



# Summer Work Travel



# Student Handbook



an ASSE affiliated program

Dear Student,

Welcome to the ASPIRE Worldwide Summer Work Travel Program! We are very pleased that you have selected us to be your program sponsor. We take pride in offering you a program that will allow you to visit the USA, meet people, and learn about the culture while working in an American company. In turn, your participation will enrich the lives of the people you meet by giving them the chance to learn about you, your culture, and your country.

To make your adjustment to the Summer Work Travel Program as easy as possible, we have prepared this handbook for your use throughout the program. Hopefully, it will answer most of your questions and prepare you for your experience in the USA.

Again, we welcome you to the United States and wish you a rewarding work and travel experience during your visit!

Sincerely yours,

The ASPIRE Team

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E-mail: [info@aspireww.com](mailto:info@aspireww.com) • Web Site: [www.aspireww.com](http://www.aspireww.com)

## **Important Items to Bring**

- Passport**
- Original DS-2019 Form**
- Job Offer**
- Sponsor Letter**
- ASPIRE Identification Card**
- Insurance Card**
- ASPIRE Student Handbook**
- International Driver's License**
- \$1,000 US dollars for initial expenses**
- Credit Card**

## Insurance

**Insurance Company: IMG - UnitedHealthCare Network**

**Toll-Free 24-Hour Assistance: 1.800.628.4664**

**Student Portal: <https://www.envisageglobalinsurance.com/student-zone/aspire/>**

All insurance information is found on your Insurance Identification Card, also via email before you arrive for your program.

### **Non-Life Threatening (Emergency) Sickness and Injuries**

Always call the insurance company's assistance service, before seeking medical care. Contact details for the insurance company are listed on your Insurance Identification Card. The insurance company can help you to locate approved medical providers (doctors, clinics, urgent care, hospitals, etc) in your area. You can also log onto student zone to find a list of medical providers near you.

### **Where to go? Hospitals, urgent care, walk-in clinics or doctors office?**

In non-life threatening situations, choose urgent care clinics, walk-in clinics and doctors' offices that will have a \$50 deductible

**Choose Hospital Emergency Room ONLY in emergency situations.** The cost to you for the Emergency Room (ER) treatment for a non-emergency will have a \$350 deductible.

If you visit a hospital, please first ask the hospital to call the insurance company for authorization of your treatment.

### **Types of Medical Providers:**

#### **• In-Network**

This group is always the best option. In-Network medical providers will bill the insurance company directly, so you will only pay the co-pay amount (first \$50). The In-Network medical providers can be found at <https://www.envisageglobalinsurance.com/student-zone/aspire/providers.php> or by calling the insurance company directly.

#### **• Out of Network**

The out of network providers will not bill the insurance company directly. Therefore, you will need to pay for your entire visit upfront (out of your pocket) at the time of service. This payment will be reimbursed to you by the insurance company less the deductible once you file a claim. You must submit a Claim Form to the insurance company, for Out of Network medical providers. With the Claim Form you are required to submit the itemized bill, any additional receipts and medical records from your visit.

The Claim Form can be found at: <https://www.envisageglobalinsurance.com/student-zone/aspire/claims.php>

## Social Security

### **You must apply for your social security number.**

If you already have a Social Security Number from previous visit in the USA, you do not need to apply again.

### **In order to apply for a Social Security number:**

1. Complete your arrival check-in
2. Wait at least 24 hours after you have completed your arrival check-in before you go to the Social Security office to apply.

**Purpose of Social Security Number:** For the Host Employer payroll purposes, and when applying for tax refund.

**Where is the Social Security office:** visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) or call toll free: 1.800.772.1213

### **Documents to take with you to the Social Security office:**

- Original DS-2019 Form
- Passport with Your J1 Visa
- I-94 Number (record of admission). Find it at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>
- Sponsor Letter

Make sure that you request an official Certificate/Receipt or an Official Letter from the Social Security Administration confirming your attempt to apply for a Social Security Card. This Certificate/Receipt or Letter should be shown to your Host Employer.

You must report your Social Security Number to your Host Employer immediately. Otherwise, you will have difficulty filing your tax return documentation. Keep the Social Security Card in a safe place.



an ASSE affiliated program

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To download our app  
from Google Play Store,  
scan this QR code



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To download our app  
from iTunes Store,  
scan this QR code



ASSE Aspire proudly presents to you the new Smart-phone Application for all our SWT program participants.

Please download this app as soon as possible. All the important information and documents will be at your fingertips just a few clicks away. Arrival and Monthly Check-ins are more convenient to complete through this app. You can scan the QR code on the left to download it on your smart-phone. It is available in Google Play Store and iTunes Store. To search for this app simply type the name "ASSE Aspire"

We hope you have a great experience in the US!

Best Regards,

ASSE ASPIRE Team

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# Experience of ASSE ASPIRE Worldwide's Founding Organization ASSE International

ASSE International Student Exchange Programs (ASSE) was founded by the Swedish Ministry of Education. It cooperates closely with the provincial Ministries of Education in Canada. In the United States, ASSE has been designated by the US Department of State as an 'exchange-visitor program' and adheres strictly to all Department of State regulations. ASSE is a full member of the Alliance Exchange, the World Youth Student & Educational Travel Confederation and GWEA. ASSE is approved for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET).

The history of ASSE goes back to the 1930's when the Swedish Parliament instituted an exchange program for Swedish and German students. In the post World War II era, this was expanded to include England, France, Spain, and Switzerland. The USA entity was added in the 1960's, when the Swedish government's National Department of Education organized in the USA. In 1976, the program was incorporated in

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

ASSE also provides short term homestay language study and campus programs in Europe, as well as 3-month reciprocal exchanges with France, Germany and Spain. ASSE is proud to participate in the prestigious Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Program between the USA, and Germany, as well as the FLEX program (Future Leaders Exchange Program), a USA government-sponsored program that

brings hundreds of students to the USA from the Independent Republics of the former Soviet Union.

In addition to all the above, ASSE founded in 1989 the EurAupair Program, a not-for-profit, public benefit organization by funding it in its initial stage and applying for the original designation. Most recently, ASSE became a designated sponsor for the Summer Work Travel Program, which provides summer employment opportunities to university students in the USA, and the ASSE ASPIRE Trainee Program, which facilitates recently graduated professionals and specialists to spend up to 18 months training in their field in an American corporation or professional/vocational group, and the ASSE ASPIRE Intern Program, which facilitates current university students or recent graduates to spend up to 12 months participating in an internship with an American business. While the above programs are separate and completely different entities, they share a common mission and philosophy: To improve understanding among people of different countries through cultural exchange.

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

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



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

### **SUMMER WORK TRAVEL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of the Work Travel Program is to offer international students like you the opportunity to immerse themselves in USA daily life through temporary employment opportunities during their summer holidays. This is accomplished by ongoing interaction with Americans at the host employer, as well as other social activities.

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

The jobs that will be available are almost always unskilled, or semi-unskilled, and include the following possibilities: amusement park attendant; banquet server; busser; cook; dishwasher; fast food server; front desk clerk; game/ride attendant; host/hostess; housekeeper; park services; bellman; tour guide assistant; waiter/waitress.

