What is hosting for CIPUSA like?

Frequently Asked Questions

Generally, how old are the participants?
They range in age from 35 - 45 years old.

How long will the participant be staying with me?
For eight nights total.

What do host families provide?
A private bedroom, shared bath, and meals (breakfasts, some dinners and some lunches). We will provide lunch to the delegates when they are with us during the day and dinner when programming extends into the evening.

When should I expect the participant to need to leave in the morning and arrive home for the day?
We will give you a schedule for the week that includes estimated start times and end times. CIPUSA will hire a van to pick up the participant from your home each morning and drop off the participant at your home each evening. Each night we will give the participant a sticky note with the exact time of the next morning pick up to share with you so that you will know when the van will pick them up each day.

What if I am unable to be home when the participant arrives for the night?
You can leave them a key to use to enter the home. If you would prefer, you can inform CIPUSA of the situation and we can host them until you are home.

What if the participant wants to go out after the program ends for the day?
Participants understand that they should spend time with the host family to learn about American life and culture. They understand that they should be spending time with their host families and participate in any hobbies or activities you may have planned for them.

Participants often wish to shop for souvenirs and may ask if they can be dropped off at a store. You can allow this based on your schedule and availability. Please note that CIPUSA makes every effort to take the participants shopping (at least two nights) during their stay.

Am I expected to engage the participant in cultural activities?
There is generally one day allocated to spend with the host family. During this time it is a nice opportunity to show the participant your community or activities you like to participate in.

What kinds of foods should I serve?
During the orientation, CIPUSA emphasizes the diverse nature of average American lifestyle and diet. Although some participants may have dietary restrictions, it is generally fine to serve whatever you would normally prepare for meals in your home. Trips to the grocery store with your participant are always appreciated so that they find particular foods that they may prefer. Some participants also like to cook a meal for their host families during their stay.

**Will the participant speak English?**

CIPUSA receives participants with all language abilities. There is never a 100% guarantee that you will receive a fluent English speaker. CIPUSA will provide language guidebooks to the host family as well as the participant with basic phrases and words that can help during the week you are together. Many participants will bring their own smartphones, tablets, or computers and use Google Translate to communicate with their hosts.

**What if I have a hard time communicating with my guest?**

CIPUSA has an interpreter on call to assist with urgent interpreting needs 24/7.

**Will the participant have a cell phone?**

Yes, many of them do bring a cell phone from home, however most do not have international calling plans. If you need to communicate with your guest, you can reach him or her via a CIPUSA staff member’s cell phone number.

**What if the participant needs medical attention?**

Please contact CIPUSA immediately. Each participant has health/travel insurance. CIPUSA knows which hospitals will be able to cover their health needs under their insurance.

**Do I get paid to be a host family? Is my hosting contribution tax-deductible?**

Hosting for Open World is considered a volunteer activity. CIPUSA does send all host families an end-of-year thank you letter that states the monetary equivalent of their hosting contributions for tax purposes.

**How will I benefit?**

Many of our host families maintain close contact with their guests and develop life-long friendships.

**What should I do if there is a problem I can’t solve?**

Please contact a CIPUSA staff member if you need help in anyway. We want to make sure this is a great experience for you and the participant!