



Language Assistants from Spain 2025-26

Guidelines for Host Teaching Institutions in Canada



<p><i>Education Office-Embassy of Spain</i> <i>2375 Pennsylvania Ave., NW</i></p> <p><i>Washington, D.C. 20037- USA</i></p>	<p><i>Education Office-Embassy of Spain</i> <i>74 Stanley Avenue Ottawa,</i></p> <p><i>ON K1M1P4 -CANADA</i></p>
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1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Spanish Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports (*the Ministry*) and the Education Office of the Embassy of Spain in Washington, D.C. sponsor the Language Assistants from Spain Program for elementary, middle, high schools, and Spanish Resource Centers (*CER*) located at universities in .

Objective

The program fosters cultural exchange by:

- Allowing Canadian students to access Spanish language and culture from native speakers
- Enabling Spanish language assistants to:
 - experience Canadian culture
 - improve their English
 - apply their knowledge upon returning to Spain, promoting mutual cultural understanding

Eligibility

Language assistants must be:

- Recent graduates with a B.A. in Education, English, Spanish, Humanities, or Translation and Interpretation

Program provisions

The Ministry provides:

- A monthly allowance of \$1,000
- Medical insurance from October 1st to May 31st
- Guidance through a local Spanish Education advisor

Host institutions (schools, districts, or universities with Spanish Resource Centers) must provide:

- Lodging (host family, dorm, or furnished apartment)
- Transportation to and from the school
- Meals

Alternatively, host institutions must fund these costs as specified in section 4 of these guidelines.

If a language assistant starts before October 1st (with an approved visa), the host institution must provide a stipend and medical insurance until October 1st.

Placement and orientation

- The Ministry assigns the specific destinations for the language assistants.
- The education office of the Embassy of Spain informs the school of their allocated language assistant.
- The Ministry holds an orientation seminar for language assistants in Madrid, Spain before their arrival in Canada.

Arrival details

Mentors must report all arrangements to their local Spanish Education advisor before the language assistant's arrival.

2. THE ROLE OF THE LANGUAGE ASSISTANT

Duties

- Support classroom teachers as native speakers and cultural ambassadors to foster students' interest in the Spanish language and culture.
- Engage students through cultural and language-focused activities, different from the duties of regular teaching assistants or paraprofessionals.
- Please note that assistants **must not**:
 - Teach classes independently
 - Substitute for absent teachers
 - Be responsible for classroom management, student discipline or supervision
 - Grade students' work

Preparation and orientation

- Mentors and language assistants should discuss:
 - Teaching methods, student proficiency levels, and school/classroom characteristics
 - Expected activities and levels of initiative
 - Opportunities to observe classes before taking on duties

Resources and procedures

- Language assistants should be informed about:
 - Available resources at school
 - Daily procedures and access to classroom materials

Integration and participation

- Schools should:

- Encourage language assistants to participate in the school/university's social life and community activities (e.g., clubs, field trips...)
- Make sure language assistants are not held responsible for student safety or behavior during these activities.

Additional duties for language assistants at Spanish Resource Centers

- Tasks may include:
 - Managing materials (e.g., ordering, cataloging, and lending)
 - Organizing and supporting conversation clubs, film screenings, and other cultural events

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHING INSTITUTIONS AND LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS' MENTORS

Teaching institutions must agree to the conditions outlined in these guidelines and the application form for schools.

Mentorship

- Schools must appoint a mentor to support language assistants throughout their stay
- Mentors should:
 - Provide orientation and ongoing guidance to language assistants
 - Organize orientation and evaluation sessions as needed
 - Prepare a final report summarizing the language assistant's activities
 - Act as the liaison between the school or Spanish Resource Center (*CER*) and the Education advisor of the Spanish Education Office.

Scheduling and hours

- Language assistants will carry out their duties **between 16 and 20 hours per week over four days**
- Language assistants **must obtain permission in writing from the school for any special time-off arrangements** and the local Spanish Education advisor must be notified
- Schedules should allow language assistants to have either Mondays or Fridays off

Activity planning

- The mentor and the language assistant should meet regularly to coordinate the language assistants' role
- Mentors and assistants should agree on the activities to be carried out, which may include:
 - Delivering classroom presentations
 - Participating in extracurricular events
 - Attending faculty meetings, if needed

- Mentors and schools must collaborate with assistants and teachers to create their schedules. Open communication among administrators, teachers, and assistants is key for the program's success.

Letter of recommendation

- At the end of the language assistants' appointment, schools or universities should provide language assistants with a letter of recommendation specifying the exact dates of their appointment, if applicable.

4. ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

Teaching institutions must provide language assistants with **suitable lodging, all meals, and transportation to and from school**. Details must be included in the application form teaching institutions submit.