**“ ... jobs that will be available... include: amusement park attendant; banquet server; busser; cook; dishwasher; fast food server; front desk clerk; game/ride attendant; host/hostess; housekeeper; park services; bellman; tour guide; waiter/waitress.”**

#### **How Will You Benefit?**

- Improve English proficiency
- Understand the American way of life, and its culture through frequent participation in cultural activities
- Experience the fun of working and traveling in the USA
- Develop entry level skills that could help your future employment. You could also receive a reference from your USA Host Employer to include in your CV
- Make new friends from all over the world

## **WHAT IS INCLUDED AND NOT INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM PRICE?**

Included for all students:

- DS-2019 form
- Comprehensive medical insurance for the duration of your program stated on your DS-2019 form
- Job placement
- Assistance with locating housing
- Orientation
- Support in the USA

Not Included:

- International and domestic airfares and other transportation (e.g. bus) to the employer site
- Daily living expenses, including but not limited to housing, transportation and meals (housing alone will cost a minimum of \$500 per month)

## Rules and Regulations

The following rules and regulations for ASSE ASPIRE Work Travel Programs have been established by ASSE ASPIRE Worldwide as minimum standards of participant conduct for its Work Travel Program. Each student must agree in writing to adhere to these rules prior to final program acceptance.

### Program Rules and Regulations:

1. Student is between the ages of 18 and 28, in good health, has a valid passport, and is enrolled as a full-time student at a post-secondary level college or university.
2. Student must bring at least \$1,000 with him/her to cover initial costs upon arrival in the USA.
3. Student will obey all USA federal, state and local laws.
4. Any illegal use of drugs or alcohol, abuse of harmful controlled substances or illegal possession of drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances will result in the student's immediate repatriation. Even though Marijuana is now legal under state law in certain states, it is still ILLEGAL under federal law. Student should not consider that they are safe from law enforcement, because he/she is located in a US state where Marijuana has been legalized, nor exempt from workplace drug testing. The employer holds the right to dismiss student if they are taking drugs, including Marijuana, regardless of state law.
5. Student will complete orientation in his/her country.
6. Student will carry out the duties and responsibilities of the position which ASSE ASPIRE has arranged. It is the responsibility of the student to advise ASSE ASPIRE of any significant problems, including but not limited to the health, safety or welfare of the student, adjustment to the job, culture, language, etc.
7. Student agrees to be an active and congenial part of the host employer and understands that he/she will receive basic entry-level work experience in addition to gaining cultural experience from the program.
8. Student understands that the assigned host employer holds the right to dismiss the student if the student's work performance is not satisfactory and/or the student disobeys the host employer's employee rules or codes of conduct (including the host employer's dress code). If the student is dismissed by the host employer, the student must contact ASSE ASPIRE immediately. In some cases the student will need to return home immediately at his/her own expense.

## Rules and Regulations

9. Student must secure approval for any change in host employer prior to commencing work with that host employer. Student must allow 3 business days for ASSE ASPIRE to contact the new host employer and confirm the eligibility of the host employer and suitability of the job. Any student who begins work with a new host employer without gaining approval from ASSE ASPIRE must be terminated from the program.
10. Student will cooperate fully with those supervising the program on behalf of and in correspondence with ASSE ASPIRE.
11. Student understands that the work assignment is temporary and runs for the duration of the work authorization as stated on the DS-2019 form. Student cannot change the visa to a different category.
12. It is understood that there is a minimum of 2 months work commitment required, and student agrees to work the entire period as stated on the Job Offer. Not working through the period indicated constitutes a violation of the agreement with the host employer.
13. Student will not accept any form of assignment other than what is authorized by the signed Job Offer.
14. Student will not terminate agreement with host employer without consulting with ASSE ASPIRE staff for assistance first. Students must have written authorization from ASSE ASPIRE in order to leave the placement, student will be required to provide two weeks notice to the employer prior to leaving the placement.
15. Student will respect the privacy of information learned during the work experience.
16. Student agrees to complete all evaluations in compliance with the program regulations.
17. Student will pay for any property damages caused by him/her.
18. Students from countries eligible for the travel grace period will return home no later than 30 days after their DS-2019 program end date, and prior to their university start date. Students cannot work during the travel grace period. Students cannot travel out of the US during their grace period and are ONLY allowed to travel within the US. Students terminated from the program for violation of rules governing the program must return home immediately, and are not eligible for the travel grace period.
19. For self-placed students only, it is solely the student's responsibility to ensure that the self-placed Job Offer form is completed clearly and signed by both,

## Rules and Regulations

he/she and his/her host employer. This Job Offer form must be submitted with all other application documentation.

20. If for any reason the student's pre-placed job placement should not work out, through no fault of the student, ASSE ASPIRE will do all possible within its resources to replace him/her in a suitable position. If it is able to do so, but not able to locate a position in the same area, the student would be responsible to provide for his/her own transportation to the new site.
21. Failure to comply with any program rules or giving misleading information may result in program dismissal and repatriation to the home country.

### 22. Cultural Activities

In addition to work-based cultural exposure, it is intended that students should learn about, and experience, American culture firsthand. As a program component, the United States Department of State requires each student to avail themselves of local resources and participate in activities, which would expose them to components of American life or history. Student must take part in at least one cultural activity per month during his/her stay and provide documentation of these activities on a monthly basis. Students who do not take part in and document at least one cultural activity monthly will be terminated from the program. Examples of such activities, sites or events are national, state or county parks, historic sites, sports events, local government visits, family meals or celebrations, museum visits, etc. Please search your local city and chamber of commerce websites in your area as these are great sources to find out about local cultural activities, local events, festivals and parades that you can participate in while on the program.

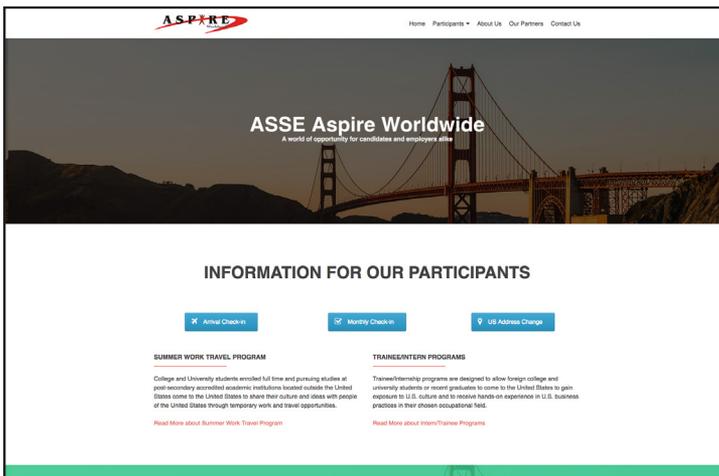
23. Student must complete the online 'Arrival Check-in' with the program sponsor ASSE ASPIRE within 10 days of arrival. Failure to check-in within 10 days of arrival will result in termination from the program.
24. Student must advise ASSE ASPIRE when they change residence/housing location within 10 days by completing the online "US Address Change" form. Failure to do so within 10 days of the change of residential address may result in termination of the program.
25. Subsequent to the 'Arrival Check-in', student must complete the online 'Monthly Check-in' every 30 days counting from the program begin date. Student who fails to check-in with ASSE ASPIRE every month will be terminated from the program.
26. Student understands that he/she is seeking a new experience and will not return to a Host Employer or location from a previous year unless placed with an ASSE ASPIRE Employer.

During your program you must do the following:

- Check-in within 10 days of your arrival in the USA.**
- Check-in once a month** (every 30 days from your program start date) **with your current address and a cultural activity.**
- Report any change of housing address within 10 days.**
- Report a second job and receive permission from ASSE ASPIRE prior to start working at this second job.**
- Complete at least one cultural activity per month and report it to ASSE ASPIRE in your monthly check-in.**

Otherwise your program will be **TERMINATED** which could prevent you from being granted a visa for the USA for the next 10 years.

