

Guidelines for Student Housing for individual International Travel

Northeastern University supports a robust program of global activities and is committed to promoting the safety and security of university travelers. When students travel abroad individually, such as for co-op, study abroad, or research, they are generally responsible for selecting and arranging their own housing. Your co-op advisor and GEO may be able to help by providing information on where other NU students have previously done the same co-op. NUPD International Security Office can assist with assessing the safety of specific neighborhoods. However, the university does not screen, recommend, vouch for, or take responsibility for the condition or safety of housing arrangements made by students.

The following recommendations and guidance have been prepared to help students in their selection of accommodations for university-sponsored international travel as defined by the university's Policy on International Travel.

- When possible, students should seek out local housing through a local university or other reliable third party provider who might arrange homestays or other accommodations. Some on-ground providers include CIEE, MASA Israel. Consult with [GEO](#) or [NUPD ISO](#) for additional information and assistance.
- Ask your co-op employer for assistance or recommendations; check with your co-op advisor for places that students on that co-op have previously stayed; where possible talk to students who have done that co-op before you.
- Contact [Co-op Connections](#) for relocation assistance. The Co-op Connections office can connect you with past and current co-ops students in your location, as well as students who are headed there during your term. They can also connect you with area alumni that may have resources and suggestions.
- "Couch Surfing"¹ is NOT an appropriate accommodation and is NOT Permitted.
- Home-sharing, such as Airbnb, Craigslist, HomeAway, etc., is strongly discouraged.
- Examine hotels or other resources, such as home-stays, carefully before selection.

Select Your Neighborhood

- Look for neighborhoods that offer proximity to place of study or work, and that are in communities that have adequate services, transportation, shops, police and health services appropriate to support your needs. (e.g., how would you get to work/school; where will you eat/buy food; is the transportation convenient, reliable, operating the hours you need it, cost effective, etc.);
- Google is always a good place to search. Check with local partners, as well as individuals who may have previously stayed in the area. Check with the U.S. Embassy in the area.
- **NUPD ISO and the university's response vendor, iJet WorldAware, can provide a neighborhood safety assessment.**

¹ Couch Surfing is the practice of moving from one house to another, sleeping in whatever spare space is available, floor or couch, generally staying a few days before moving on to the next house.

Select Your Accommodation

- If a hotel:
 - Check reviews online.
 - Conduct an assessment of the area around the hotel
 - Ensure that the facility has the services you need.
 - If you are traveling to a high-risk destination, you should meet **with NUPD ISO before submitting your petition, as part of developing your security plan, including accommodations and transportation**

- If a homestay²:
 - Homestays should be arranged **only through a known and trusted organization** such as CIEE, MASA Israel, etc.
 - Request the safety reports of the homestay location and provider.
 - Ask the homestay program coordinator or the NU Office responsible for your program to provide you with contact information for students who recently stayed with the host family with whom you can speak.
 - Ask which members of the host family stay overnight at the residence and if other students will be residing there. If there are people residing at your homestay site who are not authorized, immediately inform NUPD and your provider.
 - Confirm that there will be a lock on your room door, and once you arrive, inspect that it works. Develop a communication plan with your host family and provider, and learn the local emergency number.
 - If you feel unsafe or if you determine the residence does not meet your health or hygiene standards, ask to be moved to a new provider and/or inform NUPD.

- The university recommends against using a home-sharing arrangement, such as through Airbnb, Craigslist, HomeAway, etc:
 - Home-sharing is strongly discouraged due to the unregulated nature of the sharing economy and the difficulty for students to vet such arrangements.
 - The university recommends against sharing apartments with strangers.
 - If travelers disregard the university's recommendation regarding home-sharing, travelers should consider renting the whole apartment/home or sharing the apartment with a known traveler. Also, follow the below guidance:
 - Pay close attention to what is included and what is not in the rental
 - Ask questions about local area and accommodations
 - Read the cancellation policy carefully; they can vary tremendously
 - Look at the host's profile verification and reviews
 - Verify the profile information

² Homestay means accommodations where visitors are housed in the residence of a local or "host" family

- Let others know where you are and set up an emergency contact
- Have a security plan
- Ask questions about the safety features of the home/room. For example, determine if the residence has operational locks, smoke detectors, fire extinguisher, alarm system, etc.
- Don't check-in to your home-share late at night. Have a backup plan if your flight is delayed.