



LC HANDBOOK

YOUR GUIDE TO OPPORTUNITIES,
REQUIREMENTS, AND OTHER
HELPFUL INFORMATION

2019-2020



+ American Councils

EMAIL: inbound@americancouncils.org

PHONE: 202-833-7522

From 9AM-5PM EST

Ask for the International Student Support Team

FAX: 202-833-7523

WEBSITE: <http://inbound.americancouncils.org>

EMERGENCY: 800-621-9559

Call the above number if you have an after-hours emergency that involves the safety and soundness of a student. The appropriate AC staff member will be reached.

+ Department of State Emergency Hotline

866-283-9090

Call this line only if there is a problem reaching American Councils in cases of emergency.

+ By Mail

American Councils for International Education

ATTN: International Student Support Team

1828 L Street N.W., Suite 1200

Washington, D.C. 20036, U.S.A.

DEAR LOCAL COORDINATOR,

First of all, we would like to issue a hearty “thank you!” By placing and supporting our bright, young students—representing more than 50 countries from around the world—you are joining a network of host families, students, alumni, volunteers, and American Councils staff that truly believe in the transformative power of cultural exchange. An exchange year with American Councils is a unique cultural experience that each student will remember for the rest of his or her life.

Reading this handbook will help you to understand your responsibilities as a Local Coordinator, the resources available to assist you throughout the year, and how you can help make your students’ year rewarding. Keep this handbook close!

As a Local Coordinator, you will support students in your community, ensuring their experiences in the U.S. are unforgettable and enriching. The effects these experiences have on international students cannot be emphasized enough. After one year, students like yours return home as ambassadors for American values and culture, determined to have a positive impact in their own countries. Our alumni have gone on to become leaders in their communities by starting new volunteer organizations, organizing alumni networking groups, and developing community initiatives.

These students are directly impacted by the generosity of your time and effort to connect them with their host families and support them during their U.S. high school experience.

Over the academic year, you will have the full support of the American Councils team in Washington, D.C. We look forward to hearing from you!

Best wishes,

Benjamin Gaylord, Lindsay Cutler, Amanda Morgan, Paige Brewer, and Mandy Maglio
International Student Support Team
American Councils for International Education

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YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK



FOLLOW US!

Twitter: @acie_exchange

Instagram: @acie_exchange

Facebook: International Student Support at American Councils

Our team, based in Washington, D.C., is here to support you throughout the year. While our responsibilities vary, we are all here to help.

American Councils for International Education

Our team is part of a nonprofit organization called American Councils for International Education. The mission of American Councils is to create educational opportunities that prepare individuals and institutions to succeed in an increasingly interconnected world.

Through academic exchanges, overseas language immersion, and educational development programs, American Councils designs and administers innovative programs that broaden individual perspectives, increase knowledge, and deepen understanding. For over 40 years, American Councils has responded to the needs of the communities where we work with hundreds of robust, international education programs that span 90 countries and 40 languages and are represented by over 94,000 alumni worldwide, including government leaders, top international educators, business innovators, public officials, and K-16 students.

If you would like to learn more about American Councils, visit the main website at <http://www.americancouncils.org>.

Our Team...

1. Answers questions.
2. Serves as a liaison with your students' parents so they know how well they are doing (or when they might need a little encouragement from home)!
3. Keeps you, your students, and your host families informed about fun activities and requirements.
4. Issues LC honoraria, health insurance payments, medical expenses required for your students' schools, and stipend checks and reimbursements for incidental expenses for FLEX and YES students.
5. Encourages your students to share their experiences with us throughout the year.



Email Benjamin

gaylord@americancouncils.org

Benjamin Gaylord, Partnerships and Support

No stranger to the exchange experience himself, Benjamin has been with American Councils since 1995 and now oversees the entire team, including our network of Local Coordinators throughout the U.S. In high school and university, Benjamin was an exchange student in Russia; he has also traveled extensively throughout Eurasia, as well as lived and traveled in Latin America.

He is currently working on issues that affect the entire sphere of global exchange. From advocacy to seeking new partners, you'll hear from Benjamin mostly with respect to issues that have an impact on the world of exchange, both across the U.S. and in your community, as well as some potential new avenues for programming. If you are interested in supporting our bright, young, international students in your community (whether you are a small business owner or a leader in an organization with a complementary mission or goal), Benjamin is happy to hear from you.

Benjamin has a BA in Russian from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and he received his MS in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University. He is a fluent speaker of Russian, Spanish, and Dutch.



Email Lindsay

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Search "Lindsay at Councils"

Instagram

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Lindsay Cutler, Operations and Policy

Lindsay joined the International Student Support Team after having worked since 2013 providing on-program support for students on the YES Program at American Councils. Studying abroad in Jordan during college ignited Lindsay's passion for travel and international youth exchange, and she's slowly working to add many new stamps to her passport! Her new role has Lindsay managing the operations and administrative side of the team, as well as developing our policies for student, host family, and Local Coordinator support.

As Assistant Operations Manager, Lindsay acts as the lead on reporting to our program sponsors at the U.S. Department of State, and she also works with all sub-grantee organizations, hires consultants, and supports student placement.

Lindsay received her MA in International Affairs, concentrating in Middle East Studies, from The George Washington University. She graduated from Ithaca College with a BA in Anthropology and Politics.

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Amanda Morgan, Senior Program Officer

Amanda's high school study abroad experience in Nice, France originally sparked her interest in exchange programs. In March 2013, she joined the International Student Support Team as a Program Assistant. Now a Senior Program Officer since 2016, she is the primary contact in our department regarding student support, placement, and our annual Re-Entry Workshops. She also helps to plan and organize our annual Local Coordinator conference and other Local Coordinator training opportunities.

In addition, Amanda takes the lead on handbook and general material development and coordinates student contests and social media for the department. Prior to joining our team, Amanda worked in the D.C. area with Deaf and Hard of Hearing federal employees and ASL interpreters.

Amanda received her MA in Social Anthropology overseas from the University of Manchester. Prior to graduate school, she received her BA in History and International Studies from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where she was also a member of an organization that welcomed new exchange students to the university.

**Email Paige**

pbrewer@americancouncils.org

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Search “Paige at Councils”

Paige Brewer, Program Officer

International exchanges have been a big part of Paige's academic and professional lives over the past several years. She studied abroad in Poland, China, and Russia before teaching English in Kazakhstan, where she worked closely with FLEX students and alumni. While serving as a FLEX participant recruiter for three seasons, she traveled to several FLEX countries, particularly in Central Asia. She worked with American Councils full-time in DC since 2017 on the Secondary School Programs Enhancement Team before joining our team in February 2019.

Now a Program Officer for the International Student Support Team at American Councils, Paige's responsibilities include evaluating host family applications, travel requests, and Local Coordinator onboarding.

Paige received her B.A. from the University of Louisville in Political Science with a minor in Russian studies.



Email Mandy

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Mandy Maglio, Program Associate

Mandy (Amanda) joined our team in winter 2018 after working for the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. Mandy's interest in exchange programs originally sparked from her study abroad experience in Florence, Italy and her experiences growing up in a multicultural family and having many international friends. Mandy realized after her own studies abroad just how incredible it is to immerse yourself in someone else's culture and how the global perspectives you obtain will shape the rest of your life. She is thrilled to see the students today doing the same in the YES and FLEX programs.

In International Student Support, Mandy works on participant monitoring as well as various special projects throughout the year. Questions about reimbursements and honoraria, VIP calls, second home visits, monthly reports, and student stipends can all be directed to Mandy, whether it be a phone call or email.

Mandy has an MA in Museum Education, concentrating in Accessibility, from The University of the Arts. She graduated from Skidmore College with a BA in Art History, where she focused on broadly studying cultures around the world.



WHY WE LOVE LCs

+ Inspiring Stories

” Elina, FLEX– Armenia (Traer, IA)

My Local Coordinator was the best part of my exchange year. She has the best personality ever. A lot of exchange students in the future will appreciate her effort she will put in their learnings.

” Unubileg, FLEX– Mongolia (Raleigh, NC)

My Local Coordinator is really warm, kind, friendly, open-minded, caring, and simply a wonderful person. She knows how to do her job and how to help the exchange students to the fullest to let us have a great year.

Our LCs...

- Inspire us with what they bring to their communities.
- Show us how generous their communities are.
- Teach us about regional nuances in the U.S.
- Create mutual understanding through their commitment to the mission of our programs.
- Love our students!
- Look at their communities and see the world.
- Are dedicated to the program goals.
- Wake up and say, “I’m working to change the world!”
- Bring smiles to the faces of their students many years later.
- Are committed to helping their students have the best year of their lives in America.
- Navigate the spaces in between cultures.
- Are fundamental to our students’ experiences in America.
- Deliver the world to their host families and communities.

LOCAL COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES



Notes

As a Local Coordinator (LC), the success of our students in the U.S. often depends on your efforts and input. Always remember that you are not alone in this endeavor; we are here to support you! However, many of the day-to-day tasks—and even a few of the larger pieces in the placement puzzle—depend on you.

All Local Coordinator responsibilities listed below are detailed more fully in the following chapters and in the annual Local Coordinator Agreement that you are asked to sign. At a glance, they are:

Before Your Students Arrive on Program

- Secure enrollment in an accredited high school and submit a signed School Enrollment Form (SEF) for each of your students. See page 38.
- Recruit host families for your students and perform the necessary oversight (host family application, in-home interview, and reference checks). See pages 30-34.
- Plan and lead Host Family Orientations before your students arrive and after the families have been vetted by us. Orientations may be done individually or you may do one group orientation with all of your host families if all of the families have been vetted. It must be at least 24 hours after the in-home interview takes place and must be conducted in person. See page 40.
- Monitor and communicate immunization requirements for schools. We can request missing immunizations before students depart their home countries or help you determine if any immunizations will have to be received after their arrival in the U.S. (if they are unavailable or cost-prohibitive in their countries).



LOCAL COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES



REMEMBER

It is up to your students to take the initiative in understanding host family and program rules and responsibilities. If you or your students have questions, our team is here to help!



Inspiring Stories



Fatmah, YES–Kuwait (Wilton, ME)

The YES program isn't just life-changing; it opens people's minds and hearts to different things. This program revealed a part of myself I wasn't aware of. I owe this program a lot because it also taught me how to appreciate my community and family. Diversity is present here in so many different forms and it gives a person a greater understanding of freedom.

While Your Students Are On Program

- Serve as your students' advocate while they are in the U.S.
- Maintain monthly contact with your students and host families.
- Complete Monthly Reports (sent to you via email by our department) for each of your students. See page 51.
- Advise your FLEX and YES students and host families on incidentals allowance procedures and deadlines, emphasizing that the **students** are responsible for completing procedures on time. See pages 68-69.
- Conduct Arrival and Mid-Year Orientations for your students. See page 40.
- Share your students' successes on program with us!
- Support your students and host families if issues arise, and keep us apprised of any difficulties or problems your students or host families are experiencing from the onset.
- Organize enhancement activities for your FLEX and YES students. See pages 53-55.
- Advise your students about community service opportunities. Don't forget: each of your students is required to complete **a minimum of 30 hours** of community service during the year. Students typically find this incredibly rewarding. See pages 56-59.
- Ask us questions regarding any policies that you don't understand. We are here to help!

LOCAL COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES



REMEMBER

If you have concerns about a student's safety, call the American Councils emergency phone: 800-621-9559. **If it is a medical emergency, please call 911!**



Notes

Student Safety

The safety of our students on program is everyone's primary responsibility. Chapter 7 details many common issues students confront while on program and what sort of reporting American Councils requires from students, host families, and Local Coordinators.

Bear in mind that you must take safety into account throughout the placement and monitoring process. When you are initially considering a family who is interested in hosting, ask yourself if anything concerns you about a student living there for a year. Trust your intuition. It might be a comment from a member of the potential host family, something that strikes you as out of the ordinary about the physical space in the house, or the motivations behind why the family is interested in hosting.

Once your students are placed and their exchange year has begun, you will be in regular contact with those students. **You are the students' primary advocate!** If a student comes to you with an issue about his or her placement or safety—with the host family, school, or community in general—contact us so we can work together to ensure all appropriate steps are taken quickly and effectively. We will work with you to take immediate action if a student is in a physical or emotional environment deemed unsuitable.

Students are also at risk of making decisions that could endanger their safety. Your students' insurance plan outlines certain risky activities that may be prohibited for them to participate in while on program or that may require a Risky Activity Notice (see page 74). **Please discuss this at their Arrival Orientation.**

There are also certain activities and behaviors prohibited by our disciplinary policy and by students' programs because they may place students in danger. This includes activities like driving motorized vehicles (including ATVs and snowmobiles), snowboarding, or extreme sports. Please refer to pages 75-76 and the Student-Parent Application Agreements in the Appendices for more information. If you have reason to believe that a student is engaging in prohibited activities or behaviors, **please contact us immediately.**



HOST FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

+ Inspiring Stories

” Alex,
YES–Bulgaria
(Pueblo, CO)

I am thankful to be here, thankful to be hosted by the best host family possible, thankful to be experiencing the American life and thankful just for this scholarship which was one of my most desired dreams. I'm thankful to be able to have American friends, go to American school, go to the football games which I just love and enjoy so much. I'm thankful for everything!



Host families play an invaluable role in shaping your students' positive experiences in the U.S. We encourage host families to treat their students as valued members the family—not as guests or visitors—and we hope that this experience is rewarding for everyone.

Below is a list of primary host family responsibilities, though you can also review the Host Family Agreement (included in the Appendices) for a more detailed and comprehensive list of expectations and responsibilities.

During the exchange year, Host Families agree to:

1. Provide a safe, nurturing, and primarily English-speaking environment.
2. Provide three (3) meals per day, including lunch money OR provisions for a packed lunch for school.
3. Provide a bed and a single room OR a shared room with a sibling of the same gender.
4. Provide a quiet place to study, including a table or a desk.
5. Provide transportation arrangements to and from school and extra-curricular activities.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

+ TIPS

To ensure your students are performing well in school, ask them to share their grades with you during your monthly check-ins or ask for copies of their progress reports. If you notice one of your students is receiving poor grades, try to determine what the underlying cause is (missing assignments, problems with English vocabulary, etc.). We should be notified as soon as possible if a student has poor grades.

In order to fulfill program requirements, students have their own set of responsibilities. None of these requirements are hard or should cause concern to your students, but they do need to take them seriously.

During the program year, your students are required to:

1. Enroll in a full academic course load, including one English course (defined as a course offered by the English Department) and one course in U.S. or State History, U.S. Government, or Civics.
2. Maintain a minimum B average with no grade lower than a C.
3. Join at least one leadership or service club at school or in the community. See pages 57 and 61.
4. Complete a minimum of 30 hours of community service by participating in at least three different types of volunteering. Learn more on pages 56-59.
5. Participate in International Education Week (IEW) in November by making at least three cultural presentations. See page 65.
6. Join you for at least two enhancement activities during the year. These are not only fun, but often a way for your FLEX and YES students to meet fellow exchange students in the area. See pages 53-55. (This applies to FLEX and YES students only.)
7. Submit a Monthly Check-in Report to American Councils. See page 51.
8. Follow all rules, requirements, and procedures. That includes "house rules" established by their host families as well as program and American Councils requirements, like attending all mandatory orientations and workshops.



YOUR YEAR AHEAD



WHAT IS A STUDENT'S STIPEND CHECK

We are glad you asked! For every month a FLEX or YES student is in the U.S., that student will receive a check for \$125 in the mail after completing his or her Monthly Check-in Report.

A stipend is a FLEX or YES student's money for everyday spending on things like toiletries, attending school and community events (like prom), and other fun activities with friends.

Refer to page 67 for more details about student stipends.

Program Year Schedule

Even though students are only in the U.S. for an academic year, the work involved in supporting them is year-round! There are ongoing or monthly requirements for you and for your students to ensure student safety and to help our team communicate student successes and achievements to our program sponsors, the U.S. Department of State, as well as specific deadlines and events to mark on your calendars. These are as follows:

- If you are supervising a FLEX or YES student, each of them will receive a monthly stipend of \$125 every month they are in the U.S. (see sidebar). However, there are two exceptions: August/September and April/May are double stipends, meaning they receive \$250 in one check to cover both months. This is done to account for the variation in arrival and departure dates for students. HSA students do not receive monthly stipends.
- Your students must submit their own Monthly Check-in Reports directly to us. While we cannot share these reports with you, we will alert you about any concerns or issues that students bring to our attention on their reports. See page 51.
- You must submit a Monthly Report to us for each student you supervise. You will receive a link to this report via email on the 1st of each month and it is due by the end of the month.
- You must submit copies of receipts and a reimbursement form in order to receive reimbursements. See pages 71-72.
- You, your students, and your host families should communicate potential issues and concerns to us as they occur.

The calendar on the following pages outlines important events and deadlines from the academic year into the summer placement season, beginning in August 2019. ("PY" stands for Program Year.) There are two groups of students referenced:

PY 2019–20: students arriving in August 2019 and departing May/June 2020

PY 2020–21: students arriving in August 2020 and departing May/June 2021

AUGUST–DECEMBER

+ TIPS

Try to learn as much as you can from your students! Ask them about their families and friends back home and about the holidays, culture, traditions, and governments of their home countries. Showing an interest in your students' lives back home is an important part of developing trust.



August

- **PY 2019–20:** Students begin arriving to the U.S.
- **PY 2019–20:** FLEX and YES students with disabilities attend a week-long Arrival Orientation with MIUSA in Eugene, OR prior to going to their host communities.
- **PY 2019–20:** FLEX and YES students begin receiving their first monthly stipend checks. NOTE: the first stipend check is combined for August/September (\$250).
- **PY 2019–20:** You conduct Arrival Orientations within the first 30 days of students' arrivals to the U.S. and submit a Student Arrival Orientation Sign-Off Form for each student.
- **PY 2019–20:** You work with schools to ensure smooth transitions to the start of the academic year (enrollment, registration, vaccinations, activities, etc.).
- **PY 2019–20:** You monitor your students' progress in school and their adjustment to their host families and communities.
- **PY 2019–20:** Second home visits to host families begin.

September–November

- **PY 2019–20:** VIP wellness calls to students and host families begin and occur three times a year.
- **PY 2019–20:** Students begin community service activities.
- **PY 2019–20:** Host families submit the optional Host Family Beginning-of-the-Year Report to us.
- **PY 2019–20:** You assist your students with International Education Week (IEW), contact local media about students and presentations, and use IEW as publicity for recruiting host families.

December

- **PY 2019–20:** FLEX and YES students begin to receive general information regarding return travel dates.
- **PY 2019–20:** FLEX and YES students receive information about the Re-Entry Workshops that take place in March and April.

JANUARY–APRIL



January

- **PY 2019–20:** You arrange Mid-Year Orientations and submit your Mid-Year Reports and Mid-Year Orientation Form for each student (in lieu of January Monthly Reports) to us by the end of the month.
- **PY 2019–20:** Students submit Mid-Year Reports (in lieu of January Monthly Check-in Reports) to us by the end of the month.
- **PY 2019–20:** Host families submit the optional Host Family Mid-Year Report to us.
- **PY 2019–20:** Host families receive letters via email for tax deductions as a charitable donation for hosting a student during the 2019 calendar year.
- **PY 2020–21:** Finalist selection begins in Washington, D.C. for next year's FLEX and YES students.

February

- **PY 2019–20:** We hold our annual conference for Local Coordinators typically in February.
- **PY 2020–21:** We provide you with the first sets of participant profiles for 2020–21 students.
- **PY 2020–21:** You begin to match student profiles with interested host families and schools.

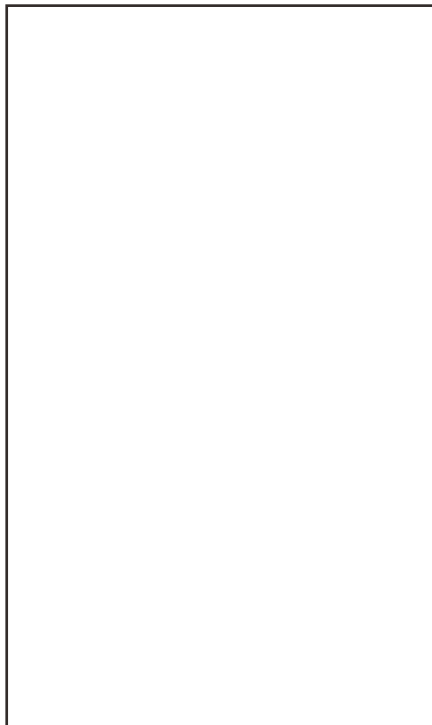
March–April

- **PY 2019–20:** FLEX and YES students attend Re-Entry Workshops in Chevy Chase, MD.
- **PY 2019–20:** Your cluster participates in Global Youth Service Day events.
- **PY 2019–20:** FLEX and YES students receive information on filing taxes for 2019.
- **PY 2020–21:** Finalist selection is finished, finalists are chosen, and final profiles are made available to you.
- **PY 2020–21:** You receive permission from local schools to place students (this may happen earlier in some areas) and continue recruiting host families for 2020–21.



MAY–JULY

+ Notes



May–June

- **PY 2019–20:** Students return home.
- **PY 2019–20:** You submit your final Monthly Reports for each of your students.
- **PY 2019–20:** Final financial reimbursement requests for students are due to us May 1st (or the next closest business day if May 1st falls on a weekend).
- **PY 2019–20:** The optional End-of-Year Evaluation Report is sent to school administrators.
- **PY 2020–21:** Placement activity for next year continues.

July

- **PY 2019–20:** Host families submit the optional Host Family End-of-Year Report to us.
- **PY 2020–21:** You confirm school and host family placements and communicate these to us.
- **PY 2020–21:** Overseas Pre-Departure Orientations (PDOs) for students take place.
- **PY 2020–21:** FLEX students who require additional English language tutoring arrive in Moldova for a month-long EFL Camp.



OVERVIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAMS



Our Scholarship Exchange Programs and Funders

The International Student Support Team administers scholarship programs on behalf of the U.S. Department of State for high school exchange students like yours. The most up-to-date program list can always be found on our website at <http://inbound.americancouncils.org> under "Our Programs."

Each of the scholarship programs we administer have three common, broader goals for its participants. These are:

- To acquire an understanding of important elements of a civil society, such as community service, civic responsibility, respect for diversity, and the rule of law.
- To develop an appreciation for American culture while educating Americans about the student's home country and culture. This includes generating enduring ties between students and members of their host community.
- To become active alumni and share acquired knowledge and experience with their local community in their home country.

+ Inspiring Stories

” Marija, YES–North Macedonia (Port Angeles, WA)

Have you ever wondered what you can do to make the world a better place? Spend ten months away from your family in a foreign country where you don't know anyone beforehand! It sounds scary. But sometimes you have to let the positive outweigh the scary things. It's taking a risk. An exchange year is first, a personal journey. You are surprised by all the things you've held inside you but never explored. I feel like a leader because I took the initiative to apply to this program and I said yes to new things. In order to have a good experience in a new culture I knew I had to be open minded and that's another thing that's important for a leader. I'm a young ambassador for my own country and that made me a better leader.

OVERVIEW OF EXCHANGE PROGRAMS



Exchange Programs

The exchange programs that American Councils administers bring students like yours from more than 50 countries around the world to study and attend high school in the U.S. for an academic year. Learn a little about each program below.

Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) is a competitive, merit-based scholarship program funded by the U.S. Department of State and administered by American Councils. FLEX students who pass three rounds of testing earn a scholarship to spend an academic year in the United States living with a volunteer host family and attending a U.S. high school. Participants come from 21 countries in Eurasia and Europe. FLEX students gain leadership skills, learn about American society and values, and teach Americans about FLEX countries and cultures. FLEX is a highly competitive program with over 27,000 alumni who have contributed over one million hours of community service in cities and towns across America. The students return home to active alumni networks that carry out inspiring activities. Visit <http://www.discoverflex.org> for more information.

Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) was established by Congress in October 2002 in response to the events of September 11, 2001. The program is funded through the U.S. Department of State and sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by American Councils, to provide scholarships for high school students from around 40 countries with significant Muslim populations to spend up to one academic year in the United States. Students live with host families, attend high school, engage in activities to learn about American society and values, acquire leadership skills, and help educate Americans about their countries and cultures. Visit <http://www.yesprograms.org> for more information.

High School in America (HSA) is an academic-year program for secondary school students interested in living and studying in the U.S. Over the course of the program, students will meet with leaders in their local area and at the national level. Through our Leadership Plan, participants on the program gain skills to become successful leaders and entrepreneurs, giving our participants an edge in an increasingly competitive global job market.

OVERVIEW OF EXCHANGE PROGRAMS



Programs for American Students

The Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) seeks to expand the number of Americans studying and mastering critical-need foreign languages. Available for eligible U.S. citizens in undergraduate or graduate school, CLS provides fully funded, intensive summer language institutes in 15 languages: Arabic, Azerbaijani, Bangla, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Swahili, Turkish, Russian and Urdu. Visit <http://clscholarship.org> for more information. The Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government.

National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) is a program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and provides merit-based scholarships for eligible U.S. high school students (ages 15-18) to study Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, Korean, Persian (Tajiki), Russian, and Turkish in overseas immersion programs. Previous language study is not required! NSLI-Y programs may take place in China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, South Korea, Morocco, Russia, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Latvia, Estonia, Moldova, and other locations around the world. Visit <http://nsliforyouth.org> for more information.

The Language Flagship is a national initiative to change the way Americans learn languages. Through a network of 31 Flagship Centers programs, the Language Flagship offers pathways for students of all academic majors to pursue advanced-level language study in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, or Turkish. Visit <http://thelanguageflagship.org> for more information.

YES Abroad, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, provides merit-based scholarships for eligible high school students and recent graduates to study abroad in select YES countries. Participants live with a host family, attend a local high school, acquire leadership skills, and engage in activities to learn about the host country's society and values; they also help educate others about American society and values. YES Abroad participants promote mutual understanding between the United States and their host country by forming lasting relationships with the local community. Visit <http://yes-abroad.org> for more information.

SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS



Notes

Language Program

Every year, a few students are selected for additional English support in the FLEX program. All students selected for this program have sufficient English for a year of high school, but compared to their peers could use some additional support to speed the adaptation process.

FLEX students are designated as Language Program (LP) participants in advance and may also be designated to participate in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) program in Moldova. FLEX students designated as LP participants must receive a minimum of 20 hours of language tutoring (depending on their English proficiency) during their first semester on program. Funding is available for this tutoring. American Councils will be in contact with you about your LP student and tutoring before he or she arrives on program.

While YES students do not have a separate language program designation like the FLEX students, there is a limited amount of funding available to YES students who need additional English language support during the academic year. Contact us if you would like to request funding or to discuss further.

Reasonable Accommodation Program

Each year approximately 25-30 FLEX and YES participants have disabilities. All participants with disabilities arrive in Washington, D.C. and immediately travel to an Arrival Orientation in Eugene, OR administered by Mobility International USA (MIUSA).

The Arrival Orientation lasts one week and provides students with strategies and support for living in the U.S. It introduces the very different culture and attitude toward people with disabilities in the U.S. Many students are accustomed to different support networks at home that they will not have in the U.S. Most participants respond that the MIUSA program plays a very constructive role in their adjustment to life in the U.S. The MIUSA staff who work with the students serve as support for American Councils if there are any disability-related placement or adjustment issues during the year.

HOW SELECTION WORKS FOR FLEX AND YES STUDENTS

+ Inspiring Stories

” Idah,
YES–Kenya
(Bettendorf, IA)

I was at school in Kenya when an assembly was called, which was rather unusual because we normally don't have assemblies after lunch break. During the assembly the principal announced that the YES Program was looking for good ambassadors to send to America. I remember the first question I asked myself was, “Am I a good ambassador?” The question remained in my head for the rest of the day. When one of the representatives came to talk to us about who is it that they want, I was up front in the dining hall paying close attention and asking as many questions as I could. So when they finally said the requirements, it seemed like they were describing me and I decided to pursue this no matter what!

One of the strengths of the FLEX and YES programs is the rigorous and uniform recruitment process that participants undergo. American Councils recruits students for FLEX and YES (Southeast Europe and Senegal). YES students not from Southeast Europe undergo a similar recruitment process conducted by partner organizations. Final selection for all students takes place in Washington, D.C.

Round 1: Pre-Test

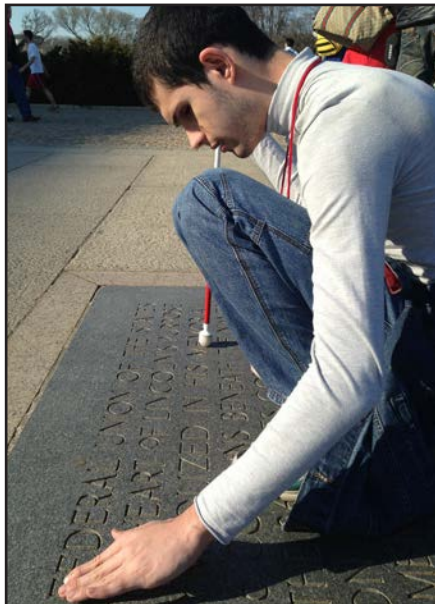
Students meeting the age and grade requirements are invited to take a 16-question, multiple choice English language test. The main purpose of the pre-test is to eliminate students with a very limited knowledge of English. Precautions are taken to discourage cheating.

Round 2: English Language Test and Essays

Eligible students who decide to continue with the application process are invited to take an English language test, which is usually the English Language Test for International Students (ELTIS). Students also respond to different prompts during proctored essays. The prompts focus on actual situations that students may confront and are designed to elicit responses that indicate both the student's maturity level and his or her suitability for international exchange. Staff are trained in administering essays and ensuring that essays represent the student's own work.

Once completed, all proficiency tests and essays are sent to a central office for independent evaluation. The field screening committees are specially trained to assess essays on the basis of ten factors considered critical for exchange experience success. Processing information and conducting the preliminary evaluation in a centralized location, rather than in the field, is important for the integrity of the competition and relieves the pressure often placed on the program staff by parents, local ministries, or others to include candidates who might not be qualified.

HOW SELECTION WORKS FOR FLEX AND YES STUDENTS



+ Inspiring Stories

” Joe, YES–Liberia (Quincy, IL)

This program has changed my life in so many ways: my perspective on people, culture, values, and my understanding of the diversity of human nature, and my understanding of leadership and the importance of volunteering. These have all changed in a positive manner.

Round 3: Interview, Essays, and Application

Students with the best assessments pass to the third round of testing. Less than 15 percent of the initial applicant pool is invited to complete an application in Round 3. One American staff member and one local staff member return to each test site to conduct 20-minute interviews with students who have been invited to complete applications. Interviews take place in both English and the student's native language to enable interviewers to assess English language skills as well as to give students the best opportunity to present themselves.

In addition to the one-on-one interview, all applicants participate in a group activity. These are conducted in the local language and led by local staff members while American staff observes. Four to seven students take part in each activity. The group activity provides an opportunity to observe the students in a less formal setting and to see how they interact with their peers. On the day of the interview, staff explain the application form in detail so students will understand how to complete it. Students have two weeks to complete the application and return it to their local American Councils office. Applications are checked in the field offices for completeness. Ultimately, the complete application and computer data files are then forwarded to the American Councils headquarters office in Washington, D.C. for further processing and student selection.

Final Round: Selection of Finalists

American Councils organizes and trains approximately 200 community service evaluators, many of whom meet daily for over three months to carefully review the complete applications. Finalists and alternates are chosen based on test center, meaning that students are competing only against students from their same city/region of recruitment. While selection for more than one country may be ongoing at any one time, official finalist lists are not compiled until all test centers for a country have been evaluated. Names of all finalists are randomly sorted by computer and distributed to placement organizations to ensure adequate representation of gender and country of origin.



ORDER OF PLACEMENT

+ TIPS

There are three main components of a successful student placement, all of which are required before a student may leave his or her home country. These are:

1. Matching a student with a Local Coordinator (LC)
2. Placing a student with a host family
3. Placing a student in an accredited local high school

! REMEMBER

ONLY after all materials have been submitted and reviewed by us is the placement finalized. Then the student will be informed and the host family may begin communicating with their student!

We use the term “placement” to refer to any time a student moves to a host family (an initial move or a mid-year move). Our main “placement season” starts around March and goes until August, when students begin arriving for the academic year. We have a shorter placement season starting in October through January for our Malaysian students, who arrive for the second semester only. However, placements occur throughout the year, as it is inevitable that some students may move host families. The information in this chapter mostly refers to the activity that goes on during our main placement season, but much of this also applies to mid-year moves.

Order of Placement

1. Network within your community to share information about the exchange programs. Recruit families and individuals who are interested in hosting and ask for referrals. At the same time, contact local high schools and district offices. Familiarize yourself with their policies and procedures regarding exchange students. Use a spreadsheet to keep track of contact information.
2. If you find a prospective host family, begin by assessing their motivations for hosting. Contact their local high school once again to verify that a placement is possible. During this time, direct the host family to our online application portal. PDF and Word versions of the host family application are also available.
3. If the host family completes the application online, we will send you a copy so that you may begin reference checks. Complete an in-home interview and send the form and photos of the host family's home to us. NOTE: You may submit placement paperwork piecemeal in any order or all at once.
4. Submit to us a School Enrollment Form signed by a school official and by you.
5. We review all of the documentation. If we have follow-up questions, we may ask you or ask the host family directly (such as with background check follow-up). Once that is done, we will notify you that the placement is complete!

AFTER A PLACEMENT IS FINALIZED

? WHERE CAN I FIND ORIENTATION MATERIALS

Orientation guides are available on our website in the LC Corner (<http://inbound.americancouncils.org/lc-corner>) under “Other Resources.” Please be aware of the following **REQUIRED** forms/handouts:

- Host Family Orientation Form (a copy signed by each host family must be sent to us)
- Student Arrival Orientation Form (a signed copy signed by each student must be sent to us)
- Student Mid-Year Orientation Form (a copy signed by each student must be sent to us)

See Chapter 6 for more details about these orientations.

After A Placement Is Finalized

1. Schedule a Host Family Orientation with your host family two to four weeks prior to your student's arrival. (If doing a group orientation with multiple host families, schedule it prior to the earliest student's arrival.)

This orientation is required in order to receive an honorarium for the placement and must be conducted in person. Submit the Host Family Orientation Form within one week of completion. Host Family Orientations must take place only after American Councils has approved the host family.

2. Perform an Arrival Orientation for your student within 30 days of the student's arrival. You may do a group orientation with all of your students, but be sure to make time to speak to each student separately. At this time, assist your students with any additional preparation for the start of school, such as course selection or obtaining any additional immunizations required for school. Submit the Student Arrival Orientation Form within one week of completion.

3. Work with us to schedule a second home visit within 30 days of your student's arrival to his or her host family. We ask that you discuss this requirement during the in-home interview so that a host family is not surprised by the visit. This visit **MUST** be conducted within 30 days for any students arriving to a temporary host family if, within that time, the student hasn't already moved to a permanent home. **NOTE:** While it is not required that you identify the person to do the second home visit during the in-home interview, you must identify someone in order to receive an honorarium for the placement. You may want to designate one person in your community (or another LC who lives within range) to complete all second home visits for your cluster.

PLEASE NOTE: The representative conducting the second home visit **CANNOT** be the LC who recruited the host family; the LC that performed the initial in-home interview; relatives or spouses of the host family or LC; nor anyone who benefits financially from the placement.



RECRUITING HOST FAMILIES

+ TIPS

Many schools have quotas for exchange students, so do not assume that a school will accept an exchange student even if it has a large student body. If a school won't let you reserve a spot, try again after you secure a host family. Often schools require the name of a family before approving a student for enrollment.

For brochures, press release templates, scripts for outreach, and promotion/recruitment ideas, please see the LC Corner on our website or contact our team!

You are part of a U.S.-based community of LCs who are directly supported by our team in Washington, D.C. As the community representative of our exchange programs, you have the ability to directly impact and expand your community's world.

Considerations When Sharing Student Information

The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel, better known as CSIET, and the U.S. Department of State J-1 visa regulations govern how we can promote or advertise our students and hosting opportunities.