Please log onto [www.aspireww.com](http://www.aspireww.com) to complete an Arrival Check-In, a Monthly Check-In (including your cultural activity documentation), or a US Address Change. Under the Work & Travel Program you will also find the instructions for a second job application.



The screenshot shows the ASPIRE website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ASPIRE logo and links for Home, Participants, About Us, Our Partners, and Contact Us. Below the navigation bar is a large banner image of the Golden Gate Bridge with the text "ASSE Aspire Worldwide" and the tagline "A world of opportunity for candidates and employers alike". Underneath the banner is a section titled "INFORMATION FOR OUR PARTICIPANTS" which contains three buttons: "Arrival Check-in", "Monthly Check-in", and "US Address Change". Below these buttons are two columns of text describing the "SUMMER WORK TRAVEL PROGRAM" and "TRAINEE/INTERNS PROGRAMS".

**“Once your check-in is approved, you will receive a confirmation email from ASPIRE”**



### **CHECK-IN INFORMATION**

For every check-in (arrival and monthly), you must enter your physical living address in the USA. This address must be correct and precise. If you are living in a dorm, apartment or motel, you must give us your room number/dorm name, for example. We do not accept PO Boxes or any mailing address.

Change of address: if for any reason your living address changes during your program (if you move motel rooms, or move to a completely different housing) you must inform ASSE ASPIRE of your new address within 10 days of such a move or go to: [https://aspireww.com/changeaddress\\_choose.php](https://aspireww.com/changeaddress_choose.php) and complete the change of US address.

### **CULTURAL ACTIVITY**

When you complete your monthly check-in (at least once every 30 days after your program begin date), you will be asked to inform us of a cultural activity you have taken part in during that month and upload a picture proving this activity took place. Examples of such activities are local events, national, state or county parks, historic sites, sports events, local government visits, family meals or celebrations, museum visits, etc. Your check-in can be disapproved if the picture is considered not valid by ASSE ASPIRE, and you will receive an e-mail asking you to complete a new check-in within 5 days. You must check your e-mails regularly and respond to them within a reasonable timeframe.

### **EARLY PROGRAM TERMINATION**

You must do your best to complete the program. Should you be unwilling to complete the program, your status in SEVIS may be terminated. Should you not return home immediately you must do your best to complete the program in accordance to the commitment you made to your host employer. ASSE ASPIRE understands, however, that sometimes unexpected situations arise. Should you find that you are unable to complete the program due to unforeseen circumstances, you must contact ASSE ASPIRE immediately. Your early program termination will affect your SEVIS status. Students who fail to complete the program successfully are not permitted the 30-day grace period to travel in the USA.



### PRE-DEPARTURE

Before you leave your country, make sure your flight and travel information has been sent to ASSE ASPIRE and your Host Employer.

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Make sure you know how to get to your Host Employer and to your housing. Your agent and your job offer will provide this information.

## LUGGAGE ALLOWANCE & PACKING

Check with your airline to find out your baggage allowance. You may want to limit your luggage weight because not only do you have to carry the luggage, but many places may not have elevators. Also, you may want to bring back more than you've taken. Try limiting the luggage to 15 kilos. Most students will be wearing a uniform so clothing needs will be minimal.

- If you plan to do any traveling while in the USA, a backpack will be much easier to manage than a suitcase.
- Pack according to the season and destination.
- You may have to go a week between laundries so bring enough clothing to get through the week during the hot season.
- Do not bring valuables. There may be difficulty finding a secure place for them.

## MONEY

• You should not carry large amounts of cash to the USA. However, you should arrive with **at least \$1000** in US currency for emergencies and unexpected costs upon arrival. Please keep in mind that it may take a few weeks before you get your first paycheck, so plan to bring at least enough money to live for a few weeks. Also, some housing may require a deposit.

- Bring enough money to cover those expenses that will not be met by the work

stipend. Having additional money sent from home can take a long time. You should consider the types of expenses that you may have upon arrival, including travel expenses, lodging, food, housing deposit, etc. until receipt of the first paycheck. Housing costs per month could be a minimum of \$350 and might be deducted from your paycheck.

- It is highly recommended that you open a checking account in a local bank. You will want to be given an Automatic Teller Card (ATM or Debit card) to avoid carrying large sums of money. ATM cards can be used at 24-hour automated teller machines. A “PIN” or Personal Identification Number is provided for your Debit card. This number should be a secret that only you know. If someone else has your Debit card and Pin number, they can take money from your account. If you lose this card notify your bank immediately. Most ATM cards can be used extensively throughout the USA. Keep track of all banking records so you don’t forget how much money you have spent.
- If you need money from home in a hurry, contact Western Union (website: [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com) or phone 1.800.325.6000. This service makes it possible to transfer money from your home country to anywhere in the USA within 15 minutes, on any day of the week. There is a handling charge, which will vary according to the amount of money sent.

## DOCUMENTS AND KEY ITEMS TO BRING

### DOCUMENTS TO BRING:

- Passport
- Sponsor Letter
- Return Plane ticket
- International driver’s license
- Original DS-2019 form
- Job Offer
- International student ID card
- Insurance card

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

### SOME KEY ITEMS

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

### I-94 ADMISSION NUMBER

Upon arrival at the US port of entry, you will present the passport, visa and DS-2019 form. After reviewing them and updating your SEVIS record with the entry information (date and port of entry), the immigration officer return the documents to you. In order to increase efficiency, reduce operating costs and streamline the admissions process, U.S. Customs and Border Protection has automated Form I-94 at air and sea ports of entry. You will be provided with a CBP admission stamp on your travel document. You will need the I-94 (record of admission) for verification of alien registration, immigration status or employment authorization, the electronic arrival/ departure record can be obtained at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home>.



#### If Your Are Lost

In case of Emergency call:  
1-888-327-7473

## Social Security Card

You are required to complete your arrival check-in at the ASPIRE website [www.aspireww.com](http://www.aspireww.com) before applying for a Social Security Card. You must obtain a **Social Security Card** (SS card) upon arrival in the USA. You can download the application form from [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov). The number on the SS card serves as the taxpayer identification number and will be used for the host employer's payroll. This number is also needed to open a bank account or obtain a state driver's license. While your Host Employer or ASSE ASPIRE Area Representative will assist you in obtaining the SS card, it is ultimately your responsibility to obtain this SS card and provide your number to your Host Employer as soon as you receive it.



## Social Security Card

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

- Original DS- 2019 form
- Passport with the J-1 Visa and a copy of your I-94 (record of admission) that can be obtained at <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>.
- Sponsor letter
- If the passport is less than one year old you will need to bring an official document (birth certificate or driver's license with photo) to serve as proof of age.

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

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

If you lose your Social Security Card, you should be fine, as long as you still have your Social Security number (or a photocopy of the card) in a safe place. The application could take up to 20 working days. Request a temporary certificate (Form SSA-5028) upon application. This temporary certificate doesn't have a number, but is proof that you have applied for the card. The host employer should be able to use a provisional number until the Social Security card arrives. To check on the status of your Social Security Card, you may call the USA Social Security Administration without charge 1.800.772.1213 or visit their website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

Please notify your sponsor IMMEDIATELY if your Host Employer does not pay you because you have not received your SS card.



## Social Security Numbers for Noncitizens

### Does a noncitizen need a Social Security number?

Unless you are a noncitizen who wants to work in the United States, you probably don't need a Social Security number.

Generally, only noncitizens authorized to work in the United States by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) can get a Social Security number. Social Security numbers are used to report a person's wages to the government and to determine a person's eligibility for Social Security benefits. You need a Social Security number to work, collect Social Security benefits, and receive other government services.

