



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

**EDUCATION ABROAD**

## **IU Policy on Student Housing Abroad**

Program leaders have the responsibility for ensuring that student housing is located in safe neighborhoods abroad and that such housing complies with basic emergency, safety and security measures. This includes ensuring that accommodations are equipped, for example, with smoke alarms, multiple avenues for egress, etc. should an emergency arise. Generally speaking, licensed facilities such as hotels, motels, and hostels must comply with local safety ordinances. Airbnb rentals and similar types of private rental housing may not and are therefore discouraged. In the case of host families, the program leaders must take steps to ensure that the host families have been appropriately vetted in advance, which typically includes at minimum an interview with all the host family members and a survey of the space in which the student(s) would live. When working with a logistics provider, on-site organization, or other entity to secure student housing abroad, program leaders should use this policy as a foundation for communicating what is expected of those vendors.

Indiana University also requires that sleeping arrangements provide for a separate bed for each program participant.

Single gender housing is not required; however, every effort must be made to ensure that students are comfortable with their housing assignments. As a general practice, program leaders assign housing based on the gender listed on the student's passport and/or IU student record, then allow for adjustments based on student requests. It is advised that program leaders have preemptive conversations with their students and let students voice who they wish to live with. It is acknowledged that some local cultures are more conservative and won't allow unmarried, mixed gender room assignments. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the faculty leaders to understand the context ahead of time and convey this to their students.

It is also expected that there will be locks on students' rooms as a method of securing the space both while students are away as well as when they are inside the room. If the nature of the program housing is such that this is not feasible, for example on a field-based program where students are housed in group tents, then it is the faculty leader's responsibility to ensure students are clearly made aware of the accommodation arrangements in advance of enrolling in the program. In these situations, a 'safety in numbers' approach is recommended, where students have their own bed (sleeping bag, mat, cot, etc.) and share the space with those with whom they feel comfortable. Students should also be advised that they consider bringing a personal alarm, emergency door stop alarm, etc. to secure their space while in their rooms or when sleeping.