



# **USA INTERNATIONAL, INC.**

**INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
9614 NE 201<sup>st</sup> St., Bothell, WA 98011 Tel: 425-483-5974 Fax: 425-485-1891  
E-mail: [info@ushomestay.com](mailto:info@ushomestay.com) / URL: [www.ushomestay.com](http://www.ushomestay.com)

## **STUDENT SHARED HOUSE GUIDELINES AND AGREEMENT**

Congratulations on having made the decision to study in the US. Choosing to live with a shared house owner can be one of the most important decisions you make, affecting your development for years to come. You will be dealing with different cultural values, language barriers, and social issues. Some adjustments need to be made by you as well as by your shared house owner. We hope to make this a valuable experience for you, both in terms of education and personal satisfaction. To assure that you have a safe, rewarding, and educational experience, our organization has established the following guidelines. It is essential that you read and understand them.

1. **Housing Application Fee:**

College Students - A non-refundable application fee is due with your application. Airport Pick Up is not included.

Security Deposit- Due with your application. If student cancels or does not move into share house deposit is non-refundable.

Airport Pickup can be arranged with additional charge. This service is only for students. Arrival time must be set between 8:00am – 8:00pm (PST), reasonable time to arrange transportation. Airport pickup fee depends on the distance from the airport to the host family's home. Airport Pickup fee is nonrefundable.

Late Application Fee- Applications received within one week prior to arrival will be charged a late fee of \$100.

2. **Monthly Stipend** (subject to change): See Website “Pricing” for current rates. Stipend will increase periodically and will affect all new and current students. Advance notice will be given by USAI.

College Students – Monthly stipend is payable in advance to USA International. Due by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. Payment after 25<sup>th</sup> will be charged a late fee.

Stipend covers room only. **Meals are not included.** The stipend is due at least 2 weeks before your move-in date so that USAI will be able to send the stipend to share house owner on time after we confirm both student and host family are doing well each month. **If student moves out earlier without notifying USAI at least 30 days prior, there will be no refund.**

3. **Stipend Refunds:** Stipend is Non-refundable. If the student and/or share house owner have a disagreement and student decides to or is asked to move out suddenly, USA INTERNATIONAL will not be responsible for any refund. Please be aware if you do not give 30 days' move out notice and move out during a month there is no refund of the unused stipend for that month.

4. **Insurance:** All students are required to always have proof of medical insurance. It is also recommended that students purchase accident and property insurance. Share house owner insurance does not cover students. If you decide to drive, you must have automobile insurance, and a Washington State driver's license. Automobile insurance is required by law.

5. **Share House Owner:** Please remember that each share house owner is different. USAI does not discriminate a share house owner based on nationality, race, religion, sex, age or disability. Student must understand that each are diverse with different cultural backgrounds. Some are with or without children, single parents, single adults, and retired people. Some may host more than one International student. It may be difficult to match you with a share house that meets all your expectations, and it depends on availability. Please be thankful for sharing their home with you.

6. **House Rules:** Please follow the rules of your share house owner. Each owner will have their own rules and lifestyle. Many families will have the rules written for you. Your share house owner has kindly allowed you to become a part of their family, for which they deserve your appreciation and respect. What your share house owner requires of you may be different from what your friends require of them. If you have questions or concerns talk and clarify with your share house owner. Please do not “assume” so be sure to clarify with your share house owner.

