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Navigating This Guideline

Linked Documents

Throughout the text of this Guideline, references will be made to related documents. Note that when such reference is made, the name of the document will appear in *bold italic* text which contains a link to that document. Clicking on the *bold italic* text will open a linked .pdf document. These documents can then be printed. The exception to this rule is when the link is to a document created in MS word or PowerPoint. Clicking the link will automatically download the file to your browser, from where it can be opened if the above application resides on your computer. These documents are able to be edited according to your circumstances.

Glossary

If you know the name of the document you wish to find, at the end of this Guideline, you will find a glossary listing of all the documents linked throughout the text. Clicking on any one item in the Glossary will bring the document into view, and able to be printed. This precludes you having to search through the Guideline to locate a document so you can view / print it.

Index

The index located at the end of this document lists the linked documents and the pages that they appear within the Host Club Guidelines.

Short Cuts

- Each topic listed in the Table of Contents is linked to corresponding text within this guideline. Clicking on a topic in the Table of Contents will take you to the relevant text in the Guideline.

- **Returning to the Table of Contents at any time:**

PC using Edge: Use key combination Ctrl + Home

Mac: using Safari: Command (Home) + up arrow (upon return to the table of contents the topic you left is **highlighted**.)

- **To open a linked document in a new window**

(This keeps the Guideline window active for easy return)

Mac using Safari: Command + Option + Shift + click Document

PC using Edge: Shift + click on linked document

- **To download a linked document**

Mac using Safari: Control + click on Document

PC using Edge: Control + leftclick on Document

Introduction

The Rotary Youth Exchange Program is a wonderful adventure in International Service which each year enables thousands of secondary school students to travel to other parts of the world to study for one year in an entirely different environment. The impact of this Program on future international relations is incalculable, however, the impact on the lives of those fortunate enough to participate is most evident. Those young people are the potential leaders in their future community; therefore, the breadth of experience and the widening of horizons obtained by them through the Program must play a vital role in the shaping of tomorrow's world.

Participants return with a broader view of the world and a deeper understanding of themselves. Global perspective, self-confidence, language competence, college competitiveness, high level career opportunities, broad education, political insight, new international friends while having the time of their life is exchanged for one year in America. The program is a most rewarding experience for all who participate in it, whether as student, host family, Rotary Club, or at District level.

For more information go to the [North American Youth Exchange Network](#) site.

Benefits of Youth Exchange

Each year, Rotary Youth Exchange provides approximately 7000 young people from over 100 countries with the opportunity to experience the cultures, concerns and accomplishments of people in other countries. Through this Rotary program, students are given the opportunity to grow as individuals while their concept of the world expands as well.

Through Youth Exchange, Rotarians seek to provide the best possible environment for the participant. The program enjoys the advantages of more than fifty years of experience and a network of more than 1.1 million Rotarians around the world. This experience and support system ensure the best possible exchange for youth in the program.

But why do we do it? It's all about **PEACE**.

The Youth Exchange program helps students around the world connect with each other and discover we all have the same wants and desires. We're really not that different from each other and when we're friends, it's hard to engage in conflict. Each student who travels to another country meets many other students, not just from the country they are hosted by, but they also meet exchange students from other countries. They become ambassadors to spread Peace and Understanding. When they return home, they continue through the rest of their lives to be ambassadors for Peace.

Participants return with a broader view of the world and a deeper understanding of themselves. As these young people become adults, many assume leadership roles in their communities and bring to these positions the benefits of their exchange experiences. As a result, Rotary's Youth Exchange program becomes a powerful force in the promotion of world peace and understanding.

Long-term exchange students must have more than one host family — preferably three different families — during their exchange. By living in the homes of several

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families, students are exposed to a variety of experiences in the host country and better understand the culture as a whole.

Objectives of the YouthExchange Program

- To further international goodwill and understanding by enabling students to study at first-hand some of the accomplishments and problems of people in other lands.
- To enable students to further their education by studying for a year in a different environment and by undertaking courses of study in subjects not normally available to them in secondary schools of their own country.
- To urge students to broaden their own outlook by learning to live with and meet people of different cultures, creeds and colors and by having to cope with day-to-day problems in a new environment.
- To act as ambassadors for their own countries by addressing Rotary Clubs, community organizations and youth groups in their host countries and by imparting as much knowledge as they can of their own countries to the people they meet during their year abroad.
- To enable students to study and observe all facets of life and culture in their host country so that on their return home they can pass on the knowledge they have gained.

