

Appendix C – Travel Policy for Inbound Exchange Students

This is a cultural and educational exchange, NOT a travel exchange. Exchange students should have no expectations of being a tourist. The Host Rotary club and Host Families are under no obligation to provide or permit it. However, some travel through the generosity of and with, the Host club, individual Rotarians and Host Families is encouraged. **Under no circumstances shall students make their own travel arrangements and then expect the Host club and Host Family to agree. Inbound Exchange students must comply with this policy and Host Families are asked to enforce it. Violations of this policy may be grounds for terminating the Exchange and returning the student to his or her home country immediately.**

The reason for these rules is simple. The Rotary District 5500 Youth Exchange Committee, Host Rotary club and Host Parents are responsible for students while in this country. We must know where students can be reached in case of emergency or a message from home.

Individual travel approvals will vary based upon many factors. Host Parents will ask themselves if the travel is something they would allow their own son or daughter to do. Further, common sense must be a guide. For example, students are not allowed to get together with other Exchange students every weekend, as this is a detriment to them and the program. You chose to be an exchange student to meet and learn about people from the USA. Further, the travel desires of an exchange student should not place a burden on the Host Family. Any independent travel outside of the host community requires many approvals as indicated in the travel matrix.

In addition to the travel matrix requirements, Rotary International and District 5500 now requires a background check for any adult who will have extended contact with a student. This includes any overnight stays the student may want to have at a friend's home, any other adult homes and other Rotarians. A background check is also required for routine weekly transportation to events (other than with a school/church function) and any adults living in the host family home over the age of 18. Forms for the background checks are available from the Club Youth Exchange Officer, or any district Youth Exchange Committee member. Costs for the background checks are at the discretion of the hosting club and may not cover these expenses. You may acquire the amounts of the background checks from the Club YEO or any District YE Committee member. These forms must be submitted and processed no less than 72 hours prior to the planned overnight /extended contact.

You may find that many people will state they have already had a background check, FBI, clearance, etc, but District 5500 and Rotary International requires that one is submitted through our program. The background checks are confidential and once it has been processed, the application is destroyed for security purposes. NOTE! IF a student is traveling with the current host family to a relative's home, it is recommended that background checks be completed for all adults over 18 in that home; but it is not required at this time and is subject to change. Any questions regarding the background checks may be directed to our District YE Compliance Officer.

In summary, so there is no misunderstanding:

THERE WILL BE NO TRAVEL ALLOWED THAT HAS NOT BEEN APPROVED BY YOUR HOST PARENTS, CLUB COUNSELOR and THE DISTRICT 5500 YOUTH EXCHANGE COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE RULES.

THERE WILL BE NO OVERNIGHT/EXTENDED CONTACT UNTIL BACKGROUND CHECKS HAVE BEEN PROCESSED FOR ALL INVOLVED PERSONS OVER THE AGE OF 18.

We are not trying to prevent you or your student from traveling nor to reduce your fun. However, Rotary is responsible for your student's safety and therefore must know where they are at all times.