Per these regulations, you cannot share any photographs of students whom you are trying to place or any information that personally identifies students (such as last names, specific cities that students are from, etc.) either publicly or with host families that have not yet completed the vetting process.

In order to assist you with placement, we create a profile, or short bio, for each of our students that includes important information about the student (such as age, religious affiliation, grade level, etc.) as well as excerpts and quotes from the student's application. These profiles are stripped of all identifying information and thus may be shared with any prospective host families.

In addition, there cannot be appeals to urgency, guilt, or pity when asking to host. For example, the following statement (and other variations on it) is completely unacceptable: "If we do not find a host family, this student will not be able to come to the U.S." Remember: we have never had to cancel a student because we did not have a host family!

It is also against regulations to specifically market a student to a school for athletic purposes.

For a full list of U.S. Department of State and CSIET regulations governing secondary school exchange programs, please see the Appendices.

HOST FAMILY SCREENING & APPLICATION PROCESS

! REMEMBER

As a representative of American Councils in your community, you are our eyes and ears on the ground. If you have any reason to believe that a host family does not share the proper motivations or will not be suitable hosts, please share this with us. Trust your instincts!

? WHAT'S A RED/YELLOW FLAG

A "flag" is anything that comes up during the host family recruitment or approval process that requires further investigation either by us or by you.

A RED FLAG means a host family is unlikely to be approved. This includes: unsanitary homes, family members who receive federal subsidies for room & board, a non-English-speaking environment, etc.

A YELLOW FLAG means proceed with caution. This includes: interest in being compensated for hosting or unrealistic expectations.

Host Family Motivations

During your first contact with a prospective host family, it is possible to begin assessing their motivations for hosting. Some of these motivations may support the goals of the program and some may not. Positive motivations include: a connection with a certain country, being interested in exchange in general, and wanting to learn about other cultures or expose their children to different cultures.

Negative motivations may include: wanting a babysitter, wanting to religiously influence someone, wanting a tutor for a foreign language, or simply having unrealistic expectations regarding the student's role in the host family. Please note that a family cannot host a student who is their relative.

Host Family Expectations

There is no ideal host family in terms of composition. However, a family needs to be open to sharing their culture, traditions, activities, and interests with their student. A host family should also want to learn about their student's culture and home. A student who is often left out of family activities, who is expected to simply be a babysitter, or who is only wanted as an extra hand around the house is not going to have a successful exchange year. It may also be unrealistic to expect that a student will be a host sibling's best friend or will want to participate in a specific sport or hobby listed on his or her application, as students come to the U.S. in order to try new things.

Hosting brings excitement and many joys, but there are also potential tensions and difficulties that host families need to be prepared to navigate. Be up front with potential host families about their responsibilities and the necessary level of commitment. Having another person in the house does cost more in food, utilities, and transportation.

However, the amount that a family spends on their exchange student is largely a matter of personal choice. We believe that host families do not need to be wealthy to provide students with wonderful experiences. We do not expect our host families to take their students on elaborate vacations or to provide food that is other than what they would provide their own family members. If a family is concerned that their financial position is not good enough to host, please refer them to us. We can help give the family a clear picture of how much it costs to host.



HOST FAMILY SCREENING & APPLICATION PROCESS



WHERE CAN I FIND PLACEMENT FORMS

The In-Home Interview Form, as well as other forms required for host family vetting, may be found on our website in the LC Corner (<http://inbound.americancouncils.org/lc-corner>) under "Applications and Forms." If you need a copy of your host family's application or their photos (to verify their accuracy for the in-home interview), please contact us!

In-Home Interview

Once you have made an initial assessment of a family and believe they could be suitable hosts, you need to schedule an in-home interview. Since 2010, the U.S. Department of State has placed increasing emphasis on host family oversight and on determining whether a placement is suitable. To this end, there are requirements for host families to submit photographs of their houses with their applications. If a family hosted before 2010 and has since taken a break from hosting, some of these requirements are likely new to them. The in-home interview you perform is a very important part of the screening process.

Please keep in mind the following:

- Remember to speak with all members of the family who live in the home in order to gauge everyone's interest.
- If anything seems amiss, either with the family's motivations, their level of commitment, or the physical condition of the house, do not hesitate to contact us about your concerns.
- As a Local Coordinator, you are a family's primary support, and it is important to thoroughly answer each question that the family has about hosting and to thank them for their important contribution to public diplomacy. However, there are additional safeguards in place to ensure that both the host family and their student have a positive and successful experience. Inform the host family that our office also conducts surveys, VIP calls, and the occasional site visit. It's important that they are receptive to this idea so that we can support them as needed.
- Remind the family about the second home visit requirement. We realize that some host families are interviewed late in the summer, but this visit is required by the U.S. Department of State to ensure that there have been no changes to the home since you conducted the in-home interview (which includes physical changes to the home, changes in family composition, etc.).



HOST FAMILY SCREENING & APPLICATION PROCESS



WHO NEEDS A CBC

- Anyone who lives in the home full-time who is 18 or older or who will turn 18 while the student is living in the home
- Anyone who lives in the home part-time who is 18 or older if he or she will be alone with the student or have responsibility over the student at any time
- Anyone who frequently visits the home (such as a nanny) who is 18 or older if he or she will be alone with the student or have responsibility over the student at any time
- Anyone who acts as a supervising adult for an approved trip on which a student is traveling without the host family or LC

Reference Checks

After a host family has completed a host family application, you should complete all four references they have provided using the Host Family Telephone Reference Check Form that is on our website. The exception to this is a single adult placement, which is defined on page 34. It may be possible to complete the reference checks before the host family turns in their application if you request the information in advance. Some LCs prefer to do this in order to expedite a placement.

Criminal Background Check

Part of the vetting process involves completing a criminal background check (CBC) using a secure online portal. We send invitations for CBCs directly to each person's email address rather than handling release forms that contain sensitive information such as Social Security numbers. The CBC email invitation requests that a recipient clicks a link and enters identifying information into the secure portal. The results are private and will not be shared with LCs, and most CBCs take 2-7 days to complete. We will contact the host family directly if there is any follow-up needed on a background check. Please inform members of the host family that for commonly found names like John Roberts, John Edwards, Jane Seymour, William White, etc., it is not uncommon for the background screening to take longer AND for it to require follow-up due to the slight possibility of falsely associated records. If you have a host family with a common last name, you may want to let them know this. We will also provide the host family with instructions on how to "disassociate" any false records from their profile.

This screening process DOES NOT include a credit check.

HOST FAMILY SCREENING & APPLICATION PROCESS



! NOTE

If there is another exchange participant in the home who is not an American Councils-placed student (this may be a J-1 or an F-1 participant such as someone from another organization, studying at university, participating in an internship/au pair program, etc.), we should be notified **immediately** for further guidance. **There is a possibility that we will still need DP paperwork and approval for this type of placement**, in which case the same restrictions would apply.

Experienced or Returning Host Families

Families who have hosted in the past, or who want to continue hosting year after year, are of great value. It is still necessary that each family go through the full vetting process each year, regardless of their experience with hosting. There is an expedited host family application available on our website that can accompany their original application as long as the original application was completed in 2016 or later. You must still complete all reference checks, but the host family may use the same people each year as references. You may also confirm that existing photos are still valid after you complete the in-home interview in lieu of taking new photos.

Double Placements

Double placements (DPs) are popular with many host families, especially when there are no other children in the home. However, this type of placement does have certain restrictions and requires additional paperwork. Please note the following:

- A student cannot be placed with another student who shares a common language (defined as being able to converse freely) even if they are from two different programs.
- Two students on the same program may be placed together if they do not share a common language (e.g. a FLEX student who speaks Serbian and a FLEX student who speaks Lithuanian or a YES student who speaks Indonesian and a YES student who speaks Arabic). Please keep in mind that many FLEX students speak Russian as a first or second language, thus there may be fewer options for FLEX DPs. If you are not sure, please contact us and we will help clarify.
- Students, natural families, and host families are required to sign paperwork agreeing to a DP.

Please refer to the sidebar for more information about double placements with other J-1 participants not placed by American Councils or with F-1 participants.

HOST FAMILY SCREENING & APPLICATION PROCESS



Notes

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for handwritten notes.

Single Adult Placements

Host families that consist of a single adult (defined as having no one else in the home related to the adult by legal or blood relationship) are considered single adult (SA) placements for the purpose of J-1 visa regulations and require that the student and his or her natural family agree to such a placement. We consider single adults to be viable host families that can offer our students a positive and enriching experience.

To help facilitate the student and natural family's approval for a SA placement, we may ask for more information about the family, along with a welcome letter from the host parent to provide a fuller picture to the student and natural parents in making their decision. Per U.S. Department of State regulations, a member of our team will either conduct two follow-up reference checks after the LC contacts all references or conduct two of the reference checks themselves, as this helps further establish the individual's involvement in his or her local community and that there is an adequate support network for his or her student.

Single parents with children at home are NOT considered single adult placements.

Dual Language Host Families

In order to be eligible to host one of our scholarship exchange students, the primary language spoken in the home must be English. Dual language host families (families who speak the same native language as the student) are asked to sign a Dual Language Form confirming that all persons residing in the home speak English at a high enough level that they are able to support a student in English.

This form also stipulates that host families will speak primarily English among those family members living in the home, regardless of whether they are speaking to the student, in order to both make the student feel more welcome and included in the family and to help the student learn about America's diverse culture through their relationship with each other. If there is a member of the household who does not speak English, host families are asked to provide that information on the form.



CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS & TIPS

? WHAT IS “HALAL”

You will most often hear “halal” used in reference to food, in particular meat. The meaning of halal in Arabic is “permissible.” Halal meat is meat that has been slaughtered according to Islamic law in the Qur’an. This practice is comparable to kosher food in Judaism, which many Americans are more familiar with than halal. The opposite of halal is “haram” meaning “forbidden.” Food that is haram includes any pork, which is why many of our Muslim students do not eat pork products. However, not all Muslim students adhere to halal diets.

To learn more about halal diets so that you may provide guidance for your host families, please refer to the “Demystifying Halal” handout available on our website in the LC Corner.

All placements are considered on a case-by-case basis. However, there are some cultural considerations that you should keep in mind. Please familiarize yourself with the following:

Dietary Restrictions

Some Muslim students may not eat pork for religious reasons and prefer a halal diet. These students (who are usually from YES countries, but not always) may be accustomed to eating only halal meat (meaning meat that is slaughtered humanely while a prayer is recited).

Students accustomed to eating only halal meat are prepared for the possibility that this may not be available in their host communities or that it may be very difficult or expensive to obtain. For students who do not eat pork, we encourage host families to offer non-pork alternatives and to clearly communicate to their students what dishes may contain pork products. Host families are **not** expected to provide halal meat for students. If you have a student that insists that halal meat be provided, please contact us.

Religious Differences

Students are encouraged to view religious institutions in the U.S. as an opportunity for cultural exchange, as well as an outlet for socializing and community service. However, caution should be exercised when placing students with extremely religious families of any faith.

While students understand that they are expected to participate in all host family activities, and many students earn community service hours at their host families’ religious centers (e.g. by watching small children during services), students **cannot** be forced to attend religious services or events if they do not wish to do so. This expectation should be made clear to prospective host families.

Host families **cannot** pressure students to change their religion or to make any life-changing decisions while on program. It is expressly against U.S. Department of State policy for host families to proselytize students (please refer to the Religion Guidelines for Local Coordinators in the Appendices). If you have reason to suspect that one of your students is being proselytized (even if your student does not tell you this directly), please inform us immediately.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS & TIPS

? DID YOU KNOW

Some YES students meet dogs at their D.C. Orientations before going to their host communities! This is not a required activity, but rather an opportunity for them to interact with dogs in a supervised environment.



Pets

Some students may express fear or aversion to pets, especially dogs. For example, in some countries, dogs are mostly kept outside as guard dogs and are not as approachable as their U.S. counterparts. Also, in some predominantly Muslim cultures, dogs (in particular their saliva) are considered unclean and are not welcome as pets in the home. Prior to arrival, students are prepared for the fact that many American families have pets. However, we encourage host families to be sensitive to this issue when introducing their students to their pets. Some strategies for a successful student adaptation to a pet are for the host family to talk to the student about their feelings, outline any expectations regarding the pets (i.e. “off-limit” areas of the home to the pets), and give the student time to adjust. While we do expect students to eventually adjust to pets in the home, it may be unrealistic to expect students to love their host families’ pets right away.

Same Nationality Hosts

Caution should be exercised when placing a student with a host family that shares the same cultural background or nationality. Students must be placed in homes where English is the primary language. If a host family shares the same language with a student, encourage them to choose a student who speaks a different language—even if the potential host family promises to speak English. (Refer to page 34.) Please note once again that students cannot be placed with relatives.

Clusters

Students are most often placed in “clusters.” Your cluster consists of those students placed within 120 miles of you (preferably closer) for whom you have supervision responsibilities. Clusters of at least three students are considered optimal, although every year there are some LCs with only one student. Additional support is given to LCs with clusters of five students or more. In some areas, two LCs who live near each other and within 120 miles of all students may share certain responsibilities for the same cluster, but the supervision responsibilities in terms of safety and soundness are clearly outlined.



CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS & TIPS

+ Inspiring Stories

” Adna, YES-Bosnia & Herzegovina (Ontario, OR)

I absolutely love going to church with my host mom. People at church always welcome me with hugs and smiles. We built strong connections not just between each other, but between our religions. Together with my host family and friends I celebrated Eid, Christmas, and Easter.

Of course diversity is more than just religion. Culture is a wide expression and it consists of many factors. From history, religion, mentality, language, and music to the way people dress, talk, and act, everything is different. Learning and embracing those differences made me rich, but not in a material way. It is a bond between America and me, and most importantly, it is a bond between America and my country. It is built on peace, love, mutual understanding, and diversity.

Gender Considerations

Due to cultural sensitivities, certain YES countries require consent from natural parents and students before placing girls in homes with a host brother or other male relative (other than the host dad) who is 13 or older and living in the home. Even if the male relative is only living in the home part-time (e.g. during college breaks), we need to know. Our office can advise you in these cases, but potential host families should be aware of this extra step. Please contact us for the most up-to-date list of countries that fit this requirement.

Special Considerations

All placements will be carefully considered and evaluated with regard to any cultural considerations. This can include placements with same sex couples or placements with nontraditional family arrangements. In some cases, additional questions may be asked about a placement during the vetting process. On rare occasions, a placement may be rejected by the student's natural family due to special cultural sensitivities of a student's home country or community.

As an LC, you are encouraged to ask for approval of any special host family situation before a placement is confirmed. If you are uncertain about how to address any of these cultural sensitivities with students or host families, please contact us. We may be able to provide resources and guidance.

HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

+ TIPS

We recommend that students take classes that they normally would not be able to choose at home. They may be tempted to take every AP class offered, but we encourage them to avoid having a strictly academic course load that might prove to be overwhelming. Many of our students are used to radically different education systems, and so it may take them time to adjust to the U.S. style.



Requirements and procedures for enrolling foreign exchange students are not uniform across the U.S. or even in your state. These policies vary by school, district, and state. Just because a school exists near a host family does not mean that enrolling a student there will be easy. School systems may have quotas for the number of exchange students that can be enrolled in a certain school or even in the entire district. Some schools may want students to take an exam or have an interview in order to enroll them. Other schools may have early deadlines in order to place an exchange student.

For this reason, it is important for you to become familiar with the particular procedures that exist in your area. This can be done by calling a school or district and asking how to find out more about their policies for enrolling exchange students. Please feel free to use our office as a reference and provide your schools with our most recent CSIET certification (a copy of which is available on our website). We will also gladly contact any school or school board to help resolve an enrollment issue.

Important Enrollment Forms

Once you have ascertained the availability of school slots in a certain area and have received verbal confirmation that a school will accept a student, you need to provide the documents below to the school. Keep in mind that no more than five American Councils students may be enrolled in the same school without first obtaining written authorization from the school. The following documents for enrollment may be found on our website:

- Student's one-page profile (which includes selections from the student's application)
- Student's school application, which includes a letter of introduction from the U.S. Department of State, transcripts, English test, teacher recommendation, and health records (please discuss vaccinations with the school nurse and let us know if any additional vaccinations are required by the school)
- School Enrollment Form with student and LC information completed and signed by both you and a school official

HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT



Nontraditional Schools

Any placement of a student at a private school (regardless of religious affiliation) or other nontraditional school (such as a boarding school, highly specialized charter school, vocational school, etc.) must be approved by the U.S. Department of State (for FLEX and YES students) or American Councils (for HSA students). If the school is religious, it will also require student and natural parent consent.

In most cases, placement at a private school is also dependent on a tuition waiver, as funding is NOT provided to cover this cost. If a private school is being considered, please contact us to find out what additional information may be required to determine whether or not this placement can be approved.

Notes



REQUIRED ORIENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

Host Family, Arrival, & Mid-Year Orientations

The following orientations play an important role in preparing both students and host families for the year, assessing student progress during their time in the U.S., and providing students a setting where they can be together and bring up any concerns that they may have. Supplementary materials mentioned below, along with additional handouts and resources, are available on our website under the LC Corner.

Orientation Type	Audience	Purpose	Timeline	Required Paperwork	Supplementary Materials
Host Family Orientation	Host family; may be held with multiple families in a group orientation	To prepare the host family to support their student	Prior to their student's arrival to the U.S., but after the host family has been fully vetted	Host Family Orientation Form	Host Family Orientation Guide; Host Family Questionnaire
Arrival Orientation	Student; may be held with multiple students in a group orientation	To set the tone for the year, review expectations and rules, and gauge student adjustment	Within 30 days of the student's arrival to his or her host family	Student Arrival Orientation Form	Student Arrival Orientation Guide; Student Questionnaire
Mid-Year Orientation	Student; may be held with multiple students in a group orientation	Allow the student to reflect on accomplishments and goals for the remainder of his or her year in the U.S.	First half of January	Mid-Year Orientation Report in place of the January Monthly Report; Student Mid-Year Orientation Form	Student Mid-Year Orientation Guide

REQUIRED ORIENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

+ TIPS

One of the things students learn at their PDOs that you will hear throughout the year is “Not better, not worse, just different.” This saying reminds students that each exchange experience is unique and that they will be placed in many different communities throughout the U.S. It also encourages students not to look at American culture as “better” or “worse” than their own cultures or compare their host families with others.



Pre-Departure Orientation

All program finalists are required to participate in a Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO). For students recruited by American Councils, PDOs are organized by each overseas field office for finalists from their respective regions. PDOs are held four to six weeks prior to student departure to the U.S. so that students have time to absorb and reflect on the experience. Most PDOs for FLEX and YES students last four days and consist of 12 required sessions and two activities. PDOs are designed to be fun and interactive, but also discuss serious themes and issues that will affect a student's success on the program. The general topics that are covered in PDOs are:

- Participation (in host family and community life)
- Uniqueness of each exchange experience
- Having realistic expectations
- Community service
- Responsibility and problem-solving
- Respecting other opinions/cultural differences
- Red flag issues: rules and laws, male/female roles, religion, food, computer use, attitude and gratitude

All American Councils-organized PDOs for FLEX and YES students employ the team-teaching method where students are divided into medium-sized groups, and all the sessions are team-taught by an American (either American Councils staff member, Peace Corps Volunteer, or other specially-selected U.S. citizen) and a program alumnus or alumna. This ensures that multiple viewpoints of the exchange experience are presented. Staff evaluate student performance and behavior during the entire orientation and address any issues that arise with natural parents and, if need be, with placement organizations.

REQUIRED ORIENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS



WHAT IS "RE-ENTRY"

"Re-entry" refers to the transition the students undergo as they depart the U.S. and return to their home countries. The process of "re-entering" begins before students step on the plane while they are still in their host communities.

The focus of the Re-Entry Workshops is to prepare students for the challenges and opportunities that they will face when they return home.



Re-Entry Workshops

All American Councils FLEX and YES students will be required to attend a Re-Entry Workshop in March or April. This workshop is organized and facilitated by us for our FLEX and YES students exclusively. It is a chance for all students to reflect together on their successes and challenges over the year and on how they have changed. It is also designed to introduce students to the concept and potential challenges of returning home.

Anyone who has spent a significant period of time outside of his or her own country can say that "reverse culture shock" encountered when returning home is often harder to deal with than the culture shock initially encountered in a new country. Special attention is given to the role of the alumni associations and ways that these soon-to-be alumni can get involved with their communities. All student expenses for travel, room and board, and workshop activities are paid for by American Councils.

The workshop is held in Chevy Chase, MD. While this location is considered the Washington, D.C. metro area, the students should not expect to sightsee during the workshop. The Chevy Chase location is selected due to its location near our D.C. office, enabling us to attend sessions, assist with chaperoning responsibilities, and meet with students individually as needed.

HSA students will attend Re-Entry Workshops locally with their Local Coordinators.

D.C. Events for YES Students

All YES students will participate in events in Washington, D.C. either before arrival to their host communities (a D.C. Orientation) or after departing their host communities (a D.C. End-of-Stay Event), respectively. These events are organized and facilitated by the YES program, not the International Student Support Team.



COMMON ADJUSTMENT ISSUES

? “OPS”

“OPS” stands for “on-program support.” This refers to any support that we provide you, your students, and your host families during the program year.

+ TIPS

Your students may find that they are much more dependent on their host families and others for transportation, but they may want to make some time for at least a daily walk or other form of physical activity. They may also be shy and nervous to ask questions—it is likely they may not understand every word that is said, especially in the first weeks of being in an all-English environment, but your students may not admit this to you. Ensure that host families are prepared to repeat what they have said more slowly to their students, and encourage your students to paraphrase what host family members have said back to them to ensure that they received the message. This can help address many issues that accumulate due to misunderstandings.

The most important aspect of supporting your students and host families is regular communication. You should work to make sure that your students and host families trust you early on as a support figure. Many adjustment issues may arise at the beginning of the year, and it is important that both your students and host families know that they can approach you. Check in regularly and independently with them to help ensure that all is going well. Being active and engaged is critical to successfully supporting your students.

Host Family Life

Being in monthly contact with your students and host families is essential since most adjustment issues are two-sided. Try to weigh both sides of the issue and work to speak with host family members and your students either separately or together. Always remember that we want to know about the issues our students and host families are facing. We are a resource to help solve issues before they escalate or challenge the bond between host families and students. Common adjustment issues for our students include:

- Lack of involvement in host family activities
- Food or dietary issues (not liking the food, not wanting to eat when the host family eats, etc.)
- Not following or not understanding host family rules
- Spending excessive amount of time in their bedroom
- Technology and internet usage and/or communicating excessively with friends and family back home or with other exchange students in the U.S.
- Budgeting and issues regarding how their monthly stipends or incidentals allowance are to be spent (for FLEX and YES students)
- Miscommunication due to language, culture, personality, or communication skills

Temporary changes in appetite, sleep patterns, or withdrawing can be normal parts of the adjustment process. If they persist or you have any concerns about these, please contact us.

If you are concerned about a student's mental health, please contact us immediately so that we may work together to address it in the most appropriate manner.



COMMON ADJUSTMENT ISSUES



REMEMBER

If one of your students has an adjustment issue, neither you nor the host family should be in direct communication with the student's natural family about the issue.

Likewise, in these situations, natural family members should not contact their child's host family or LC directly. All information and requests should be relayed through us and then to the appropriate field office. Refer to page 48.



TIPS

One of the larger issues that many students face is excessive communication and use of electronics. Given this is a common adjustment concern, we recommend that host families follow the communication guidelines in this chapter with their students, though we do realize that individual host family rules may differ.

Communication with Family and Friends Back Home

We strongly encourage students to limit their communication with family and friends back home to **once every two weeks**. This is particularly important in your students' first months in the U.S. as they focus on building relationships with their host families, making friends, adjusting to American life, and fulfilling school and program responsibilities. Limiting communication can also apply to communication with other participants on their exchange programs or with those from the same country. Skype and WhatsApp are an inexpensive way for students to call home, as is a calling card. We recommend that host families not allow their students to make international calls on the families' calling plans and that they contact their carriers to find out what rates apply. We also recommend that students schedule calls in advance with family and friends back home, keeping in mind differences in time zones and what times host families are comfortable having their students receive calls.

Electronics and Internet Use

We strongly recommend that students only have computer access in common areas of their homes and NOT in their bedrooms. This may mean moving a computer out of a student's bedroom prior to his or her arrival. We also strongly recommend that host families set clear limits on internet and computer/tablet/smartphone use from the beginning, such as only after completing homework and other responsibilities and limiting time on the internet to no more than 30-60 minutes a day for personal use. If your students bring their own laptops, smartphones, or tablets with them or purchase laptops, smartphones, or tablets while in the U.S., we recommend that these be kept and used only in common areas and NOT in their bedrooms, especially at night. Excessive electronics and internet use can not only contribute to homesickness and difficulties in adjustment, but it can also send a negative message to others, even if unintentional. If your host families are uncomfortable setting rules regarding computer/tablet and internet use, consider asking them to set stricter rules for the first three months that can then be re-evaluated if the students have earned the privilege of more unrestricted computer/tablet and internet use. There is a good chance that students will have adjusted so well that they don't care as much anymore!

COMMON ADJUSTMENT ISSUES

! PHONES

We ask that any students with cell phones provide their numbers to American Councils for our records.

Please note that regardless of whether students use phones provided by their host families or phones that they purchased in the U.S. or brought from home, they are expected to follow all host family rules and American Councils guidelines about cell phone usage. Failure to follow these rules or guidelines may result in phone privileges being restricted.

Cell Phone Use

We discourage your students from having cell phones for unlimited use. In most cases, it can exacerbate homesickness and makes it more difficult for you or your host families to know with whom your students are speaking and what their plans are. However, we realize that many host families prefer that their students have phones where they can reach them, so we recommend students purchase phones with pay-as-you-go plans just for texting and calling, so as to help avoid excessive phone bills related to calls or texting. Students may not pay attention to how much data they are using if they have smartphones with data plans. We also recommend that host families place limits on where and when their students use cell phones, such as not taking it to, or using it at, school, not keeping it in their bedrooms, and not viewing the phone as something that they must have on them at all times.

Please keep in mind that host families are NOT responsible for paying for students' cell phones or phone plans. This expense should come out of students' monthly stipends (for FLEX and YES students) or personal funds. If host families lend students phones to use for the year or add them to their existing family plans, students should pay them the monthly fee, and host families should clearly explain the cost and expectations.

School Life

Students may face challenges with school at the beginning of the year, from registering for classes, to paying fees, to joining activities.

Host families may feel a little overwhelmed by all of these issues, especially if they are not used to parenting a high school student. As a Local Coordinator, it is a good idea to contact your students' school administrators, especially guidance counselors. By keeping in regular contact with them at the beginning of the year, it will help ensure that you are informed of any potential issues that arise during the year. It will also establish you as a representative and support figure for your students if they encounter any adjustment issues at school such as:

- Academic performance (either due to language ability or work ethic)
- Difficulty or reluctance getting involved in school activities
- Difficulty fitting in with peers or making friends



CALLING THE EMERGENCY PHONE

THE AMERICAN COUNCILS EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER IS 800-621-9559.

During the work day between 9AM and 5PM EST (M-F), all emergency calls should be made to our general office number 202-833-7522. However, if there is an emergency outside of business hours, please call the emergency phone number listed above.

The emergency phone is monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (including holidays) by American Councils staff. However, the staff member monitoring the phone may not be part of the International Student Support Team, so be sure to state that your emergency involves a student **placed by American Councils** so that he or she knows to contact us.

While we encourage you, your students, and your host families to contact us in the event of an emergency, there can be some confusion as to what necessitates an emergency. Please refer to the following examples of emergencies and non-emergencies for guidance.

Call the emergency phone

...if a student finds himself or herself involved in a legal issue either as a witness to an event or due to alleged breaking of a U.S. law. American Councils must be notified immediately.

...if a student has to be moved immediately for any reason or if the host family is suddenly unable to host. Please also notify us as to where the student will be staying overnight and what the plan is.

...if a student has an illness or injury that results in hospitalization overnight or that was a safety/soundness issue. **PLEASE NOTE:** Always see to stabilizing the student first in a life-threatening medical situation. Do not call the emergency phone—**call 911!**

...if a student is missing.

...if there is anything that concerns the safety and soundness of a student (allegations of sexual harassment, bullying by host siblings, etc). In these cases, a student should be removed from the home.

Notify us first thing next business day

...if a student has difficulty with school policies or has broken host family or program rules (e.g. student broke curfew) but is not in legal difficulties.

...if a conflict within the host family is causing difficulties, but the family is still willing to host and no safety, soundness, or legal issues have come up.

...if a student has an accident that results in him or her receiving medical care (such as a broken arm, sickness that is essentially resolved/diagnosed, etc.). In these cases, please notify us if the student will be missing any school.

...if there are any insurance issues. These can usually only be resolved during the week when offices are open.

...if there are support issues that are not a safety and soundness issue, such as the host family requesting a counseling call that is not an emergency.

TIPS FOR HANDLING URGENT, NON-EMERGENCY SITUATIONS



REMEMBER

Sometimes, the manner in which a student interacts with you can signify a larger problem. If a student appears to have a problem but will not go into detail, it could mean that the problem is larger than the student wants to admit. This can be a tacit admission of guilt (i.e., not wanting to talk about failing a test because he or she is really failing the entire class), or it could be a sign that the student does not feel safe or comfortable.

If you notice a change in how your student interacts with you or the student begins to be unresponsive concerning a specific topic (especially if that topic is a relationship with a host family member or with someone in the community), this could be a sign that the student feels unsafe. At this point, let us know immediately about your concerns. Try to get more information from the student and also from sources from whom you think you can get reliable information. The safety of our students is our highest priority, and we will actively work to resolve the situation.

1. Take a deep breath (or two) and ask yourself—what is the issue here? Sometimes this is not as easy to answer as it seems.

Focus on the real issue at hand whenever possible. Is it that the student broke a rule or is this yet another step toward the host family losing their trust in the student?

2. Take a moment to document the situation: how it came to your attention, by whom, and what your take on it is.
3. If there is time, gather as many perspectives as possible of the host family, school, or other third party. If you can't gather all of those perspectives, please tentatively plan out when you can get the rest of the information and let us know.

If the student acknowledges breaking host family or program rules, ask him or her to acknowledge it in writing along with why he or she behaved this way. Don't judge if a perspective is right or wrong; you are just gathering perspectives.

If the problem involves social media, try to take a screenshot or otherwise copy the Facebook/Twitter/Instagram, etc. page to document the issue (especially if it is something that should be taken down immediately).

4. Write all of this to your OPS contact to whom you are assigned at the beginning of the year (or write to inbound@americancouncils.org if you are unsure whom to contact). Please include your student's first and last name in the subject heading with a brief description in the subject heading (e.g. "Yuliya Romanova—broke curfew"). This highlights it as a high priority email to us and allows us to address it quickly.

If you respond to an email about an unrelated topic with an OPS issue, it is harder for us to distinguish that it is urgent when checking our email.

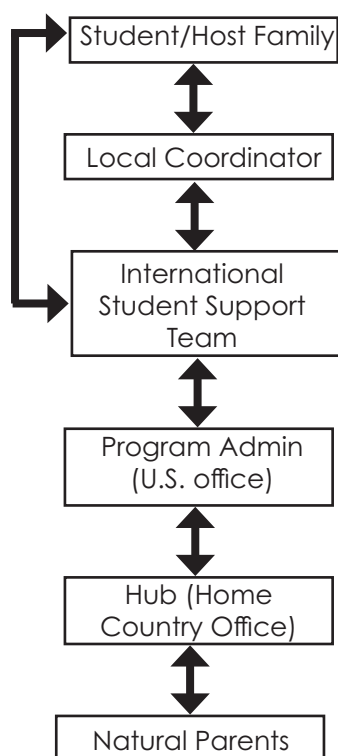
5. Follow-up with a phone call if you have had no response to your message (by email or by phone) by 11AM EST the next business day. We are here to support you in this.



CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

? WHAT IS "HUB"

You may hear us refer to "contacting hub," which is another name for an overseas field office/recruiting office. This may or may not be an American Councils office depending on your student's home country (many YES students are recruited by partner organizations).



At times there are situations when we will contact your students' natural families to gain support, ask that they encourage their children to listen to guidance from their host families, LCs, and us, or inform them of a recent event. Examples of situations where we would contact a student's natural parents are:

- Student or natural family emergencies
- Change of host family
- Notifying natural parents of significant OPS issues, including requests for early returns
- Health and welfare inquiries from the natural parents or students
- Cultural or personal background inquiries related to student adjustment
- Natural parent permission for travel requests
- Interpretation or explanation of program components, policies, and cultural differences
- Forwarding warning and probation letters

We follow a chain of communication in order to share this information with natural parents. Our department does not communicate directly with natural parents. Instead, we contact students' program administration (for FLEX or YES) and request that they communicate a message to the overseas offices, who then communicate directly with the natural parents. This same system is explained to natural families for when they may have a question or concern about their son or daughter in the U.S.

If a member of the student's natural family reaches out to you or to a member of the host family directly in any of the situations listed above, please let us know right away so that we can keep all parties updated on the situation.



MONITORING & REPORTING

+ TIPS

Perhaps the most challenging part of settling in is developing meaningful friendships with other students at school and in the community. Encourage your students to be patient! It takes time to meet people and form friendships. The best thing your students can do is become actively involved with various extra-curricular activities at school or in the community. They will not only enjoy the activities themselves, but they may also make some good friends in the process.

Contact With Students and Host Families

You must maintain a schedule of regular, separate, personal monthly contact with both your students and your host families. Having separate contact with students and host families gives both sides the opportunity to bring up topics that they may not feel comfortable discussing in front of each other. This also reinforces to students and host families that you are a support figure and resource and have each party's interests and concerns in mind. Contact between you and your students and host families:

- **Must occur within 30 days of each student's arrival to his or her host family** (to perform an Arrival Orientation). This may count as your in-person contact for August or September (depending on which month you perform the orientation). Similarly, you may count your Mid-Year Orientation as your January in-person contact with your students so long as you speak to each student individually.
- **Occurs at least once every month.** Every other month must be in person (e.g., individualized contact during a cluster activity, picking up a student for lunch, or meeting in a private space in the host family's home). During the other months, contact can be online (such as by email or Facebook messenger) or by phone.
- **May be a in group setting** with all of your students and host families (such as a potluck, enhancement activity, etc.), so long as you set aside time to speak with each student and host family privately.

MONITORING & REPORTING

! REMEMBER

If you don't regularly check in and take the initiative, your students and host families may not feel comfortable approaching you about an issue. Your efforts to make sure that your students and host families know that you are open to hearing their concerns will pre-empt many support issues.

By following up on issues, you are showing that you listen to your students and host families, which is an important part of building trust. You may find it helpful to take notes and follow up on any events or issues mentioned in previous conversations. They are also helpful when reporting concerns and issues to us.

What Is Sufficient Contact?

How do you know if you have had sufficient contact with your students and host families? How do you know if you are doing enough? Imagine yourself in your students' or host families' place and ask yourself the following questions:

- Have my students or host families had the opportunity to approach me either while we spoke in person, on the phone, or online about a situation that might be embarrassing to them?

If you answered: "Yes, my students and host families know that they can call or email me anytime about issues! No one called, so everything must be fine." This is NOT sufficient contact. Remember, your students and host families may not email you about an issue that they regard as particularly delicate or embarrassing. Instead, take the time to ask them about how things are going and, if they have any concerns, encourage them to discuss these issues with you (and with each other).

If you answered: "Both my students and my host families seemed very comfortable when I saw them together this month. Furthermore, I have examples from each that show that they are adjusting well to each other, and these were expressed to me privately when we spoke." You are well on your way to sufficient contact.

- Do I know generally what is going on in my students' and host families' lives?

You don't need to know everything about your students and host families, but you should know general news related to the students or host families (such as change in family composition) and any major issues happening. Whether it's as simple as asking about an upcoming trip (or holiday plans) or knowing your students' friends and major events at school, you should be able to follow up on any potentially outstanding issues. For example: "How did the insurance reimbursement go for Ahmed's hospital visit? I know that you were wondering how to submit receipts last time. Did it go smoothly? Do you still need help with anything?"