Outbound Student Eligibility

- Participants should be secondary school pupils in good health who will be at least 16 and not have reached their 19th birthday at the beginning of their year abroad unless a different age range is mutually agreed by the participating Rotary Clubs and Districts. Applicants would be freshmen, sophomores, or juniors.
- Applicant's family must be willing to host a foreign exchange student for a minimum of 3 months or be of assistance in recruiting a host family.
- All applicants are selected solely on merit. Sons and daughters of Rotarians are eligible to participate in the program but receive no special preference.

Participating Countries

The appendix has a list of **Recently Exchanged Countries** that have been active in exchanges with District 5060 in recent years. This list is subject to change on a yearly basis. If Rotary is present in a country we can usually arrange an exchange.

Selection Criteria

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Listed below are the qualities which the District Youth Exchange Committee seeks in applicants to be sent abroad under the program:

- Above average academic qualification. Students who do not have an above average GPA should not be recommended by clubs unless they possess outstanding qualifications in other areas.
- Applicants should possess well-rounded personalities with an ability to think through the problems and to cope with the many problems and stresses of living in a foreign environment.
- Applicants should be good ambassadors not only of their own town, but also Rotary and their country. During their year abroad, they will be called upon to address many groups; therefore, they must possess an ability to communicate easily with other people and to express themselves clearly and well. A well-rounded personality is a virtual necessity.
- Applicants should have an inquiring mind and be actively interested in their own environments, the world in general, and be aware of world problems.
- Applicants should be students who are active in their communities through sports, hobbies, youth activities, and/or church affairs. The best students are invariably those who lead busy, active lives in their communities.
- Applicants should be well adjusted, particularly in their family relationships. The student who cannot adjust to his or her own family may well find it impossible to adjust to more difficult family situations in a foreign environment. The students who have 100% support from parents for his or her participation in the program are the ones most likely to succeed.
- Applicants should have the ability to cope with changing situations on a continuing basis.

Process Timeline

- September - Club Outbound Student Applications given to students interested in exchange by early October - Completed Club Outbound Student Applications returned to Club YEO.
- October - Interviews with prospective exchange students and parents. Students complete Long Term Exchange Application and prepare for district interviews.
- mid November - District interviews
- Early December - Applicants notified of exchange country.
- December - January - Applications sent by District committee coordinator to prospective countries for matching with family and foreign student.
- January -April - Notification of acceptance as matches are made,

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orientation session for students only in April

- April - Orientation meeting for students and at least one parent
- April - May - Students correspond with host families and counterpart students overseas. Travel arrangements made.
- July - Sept - Exchange begins with students departing or arrival of foreign student.

How the Exchange System Works

Club Selection

The Rotary Clubs carry out their selection process and then nominate one or two students for placement overseas for every student the Club is prepared to host in return.

District Endorsement

District 5060 Youth Exchange Committee has another interview with each of the Club's candidates, reserving the right to approve or reject any applicant. The selected students must attend two compulsory orientations in the winter and spring.

Club Selection Overseas

The hosting Club is selected by the hosting District Youth Exchange Committee. The only influence exerted by the sponsoring District is in the selection of the District to which the students' papers are sent.

Placement

The placement process is handled by the hosting District in the country to which the student will be going. The Outbound Coordinator from the sponsoring District has then to wait until the student guarantee forms are returned from the hosting District at which time the student is notified.

Student Mental Health

Homesickness

Every student experiences homesickness to some degree and the extent of this problem will depend largely on the student's own background and personality. The student who is actively involved in the community will be less likely to suffer from adjustment problems and homesickness than the non-participant; therefore, do all you can to encourage your student to accept the opportunities available to become involved in the community.

Anxiety & Low Mood

Exchange students can be especially susceptible to Anxiety and mood swings. Refer to *Navigating Anxiety & Low Mood* for insight to this phenomenon. In extreme cases the student's Rotary councilor stands ready for support and counsel when needed, and should be alerted.

