



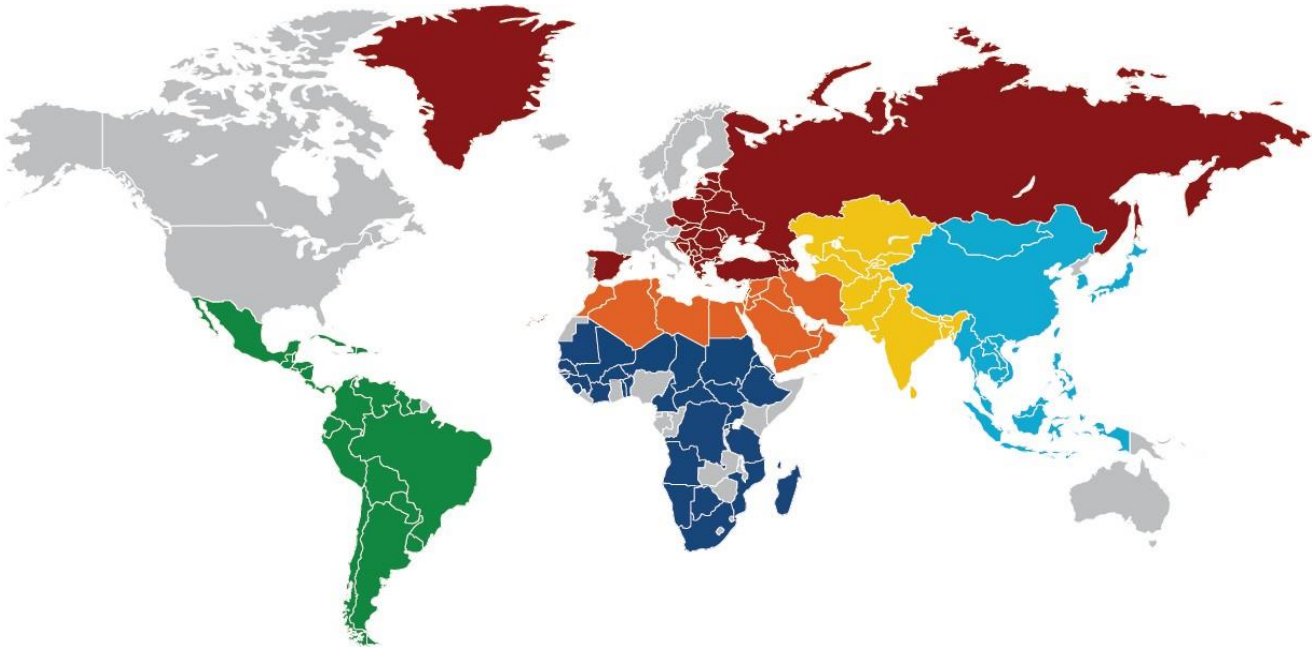
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE  
PROGRAMS

*The World is  
Your Classroom*

# ***English Language Specialist Program Policy Handbook***

*for Entirely In-Country Projects and for Mixed Projects*



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPECIALIST PROGRAM .....	4
OVERVIEW OF RESPONSIBILITIES.....	5
GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS.....	6
CONTACTING GU/CIED.....	6
INTRODUCTION TO THE HANDBOOK.....	7
1. EMPLOYMENT POLICY AND REMUNERATION FROM OTHER SOURCES.....	7
2. PAYMENTS, BENEFITS, AND ALLOWANCES .....	8
3. SCHEDULE AND DURATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPECIALIST PROJECT .....	9
4. MEDICAL CLEARANCE AND HEALTH BENEFITS.....	10
5. PRE-PROJECT ORIENTATION (PPO) AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES.....	11
6. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP).....	12
7. SAFETY, SECURITY, AND EMERGENCY CONTACTS.....	13
8. MEALS AND LODGING WHILE IN THE COUNTRY(IES) OF ASSIGNMENT.....	14
9. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.....	15
10. PAYMENT TO THE PROGRAM FOR ADDITIONAL TRAVEL FEES AND COSTS .....	17
11. INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL-RELATED COSTS.....	18
12. LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION.....	20
13. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES ALLOWANCE (PAA).....	20
14. LEAVE, ABSENCES, AND EXTENSIONS.....	23



15. EVACUATION FROM THE COUNTRY(IES) OF ASSIGNMENT (NON-MEDICAL OR MEDICAL) .....23

16. TERMINATION .....26

17. REMAINING IN COUNTRY AFTER AGREEMENT ENDS OR IS TERMINATED .....28

18. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS – EXPENSE REPORTS AND PROGRAM REPORTS .....29

19. IN-COUNTRY DEBTS .....34

20. TAXES AND WITHHOLDINGS.....34

21. RETURN-TO-PROGRAM POLICY .....34

22. SOCIAL MEDIA, BLOGGING, AND PHOTOGRAPHS.....35

23. REPRESENTING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPECIALIST PROGRAM.....36

24. MATERIALS DEVELOPED DURING THE AGREEMENT PERIOD .....36

25. ACCOMPANYING PERSONS OR DEPENDENTS.....37

26. PETS .....38

27. COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPECIALISTS.....39



## Overview of the English Language Specialist Program

The English Language Specialist Program is a U.S. Department of State (DOS) public diplomacy initiative in which experts in the field of English language education lead intensive English language projects, designed by the Public Affairs sections of U.S. Embassies around the world, to respond to local needs.

English Language Specialists exchange knowledge, build capacity, and establish partnerships benefiting participants, institutions, and communities in the United States and overseas. English Language Specialists work with universities, teacher-training institutions, ministries of education, bi-national centers, and other English language education institutions. Depending on local needs and circumstances, English Language Specialist projects can be entirely in-country, entirely virtual, or mixed (a combination of both in-country and virtual). The length of in-country projects ranges from 10 working days to three months. The length of virtual projects varies from project to project.

The program is funded by DOS through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). It is currently administered by the Center for Intercultural Education and Development at Georgetown University (GU/CIED).



## Overview of Responsibilities

The following chart outlines which organization is responsible for specific components of the English Language Specialist Program.

U.S. Department of State (DOS) – ECA / Office of English Language Programs	U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Sections (PAS) & Regional English Language Officers (RELO)	Partnering Organization(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets and monitors program policies</li> <li>• Reviews all English Language Specialist project proposals</li> <li>• Notifies PAS/RELO which projects have been selected for funding</li> <li>• Monitors projects, English Language Specialists, and activities</li> <li>• Communicates and works with PAS/RELO and GU/CIED to resolve issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops English Language Specialist project proposals and sends them to DOS/ECA for approval</li> <li>• Determines the English Language Specialists’ duties</li> <li>• Works with partnering organizations to determine adequate support for English Language Specialists during their projects</li> <li>• Approves international travel</li> <li>• Acts as first point of contact for English Language Specialists on all programmatic issues, concerns and in-country logistics</li> <li>• Acts as first point of contact in emergency or evacuation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determines English Language Specialists’ duties alongside PAS/RELO</li> <li>• Provides counterparts for English Language Specialists during their projects</li> <li>• If applicable, provides cost sharing to supplement the English Language Specialist benefits (e.g. partnering organizations may pay for a portion of lodging costs or provide lodging, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Georgetown University – Center for Intercultural Education and Development (GU/CIED)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues English Language Specialist acceptance letters and processes English Language Specialist agreements</li> <li>• Coordinates Pre-Project Orientation</li> <li>• Coordinates international travel to/from the country(ies) of assignment</li> <li>• Receives Health Verification Forms and notifies English Language Specialists of clearance status</li> <li>• Enrolls English Language Specialists in the ASPE health benefits plan</li> <li>• Issues payments and processes expense reports</li> <li>• Facilitates participation in the Community of Practice</li> <li>• Answers questions regarding the English Language Specialist agreement</li> <li>• Acts as first point of contact for English Language Specialists on all administrative issues and concerns</li> <li>• Acts as second point of contact in case of emergency or evacuation</li> <li>• Amends English Language Specialist agreement, as needed</li> <li>• Works with English Language Specialists on alumni relations and outreach activities</li> </ul>		



## Glossary of Acronyms

ACS	American Citizen Services of the U.S. Embassy
ASPE	Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges
CAO	Cultural Affairs Officer (at U.S. Embassy)
COP	Community of Practice
DOS/ECA	U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
FAA	Fly America Act
GU/CIED	Georgetown University, Center for Intercultural Education and Development
HVF	Health Verification Form
PAA	Program Activities Allowance
PAO	Public Affairs Officer (at U.S. Embassy)
PAS	Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PPO	Pre-Project Orientation
RELO	Regional English Language Officer
RSO	Regional Security Officer
STEP	Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

## Contacting GU/CIED

Region	Email address
Sub-Saharan Africa (AF)	<a href="mailto:AFSpecialists@georgetown.edu">AFSpecialists@georgetown.edu</a>
East Asia and the Pacific (EAP)	<a href="mailto:EAPSpecialists@georgetown.edu">EAPSpecialists@georgetown.edu</a>
Europe and Eurasia (EUR)	<a href="mailto:EURSpecialists@georgetown.edu">EURSpecialists@georgetown.edu</a>
Near East and North Africa (NEA)	<a href="mailto:NEASpecialists@georgetown.edu">NEASpecialists@georgetown.edu</a>
South and Central Asia (SCA)	<a href="mailto:SCASpecialists@georgetown.edu">SCASpecialists@georgetown.edu</a>
Western Hemisphere (WHA)	<a href="mailto:WHASpecialists@georgetown.edu">WHASpecialists@georgetown.edu</a>



## Introduction to the Handbook

This handbook has been prepared to guide you through the many policies that apply before, during and after your English Language Specialist project. **It applies to entirely in-country projects and to mixed (a combination of both in-country and virtual) projects.**

This handbook complements the English Language Specialist agreement, and together they represent the full terms and conditions of your participation in an English Language Specialist project. You should always refer to both documents when referencing program policy.

### 1. Employment Policy and Remuneration from Other Sources

#### **What is my employment status as an English Language Specialist?**

You are not employed by the U.S. Government, GU/CIED, the partnering organization(s), or any agency or government of the country(ies) of assignment. You are instead considered a grantee and, for tax purposes, a supplier or independent contractor. You are bound by the terms and conditions of your agreement.

#### **Am I eligible to receive stipend payments if I am also filing for unemployment benefits?**

It is incumbent upon you to check with your state's employment commission to determine whether you are eligible to receive other compensation while receiving unemployment benefits (including Pandemic Unemployment Assistance). This is not a decision made by DOS/ECA or GU/CIED. If you choose to forgo the program stipend, you must notify GU/CIED before you sign your agreement.

