

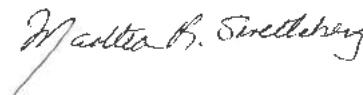


# 2020 INFORMATION FOR AU PAIRS

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# PREFACE

The world has changed considerably since the au pair-scheme was established in 1969. Today, people migrate across continents for various reasons and motivations. However, the possibility to travel is not easily accessible to all. The purpose of the au pair-scheme is cultural exchange. The au pairs we talk to, call it a unique possibility of international experience. Although the au pair-scheme is a unique possibility for many, it also comes with challenges. Au pairs and host families may have different expectations to the stay. The host family has a big responsibility when they receive a young adult, new in Norway, to their home. The au pair stays as part of the family for up to two years. Another challenge is that even though the au pair is not an employee, the scheme has similarities with work: work time, salary, tax and holiday pay. Caritas au pair-senter provides support for au pairs and host families in all questions about the au pair-stay. We hold high the purpose of the scheme, which is cultural exchange. The possibility of international experience for young people is a positive thing as long as the framework provides a safe stay and there is mutual respect for this purpose.



**Martha Rubiano Skretteberg**  
*Secretary General Caritas Norge*

# CARITAS AU PAIR CENTER

We are an information and guidance centre that supports au pairs and host families in Norway. You can contact us with questions about the au pair scheme and your stay in Norway. We assist you in small practical problems as well as challenging legal issues. We can also help in resolving conflicts through dialogue between you and your host family. If we do not have the necessary expertise, we will guide you to the correct offices that can answer your question. Our center is run by support from the UDI, but we are not a part of the Immigration Authorities. We practice strict confidentiality towards all who contact us.

We organize information meetings, and we recommend all to attend at least one. In the meeting you will learn more about the au pair scheme tax, health and holiday that applies to au pairs in

Norway, and you will meet other au pairs.

In addition, we arrange weekly activities for au pairs in Oslo. This is meant for au pairs to experience the local community, get a social network, and stay in touch with our centre.

On a monthly basis we also arrange social activities in Bergen, Stavanger, Trondheim and Drammen. Check out our Facebook page for updated information about these happenings:

[www.facebook.com/caritasaupair/](http://www.facebook.com/caritasaupair/)

In 2019 there were 689 au pair permits issued in Norway. These number do not include au pairs coming to Norway from EU/EEA countries





# THE AU PAIR SCHEME

The purpose of the scheme is cultural exchange and its origin can be traced back to the movement of young Europeans across countries in the 1960s, leading to the European au pair agreement of 1969. The agreement specifies rights and responsibilities of both au pairs and host families for protection of the travelers staying abroad.

These rights and duties are outlined by UDI in guidelines called 2012-015. The information in this brochure is based on these guidelines.

We recommend reading through the full version on UDIs webpage. Some believe that the program facilitates exploitation of cheap domestic labor.

To prevent misuse of the au pair-scheme, Caritas au pair-center works to support au pairs and host families in Norway and hopes that anyone who suspects such issue, will contact us. We practice full confidentiality.

It is all about social events, to get to know different people who came from totally distinct backgrounds from mine. I like talking to persons who are willing to share a bit of their stories. So far, I've met interesting people, mainly from international backgrounds too.

I enjoy music concerts, public talks, comedy shows, movies, ice skating, go to museums, grabbing coffee and eating cakes with my friends, going out to dinner and enjoy a good conversation.

Alicia (Au pair from Mexico)

## WHO CAN BE AN AU PAIR?

Not everyone can be an au pair in Norway. There are certain requirements that the au pair needs to fulfill, these requirements are found in the UDI guidelines 2012-015.

EU/EEA-citizens can freely travel to Norway, but you must register at the police to stay longer than 3 months.

If you come from a country outside the EU/EEA, you must apply for an au pair-permit. Normally you must apply from your own country, but there are some exceptions.

Your host family cannot be your family member and can normally not come from your home country because the au pair-scheme is about cultural exchange.

You must be over 18 years old and not yet turned 30 when you apply. You can turn 30 while being an au pair. Both men and women can be au pairs.

You are not allowed to be an au pair if you have children of your own. However, becoming pregnant during your stay as an au pair does not constitute valid grounds for terminating UDI's contract for cultural exchange.

UDI makes a return assessment. This means that it must be probable that you will return to your home country when your au pair-stay has ended. Conditions in your home country will be considered, as well as individual factors.





# THE HOST FAMILY'S DUTIES

The host family has several duties towards you as an au pair which are described by UDI. It is important that you agree on the conditions of your stay in the standard contract. The contract is called

“Contract for cultural exchange between au pair and host family,” and you can find it on UDI’s webpage. It is important to note that the terms in this contract cannot be changed or negotiated by the au pair nor the host family. As a general rule, do not sign anything you do not agree on, or are not sure of.