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Culture Shock

Rotary Youth Exchange Students, living and studying in a different culture, living in the homes of host families, often experience significant culture shock, sometimes on a continuous basis, throughout their stay abroad. For more information on this subject, refer to [Culture Shock](#).

Discipline

Expectations of Student

Your student is expected to adapt to the supervision and discipline of the host family. Remember the host family does not have to adapt to the student; rather the student must learn to adapt to the family. Problems can arise unless the student clearly understands the fact that they are expected to conform to host country conditions. At the same time, host families should be aware of the problems of adaptation and should be prepared to be flexible.

Standards of Behavior

Every host District / Cub has similar standards of behavior. Violations of their standards can have repercussions ranging from warnings to immediate return home depending on the severity of the violation.

The Standard for Behavior is to protect the exchange student, host family, host Rotary Club and District who have responsibility to the sponsor club and parents.

Cannabis, Tobacco, Alcohol and Related Products

District 5060 recognizes that the use of tobacco and alcohol in other countries is different than in North America. In some countries, smoking is much more prevalent at all ages but is still not permitted for outbound students to do so while abroad. In some instances, a student may be living in a home where smoking tobacco does occur, and they will need to be aware of this. Most host families will be conscious of this and will not smoke near the student /or inside the home.

As well, the drinking of wine or beer with dinner or at special occasions is very common in many countries and not looked down upon. This is something outbound students will need to inquire about (at orientations) as it could be a permitted practice if under supervision. **Intoxication and drug usage (including Cannabis) is not tolerated in Rotary International and could have a student sent home.**

Youth Protection

Components

A Youth Exchange student will spend a year, or perhaps just an extended period of time, living with a host family in a country other than their own. Rotarians, their families, and non-Rotarian volunteers are expected to use their best efforts to safeguard the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment of every student with whom they come into contact. To this end, Rotary International requires that all Rotary Districts have a Youth Exchange [Youth Protection Policy](#) in place.

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Incorporated in this policy is the requirement that all parties with extensive contact with students be vetted according to the requirements of Rotary International.

Rotary International and Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled according to the [Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines](#).

Prevention is always preferable to having to deal with an actual case of abuse. To that end, alerting all parties involved with our inbounds to the fact that we are sensitive and vigilant is extremely important. This includes discussions with our inbound students themselves that include a [Sexual Abuse Response](#): A Quick guide for Inbound Exchange Students.

Responsibilities of the Various Parties to an exchange

There are distinct responsibilities, both task oriented and / or financial, that all parties should be aware of.

Exchange Student

- Agrees in writing to accept all the rules of the program.
- Accepts the supervision of the receiving District, Club, and host family.
- The student will be expected to attend host Rotary club meetings and events as requested by the host Rotary club.
- The student will be expected to make continuous improvement, leading to practical fluency in the language of the host club.
- The student will limit their total electronic communications (text, Skype, Facebook and similar services) to Canada and the US to not more than 30 minutes per day (preferably less).
- The student will become engaged with the local environment and community so as to be an exceptional ambassador for Rotary International
- Agrees to accept the placement in the country to which he or she is assigned.
- Arranges to speak at Rotary and other community functions both during and after the period of the Exchange.
- Corresponds regularly with both the sending District and sponsor Club.
- Returns home at a time and by a route specified by the sending District.
- attends secondary school regularly.

Host Family

- Provides room and board for the student.
- Exercises parental responsibilities and supervision, as would the student's

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own parents.

- Advises the student about matters such as the family, school and community functions during the period of the exchange.
- Notifies the Rotary counselor if the student is encountering any problems (such as illness, difficulty in adapting to the host family or school, or serious homesickness).

