



United States Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Washington, DC 20522

February 1, 2017

Dear Au Pair:

Congratulations on your decision to become an au pair on the Exchange Visitor Program! On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, I want you to know that your decision to come to the United States is important to us. We want your stay to be a positive and memorable experience as you build connections that will last a lifetime.

As an au pair, you are part of a U.S. Department of State cultural exchange program. Like thousands of au pairs from around the world, will have the opportunity to share your language, culture, and customs with your American host family and your host community. Your participation in this program fosters a greater understanding between our countries.

You are a valued guest in the United States, and we want you to succeed in this program. Your goal should be to learn as much as you can about American customs, values, and culture and to build strong relationships with your host family and new friends. You will be living with a host family that may have different rules for their children and a different way of life from what you are used to, so keeping an open mind will be important to your success.

You and your host family have agreed to follow the program rules that govern the au pair exchange program. We hope you have taken the time to review the program rules carefully and that you understand your rights and responsibilities. Your work should never exceed 10 hours of childcare a day and 45 hours of childcare a week. Your host family should also make sure your schedule allows you to take at least six credit hours of academic coursework. Coursework, as well as enjoying cultural activities are an important part of your exchange program. If you have any questions or do not understand your rights and responsibilities, please contact your U.S. sponsor.

Your U.S. sponsor is your primary point of contact throughout your stay in the United States, and you should contact them with any issues. Your sponsor is identified on your Form DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Program (J-1) Status. If you have any questions about your exchange program, if you need assistance of any kind while you are here, if you feel your rights are being violated, or if something just does not feel right to you, please contact your U.S. sponsor. It is your sponsor's responsibility to help you with any issues, needs, or concerns you may have.

Your U.S. sponsor should have given you materials on your rights as a temporary worker in the United States, as well as an emergency telephone contact number in your program orientation materials. This telephone number should be available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, if you have concerns or issues that your U.S. sponsor has not resolved, or you find you cannot reach your sponsor, please contact the Department of State through our J-1 Visa Emergency Helpline (1-866-283-9090), which is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or for less time sensitive issues via e-mail at JVisas@state.gov. Moreover, because your safety is of the utmost importance to us, the Department of State has prepared information to make sure you can always get help if you ever need it. Please review the information in the following link before you depart your home country:
<http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/rights-protections-temporary-workers.html>

As an au pair on the Exchange Visitor Program, you are now part of the alumni network of over one million current and former exchange participants. We welcome you to join the International Exchange alumni website – a place where past and present U.S. exchange program participants find tools to advance their communities and our world. Membership to this exclusive online community grants access to: grant opportunities; professional development resources; exclusive video webchats with VIPs; and 20,000 online magazines and newspapers. Members can also: network with fellow alumni around the world; find the latest research in your field; develop plans for your alumni association, or find an association to join; and read alumni success stories, perspectives, and ideas. To join please visit: <https://alumni.state.gov/>

We are pleased that you made the decision to participate in the Exchange Visitor Program, and I hope you enjoy your stay in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G.K. Saba', enclosed within a faint circular outline.

G.K. Saba
Director, Policy & Program Support
for Private Sector Exchange