Lawfully admitted noncitizens can get many benefits and services without a Social Security number. You don't need a number to get a driver's license, register for school, get private health insurance, or apply for school lunch programs or subsidized housing.

Some organizations use Social Security numbers to identify you in their records. Most, however, will identify you by some other means if you request it.

We can't assign a Social Security number solely for you to get a driver's license or a service that requires a credit check.

Although many companies, such as banks and credit companies, may ask for your Social Security number, you generally aren't required to provide one if you don't have one.

### How can I get a Social Security number and card?

If you are an immigrant, you can apply two ways:

- You can apply in your home country before you come to the United States when filing an application for an immigrant visa with the U.S. Department of State. In almost all cases, if you apply for a Social Security number and card with your immigrant visa application, you don't have to visit a Social Security office in the United States. (For more information, see [www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnvisa](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnvisa)); or

- You can visit a Social Security office in person. (See section below for what you need to bring with you to the Social Security office).

If you are a nonimmigrant, you can apply two ways, depending on your visa status:

- If you are lawfully present in the United States and plan to apply for work authorization from the DHS, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), you can apply for your SSN on the same USCIS application Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization). (For more information, see <https://www.ssa.gov/ssnvisa/ebe.html>).
- If you are lawfully present in the United States and your visa status allows you to work, then you must visit a social security office in person to apply.

### What do I need to bring to the Social Security office?

#### You need to prove your identity and work-authorized immigration status.

To prove your identity and work-authorized immigration status, show us your current U.S. immigration documents and your unexpired foreign passport. Acceptable immigration documents include your:

- Form I-551 (Lawful Permanent Resident Card, Machine-Readable Immigrant Visa);
- Admission stamp showing a class of admission permitting work;
- Form I-94 (*Arrival/Departure Record*); or
- Form I-766 (*Employment Authorization Document/EAD*).

**Exchange visitors:** If you're a J-1 or J-2 exchange visitor, we also need to see your DS-2019, *Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status or EAD*. If you are a J-1 student, student intern, or international visitor, you must provide a letter from your sponsor. The letter should be on sponsor letterhead with an original signature that authorizes your employment.

# Social Security Fact Sheet

**International students:** If you're an F-1 or M-1 student, we need to see your Form I-20, *Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status or Designated School Official (DSO) letter*. For information on other documents that students must provide, ask for *International Students And Social Security Numbers* (Publication No. 05-10181).

## You need to prove age.

You must present your foreign birth certificate if you have it or can get it within 10 business days. If not, we can consider other documents, such as your unexpired passport or a document issued by DHS, as evidence of your age.

## You need to complete an application.

You will need to complete an *Application for a Social Security Card* (Form SS-5). You can do this at the Social Security office or you can find a copy of this form on our website that you can print and bring with you.

**Important:** All documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. We cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents. We also cannot accept a receipt showing you applied for the document.

We may use one document for two purposes. For example, we may use your DHS EAD as proof of both your identity and work-authorized immigration status. Your birth certificate or passport may serve as proof of age. **However, you must provide at least two separate documents.**

## When should I apply?

We recommend you wait 10 days after arriving in the United States to apply for a Social Security number to make it easier for us to verify your DHS documents online, which will speed processing of your Social Security number application.

We will mail your Social Security number card as soon as we have all of your information and have verified your documents with the issuing offices.

## How much does applying for a Social Security number and card cost?

Applying for a Social Security number and card is free.

## What if I need a number for other reasons?

If you aren't authorized by DHS to work in the United States, you can get a Social Security number only if you can prove you need it for a valid non-work reason. That might happen, for example, if a state or federal law requires you to have a Social Security number to get benefits to which you have already established entitlement.

If you need a number for tax purposes, and you aren't authorized to work in the United States, you can apply for an *Individual Taxpayer Identification Number* from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Visit the IRS in person, or call the IRS toll-free number, **1-800-TAXFORM (1-800-829-3676)**, and request Form W-7, *Application For An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number*.

If a business or government agency asks you for a Social Security number and you are not authorized to work in the United States, ask if they can identify you in some other way. In most cases, you'll be able to get the service or license you need without a Social Security number.

## Contacting Social Security

The most convenient way to contact us anytime, anywhere is to visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov). There, you can: apply for benefits; open a *my* Social Security account, which you can use to review your *Social Security Statement*, verify your earnings, print a benefit verification letter, change your direct deposit information, request a replacement Medicare card, and get a replacement SSA-1099/1042S; obtain valuable information; find publications; get answers to frequently asked questions; and much more.

If you don't have access to the internet, we offer many automated services by telephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call us toll-free at **1-800-772-1213** or at our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**, if you're deaf or hard of hearing.

If you need to speak to a person, we can answer your calls from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. We ask for your patience during busy periods since you may experience a higher than usual rate of busy signals and longer hold times to speak to us. We look forward to serving you.



Securing today  
and tomorrow

Social Security Administration  
Publication No. 05-10096 | ICN 468630 | Unit of Issue — HD (one hundred)  
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Social Security Numbers for Noncitizens  
Produced and published at U.S. taxpayer expense

♻️ Printed on recycled paper

### **STARTING WORK & COMPLETING YOUR W-4 FORM**

When you start your job in the USA, your Host Employer will provide you with a W-4 form to complete. Please note it is very important for you to take the following steps when completing it:

- Step 1 – A) Name and Address write your name and surname with capital letters as you have written it on the Social Security Card application. Write your full home address in your home country. This will ensure that your final payment document W-2 will arrive at your home country, and you will need it to file an income tax return the following year. B) Social Security number please write your SSN only if you already have received your card. If not - leave blank and make sure you provide your Host Employer with your Social Security number as soon as you receive your card, so you can use your SSN to file an income tax return. C) Tick “Single or Married filing separately.”
- Step 2 – Complete Steps 2-4 ONLY if they apply to you: otherwise skip to Step 5
- Step 5 – Sign and date

For further information on W-4 form - please see the following pages.  
As soon as you receive your Social Security Card - please inform your Host Employer of your Social Security number.

Copies of important documents you need to keep for when you return from the USA:

- Your Visa in your passport
- DS-2019 form
- I-94 admission number
- Social Security Card
- Last pay slip from all Host Employers you received before you left USA
- W-2 form if you receive it while you are in USA. There is one W-2 form for every calendar year, which your Host Employer should give you (or mail to the address you provided on the W-4 form) in the beginning of the next calendar year. (Example your W-2 form for 2020 should be given or mailed to you in January 2021).

# W-4 Form

Form **W-4**

## Employee's Withholding Certificate

OMB No. 1545-0074

**2020**

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

▶ **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.**

<b>Step 1:</b> <b>Enter Personal Information</b>	(a) First name and middle initial	Last name	(b) Social security number
	Address		▶ <b>Does your name match the name on your social security card?</b> 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"/> <b>Single or Married filing separately</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Married filing jointly</b> (or Qualifying widow(er)) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Head of household</b> (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, when to use the online estimator, and privacy.

**Step 2:** Complete this step if you (1) hold more than one job at a time, or (2) are married filing jointly and your spouse also works. The correct amount of withholding depends on income earned from all of these jobs.

**Multiple Jobs or Spouse Works**

Do **only one** of the following.

