SOFTWARE & TECH

Marriott Friends And Family Authorization Form

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Unlocking Exclusive Travel Perks: A Complete Guide to the Marriott Friends and Family Authorization Form

For many travelers, the dream of staying at world-class Marriott hotels at a fraction of the regular price is a tantalizing possibility. This dream becomes a reality through the Marriott Explore (formerly known as the Employee Discount) program, which allows Marriott associates to share incredible room rates with their friends and family. However, accessing these discounted rates is not as simple as just showing up. It requires a specific, often misunderstood document: the **Marriott Friends and Family Authorization Form**. This form is the official ticket to unlocking the Explore program's benefits for non-employees, and understanding its ins and outs is essential for both associates and their guests. In this comprehensive guide, we'll walk you through everything you need to know about this form, from what it is and why it exists, to how to fill it out correctly and avoid common pitfalls that could derail your travel plans.

What Is the Marriott Friends and Family Authorization Form?

The **Marriott Friends and Family Authorization Form**, also known as the Explore Rate Authorization Form or the Friends & Family Form, is a formal document issued by a Marriott associate (an employee of Marriott International or a franchise property) to a designated friend or family member. This form authorizes the bearer to stay at any participating Marriott property using the deeply discounted "Explore Rate" (also called the Friends & Family Rate). Unlike standard hotel bookings, these rates are a fraction of the Best Available Rate (BAR) or the standard retail rate, making them incredibly popular among those who know about them.

This form is part of the larger Marriott Explore program, which is the official employee travel benefit. The program itself has strict rules to prevent abuse and ensure that the discount remains a genuine perk for associates and their personal circles. The authorization form acts as a verification tool for hotel front desk staff. When you check in using the Explore Rate, the hotel will ask to see the physical (or in some cases digital) form, along with valid photo ID and often the associate's ID or proof of employment. Without this form, the discount cannot be applied, and the guest will be charged the regular rate.

Who Is Eligible to Use the Friends and Family Form?

Not everyone can simply request this form. The eligibility is strictly tied to the relationship with a Marriott associate. Here is a breakdown of who qualifies as a friend or family member under the program guidelines:

Family Members

Immediate family members such as spouses, domestic partners, children, parents, siblings, and in-laws are

typically eligible. Some programs also extend to grandparents, grandchildren, and aunts/uncles, but this can vary by region or property. The associate must verify the relationship.

Friends

Yes, friends are explicitly included. However, the term “friend” is interpreted broadly. The associate must know you personally; you cannot be a stranger who finds the form online. The form is meant for genuine social connections, not for commercial resale or strangers.

Who Cannot Use the Form?

It is important to note that the form cannot be used by the associate themselves. Associates use their own employee ID and a different authorization process (often called the “Associate Rate” or “MMP” rate). The Friends and Family form is exclusively for non-employees designated by the associate.

How to Obtain the Marriott Friends and Family Authorization Form

The process of getting the form is straightforward but requires direct contact with a Marriott associate. Here is the typical workflow:

1. Find a Marriott Associate: The form can only be issued by an active Marriott employee (corporate, managed, or franchise). It cannot be sold or transferred through third-party websites or travel agents.
2. Request the Form: The associate will access the Marriott internal system (often called “MGS” or the Employee Portal) and generate the form. They must input your name, relationship, and the travel dates.
3. Digital or Paper Version: Traditionally, the form was printed on paper. Today, many associates provide a digital PDF version, but some hotels still require a physical copy. It is best to ask the associate which format is accepted at your destination.
4. Sign and Date: The associate must sign the form, and in some cases, the guest may also need to sign. The form should include the associate’s Marriott ID number and hotel name.

Important: Never attempt to forge or alter the form. Doing so can result in immediate termination of the associate’s job and permanent blacklisting of the guest from the Marriott Explore program.

Key Information Required on the Authorization Form

To be valid, the **Marriott Friends and Family Authorization Form**must contain specific details. Incomplete or incorrect information will lead to rejection at check-in. Here is what must be present:

- Guest Full Name: Must exactly match the ID you will present at check-in.
- Associate Full Name and Marriott ID Number: This verifies the issuing employee.
- Relationship to Associate: e.g., “Cousin” or “College Friend”.
- Travel Dates: The specific dates the form is valid for. Most forms are valid for a single stay, though some associates may issue blank forms with date ranges—this is less common and often discouraged.
- Property Name (Optional but Recommended): Some associates fill in the specific hotel, but many leave it blank to allow the guest to choose any participating property.
- Associate Signature and Date: The associate’s signature certifies the form is genuine.

