of-mouth, advertisements, locator services, and brokers. Most cities and towns have websites and free publications where information on vacant apartments and houses is posted. Try your friends/older coworkers via Facebook as they can provide a more well-rounded review of your area. Apartmentfinder.com and Padmapper.com are also good options. Apartments leased directly through the owner, on-site leasing offices, or apartment locator services do not typically have a brokerage fee that the tenant is required to pay. Almost all rental properties require an application deposit (usually \$100), lease deposit (first and last month's rent) and a lease agreement. Leases are typically available in 6 month, 12 month, and 24 month durations, and are legally binding contracts.

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN HOUSING** — When looking for an apartment, pay attention to the neighborhood, size of the apartment, and other factors that will affect your comfort and enjoyment of your home during your program. Is the apartment in good condition? Do the windows work properly? Are the kitchen and bathroom clean and in working order? Do you feel safe? Are laundry facilities available nearby? Is parking available on-site or nearby? Is public transportation easily accessible?



**WHAT IS INCLUDED** — Most apartments in the US are unfurnished. Kitchen appliances are usually included, and all apartments should have a full kitchen and bath. In some apartments, some or all utilities are included in the monthly rent. The term "utilities" refers to electricity, water, natural gas, and garbage pick-up services that are regulated by local government agencies. Telephone service and cable TV is almost never included. Before signing a lease, confirm which utilities, if any, are included in the rent, and which you must pay on your own, and how much the services will cost.

**How MUCH TO PAY** — A general guideline for housing expenses is that your monthly rent and utilities should be no more than 25% - 35% of your gross monthly salary. This means that if you are planning to live by yourself, and you receive a stipend of \$2700 per month, you should not plan to rent housing that costs more than \$675 - \$945 per month.

**FINDING A ROOMMATE** — Sharing an apartment with a roommate is an excellent way to control your expenses and make friends. Roommate shares are usually best for housing during short-term traineeships. In large cities where housing is expensive, it is common for students, interns, and young professionals to share housing. Your best resource would be Facebook where you can communicate with friends about potential roommates and verify the identity of your potential roommates. When you are searching for a roommate, keep safety in mind, and think about what types of people you enjoy living with. If you are not willing to share or make compromises, a roommate situation may not be right for you. Once a lease is signed, it is very difficult to make changes, so choose your roommates carefully.

**SHORT TERM PROGRAMS** — If your program is less than 6 months, a short-term lease may be the best option for you if you are unable to find a roommate to share expenses. Furnished apartments are usually available on a short-term basis, and are often listed as "corporate apartments." Because these apartments are furnished, they are typically more expensive than unfurnished apartments. Some apartment complex leasing offices may also be willing to negotiate

short-term leases on a pro-rated basis. This means that if you are leasing an apartment for 4 months, you will be charged the total amount for a 6 month lease during the 4 months you live there. Short-term rentals are almost always more expensive. You may also be able to get a short term rental as a “sub-lease.” This means that the tenant of the apartment must move before the agreed end of their lease, and that a new tenant will sign the lease, or another formal agreement, and move into the apartment for the duration of the original lease. While some sub-leases are legal, others are not approved by landlords or building management, so use caution when entering this type of arrangement.

Once you find your apartment and sign your lease, you are responsible for paying your rent, keeping your apartment clean and in good condition, and meeting any other obligations that are included in your lease agreement. If you (or your roommates) damage your apartment beyond ordinary “wear and tear” that is expected at the end of a lease term, your landlord or building management may not return your security deposit. If you (or your roommates) do not pay your rent, you may be removed from the apartment through a formal eviction process, during which a court order is issued to force a tenant to vacate an apartment. If you have a legitimate grievance with your landlord, you must continue to pay your rent. Tenant’s councils and city government can offer free assistance or referrals to attorneys who can help you resolve any issues that are affecting your lease agreement.

**UTILITIES** - The cost of utility services vary seasonally. During the winter, a reasonable bill for electricity service is approximately \$60 per month. Natural gas, fuel oil, and water may be included in your utilities plan, or you may receive separate bills for these services. Water is typically \$40-\$60 per month, and natural gas is often less than \$25 per month. During the summer and winter, utility bills can exceed \$100 per month with constant use of air conditioning or heat. Basic cable television service is approximately \$60 per month. Most cable providers offer high-speed broadband internet services for an additional \$50 per month with a basic television account.

If utilities are not included with your lease, you must request service. Your landlord or apartment leasing office can provide you with contact information for utility providers. All utility companies will require basic information, such as proof of your employment and residence, and some may require that you pay a service deposit. After you have requested service, the utility company will schedule a “hook up” appointment so that an installation technician can visit your home to connect the service. Typically, they cannot confirm an exact time of day for the appointment, so make sure to be at home the day of the installation to avoid delays. Most apartments have electricity and water available upon your arrival. The installation appointment takes place so that the utilities can be registered in your name. Once service is connected, you must pay your bills on time.