#### **What happens if I need employment verification?**

Since you are a grantee/independent contractor and not employed by the U.S. Government or GU/CIED, the only verification the program can provide is a letter confirming what is stated in your agreement such as your project dates, the country(ies) of assignment, the partnering organization(s), and your benefits package. The program is unable to complete and/or sign any documents that require employment confirmation for items such as (but not limited to) job applications, background checks, employment continuity, unemployment benefits, loan forgiveness, loan deferment, Medicare applications, Social Security, etc.

#### **Who can I ask for a letter of recommendation?**

Letters of recommendation need to be requested either from the U.S. Embassy or PAS/RELO overseeing your project, or from the partnering organization(s). GU/CIED is not in a position to provide any evaluative comments related to your project.

#### **Does the English Language Specialist Program participate in the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program?**

No. The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program originates at the Department of Education. It stipulates that it covers employment only; because you are not an employee, you cannot be considered for the program. Peace Corps and AmeriCorps were written into the regulation as specific exceptions; the Department of Education noted it would not reopen the regulation or consider new groups as exceptions to the employment requirement. If the regulation changes, the program will notify all participants.

#### **Can I undertake other work, either paid or unpaid, during my project?**

You may accept funds from other United States government agencies, except DOS/ECA, for similar or related work performed during the agreement period.



If, however, you will have a coinciding full-time employment contract with or will be employed by another USG agency during the agreement period, you are required either to waive the Stipend portions of this Agreement or to take an unpaid leave of absence from the other USG agency for the duration of the agreement period. You must provide confirmation, in writing, indicating which of these two options has been agreed upon and, in the case of the unpaid leave of absence, documentation from the other USG agency confirming the leave.

Performance of any other professional activity which you may be independently contracted or employed to execute must not interfere with or be in conflict with the duties specified in the agreement, and must not violate the laws of the country(ies) of assignment.

In the event that you are offered an English language related project in the country(ies) of assignment outside the duties of the agreement, you may accept it only with advance written approval from PAS/RELO. You cannot accept any honorarium for any such project throughout the duration of the agreement period.

### **Can I accept invitations to visit programs in other countries or attend professional development activities during my project?**

In most cases, given the intensive, short-term nature of English Language Specialist projects, this is not permitted.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **2. Payments, Benefits, and Allowances**

### **How will I be paid for my participation in an English Language Specialist project?**

English Language Specialists receive an hourly stipend for virtual activities, and a daily stipend for in-country activities. Living allowances to cover the costs of lodging, meals, and local transportation while in the country(ies) of assignment, and international travel to and from the country(ies) of assignment, are also provided. Refer to your agreement for details on your benefits, and a detailed payment schedule.

All payments will be deposited electronically into a single, United States bank account. You are responsible for making arrangements for accessing your funds while in the country(ies) of assignment. The program cannot pay you via wire transfer or check, divide your payments to more than one account, or make payments to foreign bank accounts.

If you need to change the bank account used by GU/CIED to deposit your payments, contact GU/CIED. Any change in account information during your agreement period may result in a delay of payment.

Some payments may be processed through a third-party vendor called Viewpost. If you have any questions, contact GU/CIED.

### **What are living allowances and what do they cover?**

Living allowances are provided to cover the cost of meals, local transportation, and lodging while in the country(ies) of assignment. Details regarding the living allowances can be found in Section 8 of this handbook, and in your agreement. **No living allowances of any kind are provided during virtual activity dates.**





DOS/ECA, through GU/CIED, the hosting U.S. Embassy, and/or the partnering organization(s) may contribute to your living allowances. Refer to your agreement for more information. GU/CIED will also review your living allowances with you during your pre-project call.

### **Do I need to keep receipts for any costs I incur during my project?**

Benefits and allowances are provided in three categories:

1. Non-reimbursable benefits and allowances which *do not* require the submission of receipts and are paid according to the payment schedule outlined in your agreement. These may include stipends, living allowances for meals and local transportation while in the country(ies) of assignment, and one-time costs allowances, as applicable and as outlined in your agreement.
2. Benefits which must be reconciled with the submission of receipts. The living allowance for lodging while in the country(ies) of assignment will be paid to you upfront according to the payment schedule outlined in your agreement, however, it also requires the submission of receipts at the end of the in-country activity dates. Any unused lodging funds will be deducted from your final payment, or must be returned back to the program via refund.
3. Reimbursable allowances which require the submission of receipts. When applicable, you will pay out of pocket and then submit receipts, along with a complete expense report, to GU/CIED for reimbursement of actual, allowable costs incurred under the following categories:
  - International travel-related costs;
  - Program activities allowance; and/or,
  - Other reimbursable expenses, if applicable, and as outlined in your agreement.

It is important to understand what costs are allowable under each of the categories listed above. Do not incur costs before reviewing the relevant sections of this handbook and your agreement regarding each of the reimbursable allowance categories, as well as the details and policies regarding the submission of expense reports. Contact GU/CIED with any questions.

*Further information: Sections 8, 13, and 18 of this handbook and the Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **3. Schedule and Duration of English Language Specialist Project**

### **How long is my project and what is my schedule of activities?**

Your agreement period is stated on page one of your agreement. The agreement period on page one reflects the first and last work days of your English Language Specialist project; travel days en route to in-country activities (if applicable), and rest day(s) upon arrival in the country(ies) of assignment (if applicable) will be reflected in Appendix A to your agreement.

In most cases, travel days and rest day(s) upon arrival are not included in your agreement until after your travel is booked, at which point you will receive an amendment to your agreement from GU/CIED reflecting these additional days and any necessary adjustment to your benefits.

Appendix A of your agreement details a general schedule of your project and description of your scope of work. The schedule is provided to guide your preparations, but is always subject to change. Contact the partnering organization(s) and the PAS/RELO in charge of your project to discuss the details.



### **What happens if I am invited to participate in activities that are not included in the schedule as presented in my agreement?**

You must speak with PAS/RELO and receive prior, written approval for any activities not included in your schedule.

### **Do I get any breaks?**

See Section 14 of this handbook.

### **What if I cannot begin my project as planned, or I have to leave my project early?**

See Section 14 this handbook.

*Further information: Section 14 of this handbook and the Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **4. Medical Clearance and Health Benefits**

### **Will I receive health insurance coverage during my project?**

You will not receive health insurance during the in-country portion of your project; however, the program provides a self-funded, limited health care benefits plan called Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for the duration of your in-country activity dates, rest day(s) upon arrival, if applicable, and travel dates. ASPE is not provided during virtual activity dates.

ASPE does not provide comprehensive insurance coverage and it does not cover personal travel outside of the country(ies) of assignment. You can review information about ASPE coverage, including coverage period, in the ASPE Guide at <https://www.sevencorners.com/gov/usdos> and in the terms and conditions of your agreement. It is strongly recommended, but not required, that you have or purchase comprehensive health insurance with international coverage during your in-country activity dates, rest day(s) upon arrival, if applicable, and travel dates.

### **Am I required to receive medical clearance to participate in an English Language Specialist project? What is ASPE coverage contingent on?**

Participation in English Language Specialist projects with in-country activity dates of any length, and ASPE coverage, are contingent on medical clearance of your Health Verification Form (HVF). An overview of the HVF is provided on the English Language Programs [website](#).

Prior to departure and during your project, you must immediately notify GU/CIED of any change in your medical condition or overall health and wellness. If there is any change in your medical condition after your original HVF has been cleared and before you arrive in the country(ies) of assignment, you must submit a new HVF to be reviewed by the program's medical examiner. Any subsequent HVF must be medically cleared in order for you to participate in the program. At any time, if any of the HVF information is found to be substantially inaccurate or incomplete, it may be grounds for termination.

Medical clearance for English Language Specialists is valid for 12 months from the date it was received, but only for the same project location.

### **What happens if I already have my own health care coverage or I decide to purchase my own coverage?**

When you have health care coverage other than ASPE (except Medicare or Medicaid), your other coverage is the primary provider. It is your responsibility to inform your primary provider about your ASPE plan, and



likewise to inform ASPE about your primary provider. It is not the responsibility of either provider to advise each other regarding your coverage. It is your responsibility to know if you are covered in the country(ies) of assignment by any health care plans that you have.

### **Does ASPE provide mental health support?**

ASPE Assist is the mental health consultant and referral services hotline provided by ASPE. You can contact ASPE Assist toll free at 1-833-963-1269, outside the U.S. at +44-20-3859-4463, or via email at [ASPEsupport@anvilgroup.com](mailto:ASPEsupport@anvilgroup.com). When contacting ASPE Assist for the first time, be prepared to provide your full name, date of birth, ASPE ID card number, program name, and host country(ies). This will allow the staff to verify your status as a participant with the ASPE Health Benefits Plan.

### **Will I receive an ASPE ID Card? How can I access my ASPE benefits?**

Once you sign your agreement and GU/CIED books your travel, you will be enrolled in ASPE. You will be notified of this enrollment via email, at which time you will be able to access your ASPE benefits through an online portal called MyPlan, [here](#).

You are responsible for downloading and printing your ASPE ID card through the MyPlan portal before you depart for the in-country portion of your project.

MyPlan allows secure access to your benefit plan and claim information. You will need to first register using your ASPE ID number and your Date of Birth. Once you have logged in, you can view your plan information, email ASPE administrators, Seven Corners, view eligibility dates, etc. If you lose your ASPE ID card, you can return to the MyPlan portal at any time to download and re-print the card.

### **How do I contact ASPE?**

You can always contact ASPE through the MyPlan portal. You can also reach ASPE customer service by phone, email, or mail as follows:

Toll free: 1-800-461-0430	Mailing Address:
Collect Outside US: 1-317-818-2867	ASPE Health Benefits
Customer Service Fax: 1-317-815-5984	P.O. Box 21185
Claims Fax: 1-317-575-6467	Eagan, MN 55121
Email: <a href="mailto:usdosinfo@sevencorners.com">usdosinfo@sevencorners.com</a>	

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement and the [ASPE Guide](#).*

## **5. Pre-Project Orientation (PPO) and Administrative Resources**

### **Am I provided an orientation to the program before my project begins?**

The PPO slide deck relevant to your project, which is linked in your acceptance letter and can be found through the *Participant Documents* icon on the [Community of Practice](#) (COP), provides an overview of the program and important information about preparing for your project. All Specialists must submit a form confirming that you have reviewed the PPO. Additionally, GU/CIED will contact you to schedule a pre-project call to discuss reporting requirements and answer any remaining questions you may have.