A host family can only have one au pair at a time. You must live with your host family and they must provide a private room for you at no cost. The room should have a lock and be equipped for accomodation.

You have the right to free food, and to have pocket money of at least 5900 kroner before tax per month (as of 1st April 2019). UDI may increase the rates and the host family must adjust accordingly.

The host family must pay Norwegian course for you for at least 8850 kroner per 12 months. The rates may increase annually, you can find updated information on the UDI webpage. In addition, the host family must pay for course materials and transport if necessary.

Norwegian course is an important part of cultural exchange and a good way of getting friends.

The host family must pay for an insurance that covers your transport home in case of serious disease, injury or death.



If you come from a high incidence country of tuberculosis, the host family should help you get tested for free when you arrive in Norway.

You can find the list of high incident countries on the webpage of Folkehelseinstituttet.

It is the host family's duty to ensure that the au pair is not harassed or exposed to other improper behavior, and that his or her dignity is not violated.

An au pair has the right to holiday and holiday pay in accordance with the Holiday Act (FerieLOVEN).

You can read more about this in the section "economy and holiday" in this brochure.

If you experience that your host family does not fulfill their duties towards you, you are welcome

to contact Caritas Au Pair Center. Problems are often resolved through dialogue.

If there are breaches of contract, you can report your situation directly to UDI. You can do this through their webpage via an electronic form.

UDI will evaluate the information, contact the host family and consider sanctions depending on what they conclude.

Be communicative with your host family.  
Be open-minded and accepting of the culture.  
Prepare yourself for the adjustment not just physically but mentally. Always have a happy mindset.

Chenee (Au pair from Philippines)



## WORK AND FREE TIME

The balance between work and your free time can be a reason for disagreement between some au pairs and host families. A common reason for this is that the au pair and the host family have different expectations to the au pair-scheme.

Hence, it is important to know that there are specific rules about how much you should work, and how much free time you are entitled to.

Work hours should not exceed 5 hours per day – maximum 30 hours per week.

Au pairs have the right to one day off per week.

At least one Sunday per month must be off.

In addition, you must have at least one afternoon off per week.

Au pairs from non-EU/EEA countries cannot work for other employers or other families. This will be

recognized as illegal work and can be punishable.

Au pairs have the right to participate in Norwegian language classes and recreational activities.

The work cannot stop you from practicing your religion.

Because the au pair program is about cultural exchange, the work is limited to light domestic tasks such as household chores and taking care of children and pets. We recommend that the workload is specified in detail in your contract to avoid misunderstandings. Caritas au pair center encourages you to partake in the decision of which domestic chores you will complete.

The work of an au pair must be distinguished from that of a professional domestic helper and

be reconciled with the principle that the au pair is staying as a part of the family. The lists in the next page are examples but meant as guidelines for what is considered light domestic tasks and not.

Did you know that the au pair scheme can date back to the 1800s.

According to the Store Norske Leksikon, in 1880 the Church in Switzerland organized a scheme for German speaking girls in villages to move in with French speaking families in the cities, to learn French.