(a) Use the estimator at [www.irs.gov/W4App](http://www.irs.gov/W4App) for most accurate withholding for this step (and Steps 3-4); or

(b) Use the Multiple Jobs Worksheet on page 3 and enter the result in Step 4(c) below for roughly accurate withholding; or

(c) If there are only two jobs total, you may check this box. Do the same on Form W-4 for the other job. This option is accurate for jobs with similar pay; otherwise, more tax than necessary may be withheld . . . . . ▶

**TIP:** To be accurate, submit a 2020 Form W-4 for all other jobs. If you (or your spouse) have self-employment income, including as an independent contractor, use the estimator.

**Complete Steps 3-4(b) on Form W-4 for only ONE of these jobs.** Leave those steps blank for the other jobs. (Your withholding will be most accurate if you complete Steps 3-4(b) on the Form W-4 for the highest paying job.)

<b>Step 3:</b> <b>Claim Dependents</b>	If your income will be \$200,000 or less (\$400,000 or less if married filing jointly):		
	Multiply the number of qualifying children under age 17 by \$2,000 ▶ \$ _____		
	Multiply the number of other dependents by \$500 . . . . . ▶ \$ _____		
	Add the amounts above and enter the total here . . . . .	<b>3</b>	\$ _____
<b>Step 4 (optional):</b> <b>Other Adjustments</b>	(a) <b>Other income (not from jobs).</b> If you want tax withheld for other income you expect this year that won't have withholding, enter the amount of other income here. This may include interest, dividends, and retirement income . . . . .	<b>4(a)</b>	\$ _____
	(b) <b>Deductions.</b> If you expect to claim deductions other than the standard deduction and want to reduce your withholding, use the Deductions Worksheet on page 3 and enter the result here . . . . .	<b>4(b)</b>	\$ _____
	(c) <b>Extra withholding.</b> Enter any additional tax you want withheld each pay period . . . . .	<b>4(c)</b>	\$ _____

**Step 5:** Under penalties of perjury, I declare that this certificate, to the best of my knowledge and belief, is true, correct, and complete.

**Sign Here**

▶ **Employee's signature** (This form is not valid unless you sign it.) ▶ **Date**

<b>Employers Only</b>	Employer's name and address	First date of employment	Employer identification number (EIN)

For Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see page 3.

Cat. No. 10220Q

Form **W-4** (2020)



## Notice 1392

(Rev. January 2020)



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service

## Supplemental Form W-4 Instructions for Nonresident Aliens

Nonresident aliens must follow special instructions when completing Form W-4, Employee's Withholding Certificate, for compensation paid to such individuals as employees performing dependent personal services in the United States. Compensation for dependent personal services includes amounts paid as wages, salaries, fees, bonuses, commissions, compensatory scholarships, fellowship income, and similar designations for amounts paid to an employee.

**Getting tax forms and publications.** Go to [IRS.gov/Forms-Instructions](https://www.irs.gov/Forms-Instructions) to view, download, or print all of the forms and publications you may need. You can also download and view popular tax publications and instructions on mobile devices as an eBook at no charge. Or, you can go to [IRS.gov/OrderForms](https://www.irs.gov/OrderForms) to place an order and have forms mailed to you within 10 business days. Also, you can call 800-829-3676 to place your order.

### Are you a nonresident alien? If so, these special instructions apply to you. Resident aliens should follow the instructions on Form W-4.

If you are an alien individual (that is, an individual who is not a U.S. citizen), specific rules apply to determine if you are a resident alien or a nonresident alien for federal income tax purposes. Generally, you are a resident alien if you meet either the "green card test," or the "substantial presence test," for the calendar year. Any alien individual not meeting either test is generally a nonresident alien. Additionally, a dual-resident alien who applies the so-called "tie-breaker" rules contained within the Resident (or Residence or Fiscal Residence) article of an applicable U.S. income tax treaty in favor of the other Contracting State is treated as a nonresident alien. See Pub. 519, U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens, for more information on the green card test, the substantial presence test, and the first-year choice.

### What compensation is subject to withholding and requires a Form W-4?

Compensation paid to a nonresident alien for performing personal services as an employee in the United States is subject to graduated withholding. Compensation for personal services also includes amounts paid as a scholarship or fellowship grant to the extent it represents payment for past, present, or future services performed as an employee in the United States. Nonresident aliens must complete Form W-4 using the modified instructions provided later, so that employers can withhold the correct amount of federal income tax from compensation paid for personal services performed in

the United States. This Notice modifies the instructions to Form W-4 to take into account the restriction on a nonresident alien's filing status, the restriction on claiming the standard deduction, and the restriction on claiming tax credits and deductions for certain Nonresident aliens.

### Are there any exceptions to this withholding?

Yes. Nonresident aliens may be exempt from wage withholding on the following amounts.

- Compensation paid to employees of foreign employers if such pay is not more than \$3,000 and the employee is temporarily present in the United States for not more than a total of 90 days during the tax year.
- Compensation paid to regular crew members of a foreign vessel.
- Compensation paid to residents of Canada or Mexico engaged in transportation-related employment.
- Certain compensation paid to residents of American Samoa, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Compensation paid to foreign agricultural workers temporarily admitted into the United States on H-2A visas.

See Pub. 519 to see if you qualify for one of these exemptions.

Nonresident aliens may be exempt from wage withholding on part or all of their compensation for dependent personal services under an income tax treaty. If you are claiming a tax treaty withholding exemption, do not complete Form W-4. Instead, complete Form 8233, Exemption from Withholding on Compensation for Independent (and Certain Dependent) Personal Services of a Nonresident Alien Individual, and give it to each withholding agent from whom amounts will be received.

Even if you submit Form 8233, the withholding agent may have to withhold tax from your income because the factors on which the treaty exemption is based may not be determinable until after the close of the tax year. In this case, you must file Form 1040-NR, U.S. Nonresident Alien Income Tax Return (or Form 1040-NR-EZ, U.S. Income Tax Return for Certain Nonresident Aliens With No Dependents, if you qualify), to recover any overwithheld tax and to provide the IRS with proof that you are entitled to the treaty exemption. See Form 8233 and the Instructions for Form 8233, Pub. 901, U.S. Tax Treaties, and Pub. 519 for more information on treaty benefits.

# W-4 Form

## Am I required to file a U.S. tax return even if I am a nonresident alien?

Yes. Nonresident aliens who perform personal services in the United States are considered to be engaged in a trade or business in the United States and generally are required to file Form 1040-NR (or Form 1040-NR-EZ). Also, you will need to file Form 1040-NR (or Form 1040-NR-EZ) to claim a refund of any overwithheld taxes. See the Instructions for Form 1040-NR, or the Instructions for Form 1040-NR-EZ, for more information.

Nonresident aliens who are bona fide residents of U.S. possessions should consult Pub. 570, for information on whether compensation is subject to wage withholding in the United States.

## Will my withholding amounts be different from withholding for my U.S. coworkers?

Yes. Nonresident aliens cannot claim the standard deduction. The benefits of the standard deduction are included in the existing wage withholding tables published in Pub. 15-T, Federal Income Tax Withholding Methods.

Because nonresident aliens may not claim the standard deduction, employers are instructed to withhold an additional amount from a nonresident alien's wages. For the specific amounts to be added to wages before application of the wage tables, see Pub. 15-T.

**Note.** A special rule applies to nonresident alien students from India and business apprentices from India who are eligible for the benefits of Article 21(2) of the United States-India income tax treaty. Employers are not required to withhold an additional amount for the standard deduction from the wages of these individuals, as they may be entitled to claim the standard deduction. See Pub. 15-T and Pub. 519 for more information.

## What are the special Form W-4 instructions?

Nonresident aliens should pay particular attention to the following lines when completing Form W-4.

**Step 1(b): Personal Information.** You are required to enter a social security number (SSN) on Step 1(b) of Form W-4. If you do not have an SSN, contact the Social Security Administration (SSA) to find out if you are eligible for one.