### Where can I find administrative resources, such as report templates, branded materials, or required forms?

You will receive an acceptance letter from GU/CIED with links to the main administrative resources folder. You can also access these resources at any time through the *Participant Documents* icon on the [COP](#). Follow the links to resources for entirely in-country projects and mixed projects.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## 6. Community of Practice (COP)

### What is the COP and what role does it play in my project?

The COP (pronounced C-O-P), located at [cop.elprograms.org](http://cop.elprograms.org), is a virtual meeting space for all participants and alumni of English Language Programs. It is a place to:

- Submit Highlights and Alumni Impact Statements;
- Share resources, ideas, best practices, photos, events, and experiences from around the world;
- Find teaching and teacher training tools;
- Connect with other English Language Specialists and Fellows;
- Participate in professional development opportunities provided by the program;
- Stay up-to-date on the latest events and resources available on the English Language Programs and [American English](#) websites;
- Post job announcements and search for job opportunities; and,
- Stay connected and contribute to the program as alumni.

If your project is terminated, you may be unsubscribed from the COP. Any questions regarding the COP can be directed to [cop@elprograms.org](mailto:cop@elprograms.org).

### What are the guidelines for engaging on the COP?

The COP is an invitation-only community for current and former Fellows and Specialists; staff of the Office of English Language Programs, DOS/ECA, and GU/CIED staff. The program does not control and cannot guarantee the relevance, timeliness, or accuracy of the information or materials shared on the COP. The program asks that all participants commit to the following principles when posting:

- Be respectful in all communication.
- Maintain professional standards in all postings, including profile information, photos, personal blogs, comments, and shared materials.
- When sharing resources:
  - Include accurate information regarding authorship and ownership;
  - Provide an abstract indicating topic/theme, target audience (proficiency, age, class size, learning/teaching context), example of past use;
  - Produce materials that are easy to use/read and free of errors; and
  - Respect international copyright laws and fair use practices.
- When downloading and using resources:
  - Observe professional standards in using shared materials, giving credit to the original author where appropriate and using materials only in the context in which they were originally intended.
  - Respect international copyright laws and fair use practices.

These guidelines may be modified at any time. You can also find these guidelines on the COP, [here](#).



## 7. Safety, Security, and Emergency Contacts

### How do I receive safety and security information before and during my in-country activities?

Before you leave for the country(ies) of assignment, register with the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#), a service of the Bureau of Consular Affairs. By enrolling in the program, you will receive important safety information about the country(ies) of assignment and allow the U.S. Embassy to contact you in emergency situations.

Prior to departure, and when you arrive in the country(ies) of assignment, confirm how you will receive additional safety and security information with your in-country contacts.

GU/CIED will email you an emergency contact card template prior to your departure. The template is also posted to the [COP](#). Use this card to keep important contact information on you at all times, including local phone numbers and email addresses for your PAS/RELO, your primary point person at the partnering organization(s), and GU/CIED. **Having multiple copies and adding information in a local language is highly recommended. Also, ensure you have your ASPE ID card with you at all times.**

An overview of who to contact in different emergency scenarios is below.

### Who do I contact in case of travel delays or issues en route to my project?

If you experience travel delays en route to the country(ies) of assignment, follow the instructions provided on your travel itinerary. If you are given a new itinerary, email GU/CIED at [elspecialist@georgetown.edu](mailto:elspecialist@georgetown.edu) and inform your PAS/RELO.

### Who do I contact in case of a NON-MEDICAL emergency during my project?

If you experience a non-medical emergency during your project, first contact the partnering organization(s) and your PAS/RELO. If you contact anyone by email, cc GU/CIED. If you are unable to reach anyone at the partnering organization(s) or your PAS/RELO, contact GU/CIED via email at [elspecialist@georgetown.edu](mailto:elspecialist@georgetown.edu) or call **1-800-208-0510**. If you are directed to voicemail, leave detailed information about who you are, the nature of the emergency, and how you can be reached.

### Who do I contact in case of a MEDICAL emergency during my project?

If you experience a medical emergency during your project, first seek appropriate care and contact ASPE/Seven Corners (call collect outside the US: 1-317-818-2867). \*You MUST contact Seven Corners for pre-approval for any medical evacuation.

As soon as possible, also contact your PAS/RELO and the partnering organization(s). If you contact anyone by email, cc GU/CIED. If you are unable to reach anyone at the partnering organization(s) or your PAS/RELO, contact GU/CIED via email at [elspecialist@georgetown.edu](mailto:elspecialist@georgetown.edu) or call **1-800-208-0510**. If you are directed to voicemail, leave detailed information about who you are, the nature of the emergency, and how you can be reached.

Throughout your project, you can also contact ASPE Assist, the mental health consultant and referral services hotline provided by ASPE toll free at +44-20-3859-4463, or via email at [ASPEsupport@anvilgroup.com](mailto:ASPEsupport@anvilgroup.com).

*Further information: Sections 4 and 15 of this handbook, the [ASPE Guide](#) and the Terms and Conditions of the Specialist Agreement.*



## 8. Meals and Lodging While in the Country(ies) of Assignment

### How do I pay for meals while I am in the country(ies) of assignment? Do I need to save receipts for meals?

A living allowance for meals will be provided while you are in the country(ies) of assignment (during your in-country activity dates and on rest day(s) upon arrival, if applicable). You do not need to save receipts for meals covered by the living allowance for meals while in the country(ies) of assignment, which is paid according to the schedule listed in your agreement.

You also do not need to save receipts for meals during international travel (travel to/from the country(ies) of assignment). For example, meals at airports or during a rest stop. For meals during international travel to the assignment and back, you can claim 75% of the standard government meals rate for that month of travel in the final destination city on an expense report. For meals during an approved stop-over during international travel to assignment, you can claim 75% of the standard government meals rate for that month of travel in that city on an expense report. See Sections 9, 11, and 18 of this handbook for more information.

### How do I find and pay for lodging while I am in the country(ies) of assignment?

A living allowance for lodging will be provided while you are in the country(ies) of assignment. In most cases, lodging will be arranged for you by the partnering organization(s) or PAS/RELO. Exceptions to this are managed on a case-by-case basis. Contact your PAS/RELO and partnering organization(s) for details on your specific arrangements. Lodging expenses will either be paid for directly by your PAS/RELO or partnering organization(s) or you will receive an allowance from ECA, through GU/CIED, to cover those costs.

If you receive a living allowance for lodging from ECA, through GU/CIED, the amount listed in your agreement will be paid to you upfront according to the payment schedule outlined in your agreement; however, the living allowance for lodging while in the country(ies) of assignment also requires the submission of receipts to GU/CIED either within 30 days of the end of your in-country activity dates, or with your final report, whichever is sooner. The lodging receipts must show the nightly rate. **Any unused funds will be deducted from your final payment, or must be returned back to the program via refund.**

### Are tips/gratuities at restaurants or at my hotel reimbursed by the program?

Tips/gratuities of any kind are not reimbursable.

### What if I want to move during my project?

You may be able to move to different accommodations during your project, but not without the advance written approval of your PAS/RELO. PAS/RELO or the partnering organization(s) may also ask you to move under some circumstances. If you move without approval, you may be subject to increased safety concerns or expenses that you will have to pay out-of-pocket. This may also be grounds for termination of your project. If you move to more expensive lodging, you will have to pay the difference with your own funds.

### Are guests allowed to stay with me?

You may not have strangers or acquaintances stay in lodging provided to you during your project. This includes persons that you may meet through social media sites such as Facebook, CouchSurfing, AirBnB, etc. This condition applies to any kind of lodging that you may have during your project. You may invite family and friends to stay with you, if allowed by those providing your accommodations. However, you may not accept any payment in exchange for allowing such person(s) to stay with you.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*



## 9. International Travel

### **Who arranges my international travel for the in-country activity dates (to/from the country(ies) of assignment)?**

Unless otherwise specified, GU/CIED will coordinate your international travel through a designated travel agency. If you purchase your own ticket(s), the cost of the ticket(s) will not be reimbursed.

Your travel is based on information provided in your Travel Request Form, as well as information received from the PAS/RELO in the country(ies) of assignment. In booking your travel, the program must adhere to the Fly America Act (FAA), which means that you must use a U.S. flag air carrier service for all air travel funded by the U.S. Government. If no U.S. flag air carrier provides service on a particular leg of the route, foreign air carrier service may be used, but only to or from the nearest interchange point on a usually traveled route to connect with the U.S. flag air carrier service.

### **What do I need to do before my airline ticket is issued?**

Before your tickets can be issued, you must have medical clearance, a fully executed agreement and send GU/CIED confirmation of your visa (if applicable). Travel arrangements will be made no sooner than 45 days in advance of the start date of your in-country activities.

### **Do I get to approve my itinerary before it is issued? How will I receive my tickets?**

GU/CIED will email you a complete itinerary for your review. Before tickets are issued, GU/CIED requires approval from you, as well as the hosting U.S. Embassy. The program will make reasonable efforts to accommodate special itinerary requests, within FAA and program guidelines and policies, and within budget. Further, tickets must be booked on the most direct routes available to and from the country(ies) of assignment. If the first itinerary presented does not suit you, you may request a second or third itinerary, but you must choose from one of three that you are offered.

Once your tickets are issued, you will receive an e-ticket via email with your confirmed travel bookings.

### **Am I eligible for a rest stop/layover en route to my country(ies) of assignment?**

You are eligible for a rest stop/layover of up to twenty-four (24) hours on the way to the country(ies) of assignment, if your *total flight time* by the most direct route – from the time of your first take off, to the time of your last landing, including stopovers and change of planes – exceeds 14 hours. The program will make reasonable accommodations to your layover destination requests, but your flight path must follow the most direct route and adhere to all program policies and FAA regulations. Note that rest stops/layovers are not provided on the return from your assignment.

If you are eligible, the program will reimburse you for lodging and meals not to exceed 75% of the standard government lodging and meals rates for that month of travel in the layover city. Receipts are required for lodging reimbursements, but receipts are not required for meal reimbursements during international travel. More details on international travel-related reimbursements can be found in your agreement and Section 11 of this handbook.

If you have a rest stop/layover en route to the country(ies) of assignment, you are not eligible for a rest day upon arrival in the country(ies) of assignment.

### **What if I require a round-trip ticket before I can obtain a visa to my country(ies) of assignment?**

Some countries of assignment may require you to hold a round-trip ticket as part of the application process





for a visa. If so, you must inform GU/CIED right away and a “dummy” round-trip ticket will be issued to you for this purpose. It will appear to be a validly-issued round-trip ticket, but will be canceled shortly after it is issued, and therefore you cannot use it for travel purposes.

#### **Can I travel on a non-U.S. airline?**

No, not unless it is permitted by applicable law and regulation. This includes, but is not limited to, the Fly America Act. You must travel on the tickets provided for you by the program.

#### **Can I incorporate personal travel to the schedule?**

No, the program does not incorporate personal travel into flight schedules and you must travel on the dates specified by the program.

Unless otherwise specified by the program, you must arrive in the country(ies) of assignment no more than two (2) days in advance of the start of the in-country activity dates. And, you must depart the country(ies) of assignment no later than on the day following the end of the in-country activity dates.