Store Norske Leksikon



# SUITABLE TASKS FOR AU PAIRS

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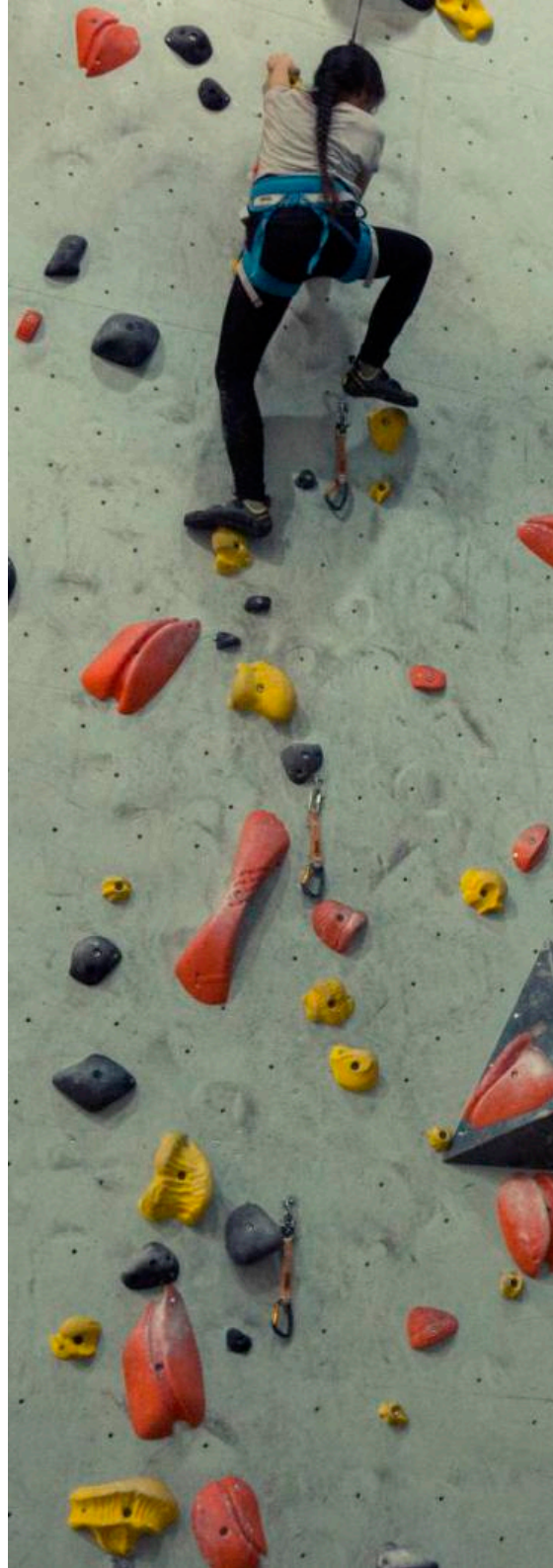
- Taking care and feeding children in the mornings. Taking care of children during the day
- Taking children to kindergarten or school
- Playing and taking children out for recreational activities
- Helping with homework
- Preparing food for children
- Taking children to and from afterschool activities
- Evening care of children, bathing and putting to bed
- Babysitting in the evening (must be agreed upon in advance)
- Tidying up after the children
- Tidying children's bed

- Vacuuming, mopping floors, dusting of children's rooms and in common area
- Laundry, hanging clothes, using dryers
- Ironing clothes for children
- Fill/empty the dishwasher
- Keeping the kitchen clean, including mopping kitchen floor
- Smaller grocery shopping
- Taking care of pets (must be agreed upon in advance)
- Participating in cooking of meals and cleaning up after meals
- Keeping your own room and bathroom tidy and clean



# UNSUITABLE TASKS FOR AU PAIRS

- Gardening
- Car washing
- Spring cleaning and any major cleaning alone
- Scrubbing ovens
- Cleaning up after pets
- Changing and tidying of host parents' bed and linen
- Cleaning host parents' private bathroom
- Polishing silverware
- Serving meals to host families' friends or at parties



## ECONOMY AND HOLIDAYS

You have rights and duties related to your payment, holiday pay and deduction of taxes. Even though it can be difficult to talk about economy, it is important to talk about these things beforehand with your host family.

Au pairs have the right to pocket money. Au pairs must receive at least 5900 kroner before tax per month. If you are paid the minimum wage, the host family is required to increase your pocket money according to changes made by UDI.

You must pay tax from your salary. Check monthly that tax is deducted and ask for a pay slip from your host family which shows tax deductions.

The host family must pay the deducted amount to the tax authorities. The value of your free accommodation and food is also taxed. The value is

fixed and set by the tax authorities. In 2020 it is 129 NOK per day. See [skatteetaten.no](https://skatteetaten.no) for more information.

If you have paid too much in taxes, you will be refunded by the Tax Administration. If you pay too little taxes, you will owe tax and must pay to Tax Administration.

- Au pairs have the right to 25 working days of holiday per calendar year. If you start after September 30th, you have the right to 6 working days of holiday. Three of your vacation weeks can be taken between June 1st and 30th September.

Your host family cannot just take a holiday and decide that it is also your time to take a holiday.

# HOW TO CALCULATE HOLIDAY PAY

You should plan together with your host family in advance.

- Au pairs have the right to 25 working days of holiday even if they change host families. In the event of a change of host family, remember to get a written confirmation of how much holiday you have taken.

When you take holiday, you will not get paid pocket money. However, you have the right to holiday pay. Holiday pay is 10,2% of your income before taxes the previous calendar year, including the value of free food. The value of free food is 91 NOK per day in 2020.

## **Example, one month in 2019:**

5900 pocket money + (89 board x 30 days)

5900 + 2670 = 8570 NOK

8570 x 10,2/100 = 874,14 NOK

The basis for holiday pay cannot include any payments you received during your holiday the previous calendar year.

Did you know that one of our most asked questions in 2019 was about holiday pay/ feriepenging. Use the example above to calculate your holiday pay.

Caritas Au Pair Center

# HEALTH

As an au pair you are a member of Norway's National Insurance Scheme (Folketrygden).