MONITORING & REPORTING

+ Inspiring Stories



Veronika,
FLEX-Ukraine
(Waianae, HI)

My American experience turned into something more than just moving to another place or meeting new people. It gave me an opportunity to open new sides of myself, and it became an amazing chance to make bigger steps in my life. Besides hundreds of new friends from all around the world and obtaining your second family and home, where you will always be loved and needed, you'll get something more important: new experiences and memories. These memories are a treasure box filled with pictures you took, music you listened to, culture you embraced, places you visited, and emotions you felt. And your host family, new friends, and exchange team will always be able to remind you about all you went through and make this box even fuller.

LC Monthly Reports

In addition to contacting us by phone or by email whenever student issues arise, you need to submit Monthly Reports about each of your students using our online reporting system so that we can track adjustment and safety and soundness issues. At the beginning of the year, emails containing links to individual student reports may go to spam, so please check your spam and junk filters if you have not received anything by September 1st.

You are required to complete each Monthly Report by the end of the month. You must complete all Monthly Reports for all of your students in order to receive your honoraria.

While the purpose of the Monthly Report is to track our students' progress, when a student issue arises, please contact American Councils by phone or email right away, even if you have not completed your Monthly Report.

Student Monthly Check-in Reports

Similarly, we require students to submit their own Monthly Check-in Reports directly to us. We use these reports to track student progress in different areas throughout the year and report this progress to our funders. A link will be sent via our online reporting system to the email address of each student each month. They have until the end of the month to complete their reports.

MONITORING & REPORTING



Notes

Host Family Reports

Feedback from host families is vitally important to the exchange experience. We are always eager to hear about how their experiences are going, and they are always welcome to contact us directly to share stories, photos, etc. We also provide them opportunities three times per year to share feedback via our online reporting system. These host family reports are typically sent at the beginning of the year, mid-year, and the end of the year. They are a way for host families to share their experiences in-depth, and they are a reference tool we use periodically to modify program policies and procedures.

Additional Communication

In addition to regular contact with you at the local level, we will also keep in direct contact with your students and host families in a number of ways throughout the year. This includes:

VIP Calls

About every three months, students and host families should expect a call from American Councils. They can always call us sooner if they need anything, but this regular call gives us a chance to catch up and learn how they are doing.

Site Visits

Our D.C.-based team, as well as our friends at the U.S. Department of State who fund our programs, visit with many students, host families, and schools throughout the year. While we can't visit every single one of them, we look forward to visiting as many communities across the country as we can and learning firsthand about all of the exciting things our students and host families are up to during the year. We will inform you in advance of any site visits to your cluster (and hopefully meet with you as well).



LEADING ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES



Your students' exchange programs present them with the opportunity to participate in American school and family life, thereby promoting mutual respect for cultural diversity and developing an awareness of shared human values. You serve as a primary resource during this exchange experience and are expected to contribute to the program goals by organizing enhancement activities on different themes for your FLEX and YES students over the course of the year.

The Four Themes

You are required to organize and execute a minimum of two different enhancement activities for your FLEX and YES students, each covering a unique theme in American society. A limited amount of funding (detailed in the Complete Honorarium and Finance Policy for 2018-19 located in the Appendices) is available to you to help plan these activities. HSA students are welcome to attend these activities, but there is no funding available for them.

Many LCs find that there are inexpensive or free local activities in which students can participate that easily meet the program requirements.

The four themes are:

- Leadership/Citizenship
- Democracy/Government
- Free Market Economy & Entrepreneurship
- Diversity in American Culture

More information about each theme may be found on the next page.





CHAPTER 9: LEADING ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Leadership/Citizenship

Leadership is “organizing a group of people to achieve a common goal.” This type of activity should focus on the difference that both leaders AND individuals can make in their communities and how to achieve leadership positions.

- Hold a leadership skills workshop.
- Analyze a historic figure (e.g. Abraham Lincoln).
- Interview Kiwanis Club members about being community leaders.
- Attend public speaking events.
- Participate in debate competitions.
- Get involved in Model United Nations.

Democracy/Government

This activity can focus either on the U.S. government or the more general concept of democracy. The equal participation of all citizens is fundamental to American society, and while exchange students have some knowledge of the U.S. government, they have not yet experienced it firsthand.

- Visit a state capital.
- Interview local government officials.
- Attend a city council or school board meeting.
- Shadow local police or firefighters.
- Attend lectures or host guest speakers.
- Meet with a local judge and observe a trial.
- Observe voter registration.

Free Market Economy & Entrepreneurship

How individuals, groups, and businesses work in a market economy to create successful ventures is something that many exchange students do not have firsthand knowledge of in their home countries. A free market economy is an integral part of American life.

- Visit local business leaders and entrepreneurs.
- Tour Whole Foods to discuss their support of local businesses and their business model. Ask to speak with your local Whole Foods manager or marketing specialist.
- Visit Costco to discuss the warehouse shopping model.
- Visit local businesses where proprietors can show students how their businesses work and what skills it takes to run successful ventures.
- Help organize a community garage sale. Don't forget to check if you need a permit for your area!
- Tour larger companies located near you (Boeing, Frito Lay, etc.) They often have community outreach programs to discuss how corporations operate worldwide.

Diversity in American Culture

Students often admire, and are surprised by, the American experience of people of diverse ethnicities, backgrounds, and religions forming a cohesive whole while holding on to their own unique traditions. Through this activity, you can help students understand the concept of the American melting pot.

- Visit a civil rights monument or museum, and examine a historic figure such as Martin Luther King, Jr. or Rosa Parks and their impact.
- Visit historical preservation societies, cultural museums, or cultural fairs.
- Visit minority communities in the U.S. (such as Amish communities) or meet with members of local ethnic enclaves to learn more about them, and explore how they incorporate broader elements of American culture into their own traditions and beliefs.
- Explore how people with disabilities are perceived in the U.S. and what accommodations they have access to in your community.
- Arrange an interfaith tour of churches and focus on the role that multiple religions had in forming the American notion of religious tolerance.



LEADING ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES



+ Notes

Planning Enhancement Activities

We highly recommend that you plan out the enhancements you want to conduct during the year and what respective themes they are likely to cover. You do not need to follow a set schedule, but you should plan to have your students participate in at least one enhancement activity per semester. Each activity should cover a different topic.

If you supervise only one FLEX or YES student, we may explore opportunities for funding to be used for your student to participate in activities with another nearby cluster of students or in individualized activities within the enhancement activity themes. This situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

When meeting with your FLEX and YES students for an enhancement activity, you should structure it to include the following: an introduction and discussion of the goal(s) of the activity, the activity itself, and then a time afterward for reflection and discussion. In discussing the activity, talk with students about their experiences and what they've learned. You might also explore with them how this experience and knowledge relates to life in their home countries.

Reporting Enhancement Activities

We document enhancement activities in Quarterly Reports to the U.S. Department of State. Even if you don't intend to submit for reimbursements for a low-cost activity, we would like to know what you did, and we need you to report it for purposes of paying an honorarium.

In addition to the documentation that you send for reimbursement requests or to claim an honorarium, please forward us photographs of your enhancement activities, as well as a short description of what took place and any student feedback.

Details on reimbursement amounts and honoraria are available in the Complete Honorarium and Finance Policy for 2019-20 in the Appendices.



COMMUNITY SERVICE

+ TIPS

Your students may be completely new to the concept of community service. Offer your help or advice as to how they can complete it, as well as suggestions for places to contact for community service opportunities.

! REMEMBER

Your students are required to complete at least 30 hours of community service during their program year. We ask that they try at least three different types of community service.

Failure to complete this requirement may result in disciplinary action (such as a warning letter), or travel or other privileges may be denied.

Community Service Requirements

Community service is an integral part of your students' exchange programs. Service to better students' host communities directly reinforces many of the program goals by showing that individuals and like-minded groups can effect positive change to confront societal problems. When they become alumni, it is expected that students apply what they have learned from their community service activities by devoting their energies to improving their communities in their home countries.

We require students to complete a **minimum of 30 hours** of community service. We believe that it is important for students to be involved in a variety of community service projects and activities and that each type of community service challenges students to grow in different ways. For this reason, students are expected to participate in at least three (3) different types of community service during the year.

Each student receives a chart for logging community service hours and will be asked to comment on their community service activities each month in their Monthly Check-in Reports. For those FLEX and YES students who complete 100 hours of qualified community service, or who are on-track to complete them before their departure from the U.S., a special certificate from the U.S. Department of State will be sent to them provided that the students return their community service logs to us on time when we request them.

The Role of Community Service

Our students learn about community service and what a large role it plays in our programs at their Pre-Departure Orientations (PDOs). However, most students will not know how they can get involved in their host communities until they actually arrive and begin navigating those communities themselves. While PDOs will prepare students to fulfill their community service requirement, they cannot prepare students for specific community service opportunities available in their host communities. That is where you can be especially important in fulfilling this goal, by helping your students to identify a variety of community service options in your area and to try new activities.



COMMUNITY SERVICE

+ TIPS

Community service is a broad concept, and our students have participated in many different types of activities. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of service activities that challenge them to use different skills and interact with different groups of people.

! REMEMBER

As students seek out community service opportunities, it's important to remember that community service benefits a person's local community and addresses a particular need that is in the interest of the greater good.

Community service should not be confused with simple courtesies such as helping to bring in the groceries or household chores.

Contact us if you are unsure whether something counts as community service.

Community Service: 30+ Hours, Three Types!

Examples of places where students can perform community service:

- Nursing homes or hospitals to read to patients or cheer them up
- Community events for children
- Retirement communities to spend time with the elderly
- Tutoring or mentoring kids
- Community centers to assist with answering the phone or similar activities
- After-school programs to study with or watch kids whose parents are still at work
- Animal shelters
- Recycling centers in your local community
- Homeless shelters or soup kitchens to help feed the hungry/homeless
- Centers or churches that collect food or clothing for the needy
- Libraries to help shelve books or organize
- Local charities

Service Clubs

Many American high schools have community service groups that are active in a range of community projects. Our students are required to join a leadership or service club at school or in the community, but they may not know what clubs fulfill this requirement. Students may wish to join a service club in order to help them fulfill their community service hours. Examples include:

- Key Club
- Interact Club
- Kiwanis
- Leo Club (Lion's Club)
- Red Cross
- FFA
- National Beta Club



Example of a community service activity

Not a community service activity

Babysitting without pay so that others can participate at a community event (such as watching small children during religious services)

Babysitting for a neighbor (even without pay)

Cultural presentation that is specifically tied to a non-IEW event for a larger cause such as a community fundraiser

Cultural presentations to host families or friends or one of the three presentations required for IEW

Participating in a community orchestra concert or theatre production

All practices associated with preparing for a school production—however, if as part of the production, there is also group set-building or publicity work outside of the student's assigned role, that would also count as community service

Fun runs/walks to raise money for specific, organized causes

Training runs to complete fun runs

Community service tutor or peer mediator, taking notes for another student in class who has a disability or injury (when organized by the teacher/school)

Being a teacher's aide

COMMUNITY SERVICE

! REMEMBER

We reserve the right to determine what counts toward the 100 hours of community service and who ultimately receives a certificate. Hours completed as part of disciplinary action are usually not counted toward the certificate, and those students who return home early as a result of disciplinary action are not granted the certificate even if they have completed 100 or more hours.

American Councils is asked quarterly by the U.S. Department of State to report on FLEX and YES student achievements while on program. We use the information reported to us by you and by your students to give a picture of how our students are getting involved in their communities.

Providing Guidance for Community Service

Your role as an LC with regard to community service is three-fold: acting as an advisor of sorts to your students looking for community service opportunities, relaying information from your students to us about the amount and type of community service in which your students participate, and hopefully organizing your cluster's participation in a community service event for Global Youth Service Day in April.

It is **not** your responsibility to arrange all community service activities for your students. It is important to let students know at their arrival orientations that they are responsible for their hours. You may be a resource, but only one of many. Inform your students of service clubs at their schools and prepare a list of organizations that may be good community service options. Be open to questions that students may have about community service. You may also want to advise your contacts at your students' schools about the community service requirement and inform them that your students will be investigating community service options at school.

Even before your students arrive, discuss community service with your host families. Many of our students do community service through organizations with which their host families are affiliated or through host families' places of worship. However, some students will not be as proactive, and the responsibility for arranging community service for students should **not** fall on host families.

Reporting Community Service

Students should keep you updated about their community service on a regular basis. During your monthly check-ins, ask them how much they have completed and request copies of their community service logs. This log is available on our website and contains space for students to report the total number of community service hours completed and to provide a description of what the service entailed.

If one of your students does not seem to be completing his or her community service requirement of 30 hours, and you still have concerns after discussing it with him or her, please let us know as soon as possible.



CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS

+ Inspiring Stories

” Progga, YES—
Bangladesh
(Waterloo, IA)

I had the most amazing time as an exchange student during IEW. The many questions that the people in the community asked me made me feel that they really liked my presentations a lot. I sang traditional songs of my country, taught them some folk dance, made them play some traditional instruments I had brought with me, painted henna on the girls' hands, and so on. It was one of the best weeks in the U.S.



Cultural Presentations

Each of your students is required to make at least three (3) cultural presentations during International Education Week (IEW), which occurs in November (see page 65). However, students are also encouraged to make cultural presentations throughout the year.

A cultural presentation is not a casual conversation with friends or family, but a real chance for your students to improve their public speaking skills while teaching Americans about their cultures and home countries. Even if your students are experienced public speakers, they may be nervous about their English skills or they may want to practice with you. We have created the following guidelines for cultural presentations to help your students plan theirs.

A cultural presentation is:

- At least 20 minutes in length.
- In front of an audience of at least 10-20 people.
- A chance for students to teach others about their favorite things from home, whether it's family traditions, popular food or dances, or common phrases or words in their native languages.

Examples of places where students can make cultural presentations:

- Schools in their host communities (including their high schools)
- Religious centers
- Homes for the elderly
- Libraries





LEADERSHIP CLUBS

Signing up for a school club or activity at the beginning of the school year will help your students feel more at home as they adjust to life in the U.S.

Be sure to provide advice or recommendations on what type of leadership clubs and activities are available in your community!

+ Notes

Why Should My Students Join A Leadership Club?

Your students can make the most out of their time in the U.S. by becoming involved in school life and extracurricular activities. Not only will it help your students achieve their program goals, but your students will make friends and help out others in their communities.

Leadership clubs help your students to build confidence, increase understanding of their peers, and learn various ways to work with others. Encourage your students to join clubs and activities!

Some leadership clubs our students have joined in the past include:

American Red Cross Club—for students interested in humanitarian work

D.A.R.E.—advocates for prevention against drug and alcohol abuse

Future Business Leaders of America—for students interested in business careers

Future Leaders of America—encourages young people to be leaders in their community

Interact Club (part of the Rotary Club)—community service projects organized by young people

Junior Achievement—teaches life skills like saving money and planning for your education

Key Club—community service activities like cleaning up parks and organizing food drives

Leo Club (part of the Lions Club)—community service projects managed by young people

Model United Nations—an authentic simulation of the UN General Assembly or other multilateral body that introduces students to the world of diplomacy, negotiation, and decision-making

National FFA Organization—for students interested in agricultural education

Peer Mediation—teaches conflict resolution skills among peers to prevent problems like bullying

Student Council—student-organized governments at your students' schools. There may be requirements for joining.

Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)—encourages positive activism against drinking, drugs, and destructive behavior



HOW CAN MY STUDENTS LEARN LEADERSHIP SKILLS?

1. Join leadership or service clubs at school or in their communities.

Your students must join at least one leadership or service club, but they may choose to join multiple clubs. Ideas include: Interact, Key Club, Best Buddies, Model U.N., student government, and other service and leadership activities. See pages 57 and 61.

2. Complete a minimum of 30 hours of community service.

Your students must complete their community service through involvement in at least three different types of volunteering. Community service is a great way for them to meet new people with similar interests and to learn more about their host communities. If their host families are already involved in community service, it can be a great way to spend time together.

Ideas include, but are not limited to: community service at a local soup kitchen, joining a neighborhood cleanup, assisting the elderly, community service associated with a school club or interest group, a faith-based youth group community service activity, etc. See pages 56-59.

3. Make a minimum of three (3) cultural presentations for International Education Week, which will take place November 18-22, 2019.

See page 65 for more information about this requirement.

Since at least one presentation must be given at school, have your students speak to their guidance counselors, teachers, or school administrators to determine how their school can benefit from cultural presentations.

4. Participate in a Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) activity, which will take place April 17-19, 2020.

Discuss GYSD at your students' Mid-Year Orientations. You can plan an event together while encouraging your students to take a leadership role in planning their own events. See page 66.

5. Achieve any personal goals they may have while in the U.S.



CONTESTS, WORKSHOPS, & MORE

During the year, your students will hear from us about different opportunities that make their program year memorable. Some of these are organized by their programs and some are organized by us.

Contests and workshops change a bit from year to year, but here are a few that typically occur.

+ Inspiring Stories

” Aibika, FLEX–
Kyrgyzstan
(Twin Falls, ID)

Exchange programs help students to find their paths in life, to see the world from different perspective. Being in different environments, we try to adjust and accept everything unfamiliar and try to make new friends and a new life. There are so many benefits for both American and exchange students. Our generation is the future, and by sharing cultures and knowledge, we establish relations and become friends.



CONTESTS



WORKSHOPS

While your students may have opportunities to participate in contests and competitions at school and in their communities throughout the year, American Councils also holds several competitions and workshops.

Contests

International Education Week Contests

Each year, we hold a series of contests for International Education Week in multiple categories such as Best PowerPoint Presentation; Best Photo; Best Artistic Response; Best Written Response; and Best Creative Non-PowerPoint Presentation. **Students must complete their required three IEW presentations in November** to be eligible to compete in these contests. Winners are generally announced the first week of December.

Social Media and Program Year Contests

The International Student Support Team holds various contests for students during the program year. While the contests may vary from year to year, typically it includes the “My American Experience” Essay Contest. Winners are generally announced the first week of May. In addition, encourage your student to keep an eye out for fun contests on our social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) throughout the year!

CONTESTS, WORKSHOPS, & MORE

+ Inspiring Stories

” Mayssa, YES-
Tunisia
(Hyattsville, MD)

Upon reflecting on my year, I am grateful that I got the opportunity to achieve so many personal goals and learn so much from all the experiences I had and the great people I met including my host family. But now, it's time to start thinking about the next step of the program, which is giving back to Tunisia. I am glad I got the chance to go to CEW where I got inspired to start a grass-roots project in my country, one that enables troubled youth to come together and engage in creative and enriching activities after school. Moreover I intend to continue advocating for the environment and I plan on starting a UNICEF club at my school. I am ready to go back, and I am more determined than ever to share what I learned as an alumna.



FLEX and YES Workshops

Civic Education Week (CEW)

Each spring, American Councils and the American Civics Center bring about 200 FLEX students and, separately, 200 YES students to four one-week workshops in Washington, D.C. These workshops provide an opportunity for students to gain a better understanding of some of the key concepts and values that are an integral part of U.S. society and culture. During CEW, students have a chance to learn firsthand about the U.S. federal system of government and other important concepts through seminar discussions, briefings, and meetings on Capitol Hill.

Workshop for Youth Leaders in English Teaching (WYLET)

In the spring, about 30 students are selected to come to Washington, D.C. to learn classroom teaching and leadership skills. The workshop focuses on developing students' abilities to teach English to other youth. Activities include interactive and reflective sessions on teaching English; a teaching practicum; site visits to local schools and education organizations; and cultural activities designed to support gains in mutual understanding and global citizenship.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: TWO KEY EVENTS

? DID YOU KNOW

During IEW 2018, American Councils students made over 300 presentations to over 9,800 people in their host schools and communities!



+ International Education Week

Visit

<http://iew.state.gov>

for more details, including toolkits and other resources!

International Education Week

International Education Week (IEW) is an opportunity to celebrate the benefits of international education and exchange worldwide. This joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education is part of their efforts to promote programs that prepare Americans for a global environment and attract future leaders from abroad to study, learn, and exchange experiences in the United States. IEW will take place November 18-22, 2019.

+ Global Youth Service Day

Visit the website

<http://www.gysd.org>

for ideas or to read about an event already planned in your community.

As this is so important to program goals, participation in IEW is mandatory for all students. It provides a wonderful forum for your students to represent their countries in myriad ways. We require each student to make at least three (3) presentations about his or her home country. We ask that they make one at their schools and two in their communities (which includes other schools). PowerPoint presentations, flip charts, dance/music routines, samples of traditional food, or anything that is well-prepared and informative have been well-received by audiences in the past. These presentations should serve to give your students pride in their home countries and the accomplishment of speaking before an audience. IEW presentations are also a great time to promote hosting, so be sure to have brochures, sign-up sheets, and more information available to distribute.

To share their efforts, serve as models for future students, and because it's FUN, American Councils provides competitions into which students can enter their presentations. See page 63.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: TWO KEY EVENTS



Notes

Global Youth Service Day

Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) is the largest annual service event in the world. The next GYSD will occur April 17-19, 2020 in over a hundred countries worldwide. It is a popular alumni event overseas, and it is a wonderful time for students to think about what types of community service activities they may get involved in when they return home.

You do not have to plan your own event, although you are more than welcome to do so. Planning an event does not have to be a very involved process. Find out what events are planned in your community for GYSD or invite your students and host families to participate in a structured group activity such as a park clean-up in April. Above all, encourage your students to come up with ideas and projects that they feel passionate about. Please refer to the Complete Honorarium and Finance Policy for 2019-20 for more information about the reimbursement policy for GYSD events. We also encourage you to check out the GYSD website (<http://gysd.org>) for toolkits. There are sometimes grants offered as well.

Please let us know what you plan to do for GYSD. This event receives a lot of attention from the U.S. Department of State each year, and we would like to publicize your event. It is an integral part of the American Councils alumni program. Participation by your students while on program is an opportunity for them to feel a part of a much larger community as alumni are also preparing projects in your students' home countries.



STUDENT STIPEND

Understanding finances while on program—as well as how to budget accordingly—can be challenging for many students. This section details the money your FLEX and YES students will receive while on program—that is, the student stipend and incidentals allowance.

Student Stipend (FLEX and YES students only)

For every month your FLEX and YES students are in the U.S., they will receive a monthly stipend of \$125. In August and April, your students will receive a double stipend, which means that they receive \$250 as a lump sum for two months, but then they will not receive a stipend the following month. This is done to account for the high degree of variability in student arrival and departure dates. Your students and host families will receive information about student stipends, as well as a schedule of stipend payments, in their welcome packets.

Amount	Purpose	How it Works	What Can Be Covered	What Can't Be Covered
\$125	For a student's everyday spending on toiletries and social expenses	The monthly stipend is mailed out upon completion of a student's Monthly Check-in Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social expenses (activities with friends, movies, sporting events, etc.)• Necessary hygiene products that are not the responsibility of a host family (shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, make-up, cologne, etc.)• Phone and Internet costs that a student may incur• A small amount of savings that can cover shipping items home at the end of the year or other end-of-year expenses that are not covered by a student's incidentals allowance (for example: clothing for a formal dance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A student is not allowed to save the money to take home at the end of the year• The stipend is not intended to cover school lunches. It is a host family's responsibility to provide their student with a packed lunch or lunch money. However, if a student is offered a packed lunch and he or she chooses not to take it, it is then the student's responsibility to purchase his or her own lunch.

INCIDENTALS ALLOWANCE

! CANNOT

Each FLEX and YES student has up to \$300 to draw on for eligible expenses, but understand that if he or she doesn't use the \$300 during the year, the student CANNOT take it home or use it on items beyond the intended purpose of the allowance.

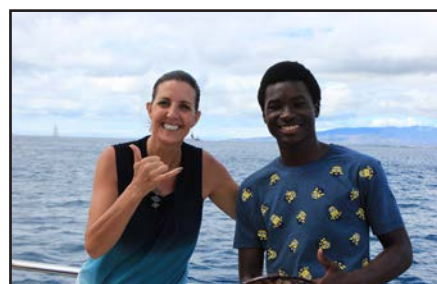
Incidentals Allowance (FLEX and YES students only)

Each FLEX and YES student is allotted up to \$300 for "incidental" expenses that occur throughout the year. The incidentals allowance is intended to help your students and host families offset costs of school-required fees and to purchase necessary items for participation in their schools and in their communities.

The chart below outlines some of the eligible expenses, as well as some expenses that are NOT reimbursable under this fund. If your students or host families are in doubt about whether an item is school-related, they should contact us before making the purchase.

Amount	Purpose	How it works	What Can Be Covered	What Can't Be Covered
\$300	Start-up fund for school-related items. Both the host family and student should agree on what is to be paid with this fund.	Reimbursement only. If in doubt about expense eligibility, a student should contact us before purchasing. To claim: Complete & submit Reimbursement Form for Students and Host Families (see pages 71-72) with copies of receipts.	School fees (textbooks, classroom activities, uniform); school supplies; backpack; school yearbook; climate-appropriate clothing up to \$100 out of the total \$300 (or more if a student has prior approval from our office); sports equipment for school; sports physicals for extracurricular sports	TOEFL/SAT fees or any other university-related expenses; AP exam fees; CDs; computer gadgets; computers/tablets; school lunches; magazines; personal hygiene items or services; phone cards; luggage or excess luggage fees; class ring; teeth cleaning, prom/homecoming clothing or fees; cap & gown/graduation fees; school bus/transportation to school; cell phones and cell phone bills

INCIDENTALS ALLOWANCE



Things to Keep in Mind

- The allowance is intended for necessary items (school supplies, school fees, activity fees, etc.). Generally, optional personal expenses will not be reimbursed, although some expenses for necessary clothing will be covered, as will all clothing required by your students' schools. The incidentals allowance will not cover gifts, hygiene products, makeup, or non-program-related testing (AP exams, SAT, ACT, TOEFL, etc.).
- While the incidentals allowance does NOT cover prom or homecoming clothing, it does cover clothing necessary for school (or winter outerwear if your student comes from a warm-weather climate) up to \$100 initially. Your students may also choose to ask for more clothing reimbursement later in the year after determining with their schools and host families that there are no other expenses that qualify for this. If they feel they need to spend more than this, they should contact us for prior approval.
- It functions on a reimbursement-only basis. This means that proper documentation (receipts) must be kept and submitted in a timely manner to us in order to access this funding. We suggest that students and host families submit early so that if something is not covered, they still have time to submit for other expenses if needed.
- To request reimbursement, students must complete the Reimbursement Form for Students and Host Families (see pages 71-72) in its entirety and attach copies of the receipts with the items and amounts for reimbursement circled. They should add a description of the expense. Students can email the request to inbound@americancouncils.org. Receiving a reimbursement check typically takes about three weeks.
- Both host families and students must sign off on requests for reimbursement. This way, all parties will be able to track how much has been claimed and how much remains. You can help your host families and students keep track of purchases if needed.
- A good deal of incidental expenses occur at the beginning of the school year, but it is good to remind your students that additional expenses (such as yearbooks) can occur later in the year, too.
- The minimum that we will reimburse for at one time is \$50 unless it is the last request of the year.



TAXABLE INCOME

! NOTE

Please note that while we try to facilitate this process for your student by directing your host family or your student to resources and information from the IRS, we cannot offer tax advice.

Taxable Income (FLEX and YES students only)

According to the regulations of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), many of the payments to your FLEX and YES students or expenses paid on their behalf by American Councils are considered taxable income.

In the fall, your FLEX or YES student will receive information about applying for an ITIN (Individual Tax Identification Number). In the spring semester, your student will receive documents from us explaining the federal tax filing procedure and notifying your student of his or her total income for the tax year. Please be assured that in the past, students have not been required to personally pay any taxes. However, we do appreciate your students' attention to the necessary paperwork.

Income Tax Reduction (Host Families)

Host families are eligible for a \$50 income tax deduction for each month that a student is living in their home for 15 or more days. We will provide them with additional information and documentation for this in January.

+ Notes



Reimbursement Form for Students and Host Families

Updated April 2019

Instructions for students:

- Review your Student Handbook for full details of your student finances before submitting this request. Incidentals and medical funds are available for specific types of costs on a reimbursement basis. \$300 total in incidentals is available for FLEX and YES students for the academic year.
- Number each receipt and list corresponding number below. Receipts must always accompany requests.
- Please email (inbound@americancouncils.org) or fax (202-833-7523) this form along with clear images of receipts. If you do mail your request, send **copies** of receipts, **not originals**, in case your correspondence gets lost in the mail.

After familiarizing yourself with guidelines for reimbursement, please contact the International Student Support Team at inbound@americancouncils.org with questions. Please allow 3-4 weeks' turnaround time to receive a reimbursement check.

Student Name:

Host Family:

Local Coordinator:

Date:

NON-CLOTHING

**Always bill medical to insurance first. AC reimburses copays and expenses required to attend school that were denied by insurance.*

Receipt # <i>Ex: 1</i>	Store / Vendor <i>Ex: Staples</i>	Item / Purpose <i>Ex: school supplies</i>	\$ Amount <i>Ex: \$10.99</i>

Please continue list on back of this page if needed →

Subtotal for non-clothing items above: \$

CLOTHING

**Up to \$100 cumulative first semester unless permitted by AC in advance. Please note if an item is for a school uniform.*

Receipt # <i>Ex: 1</i>	Store / Vendor <i>Ex: Target</i>	Item / Purpose <i>Ex: sweater</i>	\$ Amount <i>Ex: \$29.73</i>

Please continue list on back of this page if needed →

Subtotal for clothing items: \$

Name of Person to be Reimbursed:

GRAND TOTAL of all items: \$

Student Signature:

Date:

Host Parent Signature:

Reimbursement Form for Students and Host Families

Updated April 2019

Optional: Reimbursement Request Items Page 2

NON-CLOTHING (continued from front page)

**Always bill medical to insurance first. AC reimburses copays and expenses required to attend school that were denied by insurance.*

Receipt # <i>Ex: 1</i>	Store / Vendor <i>Ex: Staples</i>	Item / Purpose <i>Ex: school supplies</i>	\$ Amount <i>Ex: \$10.99</i>

Subtotal for non-clothing items above: \$

CLOTHING (continued from front page)

**Up to \$100 cumulative first semester unless permitted by AC in advance. Please note if an item is for a school uniform.*

Receipt # <i>Ex: 1</i>	Store / Vendor <i>Ex: Target</i>	Item / Purpose <i>Ex: sweater</i>	\$ Amount <i>Ex: \$29.73</i>

Subtotal for clothing items above: \$

Student Name:

Student Signature:

Date:

This page is optional. Use this to continue list of items for requested reimbursement. The front page is required.
Grand total of all costs must be on front page.



SNAPSHOT OF STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN



NOTE

In the event of a health emergency, **call 911!** Do not delay emergency treatment!

While on program, your FLEX and YES students will be covered under the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges Health Benefit Plan ("ASPE"), administered by Seven Corners as part of First Health Network. Your students will receive health insurance policy cards upon arrival to their host families as part of their welcome packets. These packets also include your students' full health insurance plan details. **If your students or host families need help submitting claims to your students' insurance company, please contact us.** For HSA students, please refer to HSA insurance plan materials.

Co-Pay

Basic Coverage

NOT Covered

Contact Info

\$25 per office visit;
\$75 for ER/
Hospitalization/
Urgent Care; \$15 for
all brand name drugs
with a generic
equivalent available

Office visits and testing
related to accidents,
injuries, or sickness;
prescription drugs for
conditions occurring
while on program;
most vaccinations;
emergency dental
services for relief of
pain (up to \$1000)
**Inpatient hospital
admissions require pre-
certification or a \$300
fee will be charged.

Routine physicals; vision
services (eye exams or
glasses/lenses); injury
sustained from certain
activities; dental visits
or procedures; claims
while traveling outside
of the U.S. (while your
student is on program);
pre-existing conditions;
check-up visits

www.usdos.sevencorners.com
usdosinfo@sevencorners.com
1-800-461-0430
ASPE Health Benefits
ATTN: Customer Service
P.O. Box 3724
Carmel, IN 46082



ASPE HAS COVERAGE LIMITATIONS:

- It does NOT cover pre-existing conditions, cosmetic conditions, dental, or vision.
- This is a limited health care plan that does not cover any traveling outside of the United States. Coverage ends when your students leave the U.S.
- Anything considered routine or cosmetic is NOT covered. This includes physicals, check-ups, and some immunizations. If a physical or additional immunizations are required to attend school, please fill out and submit a claim with the insurance company and then send the bill (including denial of claim) to the International Student Support Team.



STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

+ TIPS

Before seeing a doctor, have your students check their health insurance company's website to see which providers are considered in-network for First Health Network. They should call the number on their insurance ID cards if this is not clear.

! PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Certain activities have been deemed "perilous" activities according to your students' ASPE insurance or they may be prohibited by program rules. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Driving motorized vehicles (including ATVs and snowmobiles)
- Extreme sports such as skydiving, bungee jumping, hang gliding
- Scuba diving
- Snowboarding
- Zip lining

If you have questions about whether an activity is prohibited, please contact our office.

Your students should carry their health insurance ID cards at all times. Every time a student visits a doctor, he or she will need to present his or her insurance ID card. Doctors may charge a co-pay, which we will reimburse as long as the doctor's visit was for an eligible reason. Most of the time, costs associated with a pre-existing condition, cosmetic condition, vision, or routine dental cannot be reimbursed. If your students or host families have questions, they can request an advanced approval from our team.

We suggest that your students and host families read the policy guide carefully and visit the insurance website for the most up-to-date benefits guide and information. If they have questions about how this system works, they can ask a member of our team for help.

DENTAL Dental check-up visits and cosmetic dental care (e.g., cavities and stain removal) are not covered. If your students are not sure what is considered cosmetic, they should call their insurance company. To a certain extent, some emergency alleviation of pain or emergency repair of teeth damaged in an accident may be covered. Please see the detailed policy plan for more information. If a student is seeing a dentist due to pain, please ask the dentist to note this for insurance purposes.

VISION Unfortunately, there is no vision coverage in this plan. If one of your students is having difficulty seeing and seems to need glasses or requires a new pair of glasses, contact us. There may be cost-effective options in your community. Here are a few options:

- Visit the local Lion's Club in your area, as they deal specifically with eye care donations.
- Consider low-cost options at www.zennioptical.com or www.warbyparker.com.
- Look into the LensCrafters program called One Sight, which is a glasses recycling program. More information is available at <http://www.lenscrafters.com/lc-us/onesight>

RISKY ACTIVITY NOTICE While on program, your students may wish to participate in certain activities that require permission from us and from their natural parents in the form of a Risky Activity Notice. These are called risky activities because in the past, injuries have occurred that were serious enough to affect students' participation on program. These may also be activities that are not allowed or not covered by students' insurance plan. Contact us for an up-to-date list of what may be considered "risky" activities. More information about dangerous and risky activities may also be found in the Appendices of this handbook, and many are listed in your students' insurance plan.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM RULES

For FLEX and YES students, the final decision for termination of a student's program year lies with the program sponsor: the U.S. Department of State.

! REMEMBER

Your students have a responsibility as exchange students to follow program, host family, and school rules. While some rules may be new or different for them, it is still their responsibility to understand them. In this section, we review all of the policies and rules your students must abide by while on program. We encourage you to discuss these during Arrival Orientations.

