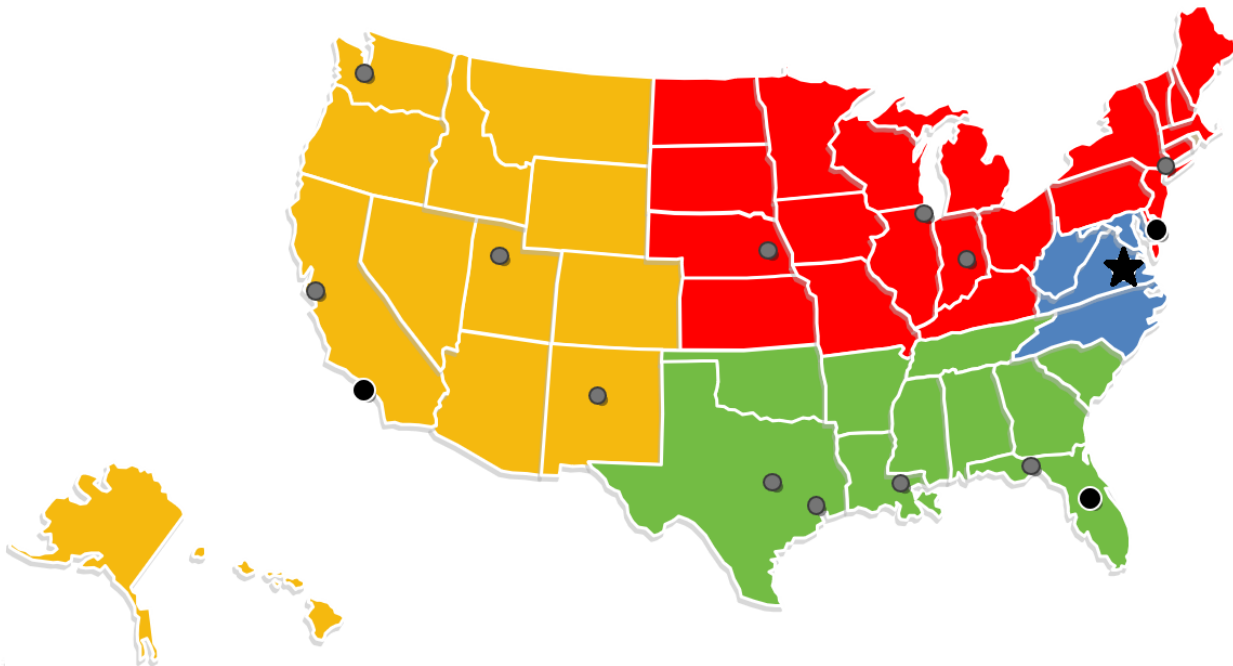


Spanish Language and Culture Assistants from Spain 2024-25

Guidelines for Teaching Institutions in the United States



- ★ Consejería de Educación
- Agregaduras de Educación
- Oficinas de Educación
- Demarcación Nordeste
- Demarcación Norte
- Demarcación Sur
- Demarcación Oeste

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1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Spanish Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports (hereafter the Ministry) and the Education Office of the Embassy of Spain in Washington, D.C., sponsor a Spanish Language and Culture Assistants program for elementary, middle, and high schools and for universities with Spanish Resource Centers sponsored by the Ministry of Education (hereafter universities with SRC) in the United States.

This program gives American **students** the opportunity to learn Spanish language and culture from native speakers. Similarly, the **Spanish assistants** will have the opportunity to learn about American culture, improve their command of English and use their knowledge upon their return to Spain, thus helping to develop cultural understanding between both countries.

The assistants may be college students in their senior year or may already have a B.A. in Education, English/Spanish or Translation and Interpretation.

The Ministry provides the assistants with an allowance and medical insurance between September 1st and April 30th.