This means that you have the right to free health services.

Upon arrival to Norway, you should book an appointment with the police to apply for a residence card as well as a personal identification number (personnummer). You will also be assigned a personal general practitioner (fastlege), to whom you may visit when you need health services.

If you get sick you are entitled to sick leave, this means you do not have to work. If you are sick for more than three days, you must go to the doctor to get a sick leave. You are entitled to sick benefits if you have been with your host family for more than four weeks. It is your host family that should cover salary the first 16 days, then the

responsibility is transferred to NAV Arbeids- og velferdsetaten (social services)

Dental services in Norway are not covered by the National Insurance Scheme, and are very expensive. If you have the opportunity, it is maybe cheaper in your home country.

The host family should help you get tested for tuberculosis when you arrive in Norway if you are from a high incidence country. Contact the municipality health service (kommunehelsetjenesten) where you live.

You also have the right to health care if you are pregnant in Norway, but if you have children in Norway you can no longer be an au pair and you must terminate the au pair contract.



## ENDING THE CONTRACT/ CHANGING HOST FAMILY

The au pair scheme does not always work for one or both parties. Because an au pair is seen as in a potentially more vulnerable situation, the threshold for terminating the contract for you is lower.

Both you and your host family can terminate the contract with a notice period of at least one month. The termination must be in writing.

The host family cannot let you go without reasonable grounds. The host family must give the reason in writing. However, you do not have to give a reason as to why you want to end the contract.

You are entitled to pocket money and to live with them on the same terms as before, during the notice period. Outstanding holiday pay should be paid together with the last payslip before you leave.

Both you and your host family can terminate the contract with immediate effect if there is gross breach of contract. Notice period does not apply in such situations.

You and your host family must report to the UDI if your contract is terminated before your residence permit expires.

The termination of your contract does not mean that you must immediately leave Norway. UDI will send you a letter if they consider withdrawing your permit and give you the opportunity to comment. Thus, if you move, make sure you call UDI to give them your new address. You can also find a new host family and apply for a new au pair permit if you have a valid visa in Norway.

## RETURNING HOME

You can apply to change host family at any time if you have a valid au pair permit. UDI will process this as an application for renewal.

You can live and work with the new host family when you have submitted an application through UDI's application portal and booked an appointment with the police. The processing time is counted in your total stay as an au pair. You can be an au pair in Norway for a maximum of 2 years.

There is no idle moment, even if its winter, Chenee explains. They say “there is no bad weather, only bad clothing” so her host family gifted her warm clothes during her first winter in Norway.

Chenee (Au pair from Philippines)  
Au Pair Centre newsletter Nov. 2019

When you are going home, the host family must pay for the whole journey, including to and from the airport. Even if you terminate the contract before its end, it is the host family's responsibility to pay for the return ticket as this is one of the basic requirements of the permission.

The host family should not pay for the journey if you choose to go to another country or stay on in Norway on different grounds (different type of permit).

If you choose not to return to your home country after the au pair period has ended, you violate the Immigration Act and you may risk expulsion and exclusion from Schengen countries.

# CONTACT US

## OSLO

Storgata 38, 0182 Oslo (Entrance from Hausmansgate)

10 - 16 Monday - Friday. (Thursday evening from 17 - 20)

Tph. 40 42 84 60

[www.caritas.no/au-pair-senter](http://www.caritas.no/au-pair-senter)

[facebook.com/caritasaupair](https://facebook.com/caritasaupair)

Instagram: [aupair\\_norway](https://www.instagram.com/aupair_norway)

## BERGEN

Sigurds gate 8, 5015 Bergen

Monday - Friday from 9 - 14

[www.caritasbergen.no](http://www.caritasbergen.no)

[facebook.com/CaritasBergenAuPairSenter](https://facebook.com/CaritasBergenAuPairSenter)

## STAVANGER

St. Olavs gate 25, 4005 Stavanger

Wednesday 10.30 - 13. Friday: 10.30 - 13.

[aupair@caritasstavanger.com](mailto:aupair@caritasstavanger.com)

[www.caritasstavanger.com](http://www.caritasstavanger.com)

[facebook.com/AupairSenterStavanger](https://facebook.com/AupairSenterStavanger)

## TRONDHEIM

Olav Tryggvasons Gate 48, 7011 Trondheim

Monday 18 - 20, Tuesday - Friday 10 - 14

[www.caritastrondheim.no](http://www.caritastrondheim.no)

[facebook.com/Au-Pair-Trondheim-Caritas-Trondheim-Au-Pair-Center](https://facebook.com/Au-Pair-Trondheim-Caritas-Trondheim-Au-Pair-Center)

## DRAMMEN

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