**TELEPHONE** - Like other utilities, obtaining telephone service requires that you contact the local telephone company and schedule a service appointment. The connection fee is typically \$100. Basic service accounts that allow you to make local calls are relatively inexpensive, typically \$35 per month. To make long distance or international calls, a long distance plan is required. In the US, there are multiple providers for long distance telephone service, including AT&T, Sprint, and Verizon, and each offer similar service and similar prices. Advertisements for these companies appear in magazines and newspapers, as well as on the TV, radio, and on the internet. Long distance and international calls are billed per minute, and it is up to you to speak to customer service with the long distance carrier to determine which plan is best, and most affordable, for you. Single country plans can be as low as \$0.10 per minute to certain countries at certain times of the day or evening.

In the US it is increasingly common for students and young professionals to use mobile phones, rather than requesting telephone services at their homes. With careful negotiation, it is possible to enroll in local, national, and international mobile calling plans that are considerably less expensive than the plans that are offered for landline service. Like long distance carriers, most mobile carriers provide similar services and service packages at similar pricing. The typical cost of basic service is \$45-55 per month for a 250 minute package. International calling is a separate service package that is added to your bill. Speak to a customer service representative for more information. Mobile plans can be paid in advance, or billed once monthly. The top mobile carriers in the US are AT&T Wireless, Verizon, T-Mobile, and Sprint.

Phone cards, credit card calling, and online services like Skype, Whatsapp and Viber are alternative methods for making

international calls and long distance calls away from home. Please note that programs like Skype, Whatsapp and Viber require WiFi access. You can apply for a phone card through your long distance or credit card companies or you may purchase a phone card at your corner store or supermarket. You can learn more about those alternative methods for calls on their respective websites.

**Food** - Typical expenses for food are approximately \$250 per month per person. Supermarkets are the primary outlet for purchasing food and household products. Supermarkets carry a large number of brands and products in multiple sizes, and most offer less expensive store brands as an alternative to widely advertised national brands. Often these “generic” products are exactly the same as the more expensive alternative.

In the US, going to the supermarket can be considered an expedition. Rather than shopping daily, as is common in many countries, most Americans go to the supermarket once or twice a week and purchase ingredients for several meals at the same time. With careful planning, budgeting, and use of discount coupons available in local newspapers, weekly supermarket shopping can be an exciting challenge.

Most major metropolitan areas often have multiple ethnic grocery stores, which are small markets that cater toward specific ethnic groups, and are often located in neighborhoods populated by distinct cultural groups. These markets feature items such as halal and kosher meats and foods, specialized produce, herbs, and spices, and cookware. In some cities, there are small groceries that cater to vegetarians and vegans, however, vegan items are increasingly common products in large supermarkets. Organic fruits, vegetables, and grains are also widely available, but are often more expensive than conventional products.

**RESTAURANTS** — Restaurants in the US vary widely in price and quality. In every city, there are a wide range of choices from fast food and inexpensive comfort foods to mid-range “casual dining” locations to very expensive and exclusive fine dining.

Fast food “value” meals typically cost around \$5 for a sandwich, fries, and a soda. Family restaurants are normally in the \$10 - \$20 per person range, and most feature special low-priced children’s menus. Fine dining is often \$30 - \$60 per person. Wine, beer, and mixed drinks, which are available at all restaurants that feature full bars, add considerable cost to a meal. Alcoholic beverages are usually priced at \$3 – \$15 per unit depending on type of drink and time of day. Upscale spirits and fine wines are often significantly more expensive.

**LAUNDRY SERVICE AND DRY CLEANING** - If you choose to launder your own clothes, you should expect to pay approximately \$2.50 per load to wash and \$1 per load to dry at your apartment or neighborhood laundromat. Laundry detergent costs approximately \$8 per container, and is available in liquid or powder form. Other products such as bleach, non-bleach whiteners, fabric softeners, special degreasers, pre-wash and stain treatments, and starch are available at similar prices. Laundry services are also available at most laundromats, usually at a “per pound” price for wash and fold service. For an additional cost, some laundromats will pick up your laundry at your home and return it to you when it is ready.



Dry cleaning, also called French cleaning, is recommended for certain items in your professional wardrobe made from fibers including wool, silk, and linen. Service at most dry cleaners costs \$8 - \$15 to clean a gentleman’s or lady’s suit. Dresses are typically the same price. Men’s shirts are usually laundered and starched at \$1.50 to \$4 per shirt. Dry cleaners usually have weekly specials, as well as seasonal specials like coat and sweater cleaning at reduced prices at the end of winter clothing seasons. Dry cleaners are often able to launder large items such as bedspreads, comforters, and pillows that you may be unable to wash on your own at a laundromat. Many dry cleaners also offer additional convenience services, such as shoe repair and clothing alterations.

*Plan your expenses well before getting to America.  
-Ivan Russia*

## TRAVELING DURING YOUR PROGRAM

AIESEC United States encourages you to take advantage of your time in the US to explore the country and visit the cultural and natural attractions that are available near your host location. Remember that the primary objective of your program is professional training, and that the 30-Day Travel Period at the conclusion of your program is available to you for travel opportunities.