#### **What if my plans change after my ticket is issued and I am unable to undertake the assignment?**

If you are unable to undertake your assignment for any non-program related reason, you must refund the program the cost of the ticket and/or any cancellation fees.

If the change is program-related, you will not be responsible for paying any change fees or price difference resulting from the change.

#### **Can I upgrade my ticket?**

The program is not responsible for providing upgradeable economy class tickets. You can request, in your Travel Request Form, that an upgradeable ticket is issued for you. However, you are responsible for any difference in cost that results from that request. Further, you must wait to upgrade your ticket until after it has been issued. Wait one business day after your ticket has been issued. You can then contact the airline directly to discuss any upgrades to business or first class. You will also be responsible for paying any fees related to the upgrade.

#### **I have a disability and have special travel needs. Can the program assist me?**

The program addresses special travel needs and reasonable accommodation travel requests on a case by case basis. Contact GU/CIED to discuss what options are available.

#### **Can the program help me with seat or meal selection?**

You are responsible for arranging for and paying any fees associated with seat or meal selection. Once your ticket has been issued, you should contact the airline directly to make your seat and meal selections, or to make other standard travel requests.

#### **What about my baggage?**

You will need to contact all the airlines you will be flying on to find out their requirements and limitations for your baggage, including any fees for overweight baggage. GU/CIED and the travel agent are not responsible for providing you with this information. The program will reimburse baggage fees not to exceed two (2) 50lb bags for each leg of the trip. See Sections 11 and 18 of this handbook for more information.

#### **If I am travelling through another country, am I responsible for any transit visas or other documentation?**

If you are being routed through another country, other than the United States and the country(ies) of





assignment, you need to research all immigration restrictions for this country or countries and then obtain any documentation you may need to transit through the country or countries. The program will reimburse any fees associated with transit visas. See Sections 11 and 18 of this handbook for more information.

### **Is the travel agency affiliated with GU/CIED and can they assist me with other travel needs?**

GU/CIED works with an independent travel agency to coordinate travel. Their only role in the program is to arrange flights to and from the country(ies) of assignment.

The travel agent cannot help you with any kind of travel when you arrive in the country(ies) of assignment, including but not limited to ground transportation. The travel agent does not have any information about your lodging, per diem rates or schedules. They also do not have any information about the general English Language Specialist Program, such as the country(ies) of assignment, visa requirements, project descriptions, information about your partnering organization, or your agreement and payments. Direct all of these enquiries to your PAS/RELO or GU/CIED.

### **I plan to travel with someone. How should I organize this?**

You are required to contact PAS/RELO in charge of the project to discuss whether it will be appropriate for accompanying persons or dependents to travel with you during your project. If this is approved by PAS/RELO, you are responsible for arranging and paying for all expenses associated with the other persons' travel. The project dates and your travel itineraries will not be adjusted to accommodate the travel needs of an accompanying person or dependent.

### **I would like my pet to travel with me. Is this possible?**

Due to the short-term and unpredictable nature of English Language Specialist projects, traveling with pets is not recommended. If you decide to travel with your pet, neither GU/CIED, nor the travel agency can help you to arrange a pet's transport. Your project and travel itineraries cannot be accommodated to coordinate with your pet's needs. If the schedule that GU/CIED coordinates for you is not acceptable due to your pet's travel, you will be responsible for planning, organizing, and paying for your own ticket, as well as that of your pet, to your project and back. In such cases, you will forfeit your ticket to and from your project. You will also be fully responsible for ensuring that your pet's presence on your project does not interfere with required English Language Specialist duties.

## **10. Payment to the Program for Additional Travel Fees and Costs**

Under certain circumstances, you may owe money back to the program for additional non-program related travel fees and costs. If that is the case, you are asked to fully cooperate with GU/CIED to arrange for this.

### **What additional travel fees and costs am I responsible for? How do I know how much I have to pay?**

If other people accompany you to the country(ies) of assignment, you are responsible for paying all of their travel costs. Also, you may owe money to the program due to travel cancellation for a non-program related reason, or a request for an upgradeable ticket. GU/CIED will tell you how much you owe the program for these costs.

### **How do I pay for these costs?**

Unless you remit payment for the cost of any changes directly to the travel agent, you must refund the program within two weeks of issuing your travel via direct deposit, called Automated Clearing Ho use (ACH) to GU/CIED, as follows:

Bank: PNC Bank N.A.



Address: 808 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006  
ABA Number: 054000030  
Account Name: Georgetown University ACH Receipts  
Account Number: 5303547831  
Account Type: Checking  
Reference: ask GU/CIED for reference information related to your payment

If you are unable to pay via ACH, you must choose one of the below repayment methods, also within two weeks of issuing your travel:

Process a wire transfer for the applicable amount to:

Bank: PNC Bank N.A.  
Address: 808 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006  
ABA Number: 031000053  
Swift Code: PNCCUS33  
Account Name: Georgetown University General Fund  
Account Number: 5300384731  
Reference: ask your GU/CIED coordinator for reference information related to your payment

Send a check or money order for the applicable amount payable to “Georgetown University” to:

Georgetown University/CIED  
English Language Programs  
2115 Wisconsin Ave, NW  
4th floor  
Washington, DC 20007

You must notify GU/CIED of the type of payment you have selected to make and the date it was issued.

### **What happens if GU/CIED does not receive my payment within two weeks?**

If your ACH payment or your check does not arrive within two weeks of your airline ticket being issued, the program may withhold your future stipend payments until it arrives or the amount may be deducted from your next payment.

## **11. International Travel-Related Costs**

### **Will I receive an allowance for expenses I incur during my international travel to and from my project?**

You may claim reimbursement for costs related to international travel—for certain costs incurred either before you travel, or while you are en route directly to/from the country(ies) of assignment—as specified below. With the exception of meals during international travel, you must retain receipts for all costs incurred.

PAS/RELO approval is not required for international travel-related costs.

When your travel is complete, you must submit an expense report to GU/CIED to claim reimbursement for these costs. You will need to claim meals, if applicable, on your expense report for reimbursement, but you are not required to submit receipts for those costs. Follow the guidelines below regarding the meals rates you can claim or contact GU/CIED with questions.

Detailed instructions about completing expense reports—and the deadlines for doing so—are provided in this handbook and the PPO.



You can claim reimbursement for the following expenses related to your international travel:

- Costs related to obtaining a visa (visa fees, visa service fees, photos, passport fees, and mailing of documents);
- Costs related to completion of the HVF;
- Vaccinations and medications required specifically for travel to the country(ies) of assignment, following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for “All Travelers” and “Most Travelers” but excluding standard vaccinations for MMR, DTP, HPV, chickenpox, polio, measles, and flu;
- Baggage fees not to exceed two (2) 50lb bags for each leg of the trip;
- Transportation to/from the airport(s) outside the country(ies) of assignment, including taxi, ride sharing services, or mileage, but excluding any parking fees at the airport(s);
- Meals during international travel, reimbursed at 75% of the standard government meals rates for that month of travel in the final destination city. Receipts are not required for meal reimbursements during international travel;
- During rest stop of up to twenty-four (24) hours, if total flight time, including stopovers and change of planes, exceeds fourteen (14) hours, lodging and meals not to exceed 75% of the standard government lodging and meals rates for that month of travel in that city. Receipts are required for lodging reimbursements, but receipts are not required for meal reimbursements during international travel;
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, or other reasonable PPE purchases in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- COVID-19 tests required for travel to the country(ies) of assignment;
- COVID-19 tests required while in the country(ies) of assignment, including tests required to depart the country(ies) of assignment, beyond any maximum amount reimbursable through the DOS/ECA’s Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (“ASPE”), as outlined in the [ASPE Guide](#);
- If quarantine outside of your home is required after the completion of the in-country activity dates, lodging not to exceed the standard government lodging rates for that month in that city for up to fourteen (14) nights;
- If quarantine outside of your home is required after the completion of in-country activity dates, meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) reimbursed at the standard government M&IE rates for that month in that city for up to fourteen (14) days and only during the period in which you reside outside your home. Receipts are not required for M&IE reimbursements during the required quarantine outside of your home.
- Other reimbursable expenses, if specified in your agreement.

### **How does mileage reimbursement work? Can I leave my car at the airport in long-term parking?**

The program will reimburse you for mileage to/from the airport outside the country(ies) of assignment using the Privately-Owned Vehicle mileage reimbursement rate established by the [U.S. General Services Administration](#). To receive this reimbursement, you will need to submit a Google Maps (or similar application) calculation of the miles driven on a direct route.

Airport parking fees of any kind will not be reimbursed.

*Further information: Section 18 of this handbook and the Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*



## 12. Local and Regional Transportation

Your international travel (to/from the country(ies) of assignment) will be arranged directly by GU/CIED. However, in many cases, you will be responsible for arranging local and regional transportation in consultation with the partnering organization(s) or PAS/RELO.

### **What is local transportation and how are these expenses covered by the program?**

“Local transportation” is defined in your agreement as the daily commute from your lodging to your partnering organization, while you are in the country(ies) of assignment. It can also include transportation around the host city(ies) to local educational institutions or other organizations (e.g. an American Corner), where you are performing your duties, as well as transportation to/from host city airport(s).

In most cases, you will receive funds for local transportation as a part of your living allowance for meals and local transportation. The partnering organization(s) or PAS/RELO may also make arrangements for local transportation directly. You do not need to retain receipts for local transportation costs as you cannot seek reimbursement for local transportation costs under any of the reimbursable allowance categories (i.e. international-travel related costs, or program activities allowance). If you feel that your living allowance for meals and local transportation does not include sufficient funds for your local transportation needs, discuss the situation with your PAS/RELO.

### **What is regional transportation and how are these expenses covered by the program?**

“Regional transportation” is defined in your agreement as travel beyond your host city (for example, a flight between two cities for project purposes) during the in-country activity dates. Costs for regional transportation can be covered in one or more of the following ways:

- If specified in your agreement, you will make regional transportation arrangements directly and will be reimbursed for these costs through GU/CIED via PAA. Your agreement will specify the amount allotted to regional transportation costs under PAA, if applicable.
- The partnering organization(s) or PAS/RELO may arrange for regional transportation, but require you to reimburse them for the costs. You will be reimbursed for these costs through GU/CIED via PAA. Your agreement will specify the amount allotted to regional transportation costs under PAA, if applicable.
- The partnering organization(s) or PAS/RELO may arrange and pay for regional transportation directly.
- The partnering organization(s) or PAS/RELO may provide you with regional transportation funds and you will make the arrangements directly.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## 13. Program Activities Allowance (PAA)

### **What is the program activities allowance (PAA)?**

PAA is provided to supplement and enhance the work you do on your project. PAA is a reimbursable benefit, which means the funds are not provided to you in advance. You will make any approved purchases out-of-pocket, and then submit an expense report to GU/CIED for reimbursement of approved costs.