The American Councils rules your students must follow:

1. Your students must follow all local, state, and U.S. federal laws.
2. Purchase, possession, and use of illegal drugs, cigarettes and other tobacco products, and alcoholic beverages (including beer), is strictly forbidden. E-cigarettes, "vaping," and possession or smoking of marijuana are also forbidden.
3. Your students must follow all host family rules, including rules regarding internet use, curfew, dating, etc.
4. Your students must follow all school rules, attend school when it is in session, and be enrolled in a full course of study. They must maintain an average grade of B and should not receive any grades lower than C.
5. Your students are not guaranteed a diploma or participation in school graduation. School districts or individual schools regulate this issue. They must respect their schools' policies and not attempt to pressure schools for a diploma.
6. Your students are not guaranteed participation in interscholastic sports. State associations or school districts regulate this issue. They must respect their states' or districts' policies. Your students are not guaranteed specific grade placements or enrollment in specific classes.
7. Your students are not permitted to drive a car, motorcycle, or any other motorized vehicle. There are no exceptions to this rule. If your students are enrolled and participate in accredited driver education programs at their high schools, they may NOT participate in the driving portion of the class. Your students may not apply for an international driver's license while in the U.S.
8. Your students are required by law to wear seatbelts when traveling by car in the United States.
9. Your students are not permitted to make life-changing decisions while on program, including, but not limited to, marriage or religious conversion.
10. Your students are not permitted to engage in sexual behavior with others. If one of your students is found to be pregnant or responsible for a pregnancy, he or she will be dismissed from the program.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM RULES



NOTE

In addition to these, the program rules that your students and their parents signed as part of their program applications are included in the Appendices.



Notes

Rules, Continued

- 11.** Your students may not make any permanent or significant changes to their personal appearances, e.g. body piercing, tattoos, etc.
- 12.** Your student may not handle, use, or purchase firearms or weapons, including, but not limited to, airsoft guns, hunting knives, or large blades.
- 13.** Your students may travel outside their communities during participation in the program only with permission from American Councils. They may travel under the supervision of their host families, schools, program officials, or American Councils-approved responsible adult. Your students may not hitchhike.
- 14.** American Councils discourages visits by natural parents during the program. Visits by parents are not permitted during your students' first semester. We must approve all visits in writing, in advance of parent travel.
- 15.** Visits with relatives and friends from your students' home countries who are living in the United States are discouraged. We must approve any such visit in advance. Failure to notify American Councils of visits with natural parents and relatives may result in a student's dismissal from the program.
- 16.** Your students must limit contact with home to the extent necessary to adjust to their experience in the United States.
- 17.** Your students must return to their home countries on the dates designated by American Councils.
- 18.** Your students are not allowed to engage in regular employment while in the United States.
- 19.** Plagiarism—copying or using another person's words or ideas *without proper citation*—is considered a form of cheating. Penalties for plagiarism vary by school.



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



REMEMBER

Inappropriate photos posted on Facebook or other social media will be asked to be taken down immediately.



TIPS

- If your students have any doubt about whether something is considered appropriate to share online, they probably should not post it.
- We recommend that your students review what people are posting in the comments section of any posts or images that they share on social media. If you or your students see something inappropriate, flag it or report it.
- Social media apps have become increasingly popular on mobile devices. In addition to checking privacy settings, when using mobile devices, your students should also check to see if features such as GPS/ location are enabled.

The Ground Rules

We encourage your students to document their exchange year online. However, it is important that they use social media responsibly. Remember, they are ambassadors of their exchange programs and of their countries, and that is a great opportunity and responsibility. Here are some things students should keep in mind when using social media:

1. **Social Media is PUBLIC.** If they don't want their moms, aunts, grandmas, or someone similar to see it—DON'T POST IT! They should take a moment to review their privacy settings and restrict certain things like birthdays, addresses, photos, and wall posts to "friends only."
2. **Not all "jokes" are funny.** Your students are in a new culture, which means that people often do not have the context to understand jokes when they are posted via photos or other information on social media platforms. Students should ask themselves: could someone re-post this photo, comment, etc. and use it in a negative way when taken out of context? If this is possible, don't post it.
3. **NOPE!** Here are some examples of things your students should not post:
 - Photos that simulate violence or contain gory or bloody themes
 - Photos with weapons, even if they are not real (such as knives, guns, paintball guns, etc.)
 - Photos that are sexually suggestive in nature (Remember: not only is it embarrassing if their moms or teachers saw it, but in the U.S., posting, texting, or sharing sexually suggestive photos of teens is often ILLEGAL.)
4. **Share the Good!** Students should post photos of them and their friends participating in community service, leadership, or social activities. They should make their families proud. Remind your students: Be the best ambassadors you can be!

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

@ FOLLOW US!

Twitter: @acie_exchange

Instagram: @acie_exchange

Facebook: International Student Support at American Councils

+ TIPS

Need ideas or guidance about how to use Facebook? Check out our handout “LC Quick Guide: Facebook Tips” available in the Appendices of this handbook and also on our website in the LC Corner!

Additional Guidelines for LCs

Social media can be a great tool for finding host families and for interacting with current and former students! However, we encourage you follow these guidelines when you are using social media for anything related to our students or exchange programs.

1. Public versus private social media. You may not feel comfortable using your personal social media accounts to interact with students and current or prospective host families. Or you may be connected with students and families, but you want to share certain posts containing personal information, photos, opinions, etc. with your friends and family only. We encourage you to adjust the privacy settings of specific posts as needed. Consider creating a separate account or Facebook page specifically for your role as an American Councils Local Coordinator. For example, each member of the International Student Support Team has a Facebook account that we use in a professional setting. Please refer to our handout “LC Quick Guide: Facebook Tips” in the Appendices for more information about privacy settings and creating pages.

2. Ask permission. We encourage you to share photos of you with your students throughout the year. However, keep in mind some people do not feel comfortable having their picture shared on social media platforms (e.g. maybe it is a photo from a pool party where people are wearing bathing suits). If you are using someone else's photos, or if you are using photos of your host families or other people in your community, it is always a good idea to ask their permission. Think of this as similar to a likeness release for more traditional media outlets like newspapers, TV, etc. We advise you to address sharing photos on social media at your host family and student arrival orientations to avoid having to ask permission later on!

3. Only use first names of current students. If you are posting about a student currently on program, a best practice is to use the student's first name only. This is for student safety since our students are minors. However, students may “tag” themselves or share the posts on their own accounts, or they may give you permission to use their full names. In those situations, use your best judgment.

4. Have a question? Ask! Our team is always here to help you navigate the ever-changing social media landscape. Call or email us if you need help!



DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Your students have a responsibility as exchange students to follow program, host family, and school rules. This section reviews the disciplinary procedures if rules are broken.



DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES:

All disciplinary procedures should be conducted in such a way as to:

- Promote communication between all parties
- Promote positive relationship-building and the goals of your students' scholarship programs
- Help your students identify and understand problem behavior and expectations
- Maintain due process

If an early return is **voluntary**, then your student and his or her natural parents will need to submit this request to us in writing.

A request for an early return does NOT need to follow a warning or probation, although it often does.

STEP 1

WARNING

Step 1: Warning

If there are ongoing issues that one of your students and host families have not been able to resolve with guidance from you and from us, then the student may be placed on warning. A warning is written in nature and must be coordinated with our office in Washington, D.C.

Overseas staff will share the warning letter with your student's natural parents. Once your student is placed on warning, the warning remains in effect for the remainder of the program year and the student is monitored accordingly.

Step 2: Probation

If issues persists or are more serious in nature, then one of your students will be placed on probation. We will prepare a written behavioral contract to be signed by the student. His or her natural parents will be kept apprised of the situation and will be sent a copy of the letter. At this point, the U.S. Department of State will also be informed.

Your student and his or her natural parents will be informed that, if issues persist, we may request your student's early return. We will work with you to follow your student's progress for a period of time and determine what additional action, if any, is necessary. As with a warning, a probation status remains in effect for the remainder of the program year. A probation letter does not need to follow a warning letter, although it often does.

Step 3: Request for Early Return (Repatriation)

If an issue persists or if an early return is deemed to be in one of your student's best interests for legal, safety, or other issues, we will recommend an involuntary early return. Your student will be asked to provide a written statement with his or her perspective as part of the process. **All** early returns for FLEX and YES students must be approved by the U.S. Department of State.

STEP 2

PROBATION

STEP 3

REQUEST FOR REPATRIATION OR EARLY RETURN



REASONS FOR PROGRAM TERMINATION & EARLY RETURN

+ Notes

Your students' safety and soundness on program are our top priority, which is why both you and your students have a support network in the U.S. to help ensure their success on program. While some early returns may be voluntary, it is important to be aware of the following reasons that may result in students' termination from their exchange programs. There may be additional reasons not listed below. The U.S. Department of State makes the final decision on every early return for FLEX and YES students.

Reasons for Program Termination and an Early Return

- Continued unwillingness to try and adapt to the lifestyle of their host families
- Poor attendance and lack of interest at school; failure to follow school rules; school suspension or expulsion
- Breaking the law (regardless of whether the students are prosecuted). This includes, but is not limited to: theft, shoplifting, illegal downloading, sexting, and trespassing, and use of illegal substances
- Unauthorized visits from relatives or family friends
- Injury or illness that keeps students from participating in their exchange programs
- Significant change in students' health status that would require a significant increase in monitoring or care such that it is determined unreasonable to ask any host family to assume responsibility—this is for students' safety
- Psychological problems that we feel cannot be supported on program
- Cutting or causing bodily harm to themselves
- Demonstrated poor judgment that hinders ours or host families' ability to be responsible for students
- Failure to follow program, American Councils, or host family rules

SEXUAL HARASSMENT & SEXUAL ABUSE AWARENESS

! CONTACT US

If one of your students approaches you with a concern, contact us immediately by calling the emergency phone at **800-621-9559**. We will work with you to determine the next best steps.

? WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is “unwanted sexual or romantic attention from an adult who knows or should know that such attention is not appropriate or not wanted.”

Examples include:

- Unwanted physical contact
- Visual abuse (e.g. showing children pornographic materials)
- Verbal abuse (using foul or rude language)
- Body language (rude hand gestures, staring at someone in a way that suggests sexual intent)

From “Sexual Harassment Resources and Facts” handout available on our website.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Abuse Awareness

The subjects of sexual harassment and abuse are covered with students during their Pre-Departure Orientations prior to their arrival to the U.S., but these should be covered again during your students' Arrival Orientations. Discuss the definition of sexual harassment, for which you can refer to the “Sexual Harassment Resources and Facts” handout and *7 Steps to Protecting Our Children*, both available on our website in the LC Corner. Once your students have an understanding of what types of behavior are not appropriate, as well as what behavior they may consider unwanted or uncomfortable, discuss with them what they can do if they encounter these.

Acknowledge: If students are uncomfortable with someone's behavior or because of something that has been said to them, they need to acknowledge that a problem exists. They should not assume that the behavior will stop; it may worsen if ignored.

Tell someone: This will help stop the problem. Help students understand that there are many people in their communities and associated with their programs who are here to support and protect them, but they have to talk to these people in order for them to be able to help. Students can start by emailing or calling you or contacting us at 800-621-9559. Your students can also approach host parents, teachers, guidance counselors, or coaches. Telling anyone they feel they can trust will help them feel less alone.

Speak up: Students should speak up as soon as possible and understand that they have the right to do so. If they can, they should tell the person doing the behavior specifically what bothers them and tell that person to stop.

Below are some basic guidelines to follow if one of your students approaches you with a concern or allegation of sexual harassment or abuse.

Listen: Listen attentively to your student, be encouraging, and acknowledge that he or she did the right thing in coming to you. Don't express shock, horror, or disbelief. Ask only open-ended questions if you need to better determine what happened or who was involved and keep a written record of the date and information the student shared with you.

Protect the student: If you cannot reach us and you determine that the student is in immediate danger, remove him or her from the situation and from the adult who made the student uncomfortable. Contact our office immediately.



TRAVEL POLICY

+ Travel Permission Forms

In most cases, your student is required to submit a Travel Permission Form to us before any travel arrangements are made, such as purchasing tickets. This form is located in this handbook on pages 85-86 and at <http://inbound.americancouncils.org>. Students traveling outside of the U.S. should email inbound@americancouncils.org to request an International Travel Permission Form.



Some students may have the opportunity to travel outside of their host communities while they are in the U.S. This is a privilege and not a right of the program.

While your students are encouraged to participate in as much of American life as they can, there are certain travel guidelines that your students must follow. If they do not follow these guidelines, they may be denied permission to travel. Travel within these guidelines is still subject to approval.

General Domestic Travel Guidelines

The following guidelines refer to domestic travel. For travel outside of the U.S., please refer to the international travel guidelines on page 84.

If any of the following conditions are met, a Travel Permission Form **MUST** be submitted to us **at least THREE (3) weeks** ahead of the scheduled travel and **BEFORE** any travel arrangements are made. Your students' natural parents will also be contacted by the overseas office and asked to approve the trip in writing.

- 1. Unaccompanied travel:** If your students are traveling without an adult chaperone.
- 2. Visits with natural family friends or relatives:** Your students are not permitted to visit with natural family friends or relatives during the first semester, and visits of this nature during the second semester will be considered on a case-by-case basis. When deciding to approve a visit with natural family friends or relatives, we will consider the student's overall adjustment, academic performance, meeting of program goals, and other factors. Your students should email inbound@americancouncils.org to request a copy of the Natural Family Travel or Visit Permission Form.



TRAVEL POLICY



+ Notes

Domestic Travel Guidelines, Continued

If any of the following conditions are met, a Travel Permission Form **MUST** be submitted to us **at least THREE (3) weeks** ahead of the scheduled travel and **BEFORE** any travel arrangements are made. Contacting us earlier is always better when possible. American Councils may need to contact your students' natural parents for permission, determined on a case-by-case basis.

- 1. Traveling outside of the host community:** This is defined as traveling more than 300 miles from the host community. Permission is required even if the students are traveling with you or with their host families.
- 2. Accompanied by unapproved chaperone:** If the adult chaperone for the trip is someone other than you, the host family, or a designated school official, we may need to screen the adult chaperone. Your students should contact us about these trips as soon as possible.
- 3. Missing school:** If your students will miss any days of school, these trips must be pre-approved by us. If more than one day of school will be missed, your students will need to show that a plan has been put in place to make up the missed work. A school official **MUST** sign the Travel Permission Form to confirm this.

What does NOT need prior approval from the International Student Support Team? When in doubt, you can always ask us. However, here are some examples:

- 1. Weekend travel** with you, the host family, or a designated school official within 300 miles of the host community.
- 2. Sleepovers or day trips** with friends in the host community if there is an adult chaperone over the age of 25 and it is within 300 miles of the host community.



TRAVEL POLICY



REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE:

Your students' health insurance plan (ASPE) does not provide coverage while they are outside of the United States. The U.S. Department of State requires supplemental insurance coverage for the duration of your students' international travel. Proof of supplemental insurance is required with all requests for international travel. American Councils CANNOT reimburse you, your students, or other parties for supplemental insurance coverage.

Please note that all policies related to prohibited or "risky" activities apply to international trips regardless of a supplemental insurance plan's policies.

International Travel Guidelines

Your students are not permitted to travel outside of the U.S. (including travel to Mexico or Canada) without prior approval from American Councils by submitting an International Travel Permission Form. Your students should email inbound@americancouncils.org to request this form. All requests for international travel must be made **at least FOUR (4) WEEKS** in advance and before any travel arrangements are made.

Even if you or your students do not have exact dates, we recommend contacting us as early as possible for trips outside of the U.S. We may need U.S. Department of State approval for any international trip. This can extend the amount of time needed to approve an international travel request. In addition, international travel requires purchasing supplemental insurance (see the sidebar for more details).

Please note that we cannot provide assistance with the visa application process, although we can sometimes advise whether a visa may be required. Visa requirements vary depending on the country your students are visiting and by their home countries. Some countries (such as Mexico and Canada) may also require letters from your students' natural parents in order to cross the border.

Travel Permission Form (Domestic Travel Only)

Updated May 2019

Please see Student and Host Family Handbooks for complete travel policy.

ALL APPLICABLE SIGNATURES MUST BE PHYSICALLY ADDED TO THIS FORM BEFORE SUBMISSION.

Travel arrangements (such as purchasing tickets) can be made only after receiving **written confirmation of approval** of this trip by email from the American Councils office. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

- Trips requested for travel over 300 miles outside of the host community require submission of a request form at least **three** weeks in advance, based on date of receipt at the American Councils office. This also applies if traveling with the LC.
 - Accompanied travel with an unapproved chaperone requires submission of a request form at least **three** weeks in advance.
 - Unaccompanied travel requires submission of a request form at least **three** weeks in advance.
 - Requests for visiting natural relatives (or relatives visiting you) must be submitted at least **three** weeks in advance. Please request a Natural Parent Travel/Visit Permission Form by emailing inbound@americancouncils.org. These requests are generally not permitted during your first academic semester.
 - International travel requests, including cruises, must be requested at least **four** weeks in advance. Please request an International Travel Permission Form by emailing inbound@americancouncils.org.
- *Please be sure to review the entire travel policy in your Student and Host Family handbooks before requesting any trips, as this form does not include all request guidelines.

We strongly recommend either sending this form via email to inbound@americancouncils.org; or via fax to 202-833-7523. Requests sent via mail may take longer to process, but if you cannot send this electronically, please mail to:

American Councils for International Education
Attn: International Student Support Team
1828 L ST. NW, Suite 1200
Washington, D.C. 20036

Questions? Contact your Local Coordinator or the International Student Support Team!

Student Name:

Today's Date:

Host Family:

Local Coordinator:

City and State:

High School:

1) Destination(s):

You may attach an itinerary to this form if needed.

2) Departure date/time:

Return date/time:

3) Purpose of Trip:

4) Please list any expenses that the student is planning to pay for on this trip, including estimated amounts:

5) Where will you be staying (full address):

6) a) Exactly what dates of school would you be missing?

From _____ to _____ = a total of _____ days absent.

b) If any days are being missed, what is your plan for making up your work?

Please see school official required signature blank on the bottom of this form.

7) Mode(s) of transportation (check all that apply):

☐ Airplane ☐ Train ☐ Bus ☐ Metro/Subway ☐ Automobile ☐ Ferry

☐ Other mode of transportation:

If you are flying, are you flying directly to your destination, or are there connecting flights?

☐ Flying Direct ☐ Connecting flights

8) Who is traveling with you and what are their relationships to you?

**ADULT CHAPERONE INFORMATION IF NOT A HOST
PARENT OR LOCAL COORDINATOR:**

List the name, age, address, and phone number of adult chaperone(s):

A chaperone who is not a host parent or LC may require a background check. Our office will inform you if so. Please provide the chaperone's email address if this applies:

To the chaperone, if you are not this student's host parent:

This American Councils student will be entrusted to your supervision if our office approves of this trip request. Please sign here to acknowledge that you understand that you will be responsible for this student during the trip described above:

Chaperone's Signature:

Relationship:

Date:

Please also take note of the American Councils 24/7 emergency phone number: 1-800-621-9559.

To the host parent and student:

By signing, I have read and reviewed the information in this travel request, as well as all travel policies, and I support this travel request. I understand that American Councils is not responsible for any financial losses incurred if travel arrangements are made prior to approval. I am aware that traveling without approval may lead to student disciplinary consequences on program:

Host Parent Signature:

Student Signature:

Date:

To the school official:

In signing my consent on this form, I acknowledge that this student is requesting permission to miss school, and I confirm that he/she is in satisfactory academic and behavioral standing. The student will be permitted to make up any missed work within school policies.

School Official's Signature:

Position:

Date:

Natural Parent Signature (must be requested by American Councils):

Date:



LC INCENTIVES & HONORARIA



+ Notes

LC Honoraria

We know that you work with our students because you love it, but we do compensate you for your labors of love through a series of honoraria. Honoraria are awarded to you for your work with student placement and support during the year. For a current list of honoraria and amounts, please see the Complete Honorarium and Finance Policy for 2019-20, available online at <http://inbound.americancouncils.org> under the LC Corner and in the Appendices.

LC Conference

Supervising LCs will be invited to attend our annual training conference. At the conference, which is usually held in February, both new and seasoned LCs will have the opportunity to meet each other and some of the International Student Support Team staff. Through a series of sessions, we hope LCs gain further knowledge, insight, and resources to enhance their work with our scholarship exchange students.

Additional LC Trainings

We hold additional trainings (such as webinars) throughout the year on a variety of topics designed to support you as the LC and help you gain the knowledge and skills to best support your students. Often there are guest speakers invited to contribute on a specific topic. Examples of past topics include: common student issues and strategies for resolution, cross cultural adjustment, alumni projects, preparing your students to return home, and making the most of Global Youth Service Day. Information about these trainings is sent via email.

Other Opportunities

During the year, we send out announcements for LCs to apply, or be considered, for other opportunities that will then enhance the support provided to our students. In the past, this has included serving as a chaperone for student events in Washington, D.C. (such as Re-Entry Workshops), attending an evaluator training workshop, or serving as a flight leader for students traveling to/from the U.S.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

! CONTACT US!

inbound@americancouncils.org
202-833-7522 (9AM-5PM EST)



+ Notes

Travel

Documentation

Q: What documents should my students bring when traveling by plane?

A: Your students should always travel with their passports, U.S. visas, and original DS-2019s.

Permission and Forms

Q: Can my students travel abroad with host families (including Mexico/Canada)?

A: If your students wish to travel outside of the U.S., they may do so only with prior approval from us after submitting an International Travel Permission Form. It is their responsibility to research what documentation may be needed in order to obtain a visa for a country outside of the U.S. We cannot facilitate the process.

Q: A host family wants to take their student on a trip to Mexico. Can they go?

A: In the past, travel to Mexico has proven to be a complicated process for students, even though this is relatively easy for Americans. Travel to Mexico also requires an International Travel Permission Form. However, if we do approve a trip to Mexico, please note once again that it is a student's responsibility to research what documentation may be needed in order to obtain a visa for Mexico. We cannot facilitate the process.

Finances and Budgeting (FLEX and YES students only)

Student Stipends

Q: How do my students receive their monthly stipends?

A: Monthly stipends are mailed after your students complete their monthly check-in reports online. Students will receive this link via email on the 20th of every month.

Budgeting

Q: How can my students determine if they should buy something with their stipend money?

A: On the next page is a handy chart that can help your students make smart budgeting choices. Remember: students receive a double stipend twice a year (in August/September and April/May).

Cost of Item	Length of Time to Decide
\$0.99 - \$10.00	Your students should be able to decide immediately and live with the decision. It's not likely that your students could ask to return it to the store because they have changed their minds.
\$10.00 - \$50.00	Your students should be able to tell you or their host families when they will be ready to make the decision. "Is it okay if we come back tomorrow so I can think about it?" A decision-making time of several hours to a few days may be necessary.
\$50.00 +	Your students can set a deadline for their decision no sooner than three days, by which they should decide on the purchase.

Incidentals Allowance (FLEX and YES students only)

Q: May my students use their incidentals allowance to pay for luggage fees and extra suitcases to take home?

A: No. The primary purpose of the incidentals allowance is to help pay for expenses that are required for participation in high school.

Q: May my students use their incidentals allowance to pay for the ACT/TOEFL/SAT Tests?

A: No. These are tests for U.S. college admission and not in the spirit of your students' J-1 visas (two-year home residency requirement). Your students may arrange for these tests in their home countries upon return.

Health Insurance (FLEX and YES students only)

Q: What kind of medical treatment is NOT covered by my students' health insurance plan?

A: Anything considered routine or cosmetic is NOT covered. This includes physicals, check-ups, and some immunizations. If a physical or additional immunizations are required to attend school, your students should fill out and submit a claim with their insurance companies. Host families or students can call the phone number on the back of students' insurance ID cards and ask for assistance with this. Our team can help, too. They can give us a call at 202-833-7522 and we will ask your students or host families to mail us the bill (including denial of claim) so we can help.

Q: What if my students' sports teams require a physical? Is that covered?

A: If a physical is required for playing sports, this will be reimbursed out of the student's incidentals allowance. If your student emails us about this, we will walk him or her through it.



United States Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Washington, DC 20522

January 8, 2019

Dear American Host Family:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, I welcome your decision to host a secondary school student. The secondary school student program is one of many ways foreign nationals participate in people-to-people exchange programs in the United States. People-to-people exchanges are a valuable tool of foreign policy. The secondary school student program offers a unique opportunity for you to experience firsthand the richness and diversity of a culture different from your own, and for you to exemplify American values and culture to a foreign visitor. Through this program, you will join thousands of American families who serve as citizen ambassadors of the United States. Many families have found the secondary school student program to be a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

High School programs have been a part of U.S. public diplomacy efforts since 1949. Approximately 25,000 high school students from around the world participate in this program each year. The good will of American host families in opening their homes to these young international visitors is vital to this program's success.

The health, safety, and well-being of the young people who participate in this program are our highest priority. A host family has many responsibilities, the most important of which is properly caring for an international student during the course of his/her program. The student is a guest in your home and in our country and you may be the first "real Americans" this young person meets. How you relate with this student will create a lasting image of our country and its people.

The regulations governing the secondary school student program are found at eCFR — [Exchange Visitor Program regulations](#) (22 CFR 62 - Exchange Visitor Program). These regulations address the most frequently asked questions about the program and provide the rules under which the program operates. It is extremely important that you notify your sponsoring organization if you have any concerns or if the student's personal health, safety or well-being is threatened in any way. If the sponsoring organization is not responsive to your concerns, you should contact the Department of State directly through our J-1 Visa Emergency Helpline (1-866-283-9090), which is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or by e-mail at JVisas@state.gov.

The secondary school student program offers you, your family, your exchange student, your local school and community the opportunity to create a strong lifelong relationship. I hope this will be a positive and rewarding experience for all of you. The Department of State is deeply appreciative of your part in ensuring the program reaches its maximum potential as a quality educational and cultural exchange experience.

Sincerely,



G.K. Saba
Director, Policy & Program Support
for Private Sector Exchange



United States Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Washington, DC 20522

January 8, 2019

Dear Secondary School Student:

Congratulations on your participation in the Exchange Visitor Program! On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, I want you to know that your decision to come to the United States is important to us. We want your stay to be a positive and memorable experience for you.

As a secondary school student, you are part of a U.S. Department of State cultural exchange program in which you, like thousands of other students from around the world, will have the opportunity to share your language, culture and customs with your American host family, your American school and also the broader local community. Your participation in this program fosters a greater understanding between our countries.

You are a valued guest in the United States, and we want you to succeed in this program. Your goal should be to learn as much as you can about American customs, values and culture and to build strong relationships with your host family, new classmates, and new friends. You will be living with a host family and attending a new school, both of which may have different rules and ways of life from what you are used to, so keeping an open mind will be very important to your success.

You and your host family have agreed to follow the program rules that govern the secondary school student exchange program. We hope you have taken the time to review the program rules carefully and that you understand your rights and responsibilities. If you have any questions and/or do not understand your rights and responsibilities, please contact your U.S. sponsor.

Your U.S. sponsor is your first point of contact throughout your stay in the United States. Your sponsor is identified on your Form DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Program (J-1) Status. If you have any questions about your exchange program, if you need assistance of any kind while you are here, or if something just does not feel right to you, immediately contact your U.S. sponsor. It is your sponsor's responsibility to help you with any problems, needs, or concerns you may have. Your U.S. sponsor should have given you an emergency telephone contact number in your program orientation materials. This telephone number should be available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you have concerns and/or issues that your U.S. sponsor has not resolved, or you find you cannot reach your sponsor, please contact the Department of State through our J-1 Visa Emergency Helpline (1-866-283-9090), which is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or by e-mail at JVisas@state.gov.

We are pleased that you made the decision to participate in the Exchange Visitor Program and I hope you enjoy your stay in the United States.

Sincerely,



G.K. Saba



Host Family Agreement 2019-20

Our family has volunteered to host a student with American Councils for International Education so that by sharing our lives with an international visitor, we may gain exposure to new ideas and perspectives and promote international friendship.

As a host family with American Councils for International Education:

1. We will welcome our student as a member of our family and assist in our student's adjustment to our family as well as U.S. life and culture.
2. We will read the American Councils Host Family Handbook and other information to be provided in our Host Family Welcome Packet to prepare for our student's arrival, reviewing it again with our student after his/her arrival. We will become familiar with American Councils' student rules and expectations, including the list of prohibited activities (such as using a gun or other weapon) and activities that require extra permissions (such as downhill skiing).
3. We are aware that a list of the U.S. Department of State regulations for our student's J-1 visa exchange program is available to us in American Councils' Host Family Handbook.
4. We will provide a safe and nurturing home environment for our student, including a bed, study area, and daily meals (three per day, which may include either lunch money or provisions for a packed lunch for school).
5. We will ensure that our student knows how to leave his/her room and the house in the event of an emergency (such as a fire) and will explain what to do in an emergency procedure.
6. We understand that our student has spent his or her life in a culture that may be very different from our own. We will work with our student and contact our American Councils Local Coordinator to resolve misunderstandings and to solve problems.
7. We will help our student meet other Americans through introductions to friends, neighbors, and classmates and by encouraging our student to join clubs or pursue activities.
8. We will help arrange necessary transportation for our student by driving him/her, providing access to a bicycle, showing the student the local school bus, rides with friends, carpooling, familiarizing him/her with public transportation, etc.
9. We will help our student become familiar with our community and its resources, such as local recreational facilities, sights, shopping areas, library, and the school he/she will be attending.
10. We will neither allow nor encourage our student to violate American Councils policies or the law and will immediately report any such violation to our local coordinator or American Councils.
11. We will attend any American Councils required host family events including Host Family Orientation. We will also ensure our student is able to attend any American Councils required events, including his/her Re-Entry Workshop in the spring and other activities.
12. We will expect contact monthly from our local coordinator and will call this person if issues arise in our family's and/or student's adjustment, in our student's school performance, or if our family must withdraw from the program at any point after a student placement is confirmed for us. We will also call our local coordinator if we have any general questions about American Councils' programs or our hosting experience. If for any reason we are unable to reach our local coordinator, we will contact the American Councils Washington, DC office at 1-866-790-2086 or, in emergencies, at 1-800-621-9559.
13. We understand that someone other than our local coordinator will need to visit our home within 30 days of our student's arrival to our home as required by the U.S. Department of State.
14. We understand that visits with friends or relatives of our student, as well as most student travel, must be approved by American Councils and will notify our local coordinator of these plans per travel and visit guidelines. We will consult our handbook regarding travel.
15. We understand that our student's passport and travel documents cannot be removed from his/her possession if the student does not agree.
16. We understand that our family cannot host a student who is a relative.
17. We understand that in the event of adjustment issues, we are not to communicate directly to our student's natural family and instead will contact American Councils if we need to communicate messages with the student's parents. Also, if student's communication with home becomes disruptive to the exchange experience, we should contact our local coordinator or American Councils directly.
18. We understand that if for any reason our student needs to move out of our house, it may take two to three weeks for our local coordinator and American Councils to find another family.
19. We understand that, prior to our student's departure from the home country, he/she will be provided with information about our family, including family make up and whether the placement is permanent or temporary. They may also be provided information about our family's religious affiliations, home environment, school, and community.
20. We will contact our local coordinator immediately if any information which we provided in our Host Family Application changes before our student arrives or during our student's stay with us (i.e. if we move; if any additional person comes to live in our house; if we separate, etc.)
21. I confirm that the information provided in my American Councils Host Family Application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I have reviewed this current year's application myself in its entirety.

We have read and understand the above guidelines and agree to follow them throughout our participation as an American Councils Host Family.



Local Coordinator Agreement PY 2019-20

As a Local Coordinator with American Councils for International Education, I understand and agree to the following:

Program Promotion, Host Family Recruitment, and Preparation

When promoting American Councils programs and recruiting host families, I will avoid appealing to public pity or guilt or implying in any way that an exchange student will be denied participation if a host family is not found immediately.

I will only serve as the Local Coordinator for students placed with host families living within 120 miles of my home.

I cannot coordinate for a student I am hosting or for any student for whom I hold a position of trust or authority, such as a student's teacher or principal. If necessary, I will work with American Councils to identify someone else in my community who will be able to coordinate for such a student.

I will not facilitate the enrollment of more than five American Councils exchange students in one school unless the school itself has given permission in writing.

I will ensure that each of my students is enrolled in a full course of study at an accredited U.S. high school, with at least one course in the English department and one course of either U.S. or State History, Government, or Civics.

By submitting host family vetting materials to American Councils, I am verifying that they are accurate to the best of my knowledge. Furthermore, I acknowledge that by submitting these forms that I have completed the work that is the LC's responsibility (examples include, but are not limited to: In-Home Interview, Orientation forms, References).

I will conduct a Host Family Orientation for all host families AFTER they have been fully vetted and accepted and BEFORE a student arrives to their home, so that they are adequately prepared.

On-Program Support of Students and Host Families

I will conduct a Student Arrival Orientation and Mid-Year Orientation and serve as an advocate for each student whom I supervise and support.

I will maintain a monthly schedule of substantive

personal contact with all students and host families for whom I am serving as the Local Coordinator. For students, the first monthly contact MUST be in person, with all subsequent contact to be, at minimum, in person at least once every two months, and otherwise by phone or via email. For host families, this contact will be in person at least once a semester, and all other contact may take place in person, by phone, or electronically.

I will maintain regular contact with schools where my students are attending.

I will promptly complete and submit a monthly online report to American Councils for each of my students.

I will provide support to students and host families on adjustment issues as they arise and keep American Councils staff in Washington, DC apprised of any difficulties students or host families may experience. I will do my best to ensure that issues brought to my attention are addressed promptly and appropriately.

I will advise students and host families on incidental fund procedures and deadlines, as well as volunteer opportunities, emphasizing that these are ultimately the student's responsibility.

I will organize and/or facilitate at least two enhancement activities for my students during the year and report student successes to American Councils.

General

I will read and familiarize myself with American Councils' Local Coordinator Handbook, Complete Honorarium and Finance Policy, State Department regulations, and CSIET standards as they apply to my role as a Local Coordinator.

I understand that American Councils for International Education is required to procure a criminal background check annually for all active Local Coordinators. I authorize American Councils for International Education, to procure a criminal background check annually for as long as I serve as an American Councils Local Coordinator.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT
SUPPORT

I acknowledge that if my actions (or lack of action) is perceived by American Councils to be in violation of this agreement, or to otherwise jeopardize either the safety and soundness of a student, or to jeopardize the reputation of the scholarship programs, or American Councils, that American Councils may immediately terminate this agreement or withhold honorarium payment for work that they do not consider complete. Furthermore, local schools and host families may be notified of a change in Local Coordinators.

I will respect the privacy and confidentiality of issues and concerns that may come to my attention from students, host family members, and American Councils.

If I will be out of town for longer than a week, or otherwise unavailable to my students and host families, I will notify American Councils at least two weeks in advance, so that appropriate arrangements can be made to ensure continuation of adequate support. If at any point I feel that I am

unable to fulfill my responsibilities as Local Coordinator, I will notify American Councils immediately and, as much as I am able, will assist American Councils in identifying an appropriate person to take on my role.

I have identified myself to American Councils as working for more than one placement organization, if applicable. In the situation of being a dual coordinator, I realize that I cannot host a student for one organization and place students for another organization. I will make arrangements with American Councils about what to do in an emergency hosting situation.

I acknowledge that I have participated in a Local Coordinator Training conducted by a representative of American Councils for International Education and have received materials to administer required orientations and other activities outlined herein.

No income taxes are withheld by American Councils. All personal income taxes owed on the payment of honoraria are my responsibility.

American Councils Representative:



Lindsay Cutler
Assistant Operations Manager
International Student Support Team

LC Signature:

Name (Printed):

Date:

Appendix IV. PARENT/STUDENT AGREEMENT FOR THE FLEX AND YES PROGRAMS

A. PURPOSE

The Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program (“the Program”), funded by the United States Government, promotes friendship between the United States of America and your country, and provides opportunities for personal development through international host family living.

The Program is implemented by private, not-for-profit organizations (“Program Organizations”). While in the United States, students will be in the care of “Placement Organizations” that identify and arrange host families and schools, and provide support and guidance for participants during the exchange Program. Participants attend an American school, share in U.S. family life, learn about the United States, increase their sensitivity to cultural differences and similarities, and develop a deepened awareness of shared human values and interests. The Program, consistent with its commitment to mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries, encourages cultural diversity in the selection of Program participants and host families. Participants are required to return to their home country after their Program, where they are expected to share their experiences in the United States.