You can visit any SSA office or call the SSA at 800-772-1213. For the deaf or hard-of-hearing, call 800-325-0778 (TTY/TTD number).

For more information, go to [www.ssa.gov/ssnnumber](http://www.ssa.gov/ssnnumber).

**Note.** You cannot enter an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) in Step 1(b) of Form W-4.

**Step 1(c): Personal Information.** Check the Single or Married filing separately box regardless of your actual marital status.

**Step 2: Multiple Jobs or Spouse Works.** Do not complete this section unless you have more than one job at the same time. Do not account for your spouse's job because nonresident aliens may not file jointly.

If you have more than one job, you may complete Step 2(b) or Step 2(c).

If you chose Step 2(b), complete the Step 2(b) Multiple Jobs Worksheet for **only one** job and write "nonresident alien" or "NRA" below Step 4(c) for **only one** job.

If you have only two jobs, you may choose Step 2(c), check the box on **both** Forms W-4, and write "NRA" or "nonresident alien" below Step 4(c) for the Form W-4 for the highest paying job. Do not write "nonresident alien" or "NRA" below Step 4(c) for the other job.

Nonresident aliens should not use the Tax Withholding Estimator.

**Multiple withholding agents.** If you are completing Form W-4 for more than one withholding agent (for example, you have more than one employer), complete Steps 3-4(b) on only one Form W-4. Withholding will be most accurate if you do this on the Form W-4 for the highest paying job.

**Step 3: Claim Dependents.** Only certain nonresident aliens should use Step 3. Nonresident aliens from Canada, Mexico, South Korea, or India may be able to claim the child tax credit or the credit for other dependents. See Pub. 519 and Pub. 972 for more information.

Nonresident aliens are generally not entitled to education credits. See Pub. 519 for more information.

Add the total credits that you may claim and enter the total in Step 3.

### Step 4. Optional

**Step 4(a).** If you want tax withheld for other income this year that won't have withholding and the income is taxable in the United States, enter the amount of other income here. Do not include any income from any jobs or self-employment. See Pub. 519 for more information.

**Step 4(b).** Nonresident alien itemized deductions and adjustments to income may be limited. See Pub. 519 for more information. If you expect to claim itemized deductions and/or adjustments to income (such as the student loan interest deduction), add your itemized deductions and adjustments to income and enter the amount in Step 4(b).

**Step 4(c).** Write "nonresident alien" or "NRA" in the space below Step 4(c). If you would like to have an additional amount withheld, enter the amount in Step 4(c).

**Exempt from withholding.** Do not claim that you are exempt from withholding in the space below Step 4(c) of Form W-4 (even if you meet both of the conditions to claim exemption from withholding listed in the instructions to the Form W-4).



All individuals who earn income in the USA are required to file a tax return the following calendar year, before April 15. Your tax return will reflect your actual earnings for the previous year, the amount of taxes you paid and the total amount of taxes owed or refunded. To file your taxes you will need your W-2 form and 1040NR-EZ tax form.

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

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

***Once you have completed the form, mail it to:***

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service Center  
Austin, TX 73301-0215 USA

If you overpaid the government, they will issue you a check. However, if you did not pay enough taxes, you must pay the government the balance. ***You must file your tax return no later than April 15.***

If you have difficulties filing your 1040NR-EZ tax form, you can contact sprintax.com. Sprintax.com is a multi-national corporation specializing on tax returns with assistance in 22 languages.

If a tax refund is due to you, sprintax.com will take a percentage of your refund for processing your taxes. sprintax.com can be reached at:

## Tax Refunds

### **Sprintax.com C/O Taxback Inc.**

333 N. Michigan Ave, Suite 915, Chicago, IL 60601  
www.sprintax.com

To speak with a Sprintax representative simply call:  
1.888.203.8900 (free in the United States) or  
1.353.1.887.1999 (outside the USA)

## Sales Tax

When making purchases, please keep in mind that what you see on the price tag is not always what you will pay at the sales register. States (and some counties and cities) will have sales taxes that are added onto the price of the purchases. Sales taxes will differ from state to state. The items that are taxed will also differ from state to state. For example, some states place a tax on clothes while others do not. The USA does not refund sales taxes.

### SUPPORT NETWORK

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

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

#### NOTE:

In order for the ASSE ASPIRE Area Representative to contact you, it is your responsibility to make sure he/she as well as ASSE ASPIRE has your updated contact information.

### WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY?

# 911

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

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

### PROBLEMS – WHO TO CONTACT?

You should always speak with your host employer supervisors first to solve work related problems that may arise. Because these individuals are busy, make an appointment to speak with him/her. If your supervisor is not responsive, speak with the manager or Human Resource Director. If this fails, and/or if you are unable to resolve your problems contact the ASSE ASPIRE Office at 1.888.3ASPIRE (1.888.327.7473).

**24 HOURS / 7 DAYS A WEEK EMERGENCY HELP!!** If you feel that your personal safety, welfare or health, or that of another, are in any danger and/or you are the recipient of any unwanted and inappropriate advances from anyone, please immediately call our “24 Hour Toll Free Help Line” and ask for “Leslie”. We will offer help to you immediately.

#### What is not an emergency?

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

“ Always speak with your host employer supervisors first to solve work related problems that may arise.”

### What is an emergency?

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

## SAFETY & HEALTH REMINDERS

- Bike Safety. If using a bicycle, remember to learn the laws of the area, respect all road users, and always wear a HELMET. For more information on bike safety please refer to [www.nhtsa.gov/Bicycles](http://www.nhtsa.gov/Bicycles) and <https://j1visa.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Revised-2017-Updated-Bike-Safety-Flyer-05.24.17.pdf>
- Never carry large amounts of money.
- Do not go out alone at night.
- Make sure that you learn which areas to avoid at night.
- Make sure someone always knows where you are.
- Always lock the doors in the housing that has been arranged.
- Do not leave valuables around.
- The drinking age in the USA is 21. If you are under 21 years of age beware. The laws in America are very strict concerning the drinking age. Most bars require that you show identification (ID) before you can enter. You will need to carry some form of photo ID. It is also illegal to drink alcohol on the street whether, you are 21 or not.
- There are many regulations prohibiting smoking in public places. Smoking is banned on all domestic air flights, most office buildings, restaurants and public transportation. Look around before you light a cigarette. In recent years, it has become customary to avoid smoking at home or when visiting someone's home.
- Do not use drugs or associate with people using drugs. It is illegal, and students will be arrested when caught. It is cause for immediate dismissal from the program.
- Even though Marijuana use is legal in certain states, under state law, it is still ILLEGAL under federal law. You should not consider that you are safe from law enforcement, just because you are in Colorado, or any other state where Marijuana has been legalized, nor are you exempt from work place drug testing – which could cost you your job and program.
- Always keep emergency numbers for the police, fire department, hospital, ASSE ASPIRE, etc. next to the phone and in purses or wallets.
- Avoid risky situations.
- Do not get into a car with somebody not known and trusted.
- Avoid areas where there is a feeling of unease.
- Avoid confrontation – do everything possible to defuse a potentially violent situation.

## Safety Reminders

We would like to remind you that you should stay alert and be aware of scams (internet, tax, identity theft, housing, immigration, craigslist, etc.) and to never provide personal information to anyone other than your sponsor or host organization. If you are contacted by someone alleging to be a representative of US Government and requesting personal information or money from you, please contact ASPIRE immediately. Do NOT send the money or give out personal information!!!