To receive reimbursement for expenses incurred, you must retain receipts for all costs incurred under PAA and submit a complete expense report to GU/CIED for payment. Detailed instructions about completing



expense reports – and the deadlines for doing so – are provided in this handbook and in the PPO.

#### **Do not incur any PAA expenses until...**

- Your agreement is fully signed;
- You have reviewed the relevant sections of this handbook and your agreement regarding allowable costs and the details and policies regarding the submission of expense reports; AND,
- You have received advance approval, in writing, from your PAS/RELO **for each PAA expense**.

You must also keep receipts for any items purchased to submit with your expense report.

Unallowable expenses will not be reimbursed, even if approved by PAS/RELO. If you have questions, contact GU/CIED before incurring the expense.

#### **How much money do I have to spend?**

Your PAA ceiling is indicated in your agreement. You are responsible for keeping track of your PAA expenses, as you will not be reimbursed for any expenses which exceed the PAA ceiling listed in your agreement. If applicable, the amount of PAA allocated for regional transportation will be indicated in your agreement, as well.

#### **What kinds of things can I spend my PAA on?**

The following are suggested uses of PAA. In advance of making any purchases, you must discuss the use of PAA with your PAS/RELO and with the partnering organization(s). **You must also obtain advance PAS/RELO approval for each expense, in writing.**

- Development, preparation, and facilitation of conferences, workshops, seminars, lectures, etc.;
- In-country and regional travel related to your duties, while in the country(ies) of assignment;
- Supporting local EFL teacher activities, in consultation with PAS/RELO;
- Purchase of commercial educational materials such as books, DVDs, visuals, educational software, magazines, newspapers, photocopies, etc., which will be donated in the country(ies) of assignment;
- Purchase of small equipment and office supplies, such as computer, copier, memory storage, paper, toner, etc. (for the partnering organization);
- Purchase of a local cell phone, SIMcards, etc., for the duration of the in-country activity dates;
- Funding of your Internet/email access for the duration of the in-country activity dates;
- Establishing/enhancing resource centers, American Corners, teacher associations, etc.

PAA can only be used to fund activities within your designated geographical region: Africa, East Asia and Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, Near East and North Africa, South and Central Asia, or Western Hemisphere and the Americas. Upon completion of your in-country activity dates, you must leave any materials or equipment purchased with PAA with either your partnering organization, or PAS/RELO.

#### **Are there any expenses that are not covered by my PAA?**

Here are examples of expenses that are not covered by PAA. You cannot receive reimbursement for these expenses, **even if they are approved by PAS/RELO**:

- Expenses and/or compensation for your companions, colleagues, students, trainees, and/or workshop participants; USG exchange participants (such as, but not limited to, English Language Fellows, English Language Specialists, Fulbright Scholars, and Fulbright English Language Teaching Assistants); Peace Corps volunteers; DOS/ECA employees; and United States citizens;
- E-books if downloaded to your personal e-reader during the in-country activity dates;
- Alcohol, flowers, prizes, and gifts;
- Local language lessons or classes;



- Your travel costs to the annual TESOL International Convention in the United States;
- Your TESOL International Association membership fees;
- Professional development training programs;
- Standard computer software such as operating systems, MS Office, Adobe, etc., for your personal use;
- Internet access charges during virtual activity dates;
- Existing subscriptions to tele-conferencing and webinar platforms such as, but not limited to, Zoom, GoToMeeting, Webex, Adobe Connect, etc.;
- Laundry costs;
- Business or first class tickets or upgrades;
- Local transportation costs; and
- Other unallowable expenses.

Note that it is not an exhaustive list. If you are unsure whether your purchases will be reimbursed, ask GU/CIED in advance of making the purchase.

**Are there any restrictions associated with the purchase of subscriptions to web conferencing services, online teaching platforms, and specialized software?**

Yes. The program will reimburse you only for the cost of the least expensive subscription necessary to meet the needs and duration of your project. In addition to including receipts for your subscription purchase, your expense report must include the available subscription pricing plans and their duration. Note that you cannot claim reimbursement for existing subscriptions.

Section 18 of this handbook provides complete details on the submission of expense reports.

**Can I provide funds or grants to colleagues, students, trainees or workshop participants using PAA? Can I use PAA funds to procure services from a third party?**

No. Providing or granting funds to colleagues, students, trainees, and/or workshop participants for any reason, or engaging with a third party (individual or business) to procure or provide services are not allowable PAA expenses for any English Language Specialists. Contact GU/CIED with any questions.

**Can I incur PAA expenses prior to the start of my project?**

It is possible, but not recommended. It is also important to remember that you cannot incur any PAA expenses prior to signing your agreement, even with PAS/RELO approval.

**Can I incur PAA expenses after my project ends?**

Yes. You have up to thirty (30) days following the end of your agreement period to incur and submit reimbursement requests for PAS/RELO-approved PAA expenses.

**What do I do with the items that I purchased with my PAA?**

**For all items purchased with PAA during in-country activity dates, and items purchased with PAA during virtual activity dates that exceed \$100 (for each item),** you must work with your PAS/RELO at the completion of your project to make arrangements to leave those items in the country(ies) of assignment with, or send those items to: PAS/RELO, the partnering organization, American Corner, local library, or other resource center. For items purchased during virtual activity dates that exceed \$100 (for each item), you may also make arrangements to send them to GU/CIED.

In your final report, you will submit an inventory of all applicable items purchased with PAA and confirmation that the items have been left with, or sent to, an appropriate recipient.



*Further information: Section 18 of this handbook and the Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **14. Leave, Absences, and Extensions**

### **Do I have any personal leave time or breaks during my project?**

Appendix A of your agreement details a general schedule of your project and description of your scope of work. You are expected to complete the duties of the project in accordance with the project description and schedule (Appendix A). Unless otherwise specified in Appendix A, you will have at least one rest day per week during in-country activity dates. You can only take leave days beyond the rest days and non-work days defined in Appendix A with prior written approval from your PAS/RELO and the partnering organization(s). The schedule is provided to guide your preparations, but is always subject to change. Contact the partnering organization(s) and the PAS/RELO in charge of your project to discuss the details.

### **What if I have a personal or medical emergency and I need to cease working?**

You are expected to carry out your activities as specified in your agreement. If you have to depart the country(ies) of assignment or stop performing virtual activities before the end of the agreement period, for any reason, you must promptly notify all parties – the partnering organization(s), PAS/RELO, and GU/CIED – in writing. The agreement will either be terminated as of that date or amended to reflect new project dates, as determined by DOS/ECA and PAS/RELO. If the project is terminated, you may be responsible for repaying portions of the stipends and living allowances, all of which will be detailed in your termination letter or agreement amendment from GU/CIED. For medical emergencies involving evacuation see Section 15: Evacuation from the Country(ies) of Assignment.

### **What if I have to leave, or cannot begin my project as scheduled for a personal or medical reason?**

If you cannot begin your project as scheduled, or are away from your project for any reason, DOS/ECA and PAS/RELO will determine if the project can be continued or if it should be cancelled, resulting in termination.

### **What if my project is extended while I am in-country?**

If DOS/ECA and your PAS/RELO amend the agreement period while you are in-country, your agreement will be amended and a new return ticket will be issued by GU/CIED, reflecting the amended agreement period.

*Further information: Section 15 of this handbook, and the Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **15. Evacuation from the Country(ies) of Assignment (Non-Medical or Medical)**

There have been volatile situations throughout the world that have created a need for the urgent departure or evacuation of American citizens to ensure their safety. These have included political and economic unrest, natural disasters, public health emergencies, and terrorist attacks. While in the country(ies) of assignment, you should be prepared to depart quickly, and for any reason, including to address medical issues that may develop while in the country(ies) of assignment.

### **How can I be ready for emergencies or for an emergency evacuation?**

DOS advice on emergency and crisis preparedness is available on the DOS travel [website](#). In addition, here is a list of things you can do to better prepare yourself and your accompanying persons or dependents in





the case of an emergency:

- Discuss an emergency plan with your PAS/RELO, including where you should relocate and who to contact in the event of an emergency, and familiarize yourself what emergency services will be provided to you by the hosting U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
- Obtain and carry with you at all times an emergency contact card (see Section 7 of this handbook) and your ASPE ID card.
- Ensure your passport and all necessary visas are valid for the duration of your project, and make copies of your passport, visa, and departure documents (as well as for any accompanying persons or dependents, if applicable). Keep one set of copies in a safe place that is accessible to you and another with a relative or close friend living back home.
- Before you leave for the country(ies) of assignment, register with the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (STEP).

### **Evacuation (non-medical)**

#### **How will I know if I must evacuate from the country(ies) of assignment, for a non-medical reason?**

Evacuation from the country(ies) of assignment may be deemed “ordered” or “authorized” by DOS/ECA for reasons such as political unrest, including riots or civil commotions, war, terrorism, epidemics or other public health emergencies. When either of these occur, PAS/RELO and GU/CIED will work with you to ensure your safety and, if necessary, your timely departure from the current country of assignment.

In all evacuation scenarios, you must follow all guidance issued by DOS/ECA. If you are found to not adhere to evacuation guidance issued by DOS/ECA, your agreement will be terminated immediately, you will forfeit your return ticket, and all conditions of termination will apply. You will be then considered to be a private U.S. citizen abroad. You should change your status from “English Language Specialist” to “American citizen in-country resident” in STEP and inform the relevant U.S. Embassy’s American Citizen Services (ACS) of your change in status.

#### **What is an “ordered departure”?**

An “ordered departure” is not voluntary. PAS/RELO and GU/CIED will work with you to facilitate your timely departure. Depending on the circumstances, you may be evacuated to a different city in the current country of assignment. You may even be asked to finish your project in this new city or another location that is safe. This is addressed on a case-by-case basis.

In other cases, you may be evacuated to your preferred destination outside of the current country of assignment. If possible, the program will provide you with an economy class airline ticket on the most direct route available. You might stay there until the evacuation order is lifted and you can return, at which point your agreement will be amended to reflect the new circumstances, or your agreement will be terminated. You would receive no additional living allowances while outside of the country(ies) of assignment.

If your preferred destination is in a country other than the United States, it is your responsibility to ensure you can enter that country. The program cannot assist you with entering any country outside the United States, if travel or any other restrictions are in place at the time of evacuation.

#### **Do I have to leave the country(ies) of assignment in the case of an “ordered departure”?**

No, but it is highly recommended. If you decide to remain in the current country of assignment while an ordered departure evacuation order has been issued, it will be at your own risk and expense. Your





agreement will be immediately terminated, you will forfeit your return ticket, and all conditions of termination will apply. You will be then considered to be a private U.S. citizen abroad. You should change your status from “English Language Specialist” to “American citizen in-country resident” in STEP and inform the relevant U.S. Embassy’s ACS of your decision and change in status.