B. PARENT AGREEMENT

General Program Policies

1. We give our child permission to participate in this Program. We and our child will obey the policies described in the Program Handbook and Program Organization guidelines. We understand that the original English-language version of this document represents the final authoritative wording of all policies and guidelines.
2. We understand that if we or any other immediate family member has applied at any time to emigrate to the United States or if we or any other immediate adult family member (whether estranged or not) is a U.S. citizen or green card holder, it may impact negatively on our child’s final selection for the Program.
3. We understand that if another member of our family will be living in the U.S. at the same time our child would be on Program, it may affect his/her eligibility for the Program.
4. We acknowledge that our child has not stayed in the United States for more than ninety (90) days in total during the past five (5) years.
5. We understand that our child must meet the Program eligibility requirements, be a citizen of the country in which s/he is applying, and be able to obtain a passport from his/her country of citizenship and any visa required by the United States.

6. Participants in an exchange visitor program funded by the U.S. Government are required, under Section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, to reside in their home country for a minimum of (2) two years after completing their exchange program in the United States, before they are eligible for an immigrant visa, U.S. permanent residence, or a non immigrant H or L visa.

7. We understand that we may not visit our child during his or her participation in the Program unless we obtain prior written approval from the Placement Organization.

8. We understand that if our child is selected to receive a scholarship, final acceptance will depend on fulfillment of the medical, placement, and academic requirements of the Program Organization.

9. We agree to release and discharge the Program Organizations and their employees and agents; host families; Program representatives; school representatives; as well as the United States Department of State and its employees, agents, and instrumentalities, from any legal liability, claim, or demand in connection with:

a. any emergency, accident, illness, injury or other consequences or events arising from the actions or participation of our child in the Program, and

b. any cause, event or occurrence beyond the control of the Program Organizations or the Department of State, including, but not limited to, natural disasters, war, terrorism, civil disturbances, and the negligence of parties not subject to the control of the Program Organizations.

c. any actions or negligence of commercial airlines, trains, buses, restaurants, hotels, and other entities engaged for travel-related services, including, but not limited to, lost baggage, uncomfortable accommodations, and travel delays.

Travel Policies

10. We agree that our child will travel to and from the United States in strict accordance with the travel plans made by the Program.

11. We will not encourage or permit our child to travel outside the host community during his or her participation in the Program except in strict accordance with the following requirements:

a. If our child desires to travel outside the host community with and under the supervision of his or her host parent(s), school official or other responsible adult, our child must first obtain written approval for such travel from the Placement Organization. For international travel this includes authorization to do so on the Form DS-2019.

b. If our child desires to travel outside the host community unaccompanied by his or her host parent(s), school official, or other responsible adult, our child must obtain prior

written approval for such travel from the Placement Organization and us, the child's parents or guardians. For international travel this includes authorization to do so on the Form DS-2019.

c. We understand that many Placement Organizations place limits on or do not allow visits with natural family members or friends from the home country. We agree to follow all Placement Organization rules concerning visits with natural family members or family friends.

12. We understand that our child will be responsible for paying any fees incurred for carrying baggage in excess of the baggage limits set by the airlines used for Program travel. We understand that this provision applies to both international and domestic travel within both the United States and our country.

13. We understand that in making travel arrangements for our child, the Program Organizations contract with or use commercial airlines, trains, buses, restaurants, hotels, and other entities whose performance and services cannot be controlled by the Program. We agree that the Program Organizations reserve the right to change or alter travel, lodging or other arrangements if they believe such change or alteration to be in the best interest of the participants or the Program.

14. We understand that our child must return home at the end of the Program on the date assigned by the responsible Program Organization. Changes to the assigned departure date will not be made to accommodate graduation, prom or other special school or family events that occur after the assigned date. We understand and agree that the U.S. visa issued to our child will not be amended or extended beyond the Program end date. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

School and Host Family Placement

15. We authorize the Placement Organizations, employees, and representatives to change the place of residence or school designated for our child when they believe such change to be in our child's best interest. We understand that we will be notified of any such changes.

16. We recognize that schools in the United States may impose academic standards or other requirements in determining grade level placement that differ from those imposed by the school our child now attends. We acknowledge and accept that participation in the Program does not guarantee credit or graduation from the school our child now attends or from the U.S. school he or she will attend while participating in the Program. We understand that it is our responsibility to arrange with the school our child now attends to receive credit or to take exams upon completion of the Program; or to arrange for permission for academic absence from any institute or university to be attended upon return.

17. We are aware that the United States is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic country providing a diversity of possible living experiences and that there is no single living experience that is typical. We understand that placements are made on the basis of criteria designed to

determine suitability of host families, and the Program does not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, disability, religion, gender, or ethnic origin, either with respect to students or to host families.

18. We understand that there are strict laws restricting smoking in the United States and that the host family may have objections to smoking in their home. We agree to honor all U.S. laws and host family restrictions.

Health/Medical Issues

19. We confirm that the information stated in the Student Health Certificate is accurate and contains no material omissions of which we are aware. **We understand that omitting information on the Student Health Certificate could endanger the health of our child and may be grounds for dismissal from the Program.** We will immediately inform the Program Organization of any change in information given. We understand that any physical or mental health condition requiring a significant and sustained level of care or monitoring of our child may require reconsideration of my child's participation in the Program. In the event our child has a recurrence of any previous illness or anything contracted before leaving home or in the United States that is not covered by insurance provided by the Program, we authorize the Program Organization to release our child to our care in our country. We will not hold the Program Organizations and their employees and agents; host families; Program representatives; school representatives; as well as the United States Department of State and its employees, agents, and instrumentalities responsible for any debts incurred in connection with this permission. We understand that treatment will be provided for injuries sustained by our child while on Program but the extent of coverage is subject to the Program's insurance provider's rules and policies.

20. We confirm that we have provided a full and complete medical and immunization history for our child. We understand that U.S. schools require immunizations, and we agree to allow the Program Organizations to arrange for all immunizations required for our child. We understand that such immunizations will be administered according to U.S. medical standards and at no expense to us or our child.

21. As the applicant's parents or guardians, we agree to and authorize the Placement Organization, its personnel and representatives, and the adult members of the host family, to act for us in any emergency, accident, or illness.

Termination from the Program

22. We understand that our child may be dismissed from the program for behavior that the Program Organizations, with the concurrence of the U.S. Department of State, consider inappropriate or detrimental to our child or to the program. Inappropriate or detrimental behavior may include, but is not limited to, violating host family or school rules, academic under-performance, or failure to participate in program activities. It may also include inappropriate sexual behavior, including but not limited to the viewing and sharing of

23. We agree that if we violate any provision of this Agreement, or if our child, during his/her stay in the United States, does any of the following, then it may be determined that our child has voluntarily withdrawn from the Program:

- a. is absent without authorization from the host school or the place of residence designated by the Placement Organization; or
- b. has misrepresented him or herself in the Program application.

24. If our child voluntarily withdraws, or is dismissed from the Program at any time after departure from our country, we understand that his/her scholarship, Program status as a J-visa holder, and health insurance coverage are canceled.

Declaration

25. We have discussed the Program and this Agreement with our child, and each of us fully understands the obligations imposed on us.

26. We confirm that all information provided in our child's application materials and this Agreement is truthful. **We understand that any misrepresentation or false answer in this application can be grounds for our child's termination from the Program.**

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR FLEX AND YES STUDENTS

Applicants will be considered for participation in this Program if:

- 1. The applicant meets the Program age and grade (class) requirements for his or her country; and
- 2. The applicant is a citizen of the country in which he or she applies.

GENERAL POLICIES

Internet: Students are required to follow ALL RULES regarding use of computers, tablets, cell phones (including devices that belong to our child) and the Internet as determined by their Placement Organization, host family and/or host school. Students who place private (contact information, pictures, etc.) or other information on the Internet in violation of the rules established by their Placement Organization, host family and/or host school may be dismissed from the Program. These Placement Organization rules are intended to protect students' safety and are based on federal guidelines and laws governing what can and cannot be posted online. Violation of any of these rules may result in dismissal from the Program. Students also may be subject to prosecution for any violation of law. Students who in any way put the safety of themselves or others at risk by misusing the Internet may be dismissed from the Program.

Dangerous/Risky Activities: The following activities have been determined by most insurance companies to be too risky, and treatment for injuries sustained while participating in them is not likely to be covered by insurance: driving any motorized vehicle (such as a car, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, etc.), riding as a passenger in off-road vehicles or in a non-

commercial aircraft, hang gliding, bungee jumping, jumping on a trampoline, parachute jumping, parasailing, scuba diving, piloting a private plane, mountain biking, mountaineering, rock climbing, skate boarding, extreme sports, handling or using a firearm or other weapon. Participants are not permitted to engage in any activities not covered by program insurance. In addition, participants are not permitted to engage in any activities prohibited by their Placement Organization, even if the activity is covered by insurance.

Driving: Exchange students are not permitted to drive any motorized vehicle under any circumstances while participating in the Program in the United States. Violators of this policy will be considered for Program dismissal. This applies even if students are in possession of an International driver's license or if the host family feels that the student is a responsible and careful driver. Exceptions may be granted for farm equipment if allowed by the student's natural parents and Placement Organization. If authorized, the student must observe precautions regarding safety and legal limitations. Exchange students are not permitted to pilot any aircraft under any circumstances while participating in the Program.

Employment: The J-1 visa permitting students to stay in the United States restricts employment. Program participants may seek only part-time, small jobs such as babysitting, yard clean-up, etc.

Marriage: Married students are not permitted on the Program. If marriage occurs while the student is a participant or is discovered to have occurred prior to the student becoming a participant, the student will be considered for dismissal from the Program.

Pregnancy: Male students who cause pregnancies must return home. If a program participant is discovered to be pregnant, she must return home.

Student expenses: The Program provides travel arrangements, host family and school placements, allowances, and insurance. In addition, the Program provides the Form DS-2019 that is required to apply for a J-1 visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate. The Program is not responsible for additional student expenses beyond the incidentals allowance, monthly pocket allowance, and official Program activities and travel. The host family is responsible for three meals a day for the student and must provide EITHER lunch money OR a bag lunch. All other expenses, such as extra school fees or activities, social activities, personal and hygienic supplies, postage and telephone calls, are paid by the student using Program allowances.

TRAVEL POLICIES

Return to home country at the end of the Program: All students must return to their home country at the end of the program on the date assigned by the responsible Program Organization. Students will not be allowed to remain in the United States after their assigned return-travel date. Those who do not adhere to this may be reported to the Department of Homeland Security and will have their program insurance canceled.

Student travel: Only authorized student travel is permitted. Authorized student travel must meet these three criteria:

- a. The Placement Organization has knowledge of the student's location and approves the travel in advance, and/or the Program Organizations have obtained the natural parents' or guardians' written permission for the travel;
- b. The student's safety is assured to the greatest extent possible; and
- c. The travel does not interfere with school attendance.

Visits with natural family, home country friends or relatives who live in the United States: Such visits are strongly discouraged during the Program year, especially during the initial adjustment period. Such visits interrupt the continuity of the relationship with the host family and may diminish the exchange experience for the student and host family. Policies vary by Placement Organization.

Visits to the home country while on Program: Such visits are not allowed. Exceptions may be made, contingent upon identification of a source of funding and Program approval, in the case of the death or imminent death of an immediate (mother, father, brother, sister) family member. An unauthorized visit will result in dismissal from the Program. Such non-emergency trips break the continuity of the relationship with the host family and may diminish the exchange experience for the student and host family. Any requests for exceptions must be presented to the Placement Organization and approved by the U.S. Department of State.

SCHOOL AND HOST FAMILY PLACEMENT

School attendance: All Program participants must attend a high school and maintain a normal course of school work. Non-attendance may result in consideration for Program dismissal or determining that the student has left the Program.

School performance: Allowing for an initial period of adjustment, participants must achieve and maintain adequate academic results. After a reasonable period of time, poor motivation, under-achievement, or inappropriate behavior in combination with poor family adjustment, may be cause for dismissal from the Program.

School expulsion: If a student is expelled from school, it may result in Program dismissal.

- Students and natural parents cannot choose their host family, school, grade placement, or location of placement. Placement organizations will request agreement of the student and natural parent(s) if a student will be 1) placed in a home with another exchange student [a double placement]; 2) placed with a single host parent without children in the home; or 3) enrolled in a school run by a religious organization.
- Participants cannot be hosted by natural family members.

HEALTH/MEDICAL

Medical treatment of a student (including emergencies): Before a student arrives in the United States, the Program must receive written permission from natural parents to obtain emergency medical attention if needed (see Permission for Care of My Child). Students will

receive medical attention in case of an accident or emergency. The insurance provider is determined by each Placement Organization. Each insurance provider has specific policies and restrictions governing the types of expenses it will reimburse. Placement Organizations, their representatives and host families are not responsible for any medical bills not covered by insurance regardless of who signs the hospital admission form. The Program also is not responsible for any negative results because of medical treatment.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

Students may be subject to prosecution by the U.S. legal system and may be dismissed from the program if they engage in illegal activity, such as:

- **Alcohol:** Participants are required to observe all U.S. laws with regard to the minimum drinking age. The minimum drinking age in the United States is 21.
- **Drugs:** Participants may not possess or use drugs that are illegal in the United States.
- **Theft or shoplifting**
- **Any other activity that is against U.S. law or that results** in the participant being arrested or charged with a crime.

Neither the Program Organizations nor the Department of State is obligated to provide legal counsel, or defray representation expenses or fines of any sort, should a Participant be charged with any crime or do something that attracts the attention of law enforcement officials. In such cases, the participant is subject to all local, state, and federal laws.

OTHER GROUNDS FOR TERMINATION

Leaving the Program early: If the student is absent from the host family, school or other place to which the Program has assigned him or her, without obtaining the advance written approval of the Program, the Program may determine that the student has left the Program through his or her own voluntary action. In this case, the Program is absolved from all obligations, legal or otherwise, to the student or his/her parents or guardians for the student's current or future well-being. The Program will, if the circumstances warrant, work with the student to return to the Program. However, if this cannot be accomplished, a decision will be made that the separation from the Program is final, and the student will receive a letter from the Program sponsor indicating that the student has been reported to the Department of Homeland Security in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) database. The participant's medical insurance and health benefits will be canceled.

Unauthorized travel may constitute termination from the Program: The Placement Organizations in the United States determine authorization for travel. Procedures for obtaining permission to travel vary by Placement Organization.

INSTRUCTIONS

Carefully review this important information with your parents. This form must be signed by you and one of your parents indicating you agree to the terms and conditions of participating in the program. Return the form to your HSA Representative with your application. Your parents should keep a copy of this document for their reference.

A. PURPOSE

The High School in America Program ("the Program") promotes friendship between the United States of America and your country and provides opportunities for personal development through international host family living.

The Program is implemented by private, not-for-profit organizations ("Program Organizations"). While in the United States, students will be in the care of "Placement Organizations" that identify and arrange host families and schools, and provide support and guidance for participants during the exchange Program. Participants attend an American school, share in U.S. family life, learn about the United States, increase their sensitivity to cultural differences and similarities, and develop a deepened awareness of shared human values and interests. The Program, consistent with its commitment to mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries, encourages cultural diversity in the selection of Program participants and host families. Participants are required to return to their home country after their Program, where they are expected to share their experiences in the United States.

B. PARENT AGREEMENT General Program Policies

- We give our child permission to participate in this Program. We and our child will obey the policies described in the Program Handbook and Program Organization guidelines. We understand that the original English-language version of this document represents the final authoritative wording of all policies and guidelines.
- We understand that if we or any other immediate family member has applied at any time to emigrate to the United States or if we or any other immediate adult family member (whether estranged or not) is a U.S. citizen or green card holder, it may impact negatively on our child's final selection for the Program.
- We understand that if another member of our family will be living in the U.S. at the same time our child would be on Program, it may affect his/her eligibility for the Program.
- We acknowledge that our child has not stayed in the United States for three (3) months or more during the past five (5) years.
- We understand that our child must meet the Program eligibility requirements, be a citizen of the country in which s/he is applying, and be able to obtain a passport from his/her country of citizenship and any visa required by the United States.
- We understand that we may not visit our child during his or her participation in the Program unless we obtain prior written approval from the Placement Organization.
- We understand that if our child is selected for the Program, final acceptance will depend on fulfillment of the medical, placement, and academic requirements of the Program Organization.
- We agree to release and discharge the Program Organizations and their employees and agents; host families; Program representatives; and school representatives from any legal liability, claim, or demand in connection with:
 - any emergency, accident, illness, injury or other consequences or events arising from the actions or participation of our child in the Program; and
 - any cause, event or occurrence beyond the control of the Program Organizations including, but not limited to, natural disasters, war, terrorism, civil disturbances, and the negligence of parties not subject to the control of the Program Organizations.
 - any actions or negligence of commercial airlines, trains, buses, restaurants, hotels, and other entities engaged for travel-related services, including, but not limited to, lost baggage, uncomfortable accommodations, and travel delays.

Travel Policies

- We agree that our child will travel to and from the United States in strict accordance with the travel plans made by the Program.
- We will not encourage or permit our child to travel outside the host community during his or her participation in the Program except in strict accordance with the following requirements:
 - If our child desires to travel outside the host community with and under the supervision of his or her host parent(s), school official or other responsible adult, our child must first obtain written approval for such travel from the Placement Organization. For international travel this includes authorization to do so on the Form DS-2019.
 - If our child desires to travel outside the host community unaccompanied by his or her host parent(s), school official, or other responsible adult, our child must obtain prior written approval for such travel from the Placement Organization and us, the child's parents or guardians. For international travel this includes authorization to do so on the Form DS-2019.
 - We understand that many Placement Organizations place limits on or do not allow visits with natural family members or friends from the home country. We agree to follow all Placement Organization rules concerning visits with natural family members or family friends.
- We understand that our child will be responsible for paying any fees incurred for carrying baggage in excess of the baggage limits set by the airlines used for Program travel. We understand that this provision applies to both international and domestic travel within both the United States and our country.
- We understand that in making travel arrangements for our child, the Program Organizations contract with or use commercial airlines, trains, buses, restaurants, hotels, and other entities whose performance and services cannot be controlled by the Program. We agree that the Program Organizations reserve the right to change or alter travel, lodging or other arrangements if they believe such change or alteration to be in the best interest of the participants or the Program.

SIGNATURE OF A PARENT
OR LEGAL GUARDIAN: _____

SIGN

Print Name: _____
family name first name middle name

Date: _____

Form 1

PARENT/STUDENT AGREEMENT

- We understand that our child must return home at the end of the Program on the date assigned by the responsible Program Organization. Changes to the assigned departure date will not be made to accommodate graduation, prom or other special school or family events that occur after the assigned date. We understand and agree that the U.S. visa issued to our child will not be amended or extended beyond the Program end date. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

School and Host Family Placement

- We authorize the Placement Organizations, employees, and representatives to change the place of residence or school designated for our child when they believe such change to be in our child's best interest. We understand that we will be notified of any such changes.
- We recognize that schools in the United States may impose academic standards or other requirements in determining grade level placement that differ from those imposed by the school our child now attends. We acknowledge and accept that participation in the Program does not guarantee credit or graduation from the school our child now attends or from the U.S. school he or she will attend while participating in the Program. We understand that it is our responsibility to arrange with the school our child now attends to receive credit or to take exams upon completion of the Program; or to arrange for permission for academic absence from any institute or university to be attended upon return.
- We are aware that the United States is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic country providing a diversity of possible living experiences and that there is no single living experience that is typical. We understand that placements are made on the basis of criteria designed to determine suitability of host families, and the Program does not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, disability, religion, gender, or ethnic origin, either with respect to students or to host families.
- We understand that there are strict laws restricting smoking in the United States and that the host family may have objections to smoking in their home. We agree to honor all U.S. laws and host family restrictions.

Health/Medical Issues

- We confirm that the information stated in the Student Health Certificate is accurate and contains no material omissions of which we are aware. **We understand that omitting information on the Student Health Certificate could endanger the health of our child and may be grounds for dismissal from the Program.** We will immediately inform the Program Organization of any change in information given. We understand that any physical or mental health condition requiring a significant and sustained level of care or monitoring of our child may require reconsideration of my child's participation in the Program. In the event our child has a recurrence of any previous illness or anything contracted before leaving home or in the United States that is not covered by insurance provided by the Program, we authorize the Program Organization to release our child to our care in our country. We will not hold the Program Organizations and their employees and agents; host families; Program representatives; and school representatives for any debts incurred in connection with this permission. We understand that treatment will be provided for injuries sustained by our child while on Program but the extent of coverage is subject to the Program's insurance provider's rules and policies.
- We confirm that we have provided a full and complete medical and immunization history for our child. We understand that U.S. schools require immunizations, and we agree to allow the Program Organizations to arrange for all immunizations required for our child. We understand that such immunizations will be administered according to U.S. medical standards and at no expense to us or our child.
- As the applicant's parents or guardians, we agree to and authorize the Placement Organization, its personnel and representatives, and the adult members of the host family, to act for us in any emergency, accident, or illness.

Termination from the Program

- We understand that our child may be dismissed from the program for behavior that the Program Organizations consider inappropriate or detrimental to our child or to the program. Inappropriate or detrimental behavior may include, but is not limited to, violating host family or school rules, academic under-performance, or failure to participate in program activities. It may also include inappropriate sexual behavior, including but not limited to the viewing and sharing of sexually explicit material, verbal or physical harassment, and/or any violation of U.S. law.
- We agree that if we violate any provision of this Agreement, or if our child, during his/her stay in the United States, does any of the following, then it may be determined that our child has voluntarily withdrawn from the Program:
 - is absent without authorization from the host school or the place of residence designated by the Placement Organization; or
 - has misrepresented him or herself in the Program application.
- If our child voluntarily withdraws, or is dismissed from the Program at any time after departure from our country, we understand that his/her scholarship, Program status as a J-visa holder, and health insurance coverage are canceled.

Declaration

- We have discussed the Program and this Agreement with our child, and each of us fully understands the obligations imposed on us.
- We confirm that all information provided in our child's application materials and this Agreement is truthful. **We understand that any misrepresentation or false answer in this application can be grounds for our child's termination from the Program.**

C. STUDENT AGREEMENT I have read this Agreement and discussed with my parent(s) or guardians its terms and conditions. I agree with the purpose of the Program and fully accept all terms and conditions of this Agreement, and all other rules, regulations and conditions set forth concerning the Program. In particular I will do my best to become an integral part of my host family, school and community; will travel only in accordance with the Travel Policies Section of this Agreement; and will attend the school designated for me on a regular basis and complete all work to the best of my ability. I hereby certify that the information provided in all parts of this application is truthful. I understand that any misrepresentation or false answer can be grounds for my dismissal from this Program.

The policies presented here are the general policies for students. Since variations regarding specific policies and procedures exist among Placement Organizations, it is important that you check with the representatives or office of your Placement Organization in the United States.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will be considered for participation in this Program if:

1. The applicant meets the Program age and grade (class) requirements for his or her country; and
2. The applicant is a citizen of the country in which he or she applies.

GENERAL POLICIES

- **Internet:** Students are required to follow ALL RULES regarding use of computers, tablets, cell phones (including devices that belong to our child) and the Internet as determined by their Placement Organization, host family and/or host school. Students who place private (contact information, pictures, etc.) or other information on the Internet in violation of the rules established by their Placement Organization, host family and/or host school may be dismissed from the Program. These Placement Organization rules are intended to protect students' safety and are based on federal guidelines and laws governing what can and cannot be posted online. Violation of any of these rules may result in dismissal from the Program. Students also may be subject to prosecution for any violation of law. Students who in any way put the safety of themselves or others at risk by misusing the Internet may be dismissed from the Program.
- **Dangerous/Risky Activities:** The following activities have been determined by most insurance companies to be too risky, and treatment for injuries sustained while participating in them is not likely to be covered by insurance: driving any motorized vehicle (such as a car, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, etc.), riding as a passenger in off-road vehicles or in a non-commercial aircraft, hang gliding, bungee jumping, jumping on a trampoline, parachute jumping, parasailing, scuba diving, piloting a private plane, mountain biking, mountaineering, rock climbing, skate boarding, extreme sports, handling or using a firearm or other weapon. Participants are not permitted to engage in any activities not covered by program insurance. In addition, participants are not permitted to engage in any activities prohibited by their Placement Organization, even if the activity is covered by insurance.
- **Driving:** Exchange students are not permitted to drive any motorized vehicle under any circumstances while participating in the Program in the United States. Violators of this policy will be considered for Program dismissal. This applies even if students are in possession of an International driver's license or if the host family feels that the student is a responsible and careful driver. Exceptions may be granted for farm equipment if allowed by the student's natural parents and Placement Organization. If authorized, the student must observe precautions regarding safety and legal limitations. Exchange students are not permitted to pilot any aircraft under any circumstances while participating in the Program.
- **Employment:** The J-1 visa permitting students to stay in the United States restricts employment. Program participants may seek only part-time, small jobs such as babysitting, yard clean-up, etc.
- **Marriage:** Married students are not permitted on the Program. If marriage occurs while the student is a participant or is discovered to have occurred prior to the student becoming a participant, the student will be considered for dismissal from the Program.
- **Pregnancy:** Male students who cause pregnancies must return home. If a program participant is discovered to be pregnant, she must return home.
- **Student expenses:** The Program provides travel arrangements, host family and school placements, and insurance. In addition, the Program provides the Form DS-2019 that is required to apply for a J-1 visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate. The Program is not responsible for additional student expenses beyond official Program activities and travel. The host family is responsible for three meals a day for the student and must provide EITHER lunch money OR a bag lunch. All other expenses, such as extra school fees or activities, social activities, personal and hygienic supplies, postage and telephone calls, are paid by the student.

TRAVEL POLICIES

- **Return to home country at the end of the Program:** All students must return to their home country at the end of the program on the date assigned by the responsible Program Organization. Students will not be allowed to remain in the United States after their assigned return-travel date. Those who do not adhere to this may be reported to the Department of Homeland Security and will have their program insurance canceled.
- **Student travel:** Only authorized student travel is permitted. Authorized student travel must meet these three criteria:
 - a. The Placement Organization has knowledge of the student's location and approves the travel in advance, and/or the Program Organizations have obtained the natural parents' or guardians' written permission for the travel;
 - b. The student's safety is assured to the greatest extent possible; and
 - c. The travel does not interfere with school attendance.
- **Visits with natural family, home country friends or relatives who live in the United States:** Such visits are strongly discouraged during the Program year, especially during the initial adjustment period. Such visits interrupt the continuity of the relationship with the host family and may diminish the exchange experience for the student and host family. Policies vary by Placement Organization.
- **Visits to the home country while on Program:** Such visits are not allowed. Exceptions may be made, contingent upon identification of a source of funding and Program approval, in the case of the death or imminent death of an immediate (mother, father, brother, sister) family member. An unauthorized visit will result in dismissal from the Program. Such non-emergency trips break the continuity of the relationship with the host family and may diminish the exchange experience for the student and host family. Any requests for exceptions must be presented to and approved by the Placement Organization.

SCHOOL AND HOST FAMILY PLACEMENT

- **School attendance:** All Program participants must attend a high school and maintain a normal course of school work. Non-attendance may result in consideration for Program dismissal or determining that the student has left the Program.
- **School performance:** Allowing for an initial period of adjustment, participants must achieve and maintain adequate academic results. After a reasonable period of time, poor motivation, under-achievement, or inappropriate behavior in combination with poor family adjustment, may be cause for dismissal from the Program.
- **School expulsion:** If a student is expelled from school, it may result in Program dismissal.
- Students and natural parents cannot choose their host family, school, grade placement, or location of placement. Placement organizations will request agreement of the student and natural parent(s) if a student will be 1) placed in a home with another exchange student [a double placement]; 2) placed with a single host parent without children in the home; or 3) enrolled in a school run by a religious organization.
- Participants cannot be hosted by natural family members.

HEALTH/MEDICAL

- Medical treatment of a student (including emergencies): Before a student arrives in the United States, the Program must receive written permission from natural parents to obtain emergency medical attention if needed (see Permission for Care of My Child). Students will receive medical attention in case of an accident or emergency. The insurance provider is determined by each Placement Organization. Each insurance provider has specific policies and restrictions governing the types of expenses it will reimburse. Placement Organizations, their representatives and host families are not responsible for any medical bills not covered by insurance regardless of who signs the hospital admission form. The Program also is not responsible for any negative results because of medical treatment.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

- Students may be subject to prosecution by the U.S. legal system and may be dismissed from the program if they engage in illegal activity, such as:
 - **Alcohol:** Participants are required to observe all U.S. laws with regard to the minimum drinking age. The minimum drinking age in the United States is 21.
 - **Drugs:** Participants may not possess or use drugs that are illegal in the United States.
 - **Theft or shoplifting**
 - **Any other activity that is against U.S. law or that results in the participant being arrested or charged with a crime.**

The Program Organizations are not obligated to provide legal counsel, or defray representation expenses or fines of any sort, should a Participant be charged with any crime or do something that attracts the attention of law enforcement officials. In such cases, the participant is subject to all local, state, and federal laws.

OTHER GROUNDS FOR TERMINATION

- **Leaving the Program early:** If the student is absent from the host family, school or other place to which the Program has assigned him or her, without obtaining the advance written approval of the Program, the Program may determine that the student has left the Program through his or her own voluntary action. In this case, the Program is absolved from all obligations, legal or otherwise, to the student or his/her parents or guardians for the student's current or future well-being. The Program will, if the circumstances warrant, work with the student to return to the Program. However, if this cannot be accomplished, a decision will be made that the separation from the Program is final, and the student will receive a letter from the Program sponsor indicating that the student has been reported to the Department of Homeland Security in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) database. The participant's medical insurance and health benefits will be canceled.
- **Unauthorized travel** may constitute termination from the Program: The Placement Organizations in the United States determine authorization for travel. Procedures for obtaining permission to travel vary by Placement Organization.



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Updated May 2019

SECTION 1: ORIENTATIONS

Tell me about...	Host Family	Student Arrival	Student Mid-Year
What I get paid	\$40 honorarium per host family paid after submission of Host Family Orientation signed form. <i>*No reimbursement.</i>	\$40 honorarium per student paid after submission of Student Arrival Orientation signed form. <i>*No reimbursement.</i>	\$40 honorarium per student paid after submission of Student Mid-Year Orientation signed form. <i>*No reimbursement.</i>
What documentation I need to submit	Host Family Orientation signed form	Student Arrival Orientation signed form	Student Mid-Year Orientation signed form
When I should do the orientations	AFTER American Councils approves the placement to you in writing; BEFORE the student arrives. Applies to both temporary and permanent families.	Within 30 days of student's arrival to host family	January
Where I should do the orientations	Must be in person. Home or public location. Multi-host family orientation okay.	Must be in person. Home or public location. Multi-student orientation okay.	Must be in person. Home or public location. Multi-student orientation okay.

SECTION 2: ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES AND GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY

Tell me about...	Reimbursement for Enhancement Activities	Honoraria for Enhancement Activities
What I get paid	\$75 reimbursement per student attending after activity, up to four activities. You may inquire about reimbursement of more than four.	\$50 honorarium per student per differently-themed activity after conducting two or more activities.
What documentation I need to submit	Reimbursement Form for Local Coordinator Program Activities submitted after activity	LC Honoraria: Enhancement Activities form
When I should do these activities	Conduct activities any time. Reimbursements are processed as received.	Honoraria are paid at the end of each semester.
Where I should do these activities	Location depends on activity. Please see details of the four enhancement themes in the LC Handbook for ideas!	
Global Youth Service Day	\$20 reimbursement per student. The event must take place in the month of April and involve any type of volunteering.	Coordinators are not paid honoraria for Global Youth Service Day activities.



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SECTION 3: PLACEMENT HONORARIA

Tell me about...	Permanent Placement (full)	Permanent Placement (partial)	Temporary Placement	Permanent Replacement for Temporary Placement
What pieces of the placement I (the LC) need to complete	Full paperwork and student selection**, LC-generated or referral Host family identified by or referred to you (LC), and you matched the family with a student and <u>completed all paperwork</u>	Host family identified by or referred to you (LC), and you processed only <u>partial paperwork</u> . Applies to both high priority and non-high priority students.	You (LC) identified host family and processed all paperwork.	Either a new fully processed host family that allows student to remain within your (LC's) cluster or notification that current host family will convert from temporary to permanent
What I get paid	\$750 honorarium for a student designed as high priority by American Councils \$500 honorarium for all other students \$450 honorarium for a referral with full paperwork and student selection completed by you (LC)	\$150 honorarium if you (LC) processed the in-home interview, references, and conducted the Host Family Orientation (but you <u>did not do the school enrollment</u>) Applies to both high priority and non-high priority students \$100 honorarium if you (LC) processed the in-home interview and conducted the HFO only	\$300 honorarium for a student designated as high priority by American Councils \$200 honorarium for all other students	\$450 honorarium for a student identified as high priority by American Councils \$300 honorarium for all other students
What documentation I need to submit	Host family identified by or referred to you (LC), and you matched the family with a student and completed all paperwork	Host family identified by or referred to you (LC), and you processed only partial paperwork. Applies to both high priority and non-high priority students.	You (LC) identified host family and processed all paperwork. Must first provide American Councils office with estimated time period for temp hosting to receive honorarium.	Either a new fully processed host family that allows student to remain within your (LC's) cluster or notification that current host family will convert from temporary to permanent
When I get paid	After the placement has been approved by the American Councils national office, and the host family orientation paperwork has been submitted to American Councils.	After the placement has been approved by the American Councils national office, and the host family orientation paperwork has been submitted to American Councils.	You (LC) must first provide American Councils office with an estimated time period for temp hosting to receive honorarium. Payment is sent after the placement has been approved by American Councils national office, and the Host Family Orientation paperwork has been submitted to American Councils.	After the placement has been approved by the American Councils national office, and the Host Family Orientation paperwork has been submitted to American Councils.



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****HELPFUL HINT:** What does “**student selection**” mean? This means you (the LC) helped the family decide on a student to host. If the family already knew which student they wanted to host, you would not have completed the “student selection” portion of the placement.

SECTION 4: SUPERVISION HONORARIA

Tell me about...	First semester	Second semester
What I get paid	\$150, prorated as needed at the rate of \$30 per month (15 days or more = rounded up to full month)	\$150, prorated as needed at the rate of \$30 per month (15 days or more = rounded up to full month)
What documentation I need to submit	LC Honoraria: Supervision form, which will be generated and emailed to you by AC staff in December/January	LC Honoraria: Supervision form, which will be generated and emailed to you by AC staff in June

SECTION 5: REFERRAL HONORARIA

Tell me about...	Permanent or Temporary Host Family <u>within</u> LC cluster	Temporary Host Family <u>outside</u> of LC cluster	Permanent Host Family <u>without</u> an American Councils LC in range	Permanent Host Family <u>with</u> an American Councils LC in range
What types of referrals there are	New host family is within the referring person's cluster, meaning referrer, host family, and supervising LC are within 120 miles of each other <u>Applies only to families who have never hosted with American Councils before</u>	New host family is outside of referring person and LC's range, meaning new host family is more than 120 miles away New host family must end up hosting for agreed-upon temporary period **If a new LC is needed in the area and referred by the same person, that person may also claim an LC referral honorarium once that LC is certified, trained, and approved to supervise	New host family must be outside of referring person's range (roughly 120 miles), and referral results in the family hosting a student for the academic year with a new LC **If the same person also refers a new LC needed in the area, that person may also claim an LC referral honorarium once that LC is certified, trained, and approved to supervise	New host family must be outside of the referring person's range (roughly 120 miles) and the referral results in the family hosting a student for the academic year with an existing American Councils LC in the area
What I get paid	\$50 honorarium	\$50 honorarium *Additional \$50 may be claimed if temporary host family agrees to go permanent	\$100 honorarium	\$150 honorarium
What documentation I need to submit	Referral Honorarium Form	Referral Honorarium Form	Referral Honorarium Form	Referral Honorarium Form



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When the referrer will get paid	Following approval of the placement by American Councils, and after the student arrives to the family's home.	Following approval of the placement by American Councils, and after the student arrives to the family's home.	Following approval of the placement by American Councils, and after the student arrives to the family's home.	Following approval of the placement by American Councils, and after the student arrives to the family's home.
Example	LC's prior host family refers new family in same town where LC lives. Prior host family receives referral honorarium.	Prior host parent refers a relative across the country, but relative only wants to host temporarily. There is no LC in range. Prior host parent receives \$50 and could receive another \$50 if that relative decides to host for the entire year.	Prior host parent refers a relative across the country, and they will host for the whole year. There is no LC in range. Prior host parent receives referral honorarium.	Prior host parent refers a relative across the country, and they will host for the whole year. There's already an LC in the area. Prior host parent receives referral honorarium.