**DOMESTIC TRAVEL** - It is possible to travel within the US for very little expense. If you camp, or stay in youth hostels rather than hotels, take buses rather than renting a car, and self-cater your meals, you can travel for as little as \$60 a day.

**MONEY** — Debit cards tend to be the simplest method for obtaining money from banks and paying for purchases. Major credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard, Discover/Novus, and American Express are widely accepted, and are necessary for rental cars. Traveler's cheques are an alternative option that are occasionally used by international travelers for making purchases; be certain to obtain the cheques in US dollars.

**LODGING** — Accommodations throughout the US are available at budget, mid-range, and luxury accommodations. Hotels vary widely in quality, services, and price, but typically budget and hostel accommodations are available for \$20 - \$80 per night for a private room with en suite bath. Mid-range accommodations are usually \$60 - \$120 per night, but may include additional amenities such as cable television, hairdryer, and coffeemaker. Luxury accommodations offer room service, fine linens, and comfortable furniture, and are typically available for \$150 and up per night.

**DISCOUNTS** — Travel websites like Expedia (<http://www.expedia.com>), Kayak (<http://www.kayak.com>) and Orbitz (<http://www.orbitz.com>) are good sources for discounts on air ticketing, hotel arrangements, and rental cars. Often these services will help you located the least expensive travel options. When using these services it is important to be flexible and informed so that you are able to get the best deal possible. Keep in mind that most arrangements made through discount sites are non-transferrable and non-refundable.

**DISCOUNT AIRLINES** — Because the US is a very large country, air travel to vacation destinations is often a necessity. In addition to the discount aggregators mentioned above, the US has multiple discount airlines that offer excellent rates on travel to specific locations on specific days. Southwest Airlines (<http://www.southwest.com>) and JetBlue ([www.jetblue.com](http://www.jetblue.com)) are the most widely known of these discount carriers. If you find a great rate, always compare with other airlines to make sure you are getting the best deal possible.

**TRAIN** — Amtrak is the national railroad and offers individual tickets, as well as 15-day and 30-day passes. Amtrak can be more expensive than airlines, but offers unique sight-seeing opportunities. For information on ticketing and passes, visit <http://www.amtrak.com> or contact Amtrak by telephone at +1 800 872 7245.

**Bus** — The most inexpensive mode of travel within the US is the bus. Greyhound is the largest bus carrier, and serves thousands of destinations and cooperates with smaller regional carriers like Kerrville and Concord Trailways. For information on routes and ticketing, visit <http://www.greyhound.com> or contact Greyhound by telephone at +1 800 231 2222. Ask about the "Ameripass" for exchange students or the "Discovery Pass," which can be used in the US and Canada. If you are traveling between major US cities, look at discount operators like Megabus and Bolt Bus services



**INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL** - If you want to visit your home country or any other country (including Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean) during your program and then plan to re-enter the US on your J-1 visa, you must meet the following requirements:

- The expiration date on your J-1 visa and in Section 3 of your DS-2019 must not occur before or during your travel outside the US. If your visa has expired, but your DS-2019 is still valid, you must reapply for a new J-1 visa before you can be readmitted (see below).
- You must have a multiple entry visa (the letter "M" will be indicated under the word "Entries" on your J-1 visa). If your visa is not a multiple entry visa, you must reapply for a new J-1 visa before you can be readmitted.
- You may not travel outside the U.S. during your grace period as you will not be allowed to enter the U.S. on your J-1 visa once your program has ended.
- You must have the Travel Validation Section on your DS-2019 signed by AIESEC United States' Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer.

**\*\*Your travel should not exceed 29 consecutive days\*\***

**TRAVEL VALIDATION** – To have your DS-2019 validated for travel, you must complete the Travel Validation Form online here: <https://www.tfaforms.com/5059957> and send a clear scanned copy of your DS-2019 to [j1forms@aiesecus.org](mailto:j1forms@aiesecus.org).

Please note, if you have failed to validate your program, or are not participating in good standing, your validation for travel will not be able to be complete.

**APPLYING FOR A NEW J-1 VISA** – In order to apply for a new J-1 visa to reenter the US and complete your program, you must schedule an appointment for a visa interview, and complete the normal visa application process.

**\*\*\*You are at risk when you travel outside the US after your J-1 visa has expired. Any US Consular official has the right to deny your new J-1 application. AIESEC United States highly recommends that you apply for a new J-1 visa in your home country *only*, rather than a country you are visiting as a tourist.**

**OBTAINING A TOURIST VISA TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY-** If you are planning to visit a country other than your home country while you are participating in your program, it is recommended that you contact that country's consulate in the US to determine whether or not a visa is required for your travel. Visa requirements change and are not the same for citizens of all countries.

When you arrive at your point of entry to reenter the US, you should expect to present your passport and program documents, including your DS-2019 form, to US Immigrations and Customs agents who are stationed at the airport just as you did at the beginning of your program. Keep in mind that some participants have difficulty with readmission to the US.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Upon your return please be sure to check your I-94 record to ensure that you were admitted under the correct status at this link: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>.



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