### **What is an “authorized departure”?**

An “authorized departure” is voluntary; you are not required to leave the current country of assignment immediately. However, you should remain in close contact with your PAS/RELO for advice, guidance, and updates on the situation.

If you decide to leave the current country of assignment, you need to inform your PAS/RELO and GU/CIED immediately. Your PAS/RELO and DOS/ECA will then work with GU/CIED to facilitate your departure, and the termination of your agreement. If possible, the program will provide you with a direct route, economy class airline ticket to your preferred destination outside of the current country of assignment.

If your preferred destination is in a country other than the United States, it is your responsibility to ensure you can enter that country. The program cannot assist you with entering any country outside the United States, if travel or any other restrictions are in place at the time of evacuation.

If no PAS staff remains in the current country of assignment to provide support and guidance, the situation will be treated like an ordered evacuation.

### **What about my dependents or others traveling with me?**

In all evacuation scenarios, you are responsible for making and paying for travel arrangements for any accompanying persons or dependents (including pets).

### **What will happen to my personal effects?**

In all evacuation scenarios, you are responsible for bringing your personal effects with you, as you may not be allowed to return to your host city to collect them. The program is not responsible for the logistics and the shipping costs of personal effects that have been left behind.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **Medical Evacuation**

### **What happens if I have an accident or I become too ill to stay on assignment?**

You must inform your PAS/RELO if you require emergency medical attention for any reason.

In the past, some English Language Specialists have experienced unexpected medical conditions (serious illness or injury) requiring medical evacuation either to the U.S. or to another country for proper treatment. In advance of your departure for the country(ies) of assignment, you should familiarize yourself with the processes and procedures that are in place to help you in such cases.

Whether you have your own coverage or whether ASPE is your only health benefit plan, the first thing you should do when you arrive in the country(ies) of assignment is identify a contact person who can liaise with your insurance company or with Seven Corners (ASPE’s health benefits administrator) in case you are incapacitated. Specifically, for ASPE, this person will be responsible for obtaining pre-approval from ASPE to evacuate you, if necessary. Be sure this person knows your ASPE ID number and has ASPE’s phone numbers.



### **Does a medical evacuation under ASPE need to be approved?**

**Yes.** Unless you have your own coverage, before you make any medical evacuation plan, or one is made for you, you need pre-approval for it to be covered by ASPE. Once notified of the medical emergency, Seven Corners will determine whether your condition is so severe that it requires a level of care not available in the current country of assignment, or is clearly life threatening. Seven Corners will confer with DOS/ECA about the need for evacuation. Keep PAS/RELO and GU/CIED informed throughout.

### **How do I contact Seven Corners/ASPE for pre-approval?**

You, your appointed advocate, or a medical provider, need to contact Seven Corners to explain the need for your evacuation. After the evacuation has been approved, Seven Corners will contact you or your liaison, as well as your PAS/RELO in the current country of assignment to help make your evacuation arrangements.

- You must obtain pre-approval from ASPE's administrator Seven Corners before any evacuation plans are made. **Call Seven Corners collect at +1 317-818-2867 to get approval.**

### **What if I handle the travel arrangements myself or another person does so on my behalf without pre-approval?**

Unless you have your own coverage, any medical evacuation travel services arranged without pre - approval from Seven Corners/ASPE will not be covered.

### **Will I always be evacuated to the United States?**

If your evacuation is approved, Seven Corners/ASPE will pay for your evacuation to the nearest suitable medical facility. In most cases, this will be a country other than the United States.

### **Can I return to my project after a medical evacuation?**

Your project is contingent upon having PAS/RELO approval and being covered by the ASPE health benefit plan. If following your evacuation, ASPE terminates your coverage, you cannot return to the country(ies) of assignment unless your ASPE health plan is reinstated. If your ASPE health plan is not reinstated, your agreement will be terminated. Also, if your PAS/RELO does not approve your return to the country(ies) of assignment, your agreement will be terminated.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement and the [ASPE Guide](#).*

## **16. Termination**

### **What if I cannot begin or complete my project? Can I make any financial claims?**

No. Neither GU/CIED nor DOS/ECA are responsible for any financial claims you may make if you cannot begin or complete your duties as an English Language Specialist. This remains the case even if this is because of circumstances beyond your control.

### **Is the implementation of my project contingent on anything?**

Yes. Implementation of your project is contingent upon:

- Your medical clearance;
- Submission of all required program documents;



- Your ability to obtain a U.S. passport;
- Your ability to obtain any necessary visa(s) that the country(ies) of assignment requires; and,
- Appropriate conditions that exist prior to and during your English Language Specialist project in the country(ies) of assignment. “Appropriate conditions” typically refer to issues around political, public health, social, and economic stability in the region and they are determined by your PAS/RELO in consultation with DOS/ECA.

**What are program related reasons for which my agreement may be terminated?**

Your PAS/RELO can direct GU/CIED to terminate your agreement at any time prior to the start of, or during, your agreement period. Program-related grounds for termination of your agreement may include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- The partnering organization(s) and/or PAS/RELO cancels or terminates the project due to conditions beyond your control in the country(ies) of assignment or related to the partnering organization;
- You are unable to perform your duties for medical and/or illness-related reasons during the in-country activity dates;
- Unforeseen political and economic unrest, natural disasters, public health emergencies, terrorist attacks, etc.

**What are non-program related reasons for which my agreement may be terminated?**

Your PAS/RELO can direct GU/CIED to terminate your agreement at any time prior to the start of, or during, your agreement period. Non-program related grounds for termination of your agreement may include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- You fail to achieve the goals of the program;
- You choose to abandon your duties before the end of the agreement period;
- You perform your duties unsatisfactorily;
- You are unable to perform your duties for personal (non-medical, or illness-related) reasons;
- You are unable to perform your duties for medical and/or illness-related reasons outside of the in-country activity dates;
- You fail to observe satisfactory professional ethics;
- You violate any law of the United States or the country(ies) of assignment;
- You violate the rules and/or policies of the partnering organization;
- You fail to observe the social norms of the country(ies) of assignment;
- You do not respond to requests by GU/CIED and/or by PAS/RELO in a timely manner;
- You refuse to follow directions/guidance from PAS/RELO;
- You give offense, intentionally or otherwise, to the United States or the country(ies) of assignment, which is contrary to the spirit of mutual understanding;
- You engage in any unauthorized income-producing activity;
- You materially misrepresent yourself in a Specialist application form or Specialist document;
- You conduct yourself in a manner that could bring DOS/ECA, PAS/RELO, GU/CIED, and/or the partnering organization into disrepute;
- You act in a way that is inappropriate or dangerous to yourself or others;
- Information on your HVF is found to be substantially inaccurate or incomplete;
- Following any change in your medical condition and prior to the start of the agreement period, your new HVF is not medically cleared by the program’s medical examiner;
- Your ASPE coverage has been canceled;
- Your visa to the country(ies) of assignment is canceled or revoked;



- You fail to comply with the agreement and the attached terms and conditions.

**How will I know I have been terminated? What payments will I receive?**

The program will send you a formal termination letter via email. This letter officially amends your agreement period and outlines details on payments you have received to date, specifying what funds you can keep, and what funds, if any, you are required to return to the program.

**What other conditions should I be aware of if my agreement is terminated?**

If your agreement is terminated, you should be aware of the following termination conditions, as applicable, and stated in your termination letter:

- You shall cease performing your duties as of the date stated in your termination letter.
- You must leave the country(ies) of assignment on the date of your termination unless otherwise specified by PAS/RELO. If your departure and travel does not take place on this date or the date established by PAS/RELO, you will forfeit any right to a return ticket provided by the program.
- The duration of the ASPE health benefit plan will be amended so that it is the same as the amended agreement period for your in-country activities.
- You will be responsible for making and covering the cost of travel arrangements for any accompanying person or dependent, and/or pet.
- You will be liable for all debts you may have accumulated while in the country(ies) of assignment.
- You must submit within thirty (30) days of termination expense reports to claim any reimbursement for approved PAA or international-travel related expenses. Any reimbursement due to you will not be issued until any amount owed to the program is refunded in full by the due date specified in the termination letter.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

**17. Remaining in Country after Agreement Ends or is Terminated**

**My project has ended but I want to remain in the country(ies) of assignment. Is this possible?**

Yes, if you meet all of the visa requirements of the country(ies) of assignment, which is your responsibility to ensure. You must also abide by any limitations imposed by the country(ies) of assignment and you should change your status from “English Language Specialist” to “American citizen in-country resident” with STEP and the U.S. Embassy’s ACS. You are no longer an English Language Specialist after your project has ended. Your ASPE coverage will also end as of the last day of the in-country portion of the project. See Section 9 of this handbook and the Terms and Conditions of your agreement for details and limitations regarding travel arrangements.

**My agreement has been terminated but I want to remain in my country(ies) of assignment. Is this possible?**

If your agreement is terminated, you must leave the country(ies) of assignment on the date of your termination unless otherwise specified by PAS/RELO. If your departure and travel do not take place on this date or the date established by PAS/RELO, you will forfeit any right to a return ticket provided by the program. As above, you are responsible for visa requirements, which may be affected by termination. Further, you should change your status from “English Language Specialist” to “American citizen in-country resident” with STEP and the U.S. Embassy’s ACS. You are no longer an English Language Specialist after your project has been terminated. Your ASPE coverage will also end as of the date of termination.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*



## 18. Reporting Requirements – Expense Reports and Program Reports

### Do I need to submit reports as part of my project?

Yes. There are two kinds of reports:

- **Program reports:** These include the preliminary report (for projects with in-country activity dates of 45+days), the final report and Highlight(s), and the Alumni Impact Statement. **Report templates and submission deadlines are included in your agreement and on the COP.**
- **Expense reports:** These must be submitted in order for you to get reimbursed for approved, reimbursable expenses.

### What program reports do I have to submit?

All program reports listed below should be submitted to GU/CIED and your PAS/RELO by the stated deadline. You will also be asked to submit a post-arrival information form immediately after your arrival in the country(ies) of assignment.

<b>Preliminary Report</b>	For projects with in-country activity dates of 45+ days; due within fifteen (15) days of your arrival in the country(ies) of assignment.
<b>Final Report</b>	Due within thirty (30) days after the end date of your agreement period; the final report includes a required Highlight submission via the <a href="#">COP</a> .  For projects with multiple phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one final report will be due no later than thirty (30) days from the end of the agreement period for the <i>final</i> phase</li> <li>• a Highlight submission is required at the end of <i>each</i> phase.</li> </ul>
<b>Alumni Impact Statement</b>	Approximately three months after the completion of your project, you will receive a reminder email from GU/CIED to submit an impact statement on the COP: <a href="https://cop.elprograms.org/alumni-impact-statements/">https://cop.elprograms.org/alumni-impact-statements/</a> . However, you can submit impact statements anytime, and as often as you see fit.