Subpart A—General Provisions

§62.1 Purpose.

(a) The regulations set forth in this part implement the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (the “Act”), as amended, Public Law 87-256, 22 U.S.C. 2451, *et seq.* (1988). The purpose of the Act is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges. Educational and cultural exchanges assist the Department of State in furthering the foreign policy objectives of the United States. These exchanges are defined by section 102 of the Act, 22 U.S.C. 2452, and section 101(a)(15)(J) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(J).

(b) The Secretary of State of the Department of State facilitates activities specified in the Act, in part, by designating public and private entities to act as sponsors of the Exchange Visitor Program. Sponsors may act independently or with the assistance of third parties. The purpose of the Program is to provide foreign nationals with opportunities to participate in educational and cultural programs in the United States and return home to share their experiences, and to encourage Americans to participate in educational and cultural programs in other countries. Exchange visitors enter the United States on a J visa. The regulations set forth in this subpart are applicable to all sponsors.

(c) The Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State may, in his or her sole discretion and to the extent consistent with the authorities described in paragraph (a) of this section and other applicable law, waive or modify any provision of this part with respect to programs that are established pursuant to memoranda of understanding, letters of intent or similar arrangements between the United States and foreign governments. When establishing such a program, the Department will publish a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER describing the program and any resulting modifications to or waivers of provisions of this part. If such an arrangement will not result in a waiver of or other modification to the provisions of this part, then the Department need not publish a notice.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.2 Definitions.

The following definitions apply to this part:

Academic institution. Any publicly or privately operated primary, secondary, or post-secondary institution in the United States or abroad that offers primarily academic programs. For the purpose of these regulations, an institution that offers primarily vocational or technical programs is not an academic institution unless the specific program or programs in which the exchange visitor is to participate or has participated has been determined by the U.S. Department of State on an exceptional basis to be comparable to those offered in academic institutions.

Accompanying spouse and dependents. The alien spouse and/or minor unmarried child(ren), if any, of an exchange visitor who are accompanying or following to join the exchange visitor and who seek to enter or have entered the United States temporarily on non-immigrant J-2 visas or seek to acquire or have acquired such status after admission. For the purpose of these regulations, a minor is a person under the age of 21 years old.

Accredited academic institution. Any academic institution that is duly accredited by the appropriate academic accrediting authority of the U.S. jurisdiction in which such institution is located. In addition, all post-secondary institutions also must be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association as recognized by the Secretary of Education.

Act. The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended.

Actual and current U.S. address. The physical, geographic location at which an exchange visitor and accompanying spouse and dependents reside while participating in an exchange program.

Alternate Responsible Officer. An employee or officer of a sponsor who has been nominated by the sponsor and approved by the Department of State to assist the Responsible Officer in carrying out the responsibilities outlined in §62.11. An Alternate Responsible Officer must be a United States person.

Certificate of Good Standing. A document issued by a state Secretary of State, Secretary of Commonwealth, or other official in the state where the business entity is registered. A Certificate of Good Standing confirms that a corporation, partnership or other legal entity is in existence or authorized to transact business. A Certificate of Good Standing is also known as a Certificate of Authorization or a Certificate of Existence.

Clerical work. Routine administrative work generally performed in an office or office-like setting, such as data entry, filing, typing, mail sorting and distribution, and other general administrative or support tasks.

Consortium. A not-for-profit corporation, partnership, joint venture or other association formed by two or more accredited academic institutions for the purpose of sharing educational resources, conducting research, and/or developing new programs to enrich or expand the opportunities offered by its members. An academic institution in the United States that participates in a consortium is not barred from having separate exchange visitor program designations of its own.

Country of nationality or last legal permanent residence. Either the country of which the exchange visitor is a national at the time status as an exchange visitor is acquired or the last foreign country in which the visitor had a legal permanent residence before acquiring status as an exchange visitor.

Cross-cultural activity. An activity designed to promote exposure and interchange between exchange visitors and Americans so as to increase their mutual understanding of each other's society, culture, and institutions.

Department of State. The U.S. Department of State.

Designation. The written authorization issued by the Department of State to an exchange visitor program applicant to conduct an exchange visitor program as a sponsor. The term includes the written authorization issued to a current sponsor that applies to continue its designation (i.e., redesignation).

Employee. An individual who provides services or labor for an employer for wages or other remuneration. A third party, as defined in this section, or an independent contractor, as defined in 8 CFR 274a.1(j), is not an employee.

Exchange visitor. A foreign national who has been selected by a sponsor to participate in an exchange visitor program, and who is seeking to enter or has entered the United States temporarily on a non-immigrant J-1 visa or who has obtained J status in the United States based on a Form DS-2019 issued by the sponsor. The term does not include the accompanying spouse and dependents of the exchange visitor.

Exchange Visitor Program. The international exchange program administered by the Department of State to implement the Act by means of educational and cultural exchange programs. When “exchange visitor program” is set forth in lower case, it refers to the individual program of a sponsor that has been designated by the Department of State.

Exchange visitor's government. The government of the exchange visitor's country of nationality or last legal permanent residence.

Financed directly. Financed in whole or in part by the U.S. Government or the exchange visitor's government with funds contributed directly to the exchange visitor in connection with his or her participation in an exchange visitor program.

Form DS-2019, A Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-Nonimmigrant) Status. A controlled document of the Department of State that a sponsor issues to a potential Exchange Visitor Program participant (J-1) and his or her accompanying spouse and dependents (J-2) as permitted by regulations. This form, together with other necessary Department of State documents, permits the named foreign national, if required, to schedule an interview at a U.S. embassy or consulate to seek to obtain a J visa to enter the United States as an Exchange Visitor Program participant or as an accompanying spouse and dependent.

Form DS-3036, Exchange Visitor Program Application. A controlled document of the Department of State that an organization uses to apply to become a designated sponsor of the Exchange Visitor Program and that a designated sponsor uses to request redesignation or amendment of an existing exchange visitor program.

Form DS-3037, Update of Information on a Sponsor's Exchange Visitor Program. A controlled document of the Department of State that a sponsor uses to update information on its exchange visitor programs in SEVIS.

Form DS-3097, Annual Report. A controlled document of the Department of State in which a sponsor reports program activity and evaluation on a yearly basis.

Form DS-7002, Training/Internship Placement Plan (T/IPP). A controlled document of the Department of State used in connection only with a Trainee or Intern under 22 CFR §62.22, or a Student Intern under §62.23 respectively, to outline an exchange visitor's program activities.

Full course of study. Full-time enrollment in an academic program of classroom participation and study and/or doctoral thesis research at an accredited academic institution as follows:

(1) Secondary school students must satisfy the attendance and course requirements of the state in which the school they attend is located; and

(2) College and university students must register for and complete a full course of study, as defined by the accredited academic institution in which the student is registered, unless exempted in accordance with §62.23(e).

Graduate medical education or training. Participation in a program in which a foreign medical school graduate will receive graduate medical education or training, which generally consists of a residency or fellowship program involving health care services to patients, but does not include programs involving observation, consultation, teaching or research in which there is no or only incidental patient care. This program may consist of a medical specialty, a directly related medical subspecialty, or both.

Home-country physical presence requirement. The requirement that an exchange visitor, and any accompanying spouse and dependents, who are within the purview of section 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, or Public Law 94-484 (substantially quoted in 22 CFR 41.63), must reside and be physically present in the country of nationality or last legal permanent residence for an aggregate of at least two years following departure from the United States before the exchange visitor is eligible to apply for an immigrant visa or permanent residence, a non-immigrant K visa as the fiancé(e) of

a U.S. citizen, a non-immigrant H visa as a temporary worker or trainee, or a non-immigrant L visa as an intracompany transferee, or a non-immigrant H or L visa as the spouse or minor child of a person who has been granted status in H or L non-immigrant classification as a temporary worker or trainee or an intracompany transferee.

Host organization. A third party in the United States that conducts training and/or internship programs on behalf of a designated sponsor pursuant to an executed written agreement between the two parties.

Internship program. A structured and guided work-based learning program for an Intern as set forth in an individualized Training/Internship Placement Plan (Form DS-7002) that reinforces an intern's academic study; recognizes the need for work-based experience; provides on-the-job exposure to American techniques, methodologies, and technologies; and enhances the Intern's knowledge of American culture and society.

J visa. A non-immigrant visa issued pursuant to 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(J). A J-1 visa is issued to an exchange visitor. A J-2 visa is issued to the exchange visitor's accompanying spouse and dependents, if qualified under §214b of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended.

Management review. A program-specific management audit in a format approved by the Department of State that is conducted by an independent auditor who is not an employee or third party contractor of the sponsor, to identify weaknesses in operating procedures in the conduct of an organization's business and in meeting regulatory requirements in the administration of a sponsor's exchange visitor program.

Office of Designation. The Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs office assigned to administer designations of sponsors.

Office of Exchange Coordination and Compliance. The Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs office assigned to oversee sponsor compliance with 22 CFR part 62 and, as appropriate, impose sanctions.

Office of Private Sector Exchange Administration. The Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs office assigned to monitor administration of each sponsor's exchange visitor program.

On-the-job training. An individual's observation of and participation in given tasks demonstrated by experienced workers for the purpose of acquiring competency in such tasks.

Prescribed course of study. A non-degree academic program with a specific educational objective. Such course of study may include intensive English language training, classroom instruction, research projects, and/or academic training to the extent permitted in §62.23.

Reciprocity. The participation of a U.S. citizen or U.S. national in an educational and cultural program in a foreign country in exchange for the participation of a foreign national in the Exchange Visitor Program. Where used herein, "reciprocity" will be interpreted broadly; unless otherwise specified, reciprocity does not require a one-for-one exchange or that exchange visitors be engaged in the same activity.

Responsible Officer. An employee or officer of a sponsor who has been nominated by the sponsor, and approved by the Department of State, to carry out the duties outlined in §62.11. A Responsible Officer must be a citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident of the United States.

Secretary of State. The Secretary of State or an employee of the U.S. Department of State acting under a delegation of authority from the Secretary of State.

SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System). The statutorily mandated system designed to collect information on non-immigrant students (F and M visas), exchange visitors (J visas), and their spouses and dependents (F-2, M-2, and J-2 visas). SEVIS enables schools and program sponsors to transmit information and event notifications electronically, via the Internet, to the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State throughout a student's or exchange visitor's stay in the United States.

Site of activity. The physical, geographic location(s) where an exchange visitor participates in his or her exchange program.

Sponsor. A legal entity designated by the Secretary of State to conduct an exchange visitor program.

Staffing/employment agency. A U.S. business that hires individuals for the express purpose of supplying workers to other businesses. Typically, the other businesses where workers are placed pay an hourly fee per employee to the staffing/employment agency, of which the worker receives a percentage.

Student internship program. A structured and guided work-based learning program for a post-secondary student intern as set forth in an individualized Training/Internship Placement Plan (Form DS-7002) that partially or fully fulfills a student's post-secondary academic degree requirements; recognizes the need for work-based experience; provides on-the-job exposure to American techniques, methodologies, and technologies; and enhances the student intern's knowledge of American culture and society.

Third party. A person or legal entity with whom a sponsor has executed a written agreement for the person or entity to act on behalf of a sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's exchange visitor program. All entities that act on behalf of the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's exchange visitor program must execute written agreements with the sponsor that outline the full relationship between the entity and the sponsor on all matters involving the administration of the exchange visitor program. A sponsor's use of a third party does not relieve the sponsor of its obligations to comply, and to ensure third party compliance, with the provisions of this part. Failure by any third party to comply with the regulations set forth in this part or with any additional terms and conditions governing administration of the Exchange Visitor Program that the Department of State may from time to time impose will be imputed to the sponsor. Sponsors are required to ensure that third parties know and comply with all applicable provisions of these regulations.

Training program. A structured and guided work-based learning program for a trainee as set forth in an individualized Training/Internship Placement Plan (Form DS-7002), that develops new and advanced skills in a trainee's occupational field through exposure to American techniques, methodologies, and technologies; and enhances a trainee's understanding of American culture and society.

United States person (individual). A person who is born within or is a national of the United States or any of its territories or outlying possessions. A U.S. person is a citizen or an individual who has been lawfully admitted for permanent residence, within the meaning of section 101(a)(20) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

United States Person (legal entity).

(1) A general or limited partnership created or organized under the laws of the United States, or of any state, the District of Columbia, or any territory or outlying possession of the United States, of which a majority of the partners are United States persons:

(i) Which has its principal place of business in the United States; and

(ii) In instances where the partnership is additionally governed by a Board, the majority of whose officers are United States persons.

(2) A for-profit corporation, association, or other legal entity created or organized under the laws of the United States, or of any state, the District of Columbia, or a territory or outlying possession of the United States, whose principal place of business is located in the United States, and

(i) Whose shares or voting interests are publicly traded on a U.S. stock exchange; or

(ii) A majority of whose officers, a majority of whose shareholders, and a majority of whose members of its Board of Directors are United States persons and collectively hold a majority of the shares or stock (i.e., the *de jure* controlling interest); or

(3) A non-profit corporation, association, or other legal entity created or organized under the laws of the United States, or any state, the District of Columbia, or any territory or outlying possession of the United States; and

(i) Whose principal place of business is located in the United States; and

(ii) A majority of whose officers and a majority of whose members of its Board of Directors, Board of Trustees or other like body vested with its management are United States persons; or

(4) An accredited college, university, or other post-secondary academic institution in the United States created or organized under the laws of the United States, or of any state, county, municipality, or other political subdivision thereof, the District of Columbia, or of any territory or outlying possession of the United States; or

(5) An agency of the United States, or of any state or local government, the District of Columbia, or any territory or outlying possession of the United States.

Validation. The process by which a Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer updates the SEVIS record of an exchange visitor to show he or she has entered the United States, and that the exchange visitor reported to his or her sponsor and is participating in the exchange visitor program at the site of activity identified on his or her Form DS-2019.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.3 Sponsor eligibility.

(a) The following types of entities are eligible to apply for designation as a sponsor of an exchange visitor program:

(1) U.S. local, state, and federal government agencies to include the District of Columbia; and government agencies of any U.S. territories and outlying possessions;

(2) International agencies or organizations of which the United States is a member and that have an office in the United States; or

(3) Reputable organizations that are United States Persons.

(b) To be eligible for designation as a sponsor, an entity is required to:

(1) Demonstrate, to the Department of State's satisfaction, its ability to comply and remain in continual compliance with all applicable provisions of this part;

(2) Meet at all times its financial obligations and responsibilities attendant to successful sponsorship of its exchange visitor program; and

(3) Demonstrate that the organization or its proposed Responsible Officer has no fewer than three years' experience in international exchange.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.4 Categories of participant eligibility.

Sponsors select foreign nationals to participate in exchange visitor program(s) in the United States. Participation is limited to foreign nationals who meet the following criteria for each of the following categories:

(a) *Student*. A foreign national who is:

(1) Studying in the United States and:

(i) Pursuing a full course of study at a secondary accredited academic institution;

(ii) Pursuing a full course of study leading to or culminating in the award of a U.S. degree from a post-secondary accredited academic institution; or

(iii) Engaged full-time in a prescribed course of study of up to 24 months (non-degree) duration conducted by:

(A) A post-secondary accredited academic institution; or

(B) An institute approved by or acceptable to the post-secondary accredited academic institution, where the student is to be enrolled upon completion of the non-degree program;

(2) Engaged in academic training as permitted in §62.23(f);

(3) Engaged in English language training at:

(i) A post-secondary accredited academic institution, or

(ii) An institute approved by or acceptable to the post-secondary accredited academic institution where the college or university student is to be enrolled upon completion of the language training; or

(4) Engaged full-time in a student internship program conducted by a post-secondary accredited academic institution.

(b) *Short-term scholar*. A foreign national who is a professor, research scholar, or person with similar education or accomplishments who enters the United States for a short-term visit for the purpose of lecturing, observing, consulting, training, or demonstrating special skills at research institutions, museums, libraries, post-secondary accredited academic institutions, or similar types of institutions.

(c) *Trainee*. A foreign national participating in a structured and guided work-based training program in his or her specific occupational field (in an occupational category for which a sponsor has obtained designation) who has either:

(1) A degree or professional certificate from a foreign ministerially-recognized post-secondary academic institution and at least one year of prior related work experience in his or her occupational field acquired outside the United States; or

(2) Five years of work experience in his or her occupational field acquired outside the United States.

(d) *Teacher*. A foreign national with the equivalent of a U.S. Bachelor's degree in either education or the subject matter (or related subjects) he or she intends to teach and a minimum of the equivalent of two years of post-degree full-time teaching experience, who is employed as a teacher at the time of application for the program, for the purpose of teaching full-time in a primary or secondary accredited academic institution.

(e) *Professor*. A foreign national whose primary purpose is teaching, lecturing, observing, or consulting at post-secondary accredited academic institutions, museums, libraries, or similar types of institutions. A professor also may conduct research where authorized by the sponsor.

(f) *Research scholar*. A foreign national whose primary purpose is conducting research, observing, or consulting in connection with a research project at research institutions, corporate research facilities, museums, libraries, post-secondary accredited academic institutions, or similar types of institutions. A research scholar also may teach or lecture where authorized by the sponsor.

(g) *Specialist*. A foreign national who is an expert in a field of specialized knowledge or skills who enters the United States for the purpose of observing, consulting, or demonstrating special knowledge or skills.

(h) *Other person of similar description*. A foreign national of description similar to those set forth in paragraphs (a) through (g) of this section coming to the United States as a participant in an exchange visitor program designated by the Department of State under this category, for the purpose of teaching, instructing or lecturing, studying, observing, conducting research, consulting, demonstrating special skills, or receiving training. The programs designated by the Department of State in this category consist of:

(1) *Alien physician*. A foreign national who is a graduate of a school of medicine who comes to the United States under a program in which he or she will receive graduate medical education or training conducted by accredited U.S. schools of medicine or scientific institutions.

(2) *International visitor*. A foreign national who is a recognized or potential leader, selected by the Department of State for the purpose of consulting, observing, conducting research, training, or demonstrating special skills in the United States.

(3) *Government visitor*. A foreign national who is an influential or distinguished person, selected by a U.S. federal, state, or local government agency for the purpose of consulting, observing, training, or demonstrating special skills in the United States.

(4) *Camp counselor*. A foreign national selected to be a counselor in a summer camp in the United States (e.g., during the U.S. summer months).

(5) *Au pair*. A foreign national who comes to the United States for the purpose of residing with an American host family and participating directly in their home life, while providing limited childcare services, and fulfilling an educational requirement.

(6) *Summer Work and Travel.* A foreign national who is a bona fide foreign post-secondary student, who at the time of application is enrolled in and actively pursuing a degree or a full-time course of study at a foreign ministerially-recognized post-secondary academic institution and whose purpose is work and travel in the United States for up to four months during his or her break between academic years.

(7) *Intern.* A foreign national participating in a structured and guided work-based internship program in his or her specific academic field and who either:

(i) Is currently enrolled full-time in and actively pursuing studies at a foreign ministerially-recognized degree- or certificate-granting post-secondary academic institution outside the United States, or

(ii) Graduated from such an institution no more than 12 months prior to the exchange visitor program begin date reflected on Form DS-2019.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.5 Designation application procedure.

(a) An entity meeting the eligibility requirements set forth in §62.3 may apply to the Department of State for designation as an Exchange Visitor Program sponsor. An applicant must first complete and submit Form DS-3036 in SEVIS. The complete application must consist of:

(1) A completed copy of Form DS-3036 signed by the applicant's Chief Executive Officer, President, or other executive with legal authority to make commitments on behalf of the sponsor (as identified in the organization's governing documents);

(2) Required supporting documentation and certifications as set forth in paragraph (c); and

(3) Confirmation of payment of the required non-refundable application fee through pay.gov as set forth in §62.17.

(b) A complete application must set forth, in detail, the applicant's proposed exchange program activity and must demonstrate, to the Department of State's satisfaction, the applicant's ability to comply and remain in continual compliance with all the provisions of this part, and, in particular, to meet the sponsor eligibility requirements set forth in §62.3 and the general obligations of sponsors set forth in §62.9.

(c) An application must be accompanied by the following supporting documentation and certifications, as relevant:

(1) Evidence of sponsor eligibility as set forth in §62.3(a), including evidence of legal status (e.g., charter, proof of incorporation, by laws, partnership agreement);

(2) Evidence of experience in operating a successful business, including a minimum of three years of experience in international exchange by the organization or by the proposed Responsible Officer;

(3) Evidence of the applicant's ability to meet at all times its financial obligations and responsibilities attendant to successful sponsorship of its exchange visitor program, and evidence that it can comply with §62.9(e) and provide any supplemental or explanatory financial information the Department of State may request. In addition:

(i) An established entity must present a current audit report with audit notes prepared by an independent certified public accounting firm.

(ii) A newly formed entity must present a compilation (i.e., a balance sheet, statement of cash flows and all disclosures, revenues, expenditures, and notes to financial statements) prepared by an independent certified public accounting firm demonstrating that the entity has been capitalized with sufficient funds to cover general operating expenses and costs associated with an exchange program.

(4) A current Certificate of Good Standing (see §62.2);

(5) An Employer Identification Number (EIN), which specifies the date of issuance;

(6) Evidence of current accreditation if the applicant is a secondary or post-secondary academic institution;

(7) Evidence of current licensure, if required by local, state, or federal law, to carry out the activity for which the applicant is seeking designation;

(8) A statement signed by the Chief Executive Officer, President, or other executive with legal authority to make commitments on behalf of the sponsor (as identified in the organization's governing documents), certifying that:

(i) The applicant is a United States Person as defined in §62.2;

(ii) The proposed Responsible Officer and all proposed Alternate Responsible Officers are United States citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States;

(iii) The sponsor has completed a criminal background check on the potential Responsible Officer and all Alternate Responsible Officers, and has determined their suitability for these positions; the criminal background checks must be no older than four years at any time for re-designated sponsors and must be newly conducted as part of the designation application for new sponsors and the redesignation application for sponsors designated for only one year; and

(iv) The Responsible Officer will be provided sufficient staff and resources to fulfill his or her duties and obligations on behalf of the applicant;

(9) A completed SEVIS-generated Citizenship Certification for the proposed Responsible Officer and all proposed Alternate Responsible Officer(s) along with evidence that they are citizens of the United States or lawful permanent residents (e.g., copy of passport, birth certificate, green card); and

(10) Such additional information or documentation that the Department of State may deem necessary to evaluate the application. In addition, the Department may decide, in its discretion, to conduct a pre-designation site visit of a first-time applicant.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.6 Designation.

(a) Upon its favorable determination that an applicant meets all statutory and regulatory requirements, the Department of State may, in its sole discretion, designate the applicant as an Exchange Visitor Program sponsor.

(b) Initial designations are effective for one or two years at the sole discretion of the Department of State.

(c) Designation will confer upon a sponsor the authority to engage in one or more activities specified in §62.4. A sponsor may engage only in the activity or activities specifically authorized in its written letter of designation.

(d) The Department of State may, in its sole discretion, require a sponsor to secure a payment bond in favor of the Department of State guaranteeing the sponsor's obligations hereunder.

(e) Designations are not transferable or assignable.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.7 Redesignation.

(a) Sponsors must file for redesignation no more than six months and no fewer than three months before the designation expiration date as set forth in the sponsor's letter of designation or its most recent letter of redesignation.

(b) A sponsor seeking redesignation as an Exchange Visitor Program sponsor must first complete and submit Form DS-3036 in SEVIS. The complete application must consist of:

(1) A completed copy of Form DS-3036, signed by the sponsor's Chief Financial Officer, President or other executive with legal authority to make commitments on behalf of the sponsor (as identified in the organization's governing documents);

(2) Required supporting documentation and certifications as set forth in paragraph (c); and

(3) Confirmation of payment of the required non-refundable application fee through pay.gov as set forth in §62.17.

(c) The complete application must include the following supporting documentation and certifications:

(1) A copy of the most recent year-end financial statements;

(2) A copy of the most recent letter of accreditation if the sponsor is a secondary or post-secondary academic institution;

(3) A list of the names, addresses and citizenship or legal permanent resident status of the current members of its Board of Directors or the Board of Trustees or other like body, vested with the management of the organization or partnership, and/or the percentage of stocks/shares held, as applicable;

(4) For a non-profit organization, a signed copy of the sponsor's most recent Form 990 filed with the Internal Revenue Service;

(5) A statement signed by the Chief Executive Officer, President, or other executive with legal authority to make commitments on behalf of the sponsor (as identified in the organization's governing documents) certifying that the sponsor has completed timely criminal background checks since the date of the last designation or redesignation letter on the Responsible Officer and all Alternate Responsible Officers and has determined their suitability for these positions; and

(6) Such additional information or documentation that the Department of State may deem necessary to evaluate the application.

(d) Upon its favorable determination that a sponsor meets all statutory and regulatory requirements, the Department of State may, in its sole discretion, redesignate the organization as an Exchange Visitor Program sponsor for one or two years. A sponsor seeking re-designation may continue to operate its program(s) until such time as the Department of State notifies it of a decision to approve, amend or terminate its designation.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.8 General program requirements.

(a) *Size of program.* A sponsor, other than a federal government agency, must have no fewer than five actively participating exchange visitors during the annual reporting cycle (e.g., academic, calendar or fiscal year), as stated in its letter of designation or redesignation. The Department of State may, in its sole discretion, waive this requirement.

(b) *Minimum duration of program.* A sponsor, other than a federal government agency, must provide each exchange visitor, except those sponsored in the short-term scholar category, with a minimum period of participation in the United States of no less than three weeks.

(c) *Reciprocity.* In conducting its exchange visitor program, sponsors must make a good faith effort to develop and implement, to the fullest extent possible, reciprocal exchanges of persons.

(d) *Cross-cultural activities.* In addition to category specific requirements, sponsors must:

(1) Offer or make available to exchange visitors and the accompanying spouses and dependents, if any, a variety of appropriate cross-cultural activities. The extent and type of the cross-cultural activities will be determined by the needs and interests of the particular category of exchange visitor. Sponsors will be responsible for determining the appropriate types and numbers of such cross-cultural programs, unless otherwise specified by the Department. The Department of State encourages sponsors to give their exchange visitors the broadest exposure to American society, culture and institutions; and

(2) Encourage exchange visitors to participate voluntarily in activities that are for the purpose of sharing the language, culture, or history of their home country with Americans, provided such activities do not delay the completion of the exchange visitors' program.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.9 General obligations of sponsors.

(a) *Adherence to Department of State regulations.* Sponsors are required to adhere to all regulations set forth in this part.

(b) *Legal status.* A sponsor must maintain the legal status it had when it was designated. A sponsor's change in legal status (e.g., from partnership to corporation, non-profit to for-profit) requires the submission of a new application for designation of the successor legal entity within 45 days of the change in legal status.

(c) *Accreditation and licensure.* A sponsor must remain in compliance with all local, state, and federal laws, and professional requirements necessary to carry out the activities for which it is designated, including accreditation and licensure, if applicable.

(d) *Representations and disclosures.* Sponsors must:

(1) Provide accurate, complete, and timely information, to the extent lawfully permitted, to the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security regarding their exchange visitor program(s), exchange visitors, and accompanying spouses and dependents (if any);

(2) Provide accurate information to the public when advertising their exchange visitor program(s) or responding to public inquiries;

(3) Provide accurate program information and materials to prospective exchange visitors, host organizations, and host employers, if applicable, at the time of recruitment and before exchange visitors enter into agreements and/or pay non-refundable fees. This information must clearly explain program activities and terms and conditions of program, including the terms and conditions of any employment activities (job duties, number of work hours, wages and compensation, and any typical deductions for housing and transportation), have itemized list of all fees charged to the exchange visitor (i.e., fees paid to the sponsor or a third party, including the host employer), insurance costs, other typical costs, conditions, and restrictions of the exchange visitor program(s), and the type, duration, nature and importance of the cultural components of the program. Program recruitment information and materials also must make clear to prospective exchange visitors in the exchange categories with a work component that their stipend or wages might not cover all of their expenses and that they should bring additional personal funds.

(4) Not use the program number(s) assigned by the Department of State at the time of designation on any advertising materials or publications, including sponsor Web sites; and

(5) Not represent that its exchange visitor program is endorsed, sponsored, or supported by the Department of State or the U.S. Government, except for U.S. Government sponsors or exchange visitor programs financed directly by the U.S. Government to promote international educational exchanges. A sponsor may, however, represent that it is designated by the Department of State as a sponsor of an exchange visitor program.

(e) *Financial responsibility.* (1) Sponsors must maintain the financial capability to meet at all times their financial obligations and responsibilities attendant to successful sponsorship of their exchange visitor program.

(2) The Department of State may require non-government sponsors to provide evidence satisfactory to the Department of State that funds necessary to fulfill all obligations and responsibilities attendant to sponsorship of their exchange visitor programs are readily available and in the sponsor's control, including such supplementary or explanatory financial information as the Department of State may deem appropriate, such as, for example, audited financial statements.

(3) The Department of State may require a non-government sponsor to secure payment bonds in favor of the Department of State guaranteeing all financial obligations arising from its exchange visitor program when the Department has reasonable doubt about the sponsor's ability to meet its program and other financial obligations.

(f) *Staffing and support services.* Sponsors must ensure that:

(1) Adequate staffing and sufficient support services are provided to administer their exchange visitor program; and

(2) Their employees, officers, agents, third parties, volunteers or other individuals or entities associated with the administration of their exchange visitor program are adequately qualified, appropriately trained, and comply with the Exchange Visitor Program regulations and immigration laws pertaining to the administration of their exchange visitor program(s).

(g) *Appointment of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers.* (1) Sponsors must appoint and maintain a Responsible Officer and between one and ten Alternate Responsible Officers to assist the Responsible Officer in performing the duties set forth in §62.11. Upon written sponsor request, the Department of State may, in its sole discretion, permit a sponsor to appoint more than ten Alternate Responsible Officers. A sponsor redesignated for two years must ensure that the proposed Responsible Officer and Alternate Responsible Officer(s) have undergone a criminal background check within the past four years to determine their suitability for these positions. Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers must be U.S. persons.

(2) Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers must be employees or officers of the sponsor. Upon written sponsor request, the Department of State may, in its sole discretion, authorize the appointment of an individual who is not an employee or officer to serve as an Alternate Responsible Officer.

(3) In the event of the departure of a Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer, the sponsor must file a request in SEVIS for the approval of a replacement and forward the required documentation to the Department of State within ten calendar days from the date of the Responsible Officer's or Alternate Responsible Officer's departure.

(4) Requests to replace the Responsible Officer or add an Alternate Responsible Officer must be submitted in SEVIS, and a signed Form DS-3037 must be either mailed or emailed to the Department of State with the required completed Citizenship Certification, along with certification that the individual has undergone a criminal background check conducted at the time of such Certification.

(5) The Department of State reserves the right to deny the appointment of a Responsible Officer or an Alternate Responsible Officer.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.10 Program administration.

Sponsors are responsible for the effective administration of their exchange visitor program(s). These responsibilities include:

(a) *Selection of exchange visitors.* Sponsors must establish and utilize a method to screen and select prospective exchange visitors to ensure that they are eligible for program participation, and that:

(1) The program is suitable to the exchange visitor's background, needs, and experience; and

(2) The exchange visitor possesses sufficient proficiency in the English language, as determined by an objective measurement of English language proficiency, successfully to participate in his or her program and to function on a day-to-day basis. A sponsor must verify an applicant's English language proficiency through a recognized English language test, by signed documentation from an academic institution or English language school, or through a documented interview conducted by the sponsor either in-person or by videoconferencing, or by telephone if videoconferencing is not a viable option.

(b) *Pre-arrival information.* At the pre-arrival stage, sponsors must provide exchange visitors clear information and materials on, but not limited to, the following topics: Program activities, cultural goals and components of the program, employment information and terms and conditions of employment (including employer name and address, position duration, job duties, number of work hours, wages, other compensation and benefits, deductions from wages, including those taken for housing and transportation), insurance costs, and other conditions and restrictions of their exchange visitor. In addition, sponsors must provide clear information and materials on:

- (1) The purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program;
 - (2) The home-country physical presence requirement;
 - (3) Travel to and entry into the United States (e.g., procedures to be followed by exchange visitors and accompanying spouses and dependents in paying SEVIS fees and obtaining visas for entry to the United States, including the information and documentation needed for the interview; travel arrangements to the United States, and what to expect at the port of entry, including the necessity of having and presenting travel documents at the port of entry);
 - (4) Housing, including specific information on what housing is provided by the program or otherwise available and the expected cost to the exchange visitor;
 - (5) An itemized list of all fees to be paid by a potential exchange visitor (i.e., fees paid to the sponsor or a third party);
 - (6) Description and amount of other costs that the exchange visitor will likely incur (e.g., insurance, living expenses, transportation expenses) while in the United States;
 - (7) Health care and insurance description, costs, and requirements for exchange visitors and their accompanying spouse and dependents, as applicable;
 - (8) Arrival notification requirements (e.g., procedures that exchange visitors, spouses and dependents are to follow upon entry into the United States in reporting their arrival to the sponsor and reporting to the location of their program); and
 - (9) Other information that will assist exchange visitors to prepare for their stay in the United States (e.g., how and when to apply for a social security number, if applicable; how to apply for a driver's license; how to open a bank account; employee rights and laws, including workman's compensation; and how to remain in lawful non-immigrant status.
- (c) *Orientation.* A sponsor must offer and record participation in an appropriate orientation for all exchange visitors. Sponsors are encouraged to provide orientation for the exchange visitor's accompanying spouse and dependents, especially for those exchange visitors who are expected to be in the United States for more than one year. Orientation must include, but is not limited to, information concerning:
- (1) Life and customs in the United States;
 - (2) Local community resources (e.g., public transportation, medical centers, schools, libraries, recreation centers, and banks), to the fullest extent possible;
 - (3) Available healthcare, emergency assistance, and health insurance coverage;
 - (4) A description of the exchange visitor program in which the exchange visitor is participating such as information on the length and location of the program; a summary of the significant components of the program; information on any payment (i.e., stipend or wage) an exchange visitor will receive; and deductions from wages, including for housing and transportation;
 - (5) Sponsor rules that exchange visitors are required to follow while participating in their exchange visitor program;

(6) Name and address of the sponsor and the name, email address, and telephone number of the Responsible Officer and Alternate Responsible Officer(s);

(7) The Office of Designation's address, telephone number, facsimile number, Web site and email address, and a copy of the Exchange Visitor Program brochure or other Department of State materials as appropriate or required;

(8) Wilberforce Pamphlet on the Rights and Protections for Temporary Workers; and

(9) The requirement that an exchange visitor must report to the sponsor or sponsor designee within ten calendar days any changes in his or her telephone number, email address, actual and current U.S. address (i.e., physical residence), and site of activity (if the exchange visitor is permitted to make such change without prior sponsor authorization).

(d) *Monitoring of exchange visitors.* Exchange visitors' participation in their exchange program must be monitored by employees of the sponsor. Monitoring activities must not include any retaliation or discrimination against exchange visitors who make adverse comments related to the program. No sponsor or employee of a sponsor may threaten program termination, remove from the program, ban from the program, adversely annotate an exchange visitor's SEVIS record, or otherwise retaliate against an exchange visitor solely because he/she has filed a complaint; instituted or caused to be instituted any proceeding; testified or is about to testify; consulted with an advocacy organization, community organization, legal assistance program or attorney about a grievance or other work-related legal matter; or exercised or asserted on behalf of himself/herself any right or protection. Sponsors must:

(1) Ensure that the activities in which exchange visitors are engaged are consistent with the category and activity listed on their Forms DS-2019;

(2) Monitor the physical location (site of activity), and the progress and welfare of exchange visitors to the extent appropriate for the category;

(3) Require that exchange visitors report to the sponsor within ten calendar days any changes in their telephone numbers, email addresses, actual and current U.S. addresses (i.e., physical residence), and site(s) of activity (if the exchange visitor is permitted to make such change without prior sponsor authorization);

(4) Report in SEVIS within ten business days of notification by an exchange visitor any change in the exchange visitor's actual and current U.S. address, telephone number, email address, and/or primary site of activity; and

(5) Report the email address for each accompanying spouse and dependent.