How to Use the Form at Check-In

Once you have the completed form, the process at the hotel is simple but requires preparation. Follow these steps:

1. Make a Reservation: You must have a reservation in your name. Try to use the Explore Rate code (typically “ENQ” for Friends & Family) when booking online or through the Marriott app. If the rate is not available online, you can call the hotel directly and ask to book the Friends & Family rate, mentioning that

you have an authorization form.

2. Bring Required Documents: At check-in, you will need:

The completed and signed Marriott Friends and Family Authorization Form (original or digital copy as accepted by the hotel).

3. A valid government-issued photo ID (driver's license, passport, etc.) matching the name on the form.
4. If required by the hotel, a credit card for incidentals. (Note: The discounted rate usually must be paid by the guest, not the associate's credit card, unless local rules say otherwise.)

Important Rules and Restrictions to Know

The Explore program comes with a strict set of rules. Ignoring them can lead to denial of service or even repercussion for the associate. Here are the most crucial:

- No Commercial Use: The form is not a product for sale. It is a personal benefit provided to associates. Selling the form or the rate is strictly prohibited and can result in termination of the associate.
- Limited to One Guest Per Associate: An associate can issue forms to multiple guests, but they cannot issue blank forms to unlimited people. Each guest must be a real person in the associate's life.
- Property and Date Restrictions: The Explore Rate is subject to availability. Not all hotels or all dates have this rate available. It is often limited during peak seasons or special events. The associate and guest should check availability before issuing the form.
- Maximum Stay Length: Typically, the Explore Rate is limited to 7 or 14 consecutive nights, depending on the policy. Longer stays may require special approval.
- Blackout Dates: Some hotels or brands (like The Ritz-Carlton, St. Regis, or EDITION) may have separate blackout dates or higher rates. The form might state that it is not valid at certain luxury brands without additional verification.
- No Additional Discounts: The Explore Rate cannot be combined with other promotions, loyalty points, or coupons.

Benefits of Using the Marriott Friends and Family Form

The primary benefit is obvious: incredible savings. But the advantages go beyond price. Here's what you can expect:

- Steep Discounts: Rates can be as low as 50% off the standard rate, sometimes even deeper. For example, a $300 room might cost around $75 to $100 per night.
- Access to a Wide Range of Properties: The form is valid at over 7,000 Marriott properties worldwide, including major brands like Sheraton, Westin, Marriott, Renaissance, Courtyard, Residence Inn, and more.
- No Extra Fees: The Explore Rate typically includes all standard amenities (Wi-Fi, gym, pool, etc.) unless the property imposes resort fees—though those may still apply.
- Flexibility: Many Explore Rate reservations are refundable or can be modified without penalty, depending on the property's policy. Always confirm at booking.

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

Even with the form in hand, travelers often run into problems. Here are the most common pitfalls and how to sidestep them:

- Mismatched Name: The name on the form must exactly match your ID. If you use a nickname or middle name, make sure it's consistent.
- Forgotten Form: Guests sometimes arrive without the physical or digital form. Hotels are not allowed to honor the rate without proper authorization. Always double-check your documents before traveling.
- Expired Form: The form must be valid for the dates of your stay. Some associates issue forms with a date

range; ensure that range covers your entire stay.

- Assuming All Hotels Participate: While most Marriott hotels accept the Explore program, some franchise properties may opt out. Always call the hotel in advance to confirm they accept the Friends and Family form.
- Overuse: Associates cannot issue a form for every weekend of the year. There are limits to how many forms an associate can generate, so respect their generosity.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Authorization Form

Can I use a photocopy of the form?

Most hotels accept a clear, readable photocopy or digital scan. However, some properties require the original with a wet signature. It's best to bring the original if possible, or at least a high-quality copy. Digital forms presented on a phone screen are increasingly accepted, but check with the associate or hotel beforehand.

Does the associate have to be present at check-in?

No. The form authorizes you to check in without the associate. However, the hotel may call the associate to verify the authenticity of the form. It's a good idea for the associate to be reachable by phone or email.

Can I use the form for multiple reservations?

Typically, each form is valid for one stay at one hotel. If you need a form for multiple stays, the associate must issue separate forms for each.

What happens if the form is rejected at check-in?

If the form is invalid, expired, or incomplete, the hotel will charge you the Best Available Rate. You may also risk being denied check-in if the hotel suspects fraud. Always verify the form's completeness before you travel.

Can a form be revoked?

Yes

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