Natural Parents or Guardians

- The parents of an outbound student are required to undertake the following financial obligations:
 - The cost of registration, lodging, transportation and meals for the Revelstoke long weekend, February 17-20 for the outbound student.
 - The cost of Rotary International required medical, travel and liability insurance.
 - The student and his or her natural family are expected to cover the costs of “special soaps, shampoos or lotions” personal cosmetics and prescriptions.
 - If students need to acquire additional clothing while on exchange, this cost is also the responsibility of the student or natural family.
 - The student and natural family will be responsible for any medical expense co-payments or payments prior to reimbursement under the provided insurance.
 - The student will normally be responsible for any costs incurred for the use of a cell phone or long distance costs incurred for the use of the host family phone.
 - Nearly all hosting Rotary districts offer optional trips within their country or region for the students. The cost of any of these optional trips varies greatly and is the responsibility of the student and the natural family.
- All students are required to carry the Rotary approved medical and hospital coverage for the year away.
- The parents are required to provide the student with a revolving emergency fund of \$500 (Canadian or US) which can be drawn upon with the consent of the Rotary Counselor in emergency circumstances only. Emergency circumstances might include medical costs that must be paid “up front”, unexpected phone bills incurred by inbound student, other unexpected costs.
- A monthly allowance will be paid to the student by the host Club to help cover spending money requirements and incidentals.
- All clothing needs of the student while abroad are the responsibility of the parents. This includes school uniforms where applicable. Some school fees may be the responsibility of the student but tuition, if applicable, is the responsibility of the host club.

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- Provide appropriate clothing including any necessary school uniforms.
- Provide any additional spending money plus the required emergency fund of \$500 (Canadian or US).

Sending District

- selects the student in accordance with the criteria for the program.
- arranges a suitable hosting by Districts abroad.
- arranges adequate orientations for both the exchange student and parents.
- informs the receiving District of the travel plans/arrival date of the student.
- maintains contact with the student and the receiving District during the exchange period.
- arranges Rotary approved insurance for the student.
- assures that each party understands all specific responsibilities.
- arranges suitable debriefing of exchange students upon their return from overseas.

Receiving District (Host)

- assigns the student to a specific Rotary club.
- arranges a suitable orientation for the newly arrived students.
- maintains contact with the student and the sending District during the Exchange period.
- ensures that students are at all times in possession of valid visas and other necessary documents during the exchange period.
- ensures that the student purchases the Rotary approved insurance policy locally if they arrived with no insurance.
- Tracks the progress of all inbound students and intercedes when necessary.

Receiving Club (Host)

- arranges for 3 to 4 host families for each student hosted. Host family orientation and maintain contact with host families.
- arranges secondary schooling. All educational expenses, including tuition, transportation to and from school, materials fees and the like are the responsibility of the hosting Rotary club.
- appoints a counselor for each student.
- meets the Exchange student upon arrival.
- ensures the attendance of the student at all mandatory functions such as orientation or District conference.

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- Bears the cost of supporting the student.
- Develops a suitable program of contact and activities for the student.
- Provides a monthly allowance.
- Ensures regular attendance of the student at club meetings and functions.
- Tracks the progress of students and reports same to District.
- Maintains records consistent with the District's *Youth Protection Policy*.

Financial Obligations

- The parents of an outbound student are required to undertake the following financial obligations:
- The cost of transportation and other travel costs for the student to and from the host country. District 5060 charges a One Price Fee for all yearlong students regardless of country destination. This fee covers the cost of transportation, in country orientation programs, insurance, and various sundry items. Parents will be advised well in advance of the total costs involved and the required terms of payment.
- All students are required to carry the Rotary approved medical and hospital coverage for the year away. Some overseas Rotary Districts require that the student take out a policy in their country of destination. All costs associated with insurance are included in the fee mentioned above.
- The parents are required to provide the student with a revolving emergency fund of \$500 which can be drawn upon with the consent of the Rotary Counselor. This fund is intended to cover major items such as clothing, approved travel or other emergencies and must be replenished as it is depleted. A monthly allowance will ordinarily be paid to the student by the host Club to help cover spending money requirements and incidentals.
- All clothing needs of the student while abroad are the responsibility of the parents. This includes school uniforms where applicable. Some school fees may be the responsibility of the student but tuition if applicable is the responsibility of the host club.
- The *Bob Winter Memorial Fund* was named after a long time Penticton Rotarian who was actively involved in the Youth Exchange program in District 5060. He noticed that some of the families sending a child abroad for a year were having problems paying the cost. Applications should be sent to the District Chair who will forward to the Chair of the Bob Winter Fund Committee as soon as possible after student selection. Applications are available from the District Chair.

