

# **SEF International Intern HOST FAMILY GUIDE BOOK**

Thank you for volunteering to be a Host Family for the Spanish Education Fund (SEF) International Intern Program in the Eden Prairie School District. As discussed in previous communications, below are the requirements for hosting an intern.

- The Host Family provides free room and board (2-3 daily meals) for the Intern. School day lunches are provided by the SEF.
- The Intern must have a private bedroom with a door that locks and convenient access to a bathroom. A basement bedroom must have a legal egress window.
- Allow a home inspection by the host family coordinator(s).
- Complete the host family fact sheet and submit to host family coordinator(s).
- Keep address on file up to date.

## **Planning for their arrival**

- Discuss arrival and departure dates, and make arrangements to meet your intern at the airport.
- Interns have a 30-day grace period after the last day of school (the expiration date of their J-1 Visa) in which to stay in MN and/or travel prior to returning to their home country. Consider whether you are open to allowing your intern to stay with you past the last day of school, but within the J-1 Visa 30-day grace period. You are not required to do so. If this is of interest to you and your intern, they can factor that into deciding on their departure date.
- Discuss food preference and/or allergies.
- Ask them whether they are planning to bring their own laptop and/or if you have one they can use.
- Consider cell phone options; bringing theirs from home or purchasing here.

## **Making them a part of your family**

- Interns are not a “guest” and you are not expected to “entertain” them for their full stay which could be 1 or 2 semesters. They should be considered more like a member of the family and included in the family routines when possible.
- Communication is the key to making this a positive experience for both parties. Try not to assume the intern knows what you want or what you are thinking and vice versa. Most previous problems have been based on not talking things out and setting clear expectations. If you need some assistance due to language barriers, please contact the Intern Program Coordinator and/or Host Family Coordinators.
- Interns are adults yet many have lived only with their family, not on their own. They sometimes have a hard time finding their place within your family’s structure. Many of them have come here to learn how to be more independent, so you can help by treating them like the adults that they are.
- To help with their transition and to integrate with your family and their buddy families, host families should organize a meet and greet gathering with their intern and their buddy families within the first few weeks of their intern’s arrival. It is also a good idea to schedule a similar farewell gathering with this group.
- Your intern must have access to your house, so give them a key, garage code or opener, and/or

security system code.

### **Family Events**

- **Money:** If you invite your intern to go with you to a movie, eat out, see a play, concert or other event, please let them know in advance if your expectation is for them to pay their own way, how much you expect them to pay, or if you will be paying for them. And if you are asking them to pay for all or a portion of the cost, you may need to factor their interest/ability to pay into whether this is a required or optional event.
- **Times/dates:** Specific events (i.e. games, visits to host family's hometown, vacations, etc.) should be discussed and documented via email with your intern to ensure alignment. Interns only have 2 days of vacation per semester, so plans requiring absence from school should be factored into their vacation schedule and pre-approved as outlined in the Intern Manual.

### **Social**

All of the interns are over the age of 21, so it is your decision whether you will allow them to drink alcohol in your home. If they are out late, you may want to discuss their behavior when coming in (i.e. being very quiet, no disruption of other's sleep) and what you will do in the morning as not to feel you have to tiptoe around (it is their decision to stay out late and sleep in, but the family activity will be normal). You should discuss your need to know their schedule as much or as little as you would like.

### **Meals**

- Lunch at school is paid for by the SEF.
- Providing lunch on non-school days is the responsibility of the host family, in addition to providing breakfasts, dinners and snacks.
- Please provide your intern with an open cupboard policy and show them where everything is located. Culturally they are likely to be uncomfortable taking food when they need it. Tell them to feel free to open your refrigerator and eat when they are hungry. Be sure they understand and tell them more than once. If there are any items that are restricted or off limits, tell them at that time.
- Discuss dietary and mealtime differences and make a list of foods your intern would like to have on hand. You may even want to take them along to the grocery store so that they can pick out some items. Note: Cub Foods has a fairly good ethnic section. Some of the interns have a little cooking experience, so help them learn some basics so they can provide for themselves when necessary.
- He or she may be interested in making meals for you and sharing their culture and traditions. Ask them if they would like to prepare an occasional meal.
- If you are going out to eat, please be clear on whether or not you want them to join you and who will be paying for their meal. They are on a budget and need to determine where they want to spend their money.