### What expense reports do I have to submit? What receipts do I need to retain?

1. **Expense reports AND receipts required:** You must submit expense reports - and therefore retain receipts for all expenses incurred - to GU/CIED for approved, allowable expenditures under the following allowance categories:
  - International travel-related costs (receipts are not required for meal costs during international travel; see the chart below for details on how to claim meals during international travel on your expense report);
  - Program activities allowance (PAA);
  - Other reimbursable expenses, if applicable, and as outlined in your agreement.
2. **Receipts required, but expense reports NOT required:** You are not required to submit an expense



report for the living allowance for lodging while in the country(ies) of assignment, but you are required to retain all lodging receipts from your in-country activity dates and the rest day(s) upon arrival (if applicable), and submit them to GU/CIED for reconciliation either within 30 days of the end of your in-country activity dates, or with your final report, whichever is sooner. You can find more information about the living allowance for lodging in Section 8 of this handbook, and in your agreement.

**3. NO receipts required and NO expense reports required:** You are NOT required to retain receipts or submit expense reports for costs you incur using the following allowances:

- Stipends;
- Living allowance for meals and local transportation while in the country(ies) of assignment (if applicable); and
- One-time costs allowance (if applicable).

**How do I prepare my expense report?**

There are strict policies around expense reports. The more precise and detailed you are, the faster you will receive your reimbursement. Contact GU/CIED with any questions. **Note: Expense reports must be submitted to GU/CIED within 60 days of incurring an expense, and no later than 30 days after the end date of your agreement period. Expense reports which are received late will not be processed.**

Below is an overview of what you need to do when preparing an expense report:

1.	Fill out an expense log.	<p>You can find a blank expense log through the <i>Participant Documents</i> icon on the <a href="#">COP</a>, or you can request one from GU/CIED via email. List every single expense on the log. Each line of the expense log should correspond to a receipt.</p> <p>Fill out the log completely and include as many details as possible regarding each expense, following the who/what/where/when/why principle. The program needs this for audit purposes. The more specific and precise you are, the faster GU/CIED can process your claim.</p> <p>*Remember, you are not required to submit an expense report for the living allowance for lodging, therefore, do not include lodging receipts from your in-country activity dates or your rest day(s) upon arrival, with an expense report. You can find more information about the living allowance for lodging while in the country(ies) of assignment in Section 8 of this handbook, and in your agreement.</p>
2.	Organize and number your receipts following your expense log entries and include written approval from PAS/RELO for each submitted expense.	<p><b>You must follow all regulations for reimbursable expenses as outlined in this handbook and in your agreement.</b></p> <p>Other than meal expenses during international travel, every expense you list on your expense log must have a corresponding receipt. Do not aggregate different cost categories or expenses incurred on different dates. Be sure to reconcile your expense log with your receipts before sending to GU/CIED or it could delay the processing of your claim. If you do not have a receipt for an expense, contact GU/CIED.</p> <p>Every PAA expense you list on your expense log must also have</p>



		<p>corresponding approval from PAS/RELO. PAS/RELO approval is usually submitted as a PDF of an email you received from PAS/RELO with the approval.</p> <p>If you are including costs for any flights purchased for regional transportation under PAA in your expense report, you must also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boarding passes for all segments of your flight;</li> <li>• Receipt showing all flight details (dates and routing), as well as costs.</li> </ul> <p>Requests for reimbursement of flight costs must be submitted within 60 days of purchasing the ticket(s).</p> <p>For meals during international travel, you can claim 75% of the standard government meals rate for that month of travel in the final destination city on your expense report. You do not need to attach receipts for meals during international travel.</p> <p>For meals during an approved stop-over during international travel, you can claim 75% of the standard government meals rate for that month of travel in that city on your expense report.</p> <p>For lodging expenses during an approved stop-over during international travel, you must submit receipts, and the cost cannot exceed 75% of the standard government lodging rate for that month of travel in that city.</p> <p>If you share your lodging with anyone else, you must either subtract the cost of lodging for that person or persons or show proof that the price of your lodging was the same regardless of the number of persons staying in the room.</p>
3.	For subscription purchases, include information about available pricing plans.	<p>The program will reimburse you only for the cost of the least expensive subscription necessary to meet the needs and duration of your project. In addition to including receipts for your subscription purchase, your expense report must include the available subscription pricing plans and their duration.</p> <p>For example: if your project is three months in length, and a monthly subscription plan is available that meets the needs of your project, you must purchase the monthly plan versus a year-long option. If you purchase a year-long option, but a monthly plan is available, the program will prorate your reimbursement for the duration of your assignment.</p>
4.	Include a copy of the exchange rate(s).	<p>If your expenses were paid in a currency other than U.S. dollars (USD), you may choose to include a historical exchange rate for EACH of the dates the purchases were made (an exchange conversion should be</p>





		<p>then attached to each expense in another currency).</p> <p>You can use an online exchange rate website such as <a href="http://www.oanda.com">www.oanda.com</a>. You can also include a copy of your credit or debit card statement, if it includes the exchange rates or an exchange receipt from a bank.</p> <p>If you choose not to include a historical exchange rate for EACH of the dates the purchases were made, GU/CIED will use the historical exchange rates found on <a href="http://www.oanda.com">www.oanda.com</a>.</p>
5.	Make a copy of your complete expense report for your records.	Make a copy of all pieces of your expense report, including the log and all receipts.
6.	Send completed expense report to GU/CIED.	<p>Email a PDF of your complete expense report in one document to GU/CIED.</p> <p>Expense reports must be submitted within 60 days of incurring the expense and within 30 days of the end of your agreement. Expense reports which are received late will not be processed.</p>

**Can I dispose of the original receipts now that I have sent them to GU/CIED?**

No, for audit purposes, you must keep all the original receipts for 60 days after the end of your agreement period.

**Are there deadlines for my expense reports?**

Yes. In accordance with GU/CIED policies and IRS publication 463, you must account for expenses by submitting complete expense reports to GU/CIED within 60 days after the expense was incurred. In addition, final requests for reimbursement must be submitted to GU/CIED no later than 30 days after the end of your agreement period, including termination.

**Expense reports which are received late will not be processed.**

**Could my reimbursement request be denied?**

Yes. GU/CIED must follow very strict rules around financial matters for auditing purposes. Following are examples of reasons why an expense report claim may be denied:

- PAS/RELO approval for the purchase is not included;
- Expense report was submitted 61 or more days after the expense was incurred or 31 or more days after the end of your agreement period;
- Your PAA ceiling, as listed your agreement, has been exceeded;
- Incomplete documentation: you must submit all your documentation for an expense report in one complete package;
- Insufficient expense details: your receipts should show the breakdown of each expense in detail. If the receipt is not detailed, it is up to you to include an explanation of what the precise expense was;
- Disallowed expense items: if the expense is not allowed under the program policies, your reimbursement will be denied. If you are not sure if an expense is allowable, contact GU/CIED prior





- to purchase;
- The scan of your expense report is illegible (too small or too blurry to read);
- Recurring expenses only have one receipt instead of multiple receipts for each of the recurring expenses;
- Receipts pasted on top of one another blocking information and therefore considered incomplete;
- Split receipts not showing clearly your share of the expense;
- Receipts for subscription services do not include sufficient back-up information about available pricing plans and their duration;
- Submitting exact same expense more than once;
- Amazon or other on-line vendor receipts without proof that the purchased items have been shipped and delivered;
- Costs were incurred prior to signing your agreement.

If your expense report contains errors or incomplete information, it will be returned to you for revision. You will receive your payment once your expense report is correct and approved for payment.

Reimbursement payments can be expected within 10-15 business days following submission of a complete, approved expense report.

**I need to purchase flights to travel between my project cities. How do I handle getting reimbursed for these flights?**

In order to be reimbursed for flights between project cities, you must ensure you have designated “regional transportation” funds as part of PAA. Further, you must obtain PAS/RELO approval in advance of purchasing any flights. Once you purchase your flights, you must submit to GU/CIED (on its own or as part of a larger expense report):

- Expense log;
- Boarding passes for all segments of your flight; and
- Receipt showing all flight details (dates and routing), as well as costs.

**What is the minimum amount I can claim on my expense report?**

There is no minimum amount required to claim reimbursement. Since you must submit your reimbursement requests within 60 days of incurring the expense, it is important that you submit your reimbursement request within that time frame regardless of the claimed amount.

**What happens if I exceed my PAA ceiling?**

It is your responsibility to keep track of your PAA expenses and make sure that you do not exceed your PAA ceiling, as stated in your agreement. The program cannot reimburse you for amounts that exceed your PAA ceiling, even if approved by PAS/RELO. In some cases, your PAA ceiling may be increased with advance approval from your PAS/RELO and DOS/ECA.

**What happens if I cannot provide a receipt because it was not available?**

With the exception of meals during international travel (which means, travel to and from the country(ies) of assignment, NOT during regional travel), receipts are required for all expenses claimed in your reimbursement request. If a vendor in the country(ies) of assignment does not provide receipts, you will need to provide detailed justification for the expense, including information about the vendor and confirming in writing that they do not provide receipts. Contact GU/CIED for further instructions.



### **Do I need to provide daily exchange rates for my expenses?**

Ideally, your expense report should include daily exchange rates for each corresponding expense. If you are unable to provide these, submit your expense report in local currency and GU/CIED will calculate the daily exchange rates for you based on the rates posted on [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com).

### **What else do I need to know about expense reports?**

There are numerous “fine points” when it comes to expense reports. If you have questions or you are not sure about something, contact GU/CIED. We will answer your questions and provide you with helpful examples and tips to make these reports easier for you.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **19. In-Country Debts**

### **Who is responsible for debts incurred in the country(ies) of assignment?**

You are responsible for paying all expenses and debts for yourself and any accompanying persons or dependents. You must ensure that all these expenses are paid in full and there are no outstanding debts by the time you leave the country(ies) of assignment.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **20. Taxes and Withholdings**

### **Do I have to pay U.S. income tax?**

Yes. For taxation purposes, you are considered a supplier or independent contractor. You are not employed by the U.S. government or GU/CIED. As such, you are providing a fee-for-service. As these fees are taxable, your payments will be reported both to you and to the IRS on Form 1099-NEC in Box 1. These fees are called “non-employee compensation” and they are considered taxable income. Taxable income and benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Stipends; and
- One-time costs allowance (if applicable).

You are advised to consult a tax specialist or the IRS for guidance. GU/CIED and DOS/ECA cannot provide any tax guidance. Filing and paying your taxes are solely your responsibility.