Rules

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Students are given manuals which contain the rules and guidelines for the exchange. Make sure you read and understand them. If you are unsure of any aspect, please contact the District Committee.

As well as the rules contained in the manual, rules for you to note are:

- Travel is not to take place without your consent - give letter of authority to be at the discretion of student's counselor.
- Students are **NOT** to **operate or drive** any motorized vehicle of any kind.
- It is a one year exchange, based on a school year, and typically lasts for 10 to 11 months. Any variation requires the District 5060 Committee approval which is not easy to obtain.
- The return home will be by the most direct route.

A student may be terminated early in any of three ways:

- At this Committee's request - failure to meet our required standards.
- At the host District's request - not complying with Rotary rules.
- At Parent's request - requires the approval of the host District and that of the District 5060 Committee.

Correspondence

Students can have problems with homesickness. This can be greatly accentuated each time a student receives communication.

Frequent telephone or skype calls should be discouraged as much as possible, especially during the first 3 months. Not only are they costly, but they can often be unsettling to both parties. If telephone calls are to be made, they should be limited. Your son or daughter will find it difficult to assimilate new friends and culture if their minds are constantly pulled back home by frequent phone calls and e-mail. This can accentuate home sickness to the point that your child will wish to terminate the exchange.

Community News

Your son or daughter will appreciate receiving newspapers from your community plus general periodicals, and school news. After the student has read them, they can pass them on to their host families and friends so that they, in turn, will receive a better understanding of our lifestyle.

Travel Arrangements

A round trip ticket must be purchased prior to departure from the United States. The ticket must be purchased through "It's Your World Travel", the District's authorized agent, and it cannot be changed without parental and District 5060 approval. Mileage plans are not applicable.

Parent Visitation

In cases where travel abroad to visit the student is contemplated by the parents, they should defer their visit until well into the second half of the Exchange period, mid-March or later. This is the time when the student is usually well adjusted and provides an opportunity for them to meet most of the people who have played a role in the student's life during the year away. However, it should be noted that Rotary is under no obligation to provide the parents with accommodation(s). As the student is usually only allowed a limited number of days away from school, the student may not necessarily be permitted to accompany the parents on private touring.

Try to avoid visitations coinciding with the ending month of the exchange. The student is usually trying to squeeze in 12th hour activities and you may be disruptive and actually be resented.

Other Parent Obligations

Parents are required to make themselves available with their son or daughter for a Club interview, a District interview and the prescribed District orientation sessions. Both parents must also sign the various agreements associated with the Rotary rules and other application documentation.

Parents will be encouraged to host an inbound student (or assist in finding a host family) for 3 to 4 months sometime during the year that their son or daughter is gone. This is a fun and rewarding experience that will help you identify with what your son or daughter is going through.

Readjustment Period

Finally, a special note should be taken of the adjustment period required after the student returns home. The initial months after a child, who has now become an independent and more mature adult, returns home can often be a most trying time for everyone. Each student will have experienced several years of normal growing up all condensed into one year, while the parents still think of him or her in the same way as when they left home. Yes, tremendous horizons have opened up for the student during the year abroad and students do find it difficult to adjust when they "return to earth".

A lot of patience and understanding is required of parents in the difficult adjustment period, but the ultimate rewards for all concerned are great!

Rotary Health Insurance for RYE Students

Minimum Standards

There have been many problems over the years with different health insurance requirements in different Rotary districts around the world. Some districts required the students purchase their insurance; others wanted students to arrive with insurance already in place. And in addition, there was the question of insurance while the student was in transit. This confusion sometimes caused students to need two different policies.

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District YEO's have been discussing the issues at various Rotary International Conferences and now have a new plan in place. Instead of having a Universal plan that was mandatory around the world, the RI Youth Exchange Committee proposed a Rotary Code of Policies that set new minimum standards and better methods of clubs and districts to work together. Below are the minimum standards that are in force worldwide.

Minimum Coverage Requirements

All the students, both inbound and outbound, now have policies that at the very least meet these requirements.