Host institutions (schools, school districts or universities with SRCs) must provide the Spanish assistants with **free transportation, free lodging** (such as a room in a furnished apartment or dorm, staying with host families, etc.) and **meals** or alternatively could provide **financial assistance to help the assistants pay for their own accommodation, meals and transportation**.

If a school or university with SRC would like the assistant to **start their duties before September 1st** (provided that the assistant already has his/her visa), the host institution is responsible for providing the assistant with medical insurance coverage and a stipend until the Ministry's scholarship comes into effect.

The Ministry of Education assigns each candidate to a specific school, school district or Spanish Resource Center and organizes an orientation seminar in Madrid or via an online platform prior to the assistants' arrival in the US.

All arrangements and details concerning assistants must be reported by their mentor to the Spanish Education Advisor in their area prior to their arrival.

2. THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT

- Assistants will help classroom teachers as native speakers and experts on their home country to encourage students' interest in Spain. Please note that their role is **different from** a regular teaching assistant or classroom aid.
- Assistants **must not be asked to undertake formal classroom teaching, substitute for absent teachers, be responsible for the discipline or supervision of students or grade the students' work**.

- Before the assistants undertake their own duties, their mentor should provide them with **information on** teaching methods, students' language proficiency levels, overall characteristics of students and the kind of activities and degree of initiative they are expected to carry out. The mentor will also facilitate the **observation of classes**.
- Assistants will be **informed** of the resources they are entitled to use such as computers, copy machines, email accounts or telephones, as well as the daily procedures to follow, where to access resources or the materials they may need, etc.
- Assistants should be given every opportunity to learn about and participate fully in the **social life** of the school/university and its community. They should be encouraged to take part in clubs and field trips. However, they will not be responsible for the safety or behavior of students.
- Assistants in an SRC may be responsible for ordering, cataloging, and lending materials, organizing and collaborating in conversation clubs, film showings, etc.
- The Spanish assistants schedule spans from **16 to 20 hours maximum** per week, as per the conditions of their visa and their scholarship.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHING INSTITUTIONS AND ASSISTANTS' MENTORS

- Teaching institutions must **comply with the conditions** expressed in this document and in the application form.
- Assistants assigned to elementary, middle and high schools will have **a schedule** of between **16 to 20 hours maximum** per week. In case special arrangements for time off are needed, these will be negotiated with the assistant. The Spanish Education Advisor in the area must be notified of any changes or arrangements in the assistant's schedule. Assistant hours should be scheduled so that they have **Mondays or Fridays off**, thus allowing for long weekends for travel or study.
- School/university officials must provide the assistant, upon completion of their assignments and if warranted, with a **letter of recommendation stating the specific dates of their appointment at the teaching institution**.
- The school must appoint a school/SRC representative or mentor to guide the assistants. It is important for the teaching institution to appoint somebody who will have the time and willingness to help the assistant throughout the school year and particularly during the first weeks of their stay.
- The mentor and assistant will both agree on the activities they will be involved in, including, for example, attending faculty meetings, making presentations in classes, and participating in extracurricular events.
- The schools and mentors will plan the schedule for the assistant in consultation with the assistants and teachers in the program. Cooperation and communication among teachers,

administrators and the assistant are crucial for the program's success.

- The mentor will advise and guide the assistants, organize orientation and evaluation sessions when necessary, and prepare a final report of the assistant's activities.
- The **mentor or school representative** will also act as liaison between the school/SRC and the Education Advisor of the Spanish Education Office.

4. ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS ARRANGEMENTS

- Teaching institutions must ensure that the **assistants' lodging is adequate**, that they get **all meals** and **transportation** options to and from school.