You can find some useful information about Craigslist's scams at <http://www.craigslist.org/about/scams> and also information about Government Imposter Scams and how to recognize them at <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0048-government-imposter-scams>

The health, safety, and welfare of exchange visitors is top priority for both the US Department of State and ASSE ASPIRE.

## Insurance

Each student will receive an insurance brochure with their personalized insurance information via e-mail a few days before the program start date. Information regarding the insurance coverage can be found in these materials. Please be aware that some costs may be at your charge (if you see a doctor not part of the network) and there might be some deductibles. Read the insurance coverage carefully. Avoid going to the Emergency Room unless you have a true emergency as there are high costs linked to ER visits.

Make sure you carry your insurance card with you at all times (store it safely in your wallet or purse). You never know when an emergency happens and you will have to show it in the medical facility, or call the insurance provider to check which medical facility you can go to.

Under certain circumstances you might have to pay medical expenses in advance and then contact the insurance company to submit a claim form and get the expenses covered reimbursed to you. If you need a claim form please request it via e-mail or log onto your student database and download the form. Always call the insurance provider if you need medical assistance so they can instruct you where to go. Do not go to the clinic or hospital without previous coordination with the insurance provider unless it is an emergency; in that case you need to call within 24 hours.

If you have any questions about your insurance coverage, claims, preferred providers in your area please call the insurance company directly for assistance.

**Make sure you carry your insurance card with you at all times (store it safely in your wallet or purse)**

### **ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

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

### **DRESS & GROOMING**

As a representative of your place of employment, appearance will matter. You will have ongoing contact with the public, and host employers tend to be more conservative about the image of their employees. High standards of grooming must be observed. A daily shower or bath and use of deodorant/antiperspirant are required. You must have clean and neat hair, in natural color (or close to it). Hair that is dyed may have to be changed, which can be quite expensive in the USA. Male workers must shave daily, and female workers should not wear a lot of jewelry, or pierced jewelry in excess of earrings as determined by the site supervisor. Pierced jewelry in the tongue, nose, eyebrows, etc. may not be permitted. Uniforms will likely be provided for you. However, some Host Employers have specific requirements for items that students may be required to provide. For example, generally, a certain type and color shoe will be required to be worn with uniforms. You should be prepared to purchase shoes in the USA, if necessary. Many jobs require employees to wear soft-soled shoes, e.g., tennis/running shoes. Because the host employer image is so important, you should be prepared to accept advice about how to meet the Host Employer standards, as they will vary from host employer to host employer. Details about the dress code at the Host Employer site is contained in your job offer.

### OVERTIME

For covered, nonexempt employees, the federal law requires Host Employers to pay ‘overtime pay’, which is to be at least one and one-half times an employee’s regular rate of pay after 40 hours of work in a workweek. Some exceptions apply under special circumstances, and some states also have overtime laws. In cases where an employee is subject to both the state and federal overtime laws, the employee is entitled to overtime according to the higher standard (i.e., the standard that will provide the higher overtime pay).

Students should ask their Host Employer regarding overtime if they are interested in working more than 40 hours per week.

More information about overtime laws can be found at this link: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs23.pdf>

### SECOND JOB

If your primary Host Employer agrees for you to have a second job you must first check the ASSE ASPIRE website to see the regulations for a second job: [http://swt.aspireww.com/student\\_second\\_job.php](http://swt.aspireww.com/student_second_job.php)

- √ There are certain types of jobs that are prohibited on the Summer Work Travel program.
- In positions that could bring notoriety or disrepute to the Exchange Visitor Program.
  - In sales positions that require participants to purchase inventory that they must sell in order to support themselves.
  - In domestic help positions in private homes (e.g., child care, elder care, gardener, chauffeur).
  - As pedi-cab or rolling chair drivers or operators.
  - As operators or drivers of vehicles or vessels for which drivers’ licenses are required regardless of whether they carry passengers or not.
  - In positions related to clinical care that involves patient contact.
  - In any position in the adult entertainment industry.

- In any position in a cleaning company or removal company
  - In positions requiring work hours that fall predominantly between 10pm and 6am.
  - In positions declared hazardous to youth by the Secretary of Labor at Subpart E of 29 CFR part 570.
  - In positions that require sustained physical contact with other people (e.g., body piercing, tattooing, massage, manicure).
  - In positions that are substantially commission-based and thus do not guarantee that participants will be paid minimum wage in accordance with federal and state standards.
  - In positions involved in gaming and gambling that include direct participation in wagering and/or betting.
  - In positions in chemical pest control, warehousing, catalogue/online order distribution centers, manufacturing and processing (including fishery jobs).
  - In positions with travelling fairs or itinerant concessionaires.
  - In positions for which there is another specific J category (e.g., camp counselor, intern, trainee).
  - In positions in the North American Industry Classification System's Goods-Producing Industries occupations categories industry sectors 11, 21, 23, 31-33 numbers.
- √ There are 4 documents that you must submit to ASSE ASPIRE for your second job verification.
- Self-placed Job Offer completed and signed by the Host Employer and yourself
  - Host Employer Agreement completed and signed by the Host Employer
  - Copy of Host Employer's Business License
  - Copy of Host Employer's valid Workers Compensation Policy Cover Sheet
- √ You are not allowed to start working for a second Host Employer until ASSE ASPIRE has verified AND approved your second job (you will receive an e-mail notification once you have uploaded all documents necessary on the link above).

### LAYOFFS/FIRING

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

The law says that you must be paid wages to date if you quit work, usually on the next scheduled pay day. The law also regulates the minimum amount of money you can be paid. Where Federal and state law have different minimum wage rate, the higher standard applies. For more information visit [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov).

### CHANGING JOBS

If you want to change jobs you must contact ASSE ASPIRE immediately to discuss your situation. You cannot change jobs without getting ASSE ASPIRE's prior authorization, giving your Host Employer 2 week notice, or your program will have to be terminated. You cannot start working with another Host Employer unless ASSE ASPIRE has approved the new Host Employer and has given you authorization. If you begin working at another Host Employer that has not been approved your program may be TERMINATED.

### TIPPED EMPLOYEES



A tipped employee engages in an occupation in which he or she customarily and regularly receives more than \$30 per month in tips. An employer of a tipped employee is only required to pay \$2.13 per hour in direct wages if that amount combined with the tips received at least equals the federal minimum wage (\$7.25). If the employee's tips combined with the employer's direct wages of at least \$2.13 per hour do not equal the federal

minimum hourly wage, the employer must make up the difference. Many states, however, require higher direct wage amounts for tipped employees.

More information about state laws regarding tipped employees can be found at this link: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/state/tipped.htm>

## HOUSING/TRANSPORTATION

Some Host Employers will provide the student housing and it will vary from dormitory style to shared apartments. In other cases you will need to secure your own housing and you will need to be sure that you know your living address before arriving into the USA.

The details of the housing will vary from Host Employer to Host Employer. In most cases, a housing deposit is required, and the subsequent rent payments may be deducted directly from your paycheck through the Host Employer. You should plan on paying a minimum of \$500 per month for housing. Make sure you get a receipt from your landlord showing the amount you paid for your deposit and each time you pay. Some Host Employers provide linens, and some do not. Some have laundry facilities on-site, and some do not. The cooking facilities may vary from site to site. Questions regarding housing should be addressed prior to arrival in the USA so that you are prepared.

We do not recommend buying a car while in the USA. The ASSE ASPIRE insurance does not cover driving a car in the USA. If you drive an automobile in the USA, it is a mandatory law that you have to secure automobile insurance. Public transportation, and the transportation provided by the Host Employer should be used. Hitchhiking is very dangerous in the USA, so should never be done.

