**Temporary Housing Guide**

Most temporary housing experiences turn out to be enjoyable for students and their hosts. You will probably find that you have a lot in common with your host. However, it is essential that you talk with your potential host before committing to stay in their home. **Your decision to seek housing from an alumnus/a is completely voluntary and you have the sole discretion to decline an offer of housing if you don’t think it would be a good fit for you. It is your responsibility to make sure the housing situation is appropriate for your needs. If you decide not to accept a housing offer, please inform the alumnus/a as soon as possible.**

The Career Center serves only as a mere clearinghouse for temporary housing opportunities, but we do care about the quality of the housing offered to students. Although we cannot control or monitor that quality, we may be able to assist you if you become concerned about your housing situation after you arrive. In that event, contact the Career Center as soon as possible.

**Writing Your Housing Message**

Begin your message with a brief introduction and mention that you noticed the alumnus/a indicated that they are willing to offer Winter Term housing on Oberlin’s alumni database, Tappan. Be sure to explain when and why you need housing (example: you are from California, but will be completing a Winter Term internship in Boston from January 6 – February 1, etc.).

Use your best professional writing skills, and ask if the alumnus/a would be willing to discuss providing temporary housing for you during Winter Term. Don’t just ask “will you give me housing?”, schedule a time to talk by phone or Skype, so that both you and the alumnus/a have a chance to decide if you will have a comfortable living arrangement.

*Be sure to send multiple emails, it will increase your chances to secure housing and broaden your options since you may not receive responses from everyone you email. If you don’t receive a response from an alumnus/a, send a polite reminder email one week later, restating your question. If you don’t receive a response after multiple attempts, move on to a different contact.*

**Arranging Housing**

Before you speak with your potential host, establish clear expectations. For most students and their hosts, a temporary housing situation is a positive experience. If there are problems, it is often due to lack of communication during the initial conversations. **You are solely responsible for making sure that the housing arrangement meets your needs, it is important to determine expectations before you commit to staying with the potential host.**

Your host may already have a list of expectations to share with you. If they have not prepared expectations in advance, be sure to ask lots of questions to find out their expectations. The following are questions you should ask:

1. Are you charging rent or reimbursement for any costs (utilities, etc.)?
2. Am I expected to help with household chores? (examples: babysitting, lawn work, etc.).
3. Will I share a room with a member of your family or sleep in a common area (i.e. living room)?

4. Do you have children? What ages?

5. Do you have house rules regarding use of the television, computer, or refrigerator? Any other house rules/preferences?

6. Do you have pets? What kind/s?

7. How will meals work? Should I be responsible for my own groceries and meals?

8. Am I allowed to have guests? What are your expectations for having guests?

9. Is there reasonable, convenient transportation to my work site?

10. Will there be curfew expectations? If so, what are they?

Please adhere to the following guidelines when staying with a host, unless your host has specifically informed you that they have different expectations:

1. Exercise friendliness and common courtesy when addressing the host and their family. You can’t overuse “please” and “thank you.” Be sure to write a thank you card afterwards and, if you are able, bring a small gift – we suggest something Oberlin related.

2. Clean up after yourself – especially in shared areas of the home. Keep your personal belongings together and your room tidy. Wash your dirty dishes and always rinse the bathtub/shower after using it.

3. Always ask first before you invite a guest into your host’s home.

4. Always ask first if you need or wish to use something belonging to your host. This can include going into closets, kitchen pantry, etc.

5. Bring your own supply of toiletries.

6. Be respectful of your host’s “lights out” routine.

7. Always notify your host in advance if you are not going to be returning home during the night for any reason.

8. Do not expect your host to provide transportation for you.

9. Do not smoke cigarettes, bring drugs and/or consume alcohol in your host’s home.

10. Do not monopolize the TV or computer. Never use the computer to view any inappropriate material. If possible, bring and use only your own computer.

**Students who secure housing through the Career Center must comply with all Oberlin College policies and regulations, including those embodied in Oberlin College's Student Regulations, Policies, and Procedures.**

Please let us know if you have any questions, need assistance, or have any feedback regarding your housing experience. Contact the Career Center at career@oberlin.edu or 440.775.8140.