### **Money**

- Interns receive a \$300.00 stipend at the beginning of each month for the previous month's work.
- The Intern Welcome Coordinators and Intern Committee volunteers will take interns to open bank accounts at Wells Fargo, but they may need rides to deposit paychecks or withdraw cash. At the end

of their stay they will need a ride to the bank to close their account.

- Explain the U.S. banking system to your intern. Please work with them to understand our system and offer to help them balance their accounts the first month or so if needed. Encourage them to use debit cards wisely and explain it is not a credit card. This will also help avoid overdrafts.
- Please do not offer to sign on a loan or make offers to your intern financially.
- ATMs: make sure to use one that is in the Wells Fargo network to avoid charges.

### **J-1 Visa Regulations**

- **Employment Restrictions** – Any employment in addition to the contracted Amity internship is not permitted per visa regulations. Interns may not take another job and earn money beyond their intern program stipend, especially that would involve a 1099 or W-2 filing.
- **30-day Grace Period** – Interns may not receive help staying in the U.S. after the 30-day grace period at the end of their assignment. Interns know before they arrive that the program is temporary and they must return home at the end. The goal of the Amity Intern Program is for interns to return home and share what they have learned and experienced. Therefore, it is very important for both the host school and host and buddy families to encourage interns to return to their home countries at the end of their assignments.

### **Childcare**

As mentioned above, there are strict limitations about paid employment beyond the J-1 visa requirement. Therefore, any desire for occasional babysitting should be discussed and mutually agreed to in advance. You should not expect the intern to function like an au pair. If you are going out and would normally hire a babysitter, then you should find an appropriate way to compensate the intern. If they are hanging out at home and you need to do a quick errand, you should be able to ask the intern to watch the kids for a short period of time while you are gone without need for compensation. However, don't take advantage of your intern. For example, don't expect the intern to routinely watch your children before or after they get on/off the school bus.

### **Housekeeping**

Your intern is expected to clean his or her own room, bathroom and living space. Help them feel like a member of the family and identify for them the areas they are responsible for based on your family's routines. Don't assume they will know how to use a vacuum and cleaning supplies, you may have to show them. Please provide cleaning supplies for them to use.

### **Laundry**

The interns are expected to do their own laundry. Show them how to operate your washer and dryer and how to use detergents. Discuss a schedule for weekly laundry. Help your intern find a balance; some of these young adults have never done their own laundry. Clothes dryers may not be used in your intern's home country so you may want to explain that their garments could shrink if these items shouldn't be put into a dryer. Check the "fabric care tags" and remind them to check their pockets for pens, pencils, crayons etc.

### **Being at School on Time**

It is not your responsibility to wake them up and get them ready for school or other events. They are adults and should know what is expected of them. Provide an alarm clock for their use and show them how to use it.

## **Dress Code**

Host families should make sure the interns know the guidelines and provide direction regarding appropriate dress code at school. Refer to the Intern Manual for additional guidance.

## **Clothing**

- The SEF will provide winter coats, boots and some other warm clothes for the interns to use while they are here. You are welcome to let them borrow items you might have. They may prefer to purchase their own hats.
- Interns come from warm climates, so teach them how to layer and dress for our climate.