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7. **Household Duties:** Please remember to clean up after yourself (washing dishes, turning off electrical appliances) You must keep your room clean shared bathroom clean and always organized, which includes making your own bed and washing your own clothes.
8. **Meals:** Meal are not included with the share house option. Students are expected to prepare and buy their own meals at their own expense.
9. **Energy Conservation:** Most families are very conservative and care about the environment. Please be conservative by turning off lights when you leave a room, taking short showers (no more than 10 – 15 minutes) or baths. You may be charged extra if you overuse utilities such as heat or water. If you are cold, please wear extra sweaters and ask your family for extra blankets. In the US, the washing machine and dryer is excessively big and therefore families usually do laundry once a week.
10. **Relatives/Guests:** Please do not have relatives or guest stay at your share house owner house during your first three months at least. After three months, you must obtain permission from your share house owner and USA International prior to inviting anyone to stay at your shared house owner. If your guest stays more than two nights, there may be an additional charge. Some shared house owners do not allow overnight visitors.
11. **Vacations:** If you or your share house owner will go on vacation, please call our office to let us know.
12. **Personal Belongings:** Students are responsible for their own personal belongings whether at home or at school. **USA INTERNATIONAL will not be responsible for your personal belongings.** Remember not to carry a lot of cash with you, and always keep your valuable belongings secure and locked. Students are encouraged to have property insurance. Share house owner insurance does not cover student's property in case of loss or damage.
13. **Money:** You should not lend money to or borrow money from your share house owner or anyone else. If you need money, contact USA International so we may be able to contact your family and/or agency.
14. **Telephone: Please do not ask your share house owner to sign any contracts for your cellular/mobile phone.** Please do not make long distance phone calls from your host family's phone. Instead, we advise you to use a calling card, purchase a cellular phone.
15. **Internet Connection:** Some share house owner may charge an extra fee for use of internet. Students will be held responsible if you use the internet inappropriately.
16. **Damages:** Students are responsible for any damage to their share house owner house properties. Please ask about changing anything in your room (moving furniture, placing things on the wall and so on).
17. **Transportation:** Please do not ask your share house owner to drive you around too often. Students must be able to take the public bus to school and other places. Please do not depend on your share house owner to drive you places.
18. **Driving:** If you plan to purchase a car to drive you must obtain a WA State Driver's License and purchase car insurance. Car insurance is required by law. For students under 18 years old USAI does not recommend students to drive. If a student would like to drive, they need written permission from their parents, pass a driving class, obtain a WA State Driver's License, and purchase car insurance. USAI and share house owner will not be responsible for any car financial issues.
19. **Housing Commitment for Long Term Students:**  
Individual College Students – By signing this agreement you are committing to stay with your host family for a minimum of one quarter (3 months). Exception for short term programs.  
Students must understand that this is not temporary housing while looking for other accommodations such as apartments or roommates. You must give your share house owner and USAI a 30 days' written notice prior to moving out. If you do not give notice, you will be required to pay the full one-month fee. The departure form is available on our website. For notices less than 30 days' you will be required to pay for one-month homestay fee. Please call USA INTERNATIONAL immediately when you decide to move out.

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20. **Trial Period:** The first month is a trial period. Both Student and Share house owner will make a good faith effort to make arrangement work. However, if the student and/or share house owner feel(s) that it is not a good match, the student or share house owner will let the other know. Student should stay the full month while USAI looks for other accommodation. **USA INTERNATIONAL does not guarantee any refund if student moves out during the month.** If student decides to move out earlier or is asked to move out earlier, there is not guarantee of a refund. It may be necessary for the student to stay longer before a new accommodation can be arranged. If you want to change your share housing after the trial period, there will be a service replacement charge.
21. **Problems:** If you have a problem with your host family, please call USA INTERNATIONAL first. USA INTERNATIONAL is here to help you.
22. **Removal from Share house owner:** Both student and share house owner must be comfortable living with each other. If either is not satisfied living together student may be asked to move out at any time. USAI reserves the right to remove a student at any time for violating house rules, student engaging in any illegal activity, rude and impolite behavior, and language. Student will not receive any refund for any fees paid. If the student and/or share house owner have a disagreement and the student decides to or is asked to move out suddenly there is no guarantee of any refund.
23. **Smoking:** All shared housing are non-smoking inside. Smoking inside house is prohibited. Please make sure to indicate on your application about your smoking habits. USAI will match you with a shared house that allows smoking outside only. If you state that you are a non-smoker and are caught smoking, you may need to move out immediately and pay for any damages including smoke damage.
- 24 . **Avoid Illegal Activities:** You are required to follow local, state and federal laws while living in the United States. You may lose your student visa status (F-1, J-1) depending on the degree of your illegal activities. Be cautious about drinking alcohol or driving without a driver's license/auto insurance, or marijuana use. Please note it is illegal for people under the age of 18 to smoke or use tobacco, and people under the age of 21 cannot drink alcohol and people **under the age of 21 and/or under student's Visa** cannot use marijuana. All share house owners do not allow marijuana use.

Keep in mind that you are visiting the U.S. as a citizen/diplomat of your country and that you are expected to behave accordingly. This means that you are representing the people of your country as being courteous, considerate, and open-minded. Please respect the ways, traditions and culture of your Host and remember that you are making an impression that will last long after you leave the U.S. It is our goal to ensure that you have a successful time while in the U.S. Our goal is for you and your host family to have a lasting friendship and be understanding of each other for many years. We are here to help you. Do not hesitate to call us at any time if you have any difficulties.

**Hold Harmless and Indemnification:** USAI will be held harmless from and against all claims, damages, actions, liability, and expense concerning loss of life, or personal property arising from a student participating in our housing programs. I understand that the hosts are not employees or agents and that USAI has no control of host's behavior. I assume all the risks associated with injury or loss arising from my host families' behavior. I release USAI from any liability and claims against my host families' behavior.

**College Students:**

I have read, understand, and agree to follow the above listed rules. I also warrant all information is true. I warrant that all the information provided is true and correct, I am not a sex offender, and I have not been convicted of any crime. I also warrant I am mentally stable and physically fit to live with a host family.

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Student's Name (Printed)

Signature

Date