



Important BridgeUSA Program Reminders for SWT Program Participants

Essentials for a Great Experience

Alliance Abroad Group (AAG) is your designated visa sponsor and is responsible for monitoring your health, safety, and wellbeing while on the program. Our Support Department is dedicated to providing assistance to you throughout your program. Please reach out to us with any concerns you may have so we can better support you.

Our Phone Number: 1-866-622-7623

Our Email: Support@allianceabroad.com

- 24 Hour Support:** We can always be reached in the case of an emergency at 1-866-622-7623. If the call is not an emergency, a message will be taken and the call returned the next business day.
 - Program Purpose:** The purpose of the Summer Work Travel Program is to provide you with opportunities to interact with U.S. citizens, experience U.S. culture while sharing your own culture with Americans you meet, travel in the United States, and work in jobs that require minimal training and are seasonal or temporary in order to earn funds to help defray a portion of your expenses
 - Program Duration:** Summer Work Travel participants are authorized to participate in the program for up to 4 months during the long break between academic years. Extensions of program participation are not permitted.
 - Research the city/town/area** where you'll be completing your program. Check to see average temperatures in the area and things and activities to do. Be prepared for local climate when packing for your trip!
 - Locate a Public Library in the area: <https://librarytechnology.org/libraries/uspublic/>
 - Housing:** It is important that you have housing secured and confirmed prior to your arrival in the United States.
 - Participant Arranged Housing-** your Host Company has provided you with available housing options in the area. It is your responsibility to secure and confirm housing before you depart for the US.
 - Host Company Provided or Host Company Assisted Housing-** your Host Company has secured housing for you. You are expected in housing secured for you by your Host Company for the entire duration of your program. If you do not agree with this requirement, please select a different placement.
 - Login to your profile in Participant Portal** and make sure you submit to AAG all the required information: <https://aag.hanovercrm.com/>
 - Bring Enough Money:** AAG recommended amount is \$1,500 USD, plus any additional funds to cover your travel expenses and initial housing expenses (deposit and 1st month rent). The recommended \$1,500 USD is to cover your expenses while you wait for your first paycheck, which might take up to 4-6 weeks. Please see this website to know approximate cost of living in the area: https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/country_result.jsp?country=United+States
 - Access to Finances:** You must have access to at least \$1,000 at any point during your program to cover any unexpected expenses and support yourself during any anticipated work interruption.
 - Traveling to the US:** You must have the following documents on you when traveling to the US:
 - Passport with your J-1 visa
 - DS-2019 document
 - Job Offer Letter
 - Address where you'll be staying upon arrival
 - AAG 24/7 Emergency Line (1-866-622-7623)
- If you do not have your passport and DS-2019 with you when clearing U.S. Customs and Immigration, you will not be allowed to enter the United States.
- Program Start:** You cannot start working before your DS-2019 program start date or work after your DS-2019 program end date.
 - SEVIS Check-in:** After arriving in the US, you MUST check into SEVIS by going your profile in Participant Portal: <https://aag.hanovercrm.com/> You cannot check in with SEVIS before you arrive in the United States and before your DS-2019 start date. If you change your living address, email address, or phone number during your program, you must notify Alliance Abroad within 10 days of the change.
 - Social Security:** After you check into SEVIS, we recommend waiting 10 days before applying for Social Security.

ENJOY YOUR CULTURAL EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE!

Find the nearest Social Security Office: <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp> and bring the following documents with you:

Completed Social Security application form: <http://ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf>

- Passport/ Visa
- Sponsor letter
- DS-2019
- Electronic I-94 record print out (can be printed at the following link: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov>)

Provide your Host Company address on the Social Security application form. Keep your Social Security application receipt and show it to Host Company.

13. **Taxes:** As a BridgeUSA program participant, you must pay all local, state and federal taxes. You do not pay Social Security and Medicare taxes.
14. **Insurance:** Always call the insurance company **before** seeking medical attention, to ensure they locate and direct you to medical facility that accepts your insurance. If you do not contact insurance company first and receive approval, your medical claims might be denied

Insurance Provider: Hollard Travel
Insurance Phone Number: 1-877-826-2910
Policy Number: AAG SA-AAG
Deductible for Urgent Care/Doctor's office: \$100
Deductible for Emergency Room at the Hospital: \$250

Your coverage starts 5 days before your DS-2019 start date and ends 5 days after DS-2019 end date.

Your insurance does not cover regular check-ups, dental, vision, pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, pre-existing conditions, etc. See our website for more information: <http://participants.allianceabroad.com/insurance>
For coverage during 30 day travel period, notify Alliance Abroad at least 3 weeks prior to your DS-2019 end date.

15. **Monthly Check In:** You are required to complete Monthly Check In every month during your program. Please use this opportunity to let us know about your program and what events and activities you've participated in. To complete Monthly Check In, please go to: <https://aag.hanovercrm.com/>
16. **Second Job:** You are allowed to have a second job as long as it does not interfere with your primary job. Second job must be approved by AAG before you start work. Report your second job here: <https://aag.hanovercrm.com/>
17. **Stay in Touch:** As a BridgeUSA program participant, it is your responsibility to stay in regular contact with your sponsor. You should report any issues or concerns to Alliance Abroad by calling us at 1-866-622-7623 or emailing support@allianceabroad.com. You are required to check your email regularly and respond to communication from Alliance Abroad within either 24 hours or time frame given. Staying in touch will help us to better assist you in your program.
18. **Commitment to your Host Company:** You are expected to complete the entire duration of your program (see your DS-2019 dates) at your Host Company. If you are experiencing any difficulties or issues at your Host Company, please address these with your supervisor or Human Resources and contact Alliance Abroad. If you leave your Host Company without prior notification and approval from Alliance Abroad, your program will be shortened and you will be required to depart the United States.
19. **Travel Validation:** If you plan to travel outside of the United States during your program, you must obtain permission from your Host Company and get your DS-2019 endorsed for travel by Alliance Abroad. AAG needs to receive your DS-2019 document in our office at least 3 weeks prior to your intended travel date. For more information, please visit: <http://participants.allianceabroad.com/travel>
20. **Your Program Is About Cultural Exchange:** You are expected to take part in cultural exchange opportunities at work, in your community, and in your area. We'd love to hear about your experiences and see photos! You may also share your experiences and photos with AAG on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. When posting, remember to use the following hashtags: #AllianceAbroad and #intlExchange
21. **Return Home after completing your Program, in time to resume your studies.**

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