



# Codes of Conduct for Au Pairs and Host Families

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## **Codes of Conduct for Au Pairs and Host Families**

The success of au pair programmes worldwide depends on the serious commitment of not only placement agencies but also the programme participants themselves. For this reason, the International Au Pair Association (IAPA) has developed codes of conduct for au pairs and host families. It is recommended that the following agreements or similar documentation be signed by, respectively, au pairs and host families at the time of registration.

The official (English) version of each Code of Conduct should be translated into the native language of the participants. The official version shall always be distributed with the translation.

## Au Pair Agreement

1. I, \_\_\_\_\_, confirm that I have read all written materials provided by the au pair agency in my home country and my host country and that I fulfil all criteria. I understand that the au pair programme is a cultural exchange programme and not a contract of work. I am aware that being an au pair requires a high degree of both responsibility and flexibility and that I must take my duties seriously.
2. I confirm that I have answered all questions honestly and that all information in the application forms is true.
3. After confirmation of placement, I shall stay in touch with my host family and shall inform them of my travel arrangements. I agree not to travel to my host family until I have received an official confirmation of placement from the au pair agency.
4. I shall familiarise myself with all (if any) visa requirements. I shall obtain necessary documents (eg, a valid passport) prior to departure and shall not enter my host country without a proper visa (if required).
5. I am familiar with and agree to abide by all programme guidelines and conditions, in particular those regarding: the number of working hours, au pair duties, pocket money, free time, holidays, language courses, transportation costs, insurance and the termination of an au pair arrangement.
6. I shall discuss in detail with my host family the daily or weekly routine and my and their expectations of the au pair programme.
7. I understand that my childcare duties are of prime importance and I shall carry them out responsibly in a caring and considerate manner.
8. I understand that I shall be asked to undertake light household duties and to make a fair contribution to the cleanliness of the 'common' areas of my host family's home and I agree to keep my own room clean and tidy.
9. I shall seek the advice of the host family before administering any form of discipline on the children. Under no circumstances shall I hit the children or leave them alone.
10. I agree to abide by all house rules set by the host family (e.g., use of telephone and facilities within the home, daytime and overnight visitors, curfew, smoking, etc.). During my stay I shall behave in a manner which does not reflect badly upon my host family, both au pair agencies or my home country.
11. I shall discuss and agree my free time arrangements with my host family well in advance.
12. I shall make a concerted effort to experience the culture of my host country and to learn the language. I shall respect cultural differences and display tolerance towards others.

13. I shall make every effort to resolve any differences with my host family. If I have any problems or questions which cannot be discussed and resolved with the host family, I shall contact the au pair agency in my host country for assistance in accordance with procedures.
14. If no solution can be reached and I have to leave the Host Family, I understand that a notice period must be respected and observed in accordance with program guidelines. During this time period, I shall perform my normal duties and I shall continue to receive room, board and pocket money.
15. If a new host family placement is found for me, I understand that this may involve moving to a different area.
16. I understand that I shall be expelled from the programme without compensation and under certain circumstances may have to return home if
- I fail to abide by this agreement or programme guidelines
  - I falsify any information in my application (eg, regarding smoking, child care experience, health, etc)
  - I begin my au pair stay before receiving an official confirmation of placement from the au pair agency or a proper visa
  - I administer corporal punishment to a child
  - I am responsible for repeated problems with several host families
  - I disobey the laws of my host country
17. I agree to leave my host country before my visa or residency permit expires (if applicable).
18. I shall not undertake any other paid employment and will perform only those tasks related to the au pair programme.
19. I shall notify the au pair agency immediately if there are any changes to the information included in my application.
20. Should I decide to cancel my application, I shall inform the au pair agency at once.
21. I understand that as a participant of an au pair Programme I shall behave in a responsible manner and respect cultural differences.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Host Family Agreement

1. We,\* \_\_\_\_\_, confirm that we have read all written materials provided by the au pair agency and that we fulfil all criteria. We understand that the au pair programme is a cultural exchange programme and not a contract of work and shall treat our au pair as a member of the family and not hired help.
2. We confirm that we have answered all questions honestly and that all information in our application (including description of au pair duties) is true.
3. We shall not encourage our au pair to travel to our family before we have agreed the placement with the agency and our au pair has obtained a proper visa (if required). After receiving confirmation of placement, we shall stay in touch with our au pair and shall arrange to pick her\*\* up at the nearest airport or train station on her arrival in the host country.
4. We agree to pay costs for our au pair as specified in the programme guidelines in addition to room, board and health insurance (if applicable). We shall give the au pair pocket money as specified in the programme guidelines.
5. We are familiar with and agree to abide by all programme guidelines regarding: the number of working hours, au pair duties, pocket money, free time, holidays, language courses, transportation costs, insurance, the termination of the au pair arrangement and any other related conditions.
6. We shall discuss with our au pair in detail our and her expectations of the au pair arrangement, including a written or verbal explanation of the weekly or daily routine, her precise duties, time off and advice on handling the children. We are aware that she will need time to adjust to her new surroundings and responsibilities and shall, accordingly, provide our au pair with a familiarisation period.
7. We understand that we are inviting the au pair in our home primarily to take care of our children. We understand that we can ask the au pair to undertake light household duties and make a fair contribution to the cleanliness of the "common" areas of our home in addition to keeping her own room clean and tidy.
8. We shall give our au pair regular reports on her progress and performance throughout the stay.
9. We shall set house rules (e.g. use of telephone, internet, and facilities within the home, daytime and overnight visitors, curfew, smoking, etc.) for our au pair.
10. We shall discuss and agree the free-time arrangements with the au pair well in \_\_\_\_\_

\*For the purpose of clarity, the host family is referred to in this pledge in the plural form. All points apply to single parent host families as well.

\*\* For the purpose of clarity, the au pair is referred to in this pledge in the feminine form. All points apply to male au pairs as well.

advance.

11. We shall introduce our au pair to the culture of our country and will assist her in the learning of our language. We understand that as participants of an Au Pair Cultural Exchange Programme we shall behave in a responsible manner and shall respect cultural differences and display tolerance towards our au pair.
12. We agree to ensure that the au pair is treated with respect and courtesy at all times.
13. We realise that the success of the au pair programme depends largely on our own initiative. We shall try to integrate our au pair into our family life and, should any problems arise, communicate with her and actively seek a solution.
14. We shall make every effort to resolve any differences with the au pair. If we have any problems or questions which cannot be discussed and resolved with the au pair, we shall contact the au pair agency for assistance in accordance with the procedures advised by them.
15. If no solution can be reached and the au pair placement needs to be terminated, we understand that a notice period must be respected in accordance with the programme guidelines. During this notice period, the au pair shall perform normal duties and we shall continue to supply the au pair with room, board and pocket money
16. We understand that we shall be expelled from the programme without compensation and that our au pair will be taken out of our home if:
  - We fail to abide by this agreement and programme guidelines
  - We have falsified or failed to disclose any material information in our application
  - We accept the au pair in our home before receiving an official confirmation of placement from the au pair agency
  - We are responsible for repeated problems with au pairs.
17. We shall notify the au pair agency immediately if there are any changes to the information included in our application.
18. Should we decide to cancel our application for the au pair placement, we shall inform the au pair agency at once.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Host Mother \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Host Father \_\_\_\_\_