### **What about my withholdings?**

You are responsible for all applicable withholdings such as, but not limited to, federal personal income tax, state personal income tax, Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA), state unemployment insurance tax, Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Program (OASDI), state disability insurance tax, Social Security, and Medicare.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **21. Return-to-Program Policy**

### **Can I reapply to the program?**

Once you have participated in the program, there is no need to reapply. However, we encourage you to update your English Language Specialist application, including your CV, at [portal.elprograms.org](http://portal.elprograms.org) at least



once a year to ensure we have your most current information and resume on file.

### **Can I participate in the program again?**

DOS/ECA strongly encourages the use of new English Language Specialist candidates. The program prioritizes projects that seek to give new opportunities to a diverse array of American citizens in celebration of the cross-cultural sharing and educational exchange that is the hallmark of the English Language Specialist Program. As of January 2020, English Language Specialists will be eligible for one project per calendar year. That is 1-1-1: one English Language Specialist – one project – one calendar year. For this policy, multi-phase and multi-country projects will count as one project. This policy includes all project types (in-country, mixed, and virtual).

If you are selected to participate in the program again, you may not be on more than one U.S. Government-funded grant at the same time and you must successfully close out your current agreement before receiving another one.

If you are delinquent in submitting reports, deliverables, or materials, you will not be eligible for additional projects until you have submitted all the required documents. Similarly, if you owe funds to the program for any reason, including funds following termination of your agreement, you will not be eligible for consideration for additional projects until you have returned all owed funds to the program.

## **22. Social Media, Blogging, and Photographs**

### **I have a blog or website. Are there any restrictions on what I post to it during my project?**

No, but understand that U.S. freedom of speech guarantees may not be applicable in the country(ies) of assignment. Privacy settings, even if you enable them, may not work and your posts may be viewable by the authorities or even citizens of the country(ies) of assignment. Be aware of this when you are posting comments on blogs, websites, or other social media platforms. Be mindful of any local sensitivities while in the country(ies) of assignment, and consider the reaction of local colleagues and authorities who may read your posts. Offensive posts could create tension and ultimately result in the termination of your project.

Also, as these will be your personal views and not those of the DOS during the time of your project, you are asked to post the following disclaimer on your personal blog or website for added clarity:

*"This website is not an official U.S. Department of State website. The views and information presented are the English Language Specialist's own and do not represent the English Language Specialist Program or the U.S. Department of State."*

### **How do I share my English Language Specialist experience on social media?**

The English Language Programs has robust presence on social media and we encourage you to engage with us on social media by sharing your English Language Specialist experience. You can access our social media platforms as follows: [Twitter](#); [Facebook](#); [Instagram](#); [LinkedIn](#).

On Twitter, Facebook, Instagram you can tag us with @ELPrograms and also use the #ELSpecialist hashtag with your posts. Make sure to check with your PAS/RELO about the safety and security protocols regarding social media posts while you're in the country(ies) of assignment or as they relate to the country(ies) of assignment or your project.

### **If I take photos of my work during my project, how will these be used by the English Language Specialist**



### **Program?**

You are welcome to submit stories and photos of your project's impact on the [COP](#) or via email to GU/CIED at any time, as well as engage with us on social media as noted above. The program will formally collect stories and photos from you in two primary ways: through the submission of your final report (via email) and Highlight (via the COP), as well as through the submission of your Alumni Impact Statement, which is due three months after the completion of your project (also via the COP).

Vibrant stories and photos may be selected for publication on the U.S. Department of State and English Language Programs websites. In some cases, your stories and photos may also be used in the program's PPO, to help prepare future English Language Specialists. We also encourage you to submit your stories to your university communications office to showcase how your project benefits your campus community.

### **Are the subjects of my photographs required to sign a consent form or a release waiver?**

In most cases, yes. You are not required to get consent from participants in order for your photos to be posted solely on the [elprograms.org](#) website. However, if your photos will be used on U.S. Department of State websites, have those photographed sign the **Non-Program Participant Consent and Release Form** and submit those forms to GU/CIED. Alternately, ahead of a presentation or activity, you can use the disclaimer slide provided on the COP. It is highly recommended to collect consent signatures from guardians when photographing minors.

Further, in order for the program to feature you in any outreach or promotional materials (via Internet, broadcast channels, and/or print media), you must sign and submit the **Participant Consent and Release Form for All Exchange Participants**.

These forms are linked in your acceptance letter, and can also be found through the *Participant Documents* icon on the [COP](#).

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **23. Representing the English Language Specialist Program**

### **I have been asked to make a presentation during my project. How should I introduce and represent myself?**

There may be times when you are asked to present, participate in a media event, or represent the English Language Specialist Program in another way during your project. You should present yourself as an English Language Specialist of the English Language Specialist Program, a program funded by the U.S. Department of State. Remember you are not an employee of the partnering organization(s), DOS/ECA, or GU/CIED.

## **24. Materials Developed During the Agreement Period**

### **I developed materials specifically for use on my English Language Specialist project. Do I own the copyright? What about materials that I create during my English Language Specialist project?**

All materials created or developed by you in advance of and/or during the agreement period for the specific fulfillment of the project duties become the exclusive property of the English Language Specialist Program. The spirit of this exchange program is to provide access to educational materials to all and therefore, you may be asked to provide a full copy of any product or accompanying materials (PowerPoint



presentations, handouts, etc.) you create for the English Language Specialist Program to the partnering organization(s), PAS/RELO, GU/CIED, and/or participants.

For example, a participant in a workshop may request a copy of your presentation to adapt for his/her own classroom. If you developed the presentation specifically for the English Language Specialist project, the program asks that you make those materials available upon request.

If you are adapting materials created previously and for a different purpose for your English Language Specialist project, note that the English Language Specialist Program cannot control what happens to materials that are used on a project. Workshop participants may choose to record your presentation, take pictures of slides you show, or make copies of handouts provided. The use of materials and resources created previously is at your own discretion.

### **What does the program intend to do with these materials?**

The program intends to make these materials freely available to all by placing the copyright in the public domain. This will make them available to anyone who wishes to use them for whatever purpose. If you want to use any of these materials, the program will grant you or anyone else who wishes to use them a royalty-free, fully transferable, non-exclusive, irrevocable, and unconditional license to use them. This license covers use in all territories worldwide:

- For the maximum duration provided by applicable law or treaty (including future time extensions);
- In any current or future medium and for any number of copies; and
- For any purpose whatsoever, including and without limitation commercial, advertising, or promotional purposes.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **25. Accompanying Persons or Dependents**

### **Can I bring someone with me on my project?**

Due to the short-term and unpredictable nature of English Language Specialist projects, English Language Specialists are not typically accompanied by dependents or other accompanying persons. Consult with the PAS/RELO in charge of your project to determine whether it will be appropriate for any accompanying persons or dependents to travel with you during your English Language Specialist project.

### **What type of support do you offer for accompanying persons?**

Agreements are made with one person and do not cover any expenses for accompanying persons or dependents, including, but not limited to, travel, insurance, visa, medical expenses, lodging, food, or local transportation. If your PAS/RELO has approved accompanying persons or dependents on your project, all expenses and logistics for your accompanying persons are your sole responsibility.

### **Will my lodging while I'm in the country(ies) of assignment accommodate accompanying persons?**

The program is only required to identify lodging suitable for one person. See Section 8 of this handbook for more information.

### **Do accompanying persons or dependents need to be U.S. citizens?**

The program has no citizenship requirements for accompanying persons or dependents. It is your responsibility to ensure any accompanying persons or dependents have the correct visa and proper documentation to enter and exit the country(ies) of assignment. You must also make the U.S. Embassy in



the country(ies) of assignment aware of the accompanying persons' or dependents' citizenship. In the event of an evacuation, the U.S. Department of State can only help with the evacuation of U.S. citizens. Also, your non-U.S. citizen accompanying persons or dependents must keep their passports, U.S. visas, or U.S. residency status current (if applicable). U.S. Embassies are not authorized to issue visitor visas to non-U.S. citizen spouses, domestic partners or relatives who accompany you, even in the event of an emergency, or if you are evacuated.

### **What about minor(s)?**

If you are traveling alone with a minor child, notarized permission to travel from the non-traveling parent or legal guardian (if applicable) must be obtained and submitted to GU/CIED prior to the minor's travel.

My dependent is a lawful permanent resident (LPR) of the United States and will be traveling with me. Can the program assist with their re-entry permit application?

The program does not provide any assistance with LPR paperwork for your dependent. It is your responsibility to ensure your LPR dependent has all the required documents needed to accompany you on your project and to re-enter the U.S.

### **What will happen during an evacuation?**

In the event of any evacuation (political, medical, natural disaster, etc.), you are responsible for making travel arrangements for any accompanying persons or dependents, as well as for their travel costs. The program is not responsible for helping to evacuate accompanying persons or dependents. You should contact the hosting U.S. Embassy for guidance in getting accompanying persons or dependents evacuated.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **26. Pets**

### **Can my pet accompany me on my project?**

It is not recommended. There are many barriers to traveling internationally with an animal. There may be restrictions about pets entering the country(ies) of assignment, such as quarantine, or an outright ban. It is also very difficult to arrange both transportation and accommodations for animals.

The lodging arrangements in the country(ies) of assignment may not allow pets. If that is the case, you would be responsible for finding, organizing, and paying for pet-friendly lodging from your own funds. The program will not pay for special lodging arrangements to accommodate pets.

### **Could I get any information or assistance from the program if I decide to bring my pet with me?**

No. If you decide to take your pet with you, the program will not help you with transportation, such as scheduling specific times or routes that would help accommodate the pet's travel. Your travel itinerary cannot be changed to coordinate with your pet's. If the schedule that the program coordinates for you is not acceptable due to your pet's travel, you will be responsible for planning, organizing, and paying for your own ticket, as well as that of your pet, to and/or from your project. In such cases, you will forfeit your ticket to and/or from your project. In addition, when you arrive in the country(ies) of assignment, the U.S. Embassy will not help you find pet-friendly lodging. All arrangements for your pet's travel and lodging are your responsibility and at your expense. Additional expenses may include, but are not limited to, quarantine, documentation fees, pet care, and vet bills. All additional expenses are entirely your responsibility.



*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement.*

## **27. COVID-19 Information for English Language Specialists**

**Is there any COVID-19 related information I should keep in mind for my participation in the English Language Specialist Program?**

Reference “[COVID-19 Information for English Language Specialists](#),” which summarizes important program policies related to in-country projects during the COVID-19 pandemic. Contact your PAS/RELO or GU/CIED with any questions.

*Further information: Terms and Conditions of the English Language Specialist Agreement, as well the following resources: [Country-specific COVID-19 information](#), including availability of testing; CDC’s [Travel page](#), U.S. Department of State’s [Travel Advisories page](#) and [COVID FAQs search tool](#).*