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

## TRAVEL & EXCURSIONS

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

During your time off, we do not recommend leaving the USA given the short time frame of the program and commitments that have been made to the Host Employer. Therefore, ASSE ASPIRE will only permit students to leave and re-enter the USA if there is an urgent situation or emergency at home which requires travel. If granted permission from ASSE ASPIRE, you may leave and re-enter the USA without obtaining a new visa, provided the visa and DS-2019 form have not expired, the passport is still valid, and you have the copy of the DS-2019 form in your possession. Before you leave the United States, however, ASSE ASPIRE must approve your international travel and provide a signature on the DS-2019 form to show that you are still in good standing with the work program. ASSE ASPIRE staff will coordinate this signature of the DS-2019 form if:

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

All extended travel must take place at the completion of your work experience. If you wish to go by car, you must have a valid driver's license from your home country in order to drive in the USA. To rent a car, most companies require that the driver be at least 21 years of age (many require you to be 25) and have at least one major credit card. For more information contact: [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com)

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

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

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

Search on-line under the heading “Automobile Transport and Drive-A-Way Companies.” You can also call the following drive-a-way companies:

Auto Driveaway Co. 1.800.346.2277

Autolog 1.800.432.5182

Travel by bus is a good and economical way to see the country. Greyhound is a nationwide bus company 1.800.231.2222; website: [www.greyhound.com](http://www.greyhound.com)) with an extensive network giving you access to many cities. You can buy tickets individually from one city to another, or you can purchase special passes.

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

## **LIFE & CUSTOMS**

The USA is a large country with people from many different economic, social, ethnic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds. Since the founding of the USA, over 60 million people have immigrated. Thus, stereotypes for Americans are difficult because there will always be segments of the population that do not fit

the stereotype. However, there are a few characteristics that seem fairly common for most Americans:

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

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

### **TIPPING**

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

### **ADJUSTING TO LIFE & CUSTOMS**

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

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

or inappropriate. The feeling of culture shock generally sets in after the first few weeks of coming to a new place.

### Symptoms:

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

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

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

***Stage 2: This is hard work.*** It is not so exciting anymore. A person may encounter some difficult times and crises in daily life. For example, communication difficulties may occur such as not being understood. In this stage, there may be feelings of discontent, impatience, anger, sadness, and incompetence. This happens when a

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## TIPS FOR ADJUSTING

- Get enough sleep and eat a healthy diet.
- Take care of your personal hygiene and dress neatly.
- Lower expectations.
- Learn to laugh at mistakes, which is a positive way to approach the adjustment process.
- Keep busy and join in as many activities as possible to make friends and take advantage of the surroundings.
- Be willing to try new things: foods, sights and activities.

- Remember to say, “thank you.” It is a phrase used frequently in the American culture.
- Practice English as much as possible. It is the best way to improve proficiency and the comfort level of being in a foreign country.
- Communicate. No one can help a student with a problem or question if he/she doesn’t speak up.
- Write down feelings.
- Talk with your ASSE ASPIRE Area Representative.
- Try to maintain a positive attitude about the experience and opportunity of living and working in a foreign country.
- Be patient. While you may feel a bit overwhelmed at first, it will all get easier in time.
- Be aware of the local, state and national laws.
- Remember, it is not better, it is not worse, it is just different!

### **TIPS FOR ADJUSTING AT WORK**

- Respect the host employer’s rules.
- Don’t expect special treatment. You will be expected to work just as hard as your American counterparts.
- Treat customers with respect and a “smile.”
- Work quickly and efficiently. Workers are expected to have a strong work ethic.
- Ask lots of questions to reduce unpredictability.

### **ELECTRICITY**

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

### **UNITS OF MEASURE**

#### **Temperature**

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

### Metric Conversion

1 mile = 1.6 kilometers

1 yard = 91.4 centimeters

1 foot = 30.5 centimeters

1 inch = 2.54 centimeters

1 liquid quart = 0.95 liter

1 gallon = 3.8 liters

## TIME ZONES

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

## Telephones, Internet & E-Mail

In most areas, to dial a local number, only the last seven numbers of the phone number are dialed. If a long-distance number is dialed, the number “1” is dialed followed by the area code and 7 digit number. Long-distance calls (outside of your “area code”) in the USA can be costly so you should investigate which types of phone card options are available where you are residing. They can generally be purchased at grocery stores and post offices. The card is a pre-paid telephone card that enables you to make telephone calls at a cheaper rate than is normally charged. To use the card, dial the toll-free access number on the back of the card and then enter the account number. This will allow you to make calls anywhere in the world from any USA land line telephone as long as the account is in good standing. A card costs generally \$10 or \$20 and can be recharged when the account gets low. The option for keeping costs low is to make calls after 5:00 pm on weekdays and on weekends.

Besides the local and long distance numbers, there are also free toll-free numbers, which will start with 1.800, 1.888, 1.877 or 1.866 plus the 7-digit number.

## Telephones, Internet & E-Mail

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

### **You pay for the phone call**

1. Dial “011” from a land line. Dial “00” from a cell phone
2. Dial the Country Code
3. Dial the City Code (if the city code begins with “0”, leave the “0” out except if you are calling the Ukraine, Russia and Italy)
4. Dial the phone number

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

If the Host Employer provides e-mail and internet access, please respect their rules and hours regarding usage.

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

## Going Home

Remember to give your Host Employer the self-addressed stamped envelope for your W-2 form and to collect your friends’ numbers and addresses!

### About Visas Issues, Restrictions and Return Home Requirements

#### *What type of visa do I receive?*

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

#### *Can I leave the USA early?*

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

#### *Can I choose to extend my visa once arrived in the USA?*

Unfortunately, no. According to the program regulations, the maximum program period is 4 months (some countries have program periods of less than 4 months). Plus, you may have an additional 30 days in which to leave the USA for home (students from some countries do not have the ability to travel for 30 days, and must return home immediately upon the completion of the program). The 30-day grace period is meant to allow students to sightsee and travel. They must go home after this period. You can stay until the expiration date on the DS-2019 form plus 30 days for travel providing you remain in compliance of the visa conditions. During the 30-day grace period, you may be a tourist in the USA, but may not work. If you leave the USA during the 30-day grace period, you cannot be

## Frequently Asked Questions

re-admitted on the J-1 visa. If you wish to stay beyond the 30-day grace period, you must leave the country and reenter on another visa (tourist, student, etc.) The ASSE ASPIRE staff cannot help with this process. To stay illegally after the 30-day grace period can prevent you from receiving future USA visas or immigration status.

### ***What if I lose the copy of the DS-2019 form?***

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

### ***Can I change jobs/positions once in the USA?***

Please contact ASSE ASPIRE to discuss your situation if you feel you may want to change jobs/positions. Each case is examined individually, and depending on the situation, you may receive permission to change your job. You must give your employer two week notice before leaving the placement. Students must have written authorization from ASSE ASPIRE in order to change jobs. If you leave your assigned host employer before your agreement ends without permission from ASSE ASPIRE you will be in breach of the ASSE ASPIRE agreement and program conditions.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you are currently in the USA and you need assistance, do not hesitate to contact the ASPIRE Worldwide Office. The toll free telephone numbers are free, just pick up the phone and dial the number.

### **ASPIRE Worldwide/ASSE International**

228 North Coast Highway  
Laguna Beach, CA 92651 USA

5000 Coastal Highway, Suite 2  
Ocean City, MD 21842 USA

Toll Free 1.888.327.7473

### **ASSE/ASPIRE Responsible Officers**

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