



cultural exchange

Teacher Program 2023 Program Fees

The below information applies to all new Teacher Programs beginning and all existing programs renewed between January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.

2023 Program Fees	Premium Program	Independent Program
First Year Program Fee	\$1,990 + \$70/month	\$1,990 + \$70/month
Host School Placement Fee	\$1,500	\$0
J-2 Dependent Program Fee	\$500 + \$70/month	\$500 + \$70/month
Total First Year Program Fee	\$4,330 + (Depending on number of J-2 applicants)	\$2,830 + (Depending on number of J-2 applicants)
Annual Program Renewal Fee Due in the spring annually until program completion. Maximum 3-year program + possible extension up to 2 additional years.	\$1490 + \$70/month	\$1490 + \$70/month
Program Extension Request Fee Program extension request to Department of State for 1–2-year program extension beyond standard 3-year program. This fee is in addition to Annual Program Renewal Fee.	\$500	\$500

International Partner/Sending Agency Fees

Teacher Program applicants may apply to Spirit directly at www.spiritexchange.com or choose to seek out assistance with their program application and Host School placement through a Spirit vetted international sending partner office abroad. Applicants may contact Spirit at teacher@spiritexchange.com for a list of Spirit-vetted international sending partners in their home country. Although fees vary by organization, Spirit-vetted international sending partners typically charge between \$500 - \$2000 for their services. These fees are in addition to the program fees charged by Spirit and additional fees and expenses listed below. For their safety, applicants may not seek out placement or application assistance with entities not fully vetted and approved by Spirit Cultural Exchange.

Spirit's Teacher Program Includes

Premium Program

- Placement as a temporary exchange teacher at a qualified Host School in the United States teaching a minimum of 32 hours a week during the academic school year for a period up to three years
- Spirit review of Host School offer to ensure regulatory compliance
- DS-2019 to support the application for a J-1 Teacher visa
- Orientation materials
- Assigned supervisor and mentor at Host School available to provide local support
- [BridgeUSA](#) regulatory compliant medical and repatriation insurance
- 24-hour support 7 days a week from Spirit's experienced staff

Independent Program

Includes all the above EXCEPT Host School placement. Spirit will review the new Host School offer to ensure regulatory compliance.

Program Renewal/Extension Fees include:

- Continued program support and monitoring
- Processing of annual renewal request including review of new Host School offer for the upcoming school year
- [BridgeUSA](#) regulatory compliant medical and repatriation insurance for the respective school year
- Maintenance of active program status in SEVIS

Program renewal fees are subject to change annually and are due each year by April 15. Failure to submit renewal fees on time will result in program cancellation in SEVIS at the end of the current school year. Renewal/Extension requests are subject to approval by Spirit and the US Department of State. Spirit may choose to not to renew a participant's program for any reason.



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Arrival Expenses

Participant must have at least \$5000 available upon arrival in the US to cover initial expenses and have access to additional emergency funds, as needed. These funds are required to cover expenses such as housing deposit, rent, food, and other in-country expenses and should NOT be used for expenses in your home country. If participant is unable to prove that \$5000 is available in a bank account in his/her name, participant must identify a financial sponsor over 30 years of age willing to provide financial support as necessary. Additional funds may be necessary in case J-2 dependents add to the cost of living in the USA.

Premium Program Participant Application Deposit

In cases when the Host School funds program fees, a refundable deposit may be required from the participant to cover cancellation fees due in case of participant program cancellation prior to arrival. Deposit would be used towards cancellation fees due in cases of visa denial/force majeure or participant-initiated cancellation after acceptance. Unless used to cover cancellation fees, participant deposit is normally refunded within one month after program start date providing there is a successful start to the program. This deposit is supplemental to program fees paid by the Host School and is payable by the participant within 2 weeks of application acceptance. Details on any participant deposit due will be provided to participant prior to formal acceptance to the program.

Not Included in Program Fees

The following fees are nonrefundable and are subject to change annually:

- Government Fees: \$380. SEVIS and DS-160 visa application fees are NOT included in the above prices. The participant can pay fee directly online at www.fmjfee.com after the DS-2019 is issued and before visa interview. Government fees are subject to change.
- Host School Transfer Fee: \$400. This fee includes the review of the new Host School's application and contract and, if accepted, a new updated DS-2019.
- Host School Site Visit Fee: \$200. This fee is only required for Independent Program Host Schools that have never hosted a Spirit J-1 teacher.
- Replacement or Revised DS-2019 form: \$100. This fee will be assessed for ANY DS-2019 required changes or replacement.
- Expedited Service: \$500. Includes guaranteed processing time of all program documentation and issuance of formal program acceptance within 5 business days. Expedited processing timeline begins once the applicant has accepted a formal offer of employment from the Host School and all accompanying application materials have been submitted in full to Spirit.
- State Certification or Licensure Costs: \$75-\$185+. This estimated fee required to apply for licensure and become certified. Requirements and fees vary by state
- Foreign Credential Evaluation: \$160-\$250+. Paid directly to the foreign credential evaluation service.
- Criminal Background Checks (as required): \$35-165+. Paid directly to the background check agency.

Additional Expenses

- International Airfare: Approximately \$1000 - \$2000+ per person plus transportation to and from the airport
- Housing: Approximately \$800-\$1300+ per month and must be arranged by the participant. Additional costs may include a housing deposit (typically equal to one-month's rent), utilities (such as gas and electricity, approximately \$100 per month), and phone/internet (approximately \$150 per month).
- Daily Transportation: Approximately \$0-\$500+ per month and must be arranged by the participant. This cost varies depending on the availability of public transportation in the teacher's community. Depending on location, such as is in a more rural area, a car is likely required and will need to be purchased or rented by the participant. Expenses may include a car purchase, monthly insurance, gas, and maintenance.
- Food: Approximately \$100+ per week
- Union Dues: Approximately \$50-\$100+ per month and are often deducted from paycheck by the school. Specific requirements and fees vary by school.
- Uniform: Fees vary by school
- Spending Money
- Cost of Supporting J-2 Dependents: estimated at \$900/month per J-2 in addition to the expenses listed above.
- Host School Provided Medical Insurance: Cost varies. Spirit strongly encourages teachers to enroll in school provided medical insurance coverage. Insurance offered by the Host School will provide teacher and their dependents access to comprehensive Affordable Care Act (ACA) compliant medical insurance. Fees for ACA compliant comprehensive insurance vary by school district and may cost approximately \$500+/month per participant or J-2 dependent. Such fees are often deducted from the participant's paycheck after participant enrolls in the school's benefits program.



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Spirit provided insurance coverage included in the program fees is not a replacement for comprehensive ACA compliant medical coverage offered by the Host School. It is rather a supplement to the Host School coverage to ensure the participant meets all J-1 visa regulatory requirements that Host School medical insurance typically does not.

State and Federal Income Taxes

Exchange Teachers may be subject to approximately 20-30% state and federal income taxes based on their income level and residency status. The Host School will deduct estimated taxes from each paycheck based on the information provided on the W-4 form the Teacher completes after arrival. Teachers will be responsible for filing a tax return annually with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and their respective state tax agency no later than April 15th. Spirit strongly recommends that participants have their taxes prepared by a tax service expert in nonresident alien tax preparation. Spirit can provide tax preparation service referrals upon request.