(e) *Requests by the Department of State.* Sponsors must, to the extent lawfully permitted, furnish the Department of State within the Department-requested timeframe all information, reports, documents, books, files, and other records or information requested by the Department of State on all matters related to their exchange visitor program. Sponsors must include sponsor's program number on all responses.

(f) *Inquiries and investigations.* Sponsors must cooperate with any inquiry or investigation that may be undertaken by the Department of State or the Department of Homeland Security.

(g) *Retention of records.* Sponsors must retain all records related to their exchange visitor program and exchange visitors (to include accompanying spouse and dependents, if any) for a minimum of three years following the completion of each exchange visitor program.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.11 Duties of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers.

Responsible Officers must train and supervise Alternate Responsible Officers and ensure that these officials are in compliance with the Exchange Visitor Program regulations. Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers must:

(a) Be thoroughly familiar with the Exchange Visitor Program regulations, relevant immigration laws, and all federal and state regulations and laws pertaining to the administration of their exchange visitor program(s), including the Department of State's and the Department of Homeland Security's policies, manuals, instructions, and guidance on SEVIS and all other operations relevant to the Exchange Visitor Program; if Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers work with programs with an employment component, they also must have a detailed knowledge of federal, state, and local laws pertaining to employment, including the Fair Labor Standards Act;

(b) Monitor that the exchange visitor obtains sufficient advice and assistance to facilitate the successful completion of his or her exchange visitor program;

(c) Conduct all official communications relating to their sponsor's exchange visitor program with the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security. A sponsor must include its exchange visitor program number on all correspondence submitted to the Department of State and to the Department of Homeland Security;

(d) Monitor to ensure that that sponsor spam filters do not block receipt of SEVIS or Department of State and Department of Homeland Security notices; and

(e) Control and issue Forms DS-2019 as set forth in §62.12.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.12 Control of Forms DS-2019.

(a) *Issuance of Forms DS-2019.* Sponsors must:

(1) Grant access only to Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers and ensure that they have access to and use SEVIS to update required information;

(2) Ensure that Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers input into SEVIS accurate, current, and updated information in accordance with these regulations; and

(3) Issue Forms DS-2019 only for the following authorized purposes:

(i) To facilitate the initial entry of the exchange visitor and accompanying spouse and dependents, if any, into the United States;

(ii) To extend the duration of participation of an exchange visitor, when permitted by the regulations and authorized by the Department of State;

(iii) To facilitate program transfers, when permitted by the regulations and/or authorized in writing by the Department of State;

(iv) To replace lost, stolen, or damaged Forms DS-2019;

(v) To facilitate the re-entry into the United States of an exchange visitor and accompanying spouse and dependents, if any, who travel outside the United States during the exchange visitor's program;

(vi) To facilitate a change of category, when requested in SEVIS and authorized by the Department of State;

(vii) To update information when significant changes take place in regard to the exchange visitor's program (e.g., a substantial change in funding, a change in the primary site of activity or a change in actual and current U.S. address);

(viii) To facilitate the correction of a minor or technical infraction; or

(ix) To facilitate a "reinstatement" or a "reinstatement update SEVIS status" when permitted by the Department of State.

(b) *Verification.* (1) Prior to issuing Forms DS-2019, sponsors must verify that each prospective exchange visitor:

(i) Is eligible and qualified for, and accepted into, the program in which he or she will participate;

(ii) Possesses adequate financial resources to participate in and complete his or her exchange visitor program; and

(iii) Possesses adequate financial resources to support an accompanying spouse and dependents, if any.

(2) Sponsors must ensure that:

(i) Only Responsible Officers or Alternate Responsible Officers who are physically present in the United States or in a U.S. territory may print and sign Forms DS-2019; and

(ii) Only the Responsible Officer or the Alternate Responsible Officer, whose name is printed on the Form DS-2019, is permitted to sign the document. The Form DS-2019 must be signed in blue ink to denote that it is the original document.

(c) *Distribution of Forms DS-2019.* Sponsors must ensure that completed Forms DS-2019 are distributed directly to the exchange visitor and accompanying spouse and dependents, if any, or to an individual designated by the exchange visitor only via the sponsor's employees, officers, or third parties in the administration of its exchange visitor program.

(d) *Allotment requests.* (1) Annual Form DS-2019 allotment. Sponsors must submit an electronic request via SEVIS to the Department of State for an annual allotment of Forms DS-2019 based on the annual reporting cycle (e.g., academic, calendar or fiscal year) stated in their letter of designation or redesignation. Sponsors should allow up to four weeks for the processing of allotment requests. The Department of State has the sole discretion to determine the number of Forms DS-2019 to be issued to a sponsor.

(2) Expansion of Program. A request for program expansion must include information such as, but not limited to, the source of program growth, staff increases, confirmation of adequately trained employees, noted programmatic successes, current financial information, additional overseas affiliates, additional third party entities, explanations of how the sponsor will accommodate the anticipated program

growth, and any other information requested by the Department. The Department of State will take into consideration the current size of a sponsor's program and the projected expansion of the program in the coming 12 months and may consult with the Responsible Officer and/or Alternate Responsible Officer prior to determining the number of Forms DS-2019 to issue to a sponsor.

(e) *Safeguards and controls.* (1) Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers must secure their SEVIS logon Identification Numbers (IDs) and passwords at all times (i.e., not share IDs and passwords with any other person or permit access to and use of SEVIS by any other person).

(2) Sponsors, their employees, officers, agents, or other third parties acting on behalf of the sponsor, may not forward to any unauthorized party (via facsimile or other electronic means) copies or Portable Document Formats (PDFs) of signed or unsigned Forms DS-2019. However, sponsors must forward such copies and/or PDFs to the Department of State or the Department of Homeland Security upon request.

(3) Sponsors must use the reprint function in SEVIS in the event the exchange visitor's Form DS-2019 has been lost or stolen.

(4) Sponsors must destroy any damaged and/or unusable Form DS-2019 on the sponsor's premises after making a record of such forms (e.g., forms with errors or forms damaged by a printer).

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.13 Notification requirements.

(a) *Valid program status of exchange visitor.* Sponsors must notify the Department of State via SEVIS of the following:

(1) Validation of program participation. Sponsors must promptly validate an exchange visitor's participation in their program. This will change the status of the exchange visitor's SEVIS record from "Initial" to "Active." SEVIS records with program durations (e.g., the period between the "Program Begin Date" and "Program End Date") of 30 days or more must be validated within 30 days following the "Program Begin Date" identified in SEVIS. SEVIS records with program durations that are less than 30 days must be validated prior to the "Program End Date" reflected in SEVIS. As part of the validation process, sponsors may amend the program begin date and must update the SEVIS record to reflect the actual and current U.S. address and site of activity in SEVIS. The status of SEVIS records that are not validated according to this schedule will automatically change to "Invalid" or "No Show". Accompanying spouses and dependents' SEVIS records are automatically validated upon validation of the exchange visitors' SEVIS records.

(2) Failure of an exchange visitor to begin program. Sponsors must report in SEVIS, no later than 30 calendar days after the "Program Begin Date" listed in SEVIS, the failure of an exchange visitor to report to his or her sponsor upon entry in the United States (i.e., failure of exchange visitor to begin an exchange visitor program as scheduled). This will change the status of the exchange visitor's SEVIS record from "Initial" to "No Show."

(3) End of an exchange visitor's program. Sponsors must report in SEVIS any withdrawal from or early completion of an exchange visitor's program that occurs prior to the "Program End Date" listed in SEVIS on the exchange visitor's Form DS-2019. Sponsors must not alter the "Program End Date" field, but should enter the date of program completion in the "Effective Date of Completion" field. This will change the status of the exchange visitor's SEVIS record from "Active" to "Inactive." Such notification in SEVIS ends a sponsor's programmatic obligations to the exchange visitor and/or his or her accompanying spouse and dependents.

(4) Accompanying spouse and dependent records. Sponsors must report in SEVIS if accompanying spouses and/or dependents depart from the United States prior to the exchange visitors' departure dates.

(5) Termination of an exchange visitor's program. Sponsors must promptly report in SEVIS the involuntary termination of an exchange visitor's program. Sponsors must not alter the "Program End Date" field, but should enter the date of program termination in the "Effective Date of Termination" field. This will change the status of the SEVIS record from "Active" to "Terminated". Such notification in SEVIS ends a sponsor's programmatic obligation to the exchange visitor and his or her accompanying spouse and dependents, if any, and prevents the sponsor from thereafter extending the exchange visitor's duration of participation, transferring the exchange visitor to another program, or changing the exchange visitor's category. Sponsors must not terminate the program of an exchange visitor who voluntarily ends his or her program.

(b) *Change of circumstance of an exchange visitor.* Sponsors must promptly notify the Department of State via SEVIS of any of the following circumstances:

(1) Change in the actual and current U.S. address. Sponsors must ensure that the actual and current U.S. addresses of an exchange visitor are reported in SEVIS:

(i) Sponsors must report the U.S. mailing address (i.e., provide a P.O. Box number) in SEVIS in those limited cases where mail cannot be delivered to the exchange visitor's actual and current U.S. address (e.g., the exchange visitor resides in a campus setting); and

(ii) If a U.S. mailing address is reported to SEVIS, sponsors must also maintain records in SEVIS of actual and current U.S. addresses (e.g., dormitory, building and room number) for such exchange visitors.

(2) Change in site of activity. Sponsors must report in SEVIS any change to an exchange visitor's site of activity by entering the new site within ten business days of notification of such a change where sponsor rules or regulations permit such a change. Sponsors must promptly enter any change in the site of activity in those instances where the sponsor is responsible for the placement. Sponsors must identify the "primary" site of activity of an exchange visitor if multiple sites of activity are reported in SEVIS.

(c) *Change in sponsor's circumstance.* Sponsors must report within ten business days in SEVIS or directly to the Department of State, if appropriate, any material changes to their exchange visitor program as follows:

(1) Change of business and/or mailing address, telephone number, facsimile number, or email address;

(2) Change in the composition of the sponsor organization that affects its status as a United States Person as defined in §62.2, which includes a new Employment Identification Number (EIN);

(3) Change of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer;

(4) Major change of ownership or control of the sponsor's organization as defined in §62.60(e);

(5) Change of the sponsor's principal place of business to a location outside the United States;

(6) Change in financial circumstances that may render the sponsor unable to comply with its obligations as set forth in §62.9(e);

(7) Loss of licensure or accreditation;

(8) Loss or theft of Forms DS-2019, in which case a sponsor must notify the Department of State promptly by telephone or email of the SEVIS identification numbers of such Forms DS-2019 that have been lost or stolen;

(9) A decision by the sponsor to voluntarily cancel (withdraw) its exchange visitor program designation; or

(10) Any other material facts or events that may have an impact on the sponsor's ability to properly administer or conduct its exchange visitor program.

(d) *Serious problem or controversy.* Sponsors must inform the Department of State on or before the next business day by telephone (confirmed promptly in writing by facsimile or email) of any investigations of an exchange visitor's site of activity or serious problem or controversy that could be expected to bring the Department of State, the Exchange Visitor Program, or the sponsor's exchange visitor program into notoriety or disrepute, including any potential litigation related to a sponsor's exchange visitor program, in which the sponsor or an exchange visitor may be a named party.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.14 Insurance.

(a) Sponsors must require that all exchange visitors have insurance in effect that covers the exchange visitors for sickness or accidents during the period of time that they participate in the sponsor's exchange visitor program. In addition, sponsors must require that accompanying spouses and dependents of exchange visitors have insurance for sickness and accidents. Sponsors must inform all exchange visitors that they, and any accompanying spouse and dependent(s), also may be subject to the requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

(b) The period of required coverage is the actual duration of the exchange visitor's participation in the sponsor's exchange visitor program as recorded in SEVIS in the "Program Begin Date," and as applicable, the "Program End Date," "Effective Program End Date," or "Effective Date of Termination" fields. Sponsors are not authorized to charge fees to their sponsored exchange visitors for the provision of insurance coverage beyond any demonstrable and justifiable staff time. Sponsors are not required to, but may, offer supplemental "entry to exit" coverage (i.e., coverage from the time the exchange visitor departs his or her home country until he or she returns). If the sponsor provides health insurance, or arranges for health insurance to be offered the exchange visitor, via payroll deduction at the host organization, the exchange visitor must voluntarily authorize this action in writing and also be given the opportunity to make other arrangements to obtain insurance. These authorizations must be kept on file by the sponsor. Minimum coverage must provide:

- (1) Medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness;
 - (2) Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$25,000;
 - (3) Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of exchange visitors to his or her home country in the amount of \$50,000; and
 - (4) Deductibles not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness.
- (c) Insurance policies secured to fulfill the requirements of this section:

(1) May require a waiting period for pre-existing conditions that is reasonable as determined by current industry standards;

(2) May include provisions for co-insurance under the terms of which the exchange visitor may be required to pay up to 25% of the covered benefits per accident or illness; and

(3) Must not unreasonably exclude coverage for perils inherent to the activities of the exchange program in which the exchange visitor participates.

(d) Any policy, plan, or contract secured to fill the above requirements must, at a minimum, be:

(1) Underwritten by an insurance corporation having an A.M. Best rating of “A-” or above; a McGraw Hill Financial/Standard & Poor's Claims-paying Ability rating of “A-” or above; a Weiss Research, Inc. rating of “B+” or above; a Fitch Ratings, Inc. rating of “A-” or above; a Moody's Investor Services rating of “A3” or above; or such other rating as the Department of State may from time to time specify; or

(2) Backed by the full faith and credit of the government of the exchange visitor's home country; or

(3) Part of a health benefits program offered on a group basis to employees or enrolled students by a designated sponsor; or

(4) Offered through or underwritten by a federally qualified Health Maintenance Organization or eligible Competitive Medical Plan as determined by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

(e) Federal, state or local government agencies; state colleges and universities; and public community colleges may, if permitted by law, self-insure any or all of the above-required insurance coverage.

(f) At the request of a non-governmental sponsor of an exchange visitor program, and upon a showing that such sponsor has funds readily available and under its control sufficient to meet the requirements of this section, the Department of State may permit the sponsor to self-insure or to accept full financial responsibility for such requirements.

(g) The Department of State may, in its sole discretion, condition its approval of self-insurance or the acceptance of full financial responsibility by the non-governmental sponsor by requiring such sponsor to secure a payment bond in favor of the Department of State guaranteeing the sponsor's obligations hereunder.

(h) Accompanying spouses and dependents are required to be covered by insurance in the amounts set forth in paragraph (b) of this section. Sponsors must inform exchange visitors of this requirement, in writing, in advance of the exchange visitor's arrival in the United States.

(i) Exchange visitors who willfully fail to maintain the insurance coverage set forth above while a participant in an exchange visitor program or who make material misrepresentations to the sponsor concerning such coverage will be deemed to be in violation of these regulations and will be subject to termination as an exchange visitor.

(j) Sponsors must terminate an exchange visitor's participation in their program if the sponsor determines that the exchange visitor or any accompanying spouse or dependent willfully fails to remain in compliance with this section.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.15 Reporting requirements.

(a) Sponsors must submit annual reports to the Department of State that are generated through SEVIS on Form DS-3097. Such reports must be filed on an academic, calendar, or fiscal year basis, as directed by the Department of State in the sponsor's letter of designation or redesignation, and must contain the following:

(1) *Program report and evaluation.* A summary of the activities in which exchange visitors were engaged, including an evaluation of program effectiveness, program difficulties, and number of staff used in the administration of the exchange visitor program;

(2) *Reciprocity.* A description of the nature and extent of reciprocity occurring in the sponsor's exchange visitor program during the reporting year;

(3) *Cross-cultural activities.* A description of the cross-cultural activities the sponsor provided for its exchange visitors during the reporting year;

(4) *Proof of insurance.* Certification of compliance with insurance coverage requirements set forth in §62.14;

(5) *Certification.* The following certification:

"I certify that the information in this report is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief; and, that the above named program sponsor has complied with all health and accident insurance requirements for exchange visitors and their accompanying spouses and dependents (22 CFR 62.14)."

(i) For exchange visitor programs classified as "Government Programs," this certification will be signed by the Responsible Officer.

(ii) For exchange visitor programs classified as P-1 or P-2 "Academic Programs" this certification will be signed by the institution's Chief Executive Officer or Responsible Officer.

(iii) For exchange visitor programs classified as P-3 and P-4 "Private Sector Programs," this certification will be signed by the organization's Chief Executive Officer or Responsible Officer.

(6) *Program participation.* A numerical count of all exchange visitors participating in the sponsor's program for the reporting year (i.e., by category, form usage, active status at one point during the annual cycle, and by other status).

(b) Sponsors of P-3 and P-4 "Private Sector" programs must file a program specific management review (in a format and on a schedule approved by the Department of State).

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.16 Employment.

(a) An exchange visitor may receive compensation from the sponsor or the sponsor's appropriate designee, such as the host organization, when employment activities are part of the exchange visitor's program.

(b) An exchange visitor who engages in unauthorized employment shall be deemed to be in violation of his or her program status and is subject to termination as a participant in an exchange visitor program.

(c) The acceptance of employment by the accompanying spouse and dependents of an exchange visitor is governed by Department of Homeland Security regulations.

[79 FR 60307, Oct. 6, 2014]

§62.17 Fees and charges.

(a) *Remittances.* Fees prescribed within the framework of 31 U.S.C. 9701 must be submitted as directed by the Department and must be in the amount prescribed by law or regulation.

(b) *Amounts of fees.* The following fees are prescribed.

(1) For filing an application for program designation and/or redesignation (Form DS-3036)—\$3,982.00.

(2) For filing an application for exchange visitor status changes (*i.e.*, extension beyond the maximum duration, change of category, reinstatement, reinstatement-update SEVIS status, ECFMG sponsorship authorization, and permission to issue)—\$367.00.

[78 FR 28139, May 14, 2013]

Subpart B—Specific Program Provisions

§62.25 Secondary school students.

(a) *Purpose.* This section governs Department of State designated exchange visitor programs under which foreign secondary school students are afforded the opportunity to study in the United States at accredited public or private secondary schools for an academic semester or an academic year, while living with American host families or residing at accredited U.S. boarding schools.

(b) *Program sponsor eligibility.* Eligibility for designation as a secondary school student exchange visitor program sponsor is limited to organizations:

(1) With tax-exempt status as conferred by the Internal Revenue Service pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; and

(2) Which are United States citizens as such term is defined in §62.2.

(c) *Program eligibility.* Secondary school student exchange visitor programs designated by the Department of State must:

(1) Require all exchange students to be enrolled and participating in a full course of study at an accredited academic institution;

(2) Allow entry of exchange students for not less than one academic semester (or quarter equivalency) and not more than two academic semesters (or quarter equivalency) duration; and

(3) Ensure that the program is conducted on a U.S. academic calendar year basis, except for students from countries whose academic year is opposite that of the United States. Exchange students may begin an exchange program in the second semester of a U.S. academic year only if specifically permitted to do so, in writing, by the school in which the exchange student is enrolled. In all cases,

sponsors must notify both the host family and school prior to the exchange student's arrival in the United States whether the placement is for an academic semester, an academic year, or a calendar year.

(d) *Program administration.* Sponsors must ensure that all organizational officers, employees, representatives, agents, and volunteers acting on their behalf:

(1) Are adequately trained. Sponsors must administer training for local coordinators that specifically includes, at a minimum, instruction in: Conflict resolution; procedures for handling and reporting emergency situations; awareness or knowledge of child safety standards; information on sexual conduct codes; procedures for handling and reporting allegations of sexual misconduct or any other allegations of abuse or neglect; and the criteria to be used to screen potential host families and exercise good judgment when identifying what constitutes suitable host family placements. In addition to their own training, sponsors must ensure that all local coordinators complete the Department of State mandated training module prior to their appointment as a local coordinator or assumption of duties. The Department of State training module will include instruction designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Exchange Visitor Program; its public diplomacy objectives; and the Secondary School Student category rules and regulations. Sponsors must demonstrate the individual's successful completion of all initial training requirements and that annual refresher training is also successfully completed.

(2) Are adequately supervised. Sponsors must create and implement organization-specific standard operating procedures for the supervision of local coordinators designed to prevent or deter fraud, abuse, or misconduct in the performance of the duties of these employees/agents/volunteers. They must also have sufficient internal controls to ensure that such employees/agents/volunteers comply with such standard operating procedures.

(3) Have been vetted annually through a criminal background check (which must include a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry);

(4) Place no exchange student with his or her relatives;

(5) Make no exchange student placement beyond 120 miles of the home of the local coordinator authorized to act on the sponsor's behalf in both routine and emergency matters arising from that exchange student's participation in the Exchange Visitor Program;

(6) Make no monetary payments or other incentives to host families;

(7) Provide exchange students with reasonable access to their natural parents and family by telephone and e-mail;

(8) Make certain that the exchange student's government issued documents (*i.e.*, passports, Forms DS-2019) are not removed from his/her possession;

(9) Conduct the host family orientation after the host family has been fully vetted and accepted;

(10) Refrain, without exception, from acting as:

(i) Both a host family and a local coordinator or area supervisor for an exchange student;

(ii) A host family for one sponsor and a local coordinator for another sponsor; or

(iii) A local coordinator for any exchange student over whom he/she has a position of trust or authority such as the student's teacher or principal. This requirement is not applicable to a boarding school placement.

(11) Maintain, at minimum, a monthly schedule of personal contact with the exchange student. The first monthly contact between the local coordinator and the exchange student must be in person. All other contacts may take place in-person, on the phone, or via electronic mail and must be properly documented. The sponsor is responsible for ensuring that issues raised through such contacts are promptly and appropriately addressed.

(12) That a sponsor representative other than the local coordinator who recruited, screened and selected the host family visit the exchange student/host family home within the first or second month following the student's placement in the home.

(13) Maintain, at a minimum, a monthly schedule of personal contact with the host family. At least once during the fall semester and at least once during the spring semester, (*i.e.*, twice during the academic year) the contact by the local coordinator with the host family must be in person. All other contacts may take place in person, on the phone, or via electronic mail and must be properly documented. The sponsor is responsible for ensuring the issues raised through such contacts are promptly and appropriately addressed.

(14) That host schools are provided contact information for the local organizational representative (including name, direct phone number, and e-mail address), the program sponsor, and the Department's Office of Designation; and

(15) Adhere to all regulatory provisions set forth in this part and all additional terms and conditions governing program administration that the Department may impose.

(e) *Student selection.* In addition to satisfying the requirements of §62.10(a), sponsors must ensure that all participants in a designated secondary school student exchange visitor program:

(1) Are secondary school students in their home countries who have not completed more than 11 years of primary and secondary study, exclusive of kindergarten; or are at least 15 years of age, but not more than 18 years and six months of age as of the program start date;

(2) Demonstrate maturity, good character, and scholastic aptitude; and

(3) Have not previously participated in an academic year or semester secondary school student exchange program in the United States or attended school in the United States in either F-1 or J-1 visa status.

(f) *Student enrollment.* (1) Sponsors must secure prior written acceptance for the enrollment of any exchange student in a United States public or private secondary school. Such prior acceptance must:

(i) Be secured from the school principal or other authorized school administrator of the school or school system that the exchange student will attend; and

(ii) Include written arrangements concerning the payment of tuition or waiver thereof if applicable.

(2) Under no circumstance may a sponsor facilitate the entry into the United States of an exchange student for whom a written school placement has not been secured.

(3) Under no circumstance may a sponsor charge a student private school tuition if such arrangements are not finalized in writing prior to the issuance of Form DS-2019.

(4) Sponsors must maintain copies of all written acceptances for a minimum of three years and make such documents available for Department of State inspection upon request.

(5) Sponsors must provide the school with a translated “written English language summary” of the exchange student’s complete academic course work prior to commencement of school, in addition to any additional documents the school may require. Sponsors must inform the prospective host school of any student who has completed secondary school in his/her home country.

(6) Sponsors may not facilitate the enrollment of more than five exchange students in one school unless the school itself has requested, in writing, the placement of more than five students from the sponsor.

(7) Upon issuance of a Form DS-2019 to a prospective participant, the sponsor accepts full responsibility for securing a school and host family placement for the student, except in cases of voluntary student withdrawal or visa denial.

(g) *Student orientation.* In addition to the orientation requirements set forth at §62.10, all sponsors must provide exchange students, prior to their departure from their home countries, with the following information:

(1) A summary of all operating procedures, rules, and regulations governing student participation in the exchange visitor program along with a detailed summary of travel arrangements;

(2) A copy of the Department’s welcome letter to exchange students;

(3) Age and language appropriate information on how to identify and report sexual abuse or exploitation;

(4) A detailed profile of the host family with whom the exchange student will be placed. The profile must state whether the host family is either a permanent placement or a temporary-arrival family;

(5) A detailed profile of the school and community in which the exchange student will be placed. The profile must state whether the student will pay tuition; and

(6) An identification card, that lists the exchange student’s name, United States host family placement address and telephone numbers (landline and cellular), sponsor name and main office and emergency telephone numbers, name and telephone numbers (landline and cellular) of the local coordinator and area representative, the telephone number of Department’s Office of Designation, and the Secondary School Student program toll free emergency telephone number. The identification card must also contain the name of the health insurance provider and policy number. Such cards must be corrected, reprinted, and reissued to the student if changes in contact information occur due to a change in the student’s placement.

(h) *Student extra-curricular activities.* Exchange students may participate in school sanctioned and sponsored extra-curricular activities, including athletics, if such participation is:

(1) Authorized by the local school district in which the student is enrolled; and

(2) Authorized by the state authority responsible for determination of athletic eligibility, if applicable. Sponsors shall not knowingly be party to a placement (inclusive of direct placements) based on athletic abilities, whether initiated by a student, a natural or host family, a school, or any other interested party.

(3) Any placement in which either the student or the sending organization in the foreign country is party to an arrangement with any other party, including receiving school personnel, whereby the student will attend a particular school or live with a particular host family must be reported to the particular school and the National Federation of State High School Associations prior to the first day of classes.

(i) *Student employment.* Exchange students may not be employed on either a full or part-time basis but may accept sporadic or intermittent employment such as babysitting or yard work.

(j) *Host family application and selection.* Sponsors must adequately screen and select all potential host families and at a minimum must:

(1) Provide potential host families with a detailed summary of the Exchange Visitor Program and of their requirements, obligations and commitment to host;

(2) Utilize a standard application form developed by the sponsor that includes, at a minimum, all data fields provided in Appendix F, "Information to be Collected on Secondary School Student Host Family Applications". The form must include a statement stating that: "The income data collected will be used solely for the purposes of determining that the basic needs of the exchange student can be met, including three quality meals and transportation to and from school activities." Such application form must be signed and dated at the time of application by all potential host family applicants. The host family application must be designed to provide a detailed summary and profile of the host family, the physical home environment (to include photographs of the host family home's exterior and grounds, kitchen, student's bedroom, bathroom, and family or living room), family composition, and community environment. Exchange students are not permitted to reside with their relatives.

(3) Conduct an in-person interview with all family members residing in the home where the student will be living;

(4) Ensure that the host family is capable of providing a comfortable and nurturing home environment and that the home is clean and sanitary; that the exchange student's bedroom contains a separate bed for the student that is neither convertible nor inflatable in nature; and that the student has adequate storage space for clothes and personal belongings, reasonable access to bathroom facilities, study space if not otherwise available in the house and reasonable, unimpeded access to the outside of the house in the event of a fire or similar emergency. An exchange student may share a bedroom, but with no more than one other individual of the same sex.

(5) Ensure that the host family has a good reputation and character by securing two personal references from within the community from individuals who are not relatives of the potential host family or representatives of the sponsor (*i.e.*, field staff or volunteers), attesting to the host family's good reputation and character;

(6) Ensure that the host family has adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations and is not receiving needs-based government subsidies for food or housing;

(7) Verify that each member of the host family household 18 years of age and older, as well as any new adult member added to the household, or any member of the host family household who will turn eighteen years of age during the exchange student's stay in that household, has undergone a criminal background check (which must include a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry);

(8) Maintain a record of all documentation on a student's exchange program, including but not limited to application forms, background checks, evaluations, and interviews, for all selected host families for a period of three years following program completion; and

(9) Ensure that a potential single adult host parent without a child in the home undergoes a secondary level review by an organizational representative other than the individual who recruited and selected the applicant. Such secondary review should include demonstrated evidence of the individual's friends or family who can provide an additional support network for the exchange student and evidence of the individual's ties to his/her community. Both the exchange student and his or her natural parents must

agree in writing in advance of the student's placement with a single adult host parent without a child in the home.

(k) *Host family orientation.* In addition to the orientation requirements set forth in §62.10, sponsors must:

(1) Inform all host families of the philosophy, rules, and regulations governing the sponsor's exchange visitor program, including examples of "best practices" developed by the exchange community;

(2) Provide all selected host families with a copy of the Department's letter of appreciation to host families;

(3) Provide all selected host families with a copy of Department of State-promulgated Exchange Visitor Program regulations;

(4) Advise all selected host families of strategies for cross-cultural interaction and conduct workshops to familiarize host families with cultural differences and practices; and

(5) Advise host families of their responsibility to inform the sponsor of any and all material changes in the status of the host family or student, including, but not limited to, changes in address, finances, employment and criminal arrests.

(l) *Host family placement.* (1) Sponsors must secure, prior to the student's departure from his or her home country, a permanent or arrival host family placement for each exchange student participant. Sponsors may not:

(i) Facilitate the entry into the United States of an exchange student for whom a host family placement has not been secured;

(ii) Place more than one exchange student with a host family without the express prior written consent of the host family, the natural parents, and the students being placed. Under no circumstance may more than two exchange students be placed with a host family, or in the home of a local coordinator, regional coordinator, or volunteer. Sponsors may not place students from the same countries or with the same native languages in a single home.

(2) Prior to the student's departure from his or her home country, sponsors must advise both the exchange student and host family, in writing, of the respective family compositions and backgrounds of each, whether the host family placement is a permanent or arrival placement, and facilitate and encourage the exchange of correspondence between the two.

(3) In the event of unforeseen circumstances that necessitate a change of host family placement, the sponsor must document the reason(s) necessitating such change and provide the Department of State with an annual statistical summary reflecting the number and reason(s) for such change in host family placement in the program's annual report.

(m) *Advertising and marketing for the recruitment of host families.* In addition to the requirements set forth in §62.9 in advertising and promoting for host family recruiting, sponsors must:

(1) Utilize only promotional materials that professionally, ethically, and accurately reflect the sponsor's purposes, activities, and sponsorship;

(2) Not publicize the need for host families via any public media with announcements, notices, advertisements, etc. that are not sufficiently in advance of the exchange student's arrival, appeal to public

pity or guilt, imply in any way that an exchange student will be denied participation if a host family is not found immediately, or identify photos of individual exchange students and include an appeal for an immediate family;

(3) Not promote or recruit for their programs in any way that compromises the privacy, safety or security of participants, families, or schools. Specifically, sponsors shall not include personal student data or contact information (including addresses, phone numbers or email addresses) or photographs of the student on Web sites or in other promotional materials; and

(4) Ensure that access to exchange student photographs and personally identifying information, either online or in print form, is only made available to potential host families who have been fully vetted and selected for program participation. Such information, if available online, must also be password protected.

(n) *Reporting requirements.* Along with the annual report required by regulations set forth at §62.15, sponsors must file with the Department of State the following information:

(1) Sponsors must immediately report to the Department any incident or allegation involving the actual or alleged sexual exploitation or any other allegations of abuse or neglect of an exchange student. Sponsors must also report such allegations as required by local or state statute or regulation. Failure to report such incidents to the Department and, as required by state law or regulation, to local law enforcement authorities shall be grounds for the suspension and revocation of the sponsor's Exchange Visitor Program designation;

(2) A report of all final academic year and semester program participant placements by August 31 for the upcoming academic year or January 15 for the Spring semester and calendar year. The report must be in the format directed by the Department and must include at a minimum, the exchange student's full name, Form DS-2019 number (SEVIS ID #), host family placement (current U.S. address), school (site of activity) address, the local coordinator's name and zip code, and other information the Department may request; and

(3) A report of all situations which resulted in the placement of an exchange student with more than one host family or in more than one school. The report must be in a format directed by the Department and include, at a minimum, the exchange student's full name, Form DS-2019 number (SEVIS ID #), host family placements (current U.S. address), schools (site of activity address), the reason for the change in placement, and the date of the move. This report is due by July 31 for the previous academic school year.

[75 FR 65981, Oct. 27, 2010]

Appendix XX. TWO-YEAR HOME RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

J-1 exchange visitors who participate in programs financed in whole or in part by an agency of the U.S. Government are expected to return to their home countries to utilize the experience and skills they have acquired while in the United States after completing their program and are subject to a two-year home residency requirement, known technically as section 212(e) of the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA). Under the terms of this requirement, they must reside in their home country physically for two years - cumulative, not successive - before they may become eligible to apply for an immigrant/residence or temporary worker (H-1) visa. Eligibility for 'F' (student), J-1, tourist, or other type of non-immigrant visa to the U.S. are not impacted by the two-year requirement and obtaining such visas is always at the discretion of U.S. Embassy or consulate where application is made. For additional information about waivers of the exchange visitor two-year home-country physical presence requirement, visit the Department of State website at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange/waiver-of-the-exchange-visitor.html>

<https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/study-exchange/student/residency-waiver.html>.

The Department of State will not facilitate any scholarship student's efforts to remain in the U.S. and change visa status. POs may wish to remind students that they (students) agreed to these terms when they signed their DS2019 form and received their U.S. visa; that the goal of program is to share what they have learned; and that they can visit the nearest Educational Advising Center in their home country to research other educational opportunities.

What is a Visa?

A visa is the written permission granted by a consular officer at an American embassy or consulate overseas and stamped or attached in the applicant's passport for a foreign citizen to seek admission to the U.S. at a port of entry. It is the responsibility of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement department (ICE) to interview the arriving foreign visitor and approve or reject his/her admission to the country. If admitted, the ICE official attaches an I-94 to the visa page and indicates the date on which the visitor must exit the U.S. For J-1 visa holders, the customary length of stay is indicated by the initials "DS" on the I-94, meaning "Duration of Status," which is generally calculated as the program end date, as indicated on the DS2019, plus 30 days. Visas are for single or multiple entries. Once a visitor is admitted to the U.S., it is irrelevant if the visa expires. The ICE official may require a visitor to register at a regional ICE office within a period of time following arrival.

DANGEROUS AND RISKY ACTIVITIES – GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS, HOST FAMILIES AND LOCAL COORDINATORS

The health, safety, and well-being of each exchange participant is paramount to the U.S. Department of State. This document provides additional clarification for students, host families, and local coordinators of the policies set by the Department of State to keep students safe during their stay in the United States.

Dangerous/Risky Activities: Participants are not permitted to engage in any activities not covered by program or supplemental medical insurance. The following activities have been determined by most insurance companies to be risky, and treatment for injuries sustained while participating in them is not likely to be covered by insurance: driving any motorized vehicle (such as a car, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, etc.), riding as a passenger in off-road vehicles or in a non-commercial aircraft, hang gliding, bungee jumping, jumping on a trampoline, parachute jumping, parasailing, scuba diving, mountain biking, mountaineering, rock climbing, skate boarding, extreme sports, and handling or using a firearm or other weapon. In addition, participants are not permitted to engage in any activities prohibited by their Placement Organization, even if the activity is covered by insurance.