Accommodation options

- 1. If accommodation, meals and/or transport are not provided, teaching institutions must provide a monthly stipend as follows:**
 - **Full Package** (Accommodation, Meals, and Transport to/from school not provided): **\$1,500**
 - **Accommodation and meals are not provided** (transport included separately): **\$1,400**
 - **Accommodation is not provided but some meals are included** (transport included separately): **\$1,300**
 - **Accommodation not included** (all meals and transport to/from school included separately): **\$1,200**
- 2. Accommodation in a furnished apartment or dorm**
 - The address of the accommodation must be included in the application form
 - Language assistants may arrange for services like telephone, cable TV, or Internet at their own expense
 - Institutions should help language assistants to arrange these services, if needed
- 3. Accommodation with a host family**
 - Language assistants must have a clean, private bedroom with a window and closet
 - Language assistants will be responsible for maintaining their own room clean and tidy and helping out with common chores
 - The host family's address and contact information must be included in the application form. Information details about alternative host families must also be included

- The school must help language assistants find suitable accommodation.
- The Spanish Education Advisor must be informed of all lodging arrangements before the assistant's arrival.
- Any changes to the arrangements must be communicated to the Spanish Education advisor in advance.

5. TRANSPORTATION

Teaching institutions must ensure that language assistants are provided with adequate transportation to/from school, through one of the following options:

1. **Monthly transportation allowance**
 - A set amount to cover the language assistant's transportation costs
 2. **Carpooling or rides**
 - Coordinating rides with staff or other community members
 3. **Provision of a car for school commute**
 - If a car is provided, the school is responsible for covering gas, insurance, and repair costs. The language assistant will be responsible for any costs related to journeys outside the school commute.
- All transportation arrangements must be included in the application form.
 - The school must inform the local Spanish Education advisor of any changes to the initial arrangements.

Arrival support

- The school must arrange to pick up the assistant at the airport upon their initial arrival in the country.

6. BEFORE THE LANGUAGE ASSISTANT'S ARRIVAL IN CANADA

Community engagement

- Schools should feature the language assistants from Spain program in their newsletter or website to inform the school community and give a warm welcome to the language assistants.

Pre-arrival support

Language assistants may have questions about their journey and new experience, especially if they are traveling to Canada for the first time. Providing information in advance can help ease their concerns. This includes:

1. **Letter of invitation**

- A formal invitation addressed to the language assistant, which s/he may need to present to Immigration Authorities at their port of entry.
- 2. **Accommodation details**
 - Details about lodging arrangements.
 - If the language assistant is staying with a host family, please facilitate communication between the language assistant and the host family before arrival.
- 3. **Information about the school**
 - An overview of the school or university, its programs, and culture.
- 4. **Schedule and tasks**
 - A detailed description of the language assistant's schedule, expected tasks and responsibilities.
- 5. **Opportunities for further learning**
 - Information on local opportunities for attending courses at universities or other institutions.
- 6. **Community and services**
 - Details on the local community, including:
 - Transportation options.
 - Banking services.
 - Other community resources.

By providing this information, schools can create a welcoming and supportive environment for the language assistants, ensuring a positive and enriching experience for everyone.

7. SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS ASSIGNED TO SCHOOLS

Classroom contributions

Language assistants play a vital role in enriching Spanish language education through:

- **Listening and speaking activities**
- **Cultural presentations:** Introducing Spanish culture through songs, newspapers, plays, etc.
- **Storytelling and cultural interpretation:** Sharing stories and discussing cultural elements.
- **Computer-assisted activities:** Supporting learning through technology.
- **Tutoring:** Assisting students with individual needs.
- **Small group practice:** Providing focused instruction to smaller groups.
- **Lesson preparation:** Developing materials for classroom use in collaboration with the classroom teacher.

Extracurricular activities

Language assistants are encouraged to engage with the school community by:

- Collaborating with Spanish Language Clubs.

- Participating in other school clubs (e.g., theater, chorus).
- Joining events such as sports, art festivals, field trips, etc.

Language assistants **should not...**

- Be responsible for managing an entire class or large group on their own.
- Handle all grading of Spanish quizzes and exams, or spend extensive time on administrative tasks (e.g., making copies).
- Exceed a 20-hour weekly schedule as outlined in these guidelines.
- Be assigned to teachers who are unfamiliar with the language assistants' program.
- Be assigned to non-Spanish related classes

Success happens when teachers and language assistants are involved from the beginning, appreciating the contribution of the language assistant, and collaborating in planning assignments.

8. SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS ASSIGNED TO SPANISH RESOURCE CENTERS (UNIVERSITIES)

Language assistants assigned to Spanish Resource Centers at universities will have additional tasks such as:

- Ordering, cataloging, and lending materials, if applicable
- Collaborating in conversation clubs, film screenings, and other events
- Assisting their local Spanish Education advisor in organizing training sessions and courses for teachers
- Promoting Spanish Education Office programs

9. APPLICATION PROCESS

How to apply

If your teaching institution is interested in hosting a Spanish language assistant, please submit the completed application form to auxiliaresesp.ca@educacion.gob.es by **March 17th, 2025**.

Notifications about placements

Decisions regarding placements will be communicated to teaching institutions by **mid-June 2025**.

Contact

For additional inquiries, please contact us at auxiliaresesp.ca@educacion.gob.es.