## **Transportation**

- Your “job” as host family does not include providing all transportation for the intern. You decide how little or how much you WANT to provide. The interns will be told about their other options for rides and it is up to you to set realistic expectations on the weekly routine that include driving so they can take advantage of those routines without creating an extra driving need for you.
- Help them get to know their buddy families who have committed to helping out with transportation. The meet and greet after their arrival should help establish a strong relationship.
- The intern will be given a list of volunteer families who will be willing to assist in rides to and from various events. Please encourage your intern to plan ahead and to use this list whenever possible.  
<https://sites.google.com/site/sefinterntransportation/>
- Encourage bus line usage. Within Eden Prairie, there is a new on-demand and scheduled ride service called SouthWest Prime ([SWPrime.org](http://SWPrime.org)). Rides can be reserved weekdays from 48 hours prior to your trip all the way up to immediate time of your trip. Cost \$3.00 per person, per ride.
- Encourage bike riding. If you don't have a bike they can use, contact the Transportation Coordinators and he/she may be able to help you locate one.
- Show them how to get to various places in your area (the mall, Target, the Community Center).
- The Host Family Coordinator will notify the Transportation Department if your intern will be riding the bus. They will need to know that the intern will be riding your child's bus to and from school.

## **Mobile phones**

- Many interns bring a mobile phone from their home country with them. This is often not compatible with the cell phone transmission system that we use in the U.S. They can talk to their cell phone provider before leaving their home country to see if they can purchase a SIM Card that is compatible in the U.S. It might also be as simple as “unlocking” the phone to be able to use it effectively in the United States.
- If your intern does not bring a cell phone along, he or she will very likely purchase a cell phone here and use a “pay-as-you-go” or non-contract phone type plan. This involves buying new “minute” cards periodically as the minutes get used up. There are many phones and plans available and can be purchased at stores like Target, Best Buy or Wal-Mart. Interns will choose the plan that best meets their needs.
- More information about phones can be found at:  
<http://www.spanisheducationfund.org/Intern%20Phone%20and%20Communication%20FAQs.pdf>

## **Personal Studies**

As part of the Intern's personal studies requirement, they will need to complete either an Amity online course or a cultural project. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are no longer offered as an option by Amity.

## **Medical**

All interns are required to have medical insurance during their time here in the U.S. Do not sign any of the medical agreements for your intern. You do not want to be responsible for any medical costs they may incur. Please help them make decisions regarding their health care as needed.

## **Vacation/Travel**

Interns must have Principal approval for vacation days. They are allowed 2 paid vacation days per semester and vacation must be used by January 24, 2017 (fall) and May 15, 2017 (spring). If you are taking your intern with you and they are using vacation days, please confirm that they have followed the approval process. International travel is allowed with some restrictions by certain countries, however the intern must follow the Amity Educational Internship Handbook travel policy.

## **Additional Resources**

You will receive a copy of the **SEF Intern Manual** for your intern's school (EHSI, CMS or EPHS). Please familiarize yourself with the information contained in this manual; in particular, we request that you read the following sections:

- Vacation Days
- Sick Days
- Host Families
- How to resolve possible problems
- Transportation, including the Intern Driving Policy

You will also receive orientation information directly from Amity. The **Amity Institute Host Family Handbook** provides you with guidelines and tips for making the most of your hosting experience. The *Housing Expectation Discussion Guideline* (contained within) is a valuable resource for facilitating a discussion with your intern at the beginning of their stay.

The interns receive orientation materials from Amity, too. The Educational Internship Handbook provides a general overview of the Intern Program including program policies, guidelines, and participant responsibilities. Most of this information (including J-1 Visa requirements) is not covered in detail in the SEF Host Family guidebook or the SEF Intern Manuals. After the interns have their Amity Orientation session, we will share a copy of the **Amity Institute Educational Internship Handbook**. Sections that would be beneficial for you to review would be:

- Program Overview
- Intern responsibilities to your host school
- Intern responsibilities to your host family
- What you (Interns) should not expect
- Host Family overview

If you have other questions or thoughts, please contact the Host Family Coordinators. Thank you for making this commitment to the SEF International Intern Program, we hope you enjoy your Host Family experience!

## **2016-17 Intern Committee**

***Intern Committee Chair*** – Sandi Lindquist ([lindquistjs@comcast.net](mailto:lindquistjs@comcast.net))

- **Host Family Coordinators** – Karl and Sara Hemmesch ([karlandsara@netzero.net](mailto:karlandsara@netzero.net))
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- **Clothing Coordinator** – Mary Ann Keddie ([dougkeddie@netzero.net](mailto:dougkeddie@netzero.net))
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