Driving: Exchange students are not permitted to drive any motorized vehicle under any circumstances while participating in the Program in the United States. Violators of this policy will be considered for Program dismissal. This applies even if students are in possession of an international driver's license or if the host family feels that the student is a responsible and careful driver. Exceptions may be granted for farm equipment if allowed by the student's natural parents and Placement Organization. If authorized, the student must observe precautions regarding safety and legal limitations. Exchange students are not permitted to pilot any aircraft under any circumstances while participating in the Program.

Religion – Placement Guidelines for Local Coordinators

Exchange students and their host families frequently have very different ideas about religion. For some families, religious services and the other activities offered by their places of worship are important to their weekly routine. For others, religion is not an important part of their lives.

In cases where a host family does not attend religious services, or may attend different ones, students may need the help of a local coordinator to find a place of worship of their own denomination.

Students are encouraged to join all host family activities, including religious services, as an opportunity to observe another aspect of American culture. It is their choice to attend or not to attend services, and it is important to respect the student's choice by encouraging hosts not to apply pressure or reacting negatively if he or she chooses not to participate.

In many areas of the U.S., religious institutions are centers not only of religious life, but also of musical, recreational and social life. When religious beliefs make it impossible for students to attend services with their host family, he or she should be encouraged to take advantage of the many other social activities offered by most U.S. churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques. Students often find a much better opportunity for friendships and social activities than expected.

In all cases, the role of a local coordinator is to ensure that both host families and students respect each others' right to their own beliefs and that there is no pressure to influence or convert while on program. If you have any concerns about this issue, please contact your Placement Organization.

Please note: J-1 visa regulations provide the following guidelines for host families in Appendix F, Family Activities (c): *“A host family may want the exchange visitor to attend one or more religious services or programs with the family. Students cannot be required to do so, but may decide to experience this facet of U.S. culture at his or her discretion.”*



CSIET Standards for Long-Term, Inbound International Student Exchange Programs

These standards are intended for use in evaluating inbound international student exchange programs of eight or more weeks' duration.

Agent: Individual or organization authorized to represent or act on behalf of the organization in administering one or more aspects of the program, for example, an overseas partner.

Organization: Entity that sponsors international student exchange activities.

Program: Organized international student exchange activity that begins with participant recruitment and selection, includes the components outlined in the standards that follow, and terminates when the participant returns to his or her point of origin or otherwise severs the relationship with the program sponsor. Programs applying for CSIET listing must have a minimum of one current international student exchange participant in each cycle that is being evaluated for each program (*i.e. J-1/F-1 inbound*).

Volunteer: 1. A representative who is compensated for out-of-pocket expenses only. If a representative receives regular compensation, such as a per student placement fee, this individual cannot be considered a volunteer. 2. A host family that provides room and board gratis to a student.

Federal Waivers: The CSIET Board of Directors has ruled that if the State Department or an agency of the U.S. government provides an exception that may affect compliance with CSIET standards, the organization to which the waiver has been granted may operate under that exemption upon written presentation of such waiver to CSIET upon application for CSIET listing.

STANDARD 1: EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. Programs shall be designed to fulfill educational purposes related to an international experience.
- B. The organization sponsoring the program shall have clearly established goals and learning objectives to fulfill the educational purposes of its programs.

STANDARD 2: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

- A. The structure and administration of the organization shall be clearly defined.
- B. The organization shall have the personnel needed to administer its programs effectively.
 - 1. The organization is accountable for the full scope of the programs it administers, including actions taken and representations made by its agents, and maintains responsibility for its students both within the United States and abroad.
 - 2. The organization shall maintain direct, hands-on control of the placement and supervision of inbound students and the hiring, firing, and remuneration of local representatives. It may not enter into a relationship with another entity that appears to exercise such control.

- C. The organization shall be organized under the laws of one of the 50 states of the United States or the District of Columbia.
- D. The organization shall demonstrate success in international student exchange through at least one full year since its incorporation.

Supplemental Guideline: Date of Incorporation

The CSIET Board of Directors has determined that the intent of this Standard is to ensure that programs have participants on international student exchange for the Evaluation Committee to review in the current cycle. Accordingly, compliance with Standard 2D could be demonstrated if the applying organization documents one year of incorporation by the final Evaluation Committee meeting of the current cycle.

STANDARD 3: FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The organization shall be capable of discharging its financial responsibilities to all participants.
- B. The organization shall have sufficient financial backing to protect all monies paid by participants and to ensure fulfillment of all responsibilities to participants.
- C. The organization shall have an independent Certified Public Accountant annually prepare an audited or review financial statement.

STANDARD 4: PROMOTION

- A. The organization's promotional materials shall professionally, ethically, and accurately reflect its purposes, activities, and sponsorship.
- B. The organization shall not publicize the need for host families via any public media with announcements, notices, advertisements, etc., that:
 - 1. are not sufficiently in advance of the student's arrival
 - 2. appeal to public pity or guilt
 - 3. imply in any way that a student will be denied participation if a host family is not found immediately
 - 4. identify photos of individual students and include an appeal for an immediate family.

Supplemental Guideline: Public Media Advertisements

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be unacceptable: Urgently Needed, Don't let me be homeless, This is an emergency...

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be acceptable: Open your hearts and homes, Host an International Exchange Student...

It is permissible to use a picture of a student, a first name, age, country of origin, and a composite or generic listing of interests in an advertisement in order to demonstrate the personal nature of the program and the types of interests that students have. It is not permissible to identify that specific student as needing a home, nor is it permissible to refer to a student's athletic ability or accomplishments. Written waivers must be obtained for the use of any student photographs.

- C. The organization shall not promote or recruit for its programs in any way that compromises the privacy, safety or security of participants, families or schools. Specifically, programs shall not include personal student data or contact information (*including address, phone or email addresses*) on websites or other promotional materials.
- D. All promotional materials/activities shall distinguish the program and the sponsoring organization from

others operating under:

1. affiliated or related corporate structures
2. the same or similar names or symbols.

- E. The organization shall fully disclose all fees, including school tuition, host family reimbursements, and other required or optional costs to prospective students and their natural families before enrollment. *(If host families provide room and board gratis to the students, publicity should state that fees cover "selection and placement in host families" and not imply in any way that the fees paid by the students cover "room and board.")*
- F. Neither the organization nor its agents shall promote its programs as providing opportunities for school athletic participation, high school graduation, driver's education instruction, household domestic service, child care, employment, or other activities that might compromise the student, program, or school. Standard 4F specifically prohibits the organization and its agents *(this includes foreign partners)* from promoting its programs as providing any of the aforementioned activities. The word "promote" as it is used in Standard 4F includes any specific focus on or prominence of pictures and/or text depicting these activities. No prominent pictures and/or text will be considered to be in compliance.
- G. The organization shall not state or imply in its promotional materials/activities that persons who are compensated other than out-of-pocket expenses are volunteers.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT SELECTION AND ORIENTATION

- A. The organization shall screen and select student participants on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.

Supplemental Guideline: Athletic Participation in the United States
The following statement must be included on either the student application or other written rules documents: "Athletic eligibility or participation is not guaranteed."
- B. Screening procedures shall include personal interviews with student applicants.
- C. Selection shall be completed sufficiently in advance of the student's departure to ensure adequate time for preparation and orientation.
- D. Students shall be given a suitable orientation before departure and after arrival in the host country, including information on how to identify and report cases of suspected student abuse.
- E. All inbound students enrolled in a U.S. high school must have adequate English language proficiency to function successfully.
- F. All inbound students enrolled in school must have adequate academic preparation to function successfully.

STANDARD 6: STUDENT PLACEMENT

- A. For programs that include a homestay, the organization shall:
 1. select host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.
 2. personally interview all prospective host families in their home.
 3. match students and host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 4. complete placement arrangements sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from home to ensure adequate time for preparation and orientation of the host family *(Whenever possible, a student should be placed with a host family who has made a long-term commitment to host the student prior to the student's departure from his/her home country. In cases where this is not possible, a student may be placed with a short-term host family until*

long-term arrangements can be made. All short-term families must be selected and oriented according to the same criteria as are long-term families. The short-term nature of the host family placement must be fully disclosed in advance to the student, his/her natural parents, and the school principal and be acceptable to them. Short-term families may, of course, also be utilized when a host family placement has not worked out and a new family must be found).

5. provide suitable orientation and training to the host family (When a family expresses an interest in hosting a student and a representative makes the initial home visit to explain the program, this is not to be considered the "host family orientation." CSIET suggests that host family orientation include information on the student's expectations about family and school life, customs, religion, and mores of the student's native country, the academic program in which the student will be enrolled, potential problems in hosting international exchange students, and suggestions on how to cope with such problems).
6. vet all adult members of the U.S. host family residing in the home through a national criminal background check in the United States.

Supplemental Guideline: Criminal Background Checks in the United States

Criminal background checks must be based on Social Security # and include a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry.

- B. Organizations shall not knowingly be party to a placement (*inclusive of direct placements*) based on athletic abilities, whether initiated by a student, a natural or host family, a school, or any other interested party. J-VISA Direct Placements must be reported to the particular school and the National Federation of State High School Associations. F-VISA placements must be reported as Direct Placements to the National Federation of State High School Associations only if interscholastic varsity athletics was a known motivating factor at the time of application. An initial/first report is due by August 1st. A final report is due immediately prior to the first day of classes. The reports to the NFHS should clearly delineate the type of VISA.

Supplemental Guideline: J-1 and F-1 Distinction

The CSIET Board of Directors has provided additional guidelines regarding the definition of the term direct placement:

- *J-1: A Direct Placement is one in which either the student or the sending organization in the foreign country is party to an arrangement with any other party, including school personnel, for the student to attend a particular school or live with a particular host family; however,*
- *F-1: The term Direct Placement, in the context of the original J-1 definition, does not apply because federal regulation requires all international students to "apply and be accepted by an SEVP approved school" prior to applying for the F-1 visa. Therefore, in its continuing effort to facilitate the needs of its partners at state associations, CSIET asks that programs provide transparency and report to the NFHS any F-1 student for whom participation in interscholastic varsity athletics was a known motivating factor at the time of application.*

The intent of the Board in requiring these placement reports to be sent to the National Federation is to provide each state athletic association with additional information to assist in the determination of athletic eligibility of each international exchange student.

Report Format

Reports should be sorted by U.S. state and include the following information:

U.S. State:

Name of Student:

Country of Origin:

Local Rep Name/Number:

Name/City of U.S. Host School:

Nature of the Direct Placement:

Visa Type (J or F):

Reports should be emailed to: CSIETREPORT@NFHS.ORG

- C. For programs that include accommodations other than a homestay, the organization shall:
 - 1. arrange accommodations on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 - 2. ensure the adequacy of the accommodations with respect to location, cleanliness, safety, nutrition, and supervision
 - 3. confirm the accommodations sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from home.
- D. For programs that include enrollment in U.S. high schools, the organization shall:
 - 1. secure written, student-specific acceptance from the school principal or other designated responsible school administrator prior to the international exchange student's departure from his or her home country.
 - 2. provide the school with the following information about the student:
 - a. academic history, including
 - i. academic records, translated into English or other language as appropriate
 - ii. number of years of school completed prior to arrival and number of years required in home country for the completion of secondary school
 - b. level of English language proficiency
 - c. appropriate background information
 - e. expectations regarding school experience.

STANDARD 7: OPERATIONS

- A. The organization shall ensure adequate care and supervision of students.
- B. Local representatives of the organization shall maintain regular personal contact with students and host families. *(Contact should be initiated by the organization's representative at least once a month be it by telephone, a visit to the home, personal contact at a gathering or other means. Regular contact, which should be monthly, is to include separate communication with the student and the host family in order to provide each with the opportunity to discuss issues they might not raise in the presence of the other. CSIET expects that there be formal documentation of this contact such as a monthly form, written journal, written log, etc. This is not to imply that representatives have to record every interaction. Rather it is to provide a record for the organization's office of the pattern of student and host family adjustments, activities, and relationships through at least monthly contact with each student and host family.)*
- C. The organization shall notify the student, host family, and/or other supervisor of accommodations regarding the travel itinerary sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from the home country.
- D. The organization shall provide adequate support services at the local level to assist with program-related needs and problems, for example, counseling services, travel, medical care, language problems, changes in host family, emergencies.
- E. The organization shall maintain an effective system of screening (including a national criminal background check for U.S. representatives with direct in-person contact with student participants), selecting, training, and supervising program representatives and group leaders.

Supplemental Guideline: Criminal Background Checks in the United States
Criminal background checks must be based on Social Security # and include a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry.
- F. The organization shall provide all students with an identification card that includes the student's name; the host family's name, address, and telephone; the local representative's name, address, and telephone; the address and telephone of the organization's appropriate national office.

- G. For programs involving school enrollment, the organization shall maintain regular communication with school authorities.
- H. The organization shall provide an opportunity to the student, host family, and school to participate in a post-exchange evaluation.
- I. The organization shall have in place adequate plans and procedures for dealing with emergency situations that may arise during the program.
- J. The organization shall respond in a timely and appropriate fashion to complaints received from students, families, schools or others concerned with the program and its quality.
- K. For programs utilizing electronic or automated program databases to demonstrate compliance with CSJET Standards, such entries must identify the date and user recording the data. Programs shall also maintain a backup system. To prevent online access to sensitive student information by unauthorized persons, program databases need to be secured by an initial screening prior to issuance of a unique username and password.

STANDARD 8: STUDENT INSURANCE

- A. The organization shall guarantee that every student is covered with adequate health and accident insurance. Such insurance shall:
 - 1. Protect students for the duration of their program
 - 2. Provide for the return of the student to his/her home in the event of serious illness, accident, or death during the program.
- B. The organization shall provide students, host families, and appropriate supervisor(s) with detailed printed information regarding the terms and limits of insurance coverage and procedures for filing a claim.
- C. Compensated officials and employees of the organization shall not receive compensation from the sale of insurance to its participants.

STANDARD 9: ADHERENCE TO GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

- A. The organization shall comply with all appropriate government regulations regarding international student exchange.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the organization to notify the Council of any change in status with respect to government designation, acknowledgment, acceptance, endorsement and/or sanction. It shall also be the responsibility of the organization to notify the Council of any current year deficiency in compliance with appropriate governmental regulations.

Supplemental Guideline: Program Transparency

Programs shall inform CSJET if they:

- 1. Cease operation
- 2. Merge with or become acquired by another organization
- 3. Receive a notice of intent to sanction, or receive sanction/s (including but not limited to letter of reprimand, probation, suspension, and/or forms reduction) by the US Department of State or any other government agency.

As revised by the Board of Directors, April 2016

Appendix 6

Safe and Responsible Social Networking

Like most youth today, you probably enjoy many computer and cell phone related activities: keeping in touch with old and new friends on social networking sites; downloading music, movies, videos, and other entertainment; and keeping up with the news by visiting interesting websites. In the United States, the use of computers, the Internet, and social networking activity may be monitored by your school, host family, Internet Service Provider, and law enforcement. Activity that is tolerated in your country may lead to problems in the U.S. To help you avoid problems, we have made the following list of program rules and U.S. laws. In addition, you must follow the rules of your host family, placement organization, and host school.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SAFETY

1. **Never post your own or your host family's contact information online or share it with strangers you meet online.** This includes email addresses, home or cell phone number(s), physical street address, or mailing address.
2. **Do not "friend" people on social networking websites if you do not know them personally – this is not a safe way to meet people.** Some people you could "friend" include:
 - a. your host family and your natural family
 - b. your friends at your U.S. school and your friends at your school at home
 - c. other exchange students in your organization or other FLEX or YES students.
3. **Never agree to meet someone in person if you only know him or her from the Internet.** Do not give anyone online your phone number or address, and do not call anyone who gives you theirs.
4. **Do not post photos online that your host family, school, placement organization, FLEX or YES program organization, or your friends and family at home may find inappropriate.** This includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Photos or videos of you in a bathing suit or otherwise partially dressed, or where you are in a "sexy" pose. Photographs like these often attract Internet predators. Also, your host family may find them inappropriate and decide not to host you.
 - b. Photos or videos of you in possession of or using cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs. It is against program rules for you to engage in such activity, but even if you post a staged photo as a "joke," it will be treated seriously and may be misunderstood by your host family and placement organization. Posting such photos is inappropriate and could result in your early return home.
 - c. Photos or videos of you with weapons. Many host families do not want to host a student who poses with guns, knives, tanks, or other weapons. In addition, photos of this nature could raise concerns with school friends and members of your host community, and they may report you to the police.
 - d. **THIS IS A U.S. LAW:** Do not send, post, text or store pictures of yourself or anyone else (such as another student) if the person in the picture is naked or not fully clothed. If a person in the picture is a minor, this could be considered possession or distribution of child pornography and is illegal, and you could even be arrested.

5. **Remember that anything you post on your website page, or anywhere on the Internet, could be viewed by people you did not intend to see these things – people tend to forward photos, posts, and links widely.** They may also cut and paste photos and posts. There are MANY ways that your personal comments and pictures can find their way into strangers' hands. **To be absolutely safe, do not post anything on the Internet you would not want everyone else to read.** The Internet is a public place, even if you think you are limiting who can see your posts.
6. **The practice of sexting is strictly prohibited in U.S. high schools and on Program. Sexting** – "The sending of sexually explicit photographs, videos or messages via a mobile device." Participating in sexting is dangerous and can lead to very serious legal consequences including prosecution.

SOCIAL NETWORKING ETIQUETTE

In the U.S., we believe in freedom of speech, and the FLEX and YES programs will not restrict your right to your opinions, but while you are in the United States, you represent your home country, your family, your school, your placement organization, your host family, and your program, and you are obligated to do so responsibly. If you say or represent something offensive, threatening, or illegal, it will reflect poorly on your program and all of these people. You are doing a disservice to yourself, your country, and the program, and may be in violation of the law. Students who have insulted or threatened other people on the Internet have been sent home early.

There are many kinds of people, and many different opinions – remember: not better, not worse, just different! Here are some rules to follow when you make comments on other people's profiles, "walls," or websites:

1. Be nice. Do not insult or threaten anyone. Do not tell them they are stupid, or that their ideas are stupid. Don't make fun of their country, ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender, school, family, friends, or opinions. Do not threaten to harm anyone or even wish harm on anyone. Posting hateful speech directed at an individual or group could lead to a police investigation of a hate crime.
2. Do not post overtly political or provocative messages. They may be misunderstood.
3. Do not form groups or make websites with the purpose of insulting or hurting another person or group of people, regardless of your personal views. When you make this information public in such a manner, you make yourself and your country look bad and you may face serious consequences.
4. If someone insults you, do not answer back. If you are angry, just turn off your computer and walk away.

INAPPROPRIATE COMPUTER USE

WEBSITES

There are certain types of websites that are NOT appropriate for you to visit. These include sites with pornographic, terroristic, or other objectionable content. If you do visit such a site, your host family and placement organization will probably take away your computer privileges and you will be given a warning letter. If you do this on your host family's home computer, the Internet Service Provider could shut down your host family's Internet connection while they are investigating this activity. If you do this on a school computer, you could be suspended or expelled from school. You could also be sent home early from the FLEX and YES program. If you are not sure if a website is acceptable, ask your host family, local coordinator, or teacher before you access the site. If you are afraid to ask anyone, then it is probably unacceptable.

DOWNLOADING CONTENT

Copyright law in the United States is extremely strict. Original copyrighted material, such as movies and music, is protected by law from being accessed for free and from being shared with others for free.

Downloading “pirated” material, or sharing material that you do not own the rights to, whether pirated or purchased legally, via file sharing sites such as BitTorrent is a crime in the United States that is punishable by fines from \$750 – \$300,000. Many such file sharing sites operate by automatically uploading files from the user’s computer; this also is illegal if you do not own the rights to the material. Downloading and uploading content illegally can cause you and/or your host family to be the subject of a police investigation. Watching the latest action or comedy movie for free is not worth the damage you risk doing to your host family and yourself. If you illegally download material in the United States, your participation on the FLEX, and YES program will be terminated.

CONSEQUENCES

Remember that the Internet is public space. If you write or show something inappropriate on your website, webpage or somewhere else on the Internet, you put yourself and your safety at serious risk and you will be held responsible and punished for these actions. If you write or show something illegal on your website, webpage, or somewhere else on the Internet, you could be prosecuted to the full extent of U.S. law.

2012

Your Safety and Security Online: Safety Tips

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs takes your online safety and security very seriously. As you use social networks, e-mail, and the Internet, please consider the following **Safety Tips**:

1. Never broadcast private contact information. Never list your e-mail address or phone number in any public space, such as your profile page, a blog, forums, or photo caption.
2. If you are a member of a social network, pay close attention to your privacy settings, which allow you to choose how much personal information you reveal and to whom.
3. Carefully consider what you publish on social networks. Before you post photos, videos, or text, ask yourself if it would embarrass you if your family or employer saw them.
4. Before you add a widget (an application that can be shared with others electronically) to your profile, think about whether you want the creators of the widget to be able to access your profile page and information about your activity on the social network. Keep in mind that the social network generally has no control over these widgets, so exercise discretion when using these tools.
5. Report any abuses of a website's Terms of Use to the website's administrators. Any reputable website or social network will have a way for you to report abuses.
6. E-mail can be used to spread malicious software or obtain your personal information in order to commit fraud.

To protect yourself and the computers that you use, follow the guidelines below:

- Be suspicious of unsolicited e-mail messages or phone calls from individuals asking for personal information. If an unknown individual claims to be from a legitimate organization, try to verify his or her identity directly with that organization.
- Never provide personal or financial information (credit card numbers, PIN numbers, identification numbers) in response to e-mails or telephone calls that you did not initiate.
- Do not send personal or financial information over the Internet before checking the website's security. (Secure website addresses begin with "<https://>")
- Pay attention to the address of a website, located at the top of the screen. Malicious web sites may look identical to a legitimate site, but the address may use a variation in spelling or a different domain (e.g., ".com" vs. ".net").
- Protect your computer and other computers that you use by scanning all removable media, such as a flash drive, CD, or DVD, for viruses before opening files that are contained on the media and by scanning all attachments that you receive via e-mail prior to opening them.
- Do not accept or open executable files (indicated by a file name ending in ".exe") that you receive via e-mail. Such files can be dangerous.



LC Quick Guide: Facebook Tips

#Hashtags

Do you want to easily discover what other people are saying about a **very** specific topic? Do you want to participate in that conversation? Use a hashtag! Hashtags will always begin with a “#” (pound sign), so they are easily recognizable.

How do you search for a hashtag? It's easy: just type in something like #whyhostingmatters into your Facebook search bar and you can see every public post that has appeared using that hashtag!

Now, when you post something, you can use a hashtag so that anyone else will be able to find what you say and interact with you! **Remember:** posts that are not public will not appear in a search, so if you use a hashtag in your own posts, change the privacy setting to make it public.

@Tagging

Now, let's say you want to get a specific person's attention or make sure that people who follow that person see your post. Try tagging! Tagging someone means that person, organization, or business will get a notification about your post. Some pages will even have your post immediately appear on their wall. This means that your post will be visible to anyone connected to the person or organization you've just tagged. Pretty neat, huh?

How do you tag someone or something? Just start writing your post and type an “@” symbol directly before the person you want to tag (no spaces needed!). For instance, say you want to include the FLEX Program in a post. You'd just start typing out @FLEXProgram and their name should pop up for you to choose from. If you're selecting a less popular page to tag, say a Denny's in St. Louis, you might have to search for the right page first. Make sure you've got the right name/page; otherwise, the wrong Denny's will be notified you just talked about their pancakes!

Setting Up a Page

Maybe you'd like to keep your personal life and your work with American Councils completely separate. The good news is that you can still be very active on Facebook and accomplish that goal by setting up a Facebook page.

What is a page and who uses it? Pages are for businesses, brands, organizations, and public figures to share their stories and connect with people. For example, the International Student Support Team has a page devoted to sharing information about our students and alumni, which is separate from individual staff Facebook profiles. Like profiles, pages can be customized with stories, events, and more. As an added bonus, people who like a page can get updates in their own news feed!

To create a Page:

1. Go to Facebook.com/pages/create
2. Click to choose a page category. We recommend choosing the “Community, Company, or Institution” category from the six main choices and then “Education” or “Non-profit organization” from the drop-down menu.
3. Name your page. Consider using keywords like “exchange” in the name!
4. Click **Get Started** and follow the on-screen instructions

Have any questions? Talk to us before you get started!

Events

Let's say you've pulled a great event together and you want to make sure that people are aware that it's going to happen. Create an event and invite people in your community to it!

To create a private or public event:

1. Go to your page.
2. Click **Event** in the menu on the left side of the page.
3. Click **Create Event**.
4. Fill in the event name, details, location, and time. Select a photo to use for the event that is appropriate and eye-catching.
 - o Select a category for your event.
 - o Add keywords about your event.
 - o Skip the “ticket” section unless you're actually selling tickets to an event.
 - o Add a co-host to the event if you'd like to have someone else's name appear along with yours.
5. Click **Create**.

Privacy Settings

Want to share something on your wall that is only meant for your family and not contacts you've made through American Councils? You can do just that!

Facebook is really great about letting you control who can see your content. Some of your posts, like American Councils-related information, could be completely open to the public. Some, like your Christmas family photos, could be private or only viewable by your close friends and family.

Remember: If you are using your personal Facebook account (rather than a page or a separate profile) to promote hosting, or if you are friends with your students or host families, you may also want to consider what information they are seeing. Facebook is a great place to talk about current events and issues, and you may do this on your own profile. But it's always a good idea to consider that we work with people from all over the world from many different backgrounds, and our host families also have diverse backgrounds and opinions. While you are of course welcome to post whatever you want on your personal profile, consider customizing posts that could be interpreted negatively by students, potential and current host families, or even alumni. On the other


hand, information that is important for exchange programs—like calls to support bills in Congress or great articles/stories about the impact of exchange programs—are posts you may want to consider making public for others to share and comment on!

Take a look at this link for more info about how to control your privacy settings: <https://www.facebook.com/about/basics/manage-your-privacy/posts>


Facebook Live

We've talked a lot about Facebook Live, but it's important to be prepared before going live. Let's take a look at the instructions on more time:

To go live using Facebook for iOS:

1. Tap **What's on your mind?** at the top of your News Feed
2. Tap  **Live Video or Go Live**
3. Write an optional description for your broadcast
4. Tap **Go Live** to begin your broadcast
5. Tap **Finish** when you want to end your broadcast

To go live for your Page:

1. Access your Page on your phone
2. Click on the area that you would to write a post
3. Tap  **Go Live or Live Video**
4. Write an optional description for your broadcast
5. Tap **Go Live** to begin your broadcast
6. Tap **Finish** when you want to end your broadcast

Remember, before you go Live, it's important to practice a few times. Rehearse what you're going to say so you don't get flustered while on camera. Keep it around 7 to 10 minutes if you can and remember – you can always stop it, erase, and start over if you want!



Reimbursement Form for LC Program Activities (FLEX/YES)

Updated May 2019

Name:

Date:

Instructions for reimbursement:

Local coordinators submit this form to request reimbursement for enhancement activities and Global Youth Service Day ONLY. Each reimbursement item requested must directly fund this activity to be eligible.

- **Pages 1 and 2 of this form are required to be filled out completely and submitted.**
Page 1 is for itemized costs, type of activity, and total requested.
Page 2 is for listing exactly which students attended. This determines budget, as activity funds are allocated per student.
Describe the activity briefly, tying it to one enhancement theme (or GYSD).
- **You must submit receipts with this form.** Number each receipt and list the corresponding number in the chart below.
Clear, readable images of form and receipts may be emailed or faxed.
- Common activity expenses an LC might request for reimbursement include food, event admission, supplies, and mileage.
Mileage is reimbursed at each year's current IRS rate. For 2019, this is \$0.58 per mile.
Submit an address-to-address map for this, and it serves as a "receipt." List the map with receipts.

Itemized receipts:

Receipt # <i>Ex: 1</i>	Store / Vendor <i>Ex: Staples</i>	Item / Purpose <i>Ex: paper</i>	\$ Amount <i>Ex: \$10.99</i>

Are you listing more receipts on the back of this form? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Activity:

Check the box for <u>one</u> activity. <i>Please submit separate reimbursement forms for separate activities.</i>					GRAND TOTAL of this request:
<input type="checkbox"/> Democracy / Government Enhancement	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership / Citizenship Enhancement	<input type="checkbox"/> Free Market Economy Enhancement	<input type="checkbox"/> Diversity / American Culture Enhancement	<input type="checkbox"/> Global Youth Service Day <i>April only</i>	
Budget: \$75 per student attending each differently-themed enhancement activity				Budget: \$20 per student for GYSD activity	\$

Continue to page 2 →

Signature:

Date:

Email completed form to inbound@americancouncils.org or fax to 202-833-7523

Reimbursement Form for LC Program Activities (FLEX/YES)

Updated May 2019

Date(s) of activity:	Location(s):
Full name and program of each student attending: <i>For more than 8 students attending, please attach a separate list.</i>	
1.	5.
2.	6.
3.	7.
4.	8.
Activity Description: <i>What did students do, and how did this teach the activity's theme?</i>	

Optional: continued list of itemized receipts from first page:

Receipt # <i>Ex: 1</i>	Store / Vendor <i>Ex: Staples</i>	Item / Purpose <i>Ex: paper</i>	\$ Amount <i>Ex: \$10.99</i>

Subtotal of this page: \$
Must provide grand total on first page of form.

Signature:

Date:

Email completed form to inbound@americancouncils.org or fax to 202-833-7523



Local Coordinator Honoraria: Placement (FLEX/YES)

Updated May 2019

Local Coordinator Name:
Student Name:

Host Family Name:
Country:

Program:

This placement is: (please check one)

☐ Permanent ☐ Temporary changing to permanent ☐ Temporary until:

Please check ONE of the following that applies to this placement:**

Permanent Placement (full paperwork and student selection, LC-generated or referral)

Host family identified by or referred to you (LC), and you matched the family with a student and completed all paperwork:

- ☐ **\$750:** Student identified as high priority (designated in advance by American Councils)
- ☐ **\$500:** All other students
- ☐ **\$450:** Referral with full paperwork and student selection completed by local coordinator

Permanent Placement (partial paperwork)

Host family identified by or referred to you (LC), and you processed only partial paperwork. Applies to both high priority and non-high priority students:

- ☐ **\$150:** I processed the in-home interview, references, and Host Family Orientation only (not the school enrollment)
- ☐ **\$100:** I processed the in-home interview and Host Family Orientation only (not the school enrollment or references)

Temporary Placement

You (LC) identified host family and processed all paperwork. You must first provide American Councils office with estimated time period for temp hosting to receive the honorarium:

- ☐ **\$300:** Student identified as high priority
- ☐ **\$200:** All other students

Permanent Replacement for Temporary Placement

Either a new fully processed host family that allows student to remain within your (LC's) cluster or notification that current host family will convert from temporary to permanent:

- ☐ **\$450:** Student identified as high priority
- ☐ **\$300:** All other students

****Please note that, when moving a student within cluster to several temporary host families, American Councils reserves the right to cap the total honoraria amount paid to \$500.**

I am to be paid a total of \$ for this student's placement.

- I understand that placement honorarium payment is sent after American Councils receives a signed Host Family Orientation form, which must be conducted in person AFTER American Councils approves the placement, but BEFORE the student arrives to the host family's home.
- I understand that an honorarium is taxable income and that American Councils does not withhold taxes.

Signature:

Date:

Email completed form to inbound@americancouncils.org or fax to 202-833-7523

For reference, here is a list of items required for a placement to be “complete” as submitted by the local coordinator. **After review, American Councils will notify you when a placement is fully approved, typically with a host family welcome email.**

All documents listed below are required for a placement to be considered complete:

- ☐ Host Family Application
The family needs either a full application OR a returning application if they completed a full application in 2016 or later. Host families can complete either print or online application.
- ☐ Host Family Agreement
This must be either included with application or sent separately; it is already included with the online application.
- ☐ Photos
Required photos are: bedroom with bed; bathroom; kitchen; living area; front and back exterior of house (showing exit)
- ☐ 4 References
You may request the family’s most recent application from American Councils for reference info.
- ☐ In-Home Interview
This includes notifying host family of requirement for second home visit, even if no second home visitor has been identified.
- ☐ School Enrollment Form (SEF)
This must be signed by all parties and filled in completely.

If applicable, these items may be requested:

- ☐ Host Family Double Placement Consent
- ☐ Dual Language Agreement (if host family shares a language with the student)
- ☐ Waiver of school tuition letter (for schools that charge tuition, e.g. nontraditional private schools)

NEXT STEPS after submitting these documents:

- American Councils reviews all documentation and approves the placement. Please note approval may involve internal AC processes, such as natural parent permission and background check completions.
- American Councils will then contact you after it has been approved.
- **AFTER approval by American Councils, you must conduct the Host Family Orientation BEFORE the student arrives to the home.** The signed orientation form is signed by the host parents and submitted by you to American Councils. This orientation is not valid before American Councils approves the host family (per J-1 regulations).
- **You must conduct the Student Arrival Orientation within 30 days of the student’s arrival to their host community.** The orientation form is signed by the student and submitted by you to American Councils.
- American Councils will contact the second home visitor to arrange a visit within the first 30 days of the student’s arrival to the family’s home.

Please note that for some YES countries, American Councils may need to notification for female students placed in a home that has a male over the age of 13 (except for the host father). This is due to cultural considerations in some of our students’ home countries. We may also need notification for male YES students with female residents over age 13 (except the host mother). Please don’t let this deter you from showing YES students to potential hosts. This has not typically prohibited placements in the past.



Referral Honorary Form

Updated May 2019

Name of Person Collecting Honorary:

Name of Host Family or Local Coordinator Referred:

If applicable:

Student Name:

Country:

Program:

Please check ONE of the following that applies:

☐ **\$50: Permanent or temporary host family within local student cluster**

New host family is within the referring person's cluster (meaning referrer, new host family, and supervising Local Coordinator are within 120 miles of each other) and has never hosted with American Councils before.

☐ **\$50: Temporary host family outside of local student cluster**

New host family is outside of referring person and Local Coordinator's range (meaning new host family is more than 120 miles away). New host family must end up hosting for agreed-upon temporary period.

Note: An additional \$50 may be claimed if the temporary host family agrees to host permanently. In that case, please submit this form again noting the change from temporary to permanent. If a new Local Coordinator is needed in the area and referred by you, you may also claim Local Coordinator referral honorary once that Local Coordinator is certified, trained, and approved to supervise by American Councils.

☐ **\$100: Permanent host family without an American Councils Local Coordinator in range**

New host family must be outside of the referring person's range (roughly 120 miles), and the referral results in the host family hosting a student for the academic year with a new Local Coordinator.

Note: If you also refer the new Local Coordinator needed in the area, you may also claim Local Coordinator referral honorary once that Local Coordinator is certified, trained, and approved to supervise by American Councils.

☐ **\$150: Permanent host family with an American Councils Local Coordinator in range**

New host family must be outside of the referring person's range (roughly 120 miles), and the referral results in the host family agreeing to host a student for the academic year with an existing Local Coordinator in that area.

☐ **\$100: Local Coordinator supervising 1-2 students for the academic year**

☐ **\$300: Local Coordinator supervising 3 or more students for the academic year**

I am to be paid a total of \$ for this/these referral(s).

I understand that an honorary is taxable income and that American Councils does not withhold taxes.

Signature:

Date:

Email completed form to inbound@americancouncils.org or fax to 202-833-7523

CONTACT US

American Councils

EMAIL: inbound@americancouncils.org

PHONE: 202-833-7522

From 9AM-5PM EST

Ask for the International Student Support Team

FAX: 202-833-7523

WEBSITE: <http://inbound.americancouncils.org>

EMERGENCY: 800-621-9559

Call the above number if you have an after-hours emergency that involves the safety and soundness of a student. The appropriate AC staff member will be reached.

Department of State Emergency Hotline

866-283-9090

Call this line only if there is a problem reaching American Councils in cases of emergency.

By Mail

American Councils for International Education
ATTN: International Student Support Team
1828 L Street N.W., Suite 1200
Washington, D.C. 20036, U.S.A.