There are several possibilities:

- **Free accommodation with a host family.**
In this case, assistants must have a clean bedroom of their own with a window and a closet. They will not be expected to do housework beyond their own room. **The address** where the assistants will be staying and a **contact** for the host family will be included in the application form. Alternative host families and their contact information will need to be provided to prevent issues due to last-minute cancellations.
- **Free accommodation** in a room in a furnished apartment or a dorm. **The address** where the assistants will be staying must be entered in the application. Assistants living in apartments may arrange to install telephone, cable TV, or Internet at their own expense. Since the assistants do not have a credit history or may not have a Social Security Number, they may need help making these arrangements.
- Institutions will provide assistants with a **monthly stipend** of **\$1200** to cover accommodation if meals are provided, or of **\$1500** to cover for both **accommodation and meals**. In this case, help to find a place to stay will be provided by the school.

The Spanish Education Advisor needs to be informed of the lodging arrangements **prior to the assistants' arrival** and will be notified of any changes in advance.

5. TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Teaching institutions are also responsible for providing the assistant with transportation to and from school. This can be done in different ways:

- Paying a monthly or annual transportation allowance.
- Facilitating carpooling or rides.
- Providing the use of a car for the school ride. If this option is chosen, gas, insurance and repair costs will be covered by the school.

All specifications concerning transportation must **be stated** when the application is submitted, and the Spanish Education Advisor must be notified if there are any changes.

The school will arrange to pick up the assistant at the airport when they first arrive in the country.

6. STEPS TO TAKE BEFORE THE ASSISTANT'S ARRIVAL IN THE US.

It is **recommended** that the school describes the program in their newsletter or webpage so that the whole school community can welcome the assistants.

Assistants may be traveling to the United States for the first time and, therefore, be concerned about the experience that lies ahead of them. Providing written information prior to their arrival may help ease their worries. **Please send the assistant** as much information as possible. Be sure to include:

- A letter of invitation addressed to the assistant, which they might need to present to the Immigration Authorities at the port of entry.
- Details about the accommodation arrangements made for them. If it is with a family, please let the assistant know that a host family is expecting them and make sure they have previous contact before the assistant's arrival.
- Information on the teaching institution.
- Information on the schedule and the tasks the assistant will carry out.
- Information on opportunities for studying or attending courses at universities or other teaching institutions, if any.
- Information on the community and its services such as transportation, banking, etc.
- Information on climate, appropriate clothing, etc.

7. SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ASSISTANT IN A SCHOOL

A. LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES FOR ASSISTANTS

- Oral reception/production activities.
- Presentations on Spanish culture: songs, newspapers, plays, etc.
- Presenting story-telling sessions and interpreting cultural aspects.
- Participating in computer-assisted activities.
- Tutoring students with individual needs.
- Small group practice.
- Developing materials for lessons.

B. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR ASSISTANTS

- Collaborating with Spanish Language Clubs.
- Participating in school clubs (theatre, chorus, etc.)
- Joining in sporting events, art festivals, etc.

Assistants must not:

- Be responsible for the entire class or whole group on their own.
- Correct all Spanish quizzes and exams or spend hours making copies.
- Be scheduled for more than 20 hours per week.
- ☐ Be assigned to teachers unfamiliar with the program who are not prepared to work with the assistant.
- Be placed in situations where the assistant may not feel comfortable (i.e., assigning them to inappropriate classes or class levels).

*Success happens when teachers
are involved from the beginning,
appreciate the contribution of the assistant,
and help plan assignments.*

8. SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ASSISTANT IN A SPANISH RESOURCE CENTER

- Ordering, cataloging, and lending resources.
- Collaborating with speaking clubs, film showings, etc.
- Helping the Education Advisor organize training and courses for teachers.
- Promoting the Education Office programs, etc.

9. APPLICATION PROCESS

If interested in participating in this program, please submit your application form. Please note that a position cannot always be granted due to the limited number of Spanish language assistants available.

Completed applications need to be emailed to auxiliaresesp.usa@educacion.gob.es by March 17th, 2024.

Teaching institutions will be notified of the decision made by mid-June 2024.

If you have any further questions, please contact us at auxiliaresesp.usa@educacion.gob.es