- \$1,000,000 for medical, dental, ambulance, hospital expenses
- \$100,000 for accidental death, dismemberment, or disability
- \$50,000 for necessary emergency transport.
- \$50,000 for repatriation
- \$50,000 for necessary emergency transport or evacuation of student in the event of a non-medical emergency.
- \$50,000 for personal legal liability

Insurance Carrier

District 5060 uses CISI Bolduc for insurance coverage for our inbound and outbound students. Refer to [Insurance Coverage](#) for details concerning accident & sickness benefits, liability coverage, enrollment, emergency instructions, and much more useful information.

Insurance Claims

For outbound students, In the event that a insurance claim required, refer to [Out of Country Claims](#). A [CISI Claim Form](#) is found in the appendix

Other Insurance Highlights

- 24-hour Door-to-Door Coverage inclusive of any personal travel
- Valid in all countries in which travel will take place.
- 24-hour emergency assistance service

Insurance Cards

While the students are supposed to carry their insurance card with them at all times, having a backup copy available can help save huge hassles at the doctor's office or hospital. In an effort to help students in the event of emergency, we are now requesting that the health insurance documents are copied and entered into the District's YEAH Youth Exchange Database.

Travel Information

Do I need a passport?

Yes! You must have a passport that is valid at least 6 months beyond your intended one-year stay. Your passport is your insurance that you will be able to re-enter the United States of America or Canada when you return. If you do not have a passport, apply immediately. You can obtain passport information and forms for the United States at www.travel.state.gov and for Canada at www.travel.gc.ca.

Do I have to send my passport to the Travel and Visa Coordinator?

Yes! We must receive your original passport for us to obtain your visa under the one-price fare. In some countries, (we will let you know) you are required to apply for the visa in the country after you arrive. In those cases, we do not need your original passport. We will require a copy of your passport prior to issuing any airline tickets.

Will I need a visa for my exchange year?

In most cases, yes. A Visa is issued by the Embassy or Consulate of your future host country. It permits a non-citizen to enter and/or remain in the country for a designated period of time. Most Rotary Youth Exchange students will be issued a Student Visa which will allow the student to remain in the country for one year's studies. The issuance of a Visa by the country does not guarantee entry into that country. That decision remains the right of the immigration officials of your host country.

Even with proper documentation, some countries may refuse entry based on comments made by the visitor when asked questions upon entry into the country. **Do not joke** with any immigration, customs, or security officers. Answer any questions that they may pose in a polite, concise manner. **Do not** volunteer any other information. Remember, **Deportation is at the traveler's expense.**

Visa's may take some time to process and obtain. Please submit your documentation as soon as possible and please honor any deadlines that we set for you.

Standard Visa requirements may include:

- Passport valid for at least 18 months beyond your departure date
- Original or certified copy of your birth certificate
- Passport photos
- Notarized authorization to travel signed by **both** parents and legal guardian, even if your parents are divorced. (sample document in this manual)
- Letter from your host school verifying your enrollment
- Rotary Youth Exchange Guarantee Form

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Other Visa requirements may include:

- Financial statements showing adequate family resources
- HIV test
- Tuberculosis test results Fingerprints
- Criminal background check from local law enforcement
- Updated immunization records
- Income tax records
- Document translations
- Proof of Health Insurance

Will I Need Immunizations:

In some cases, inoculations may be required depending on your destination within a country. You should confirm all immunization requirements with your assigned countries Embassy or Consulate's web sites. Travelers who do not have the required vaccinations upon entering a country might be subjected to vaccination, medical follow-up, isolation, or any combination of these items. Some countries may even deny entry. In some cases, an International Certificate of Vaccination against Yellow Fever may be required.

The [Centers for Disease Control](#) is a great source of Health information and requirements. You may also go to the [World Health Organization](#) for guidance and information on a number of health related issues.

An increasing number of countries have established regulations regarding HIV testing for long term visitors.

It is the Exchange Student's responsibility to obtain and fulfill immunization and pre-departure healthcare requirements.

Why do I have to wait for my guarantee form to get my visa and airline tickets?

Your guarantee form gives us your arrival airport and the date that that your host district expects you to arrive in your specific country. It also provides the estimated date that you can depart from your host country. We will need this information to acquire your airline ticket and itineraries. We will not purchase or schedule your flight until your Visa is issued. Sometimes, embassy's can take a very long time processing visas and changing airline tickets can be expensive. In some cases, if the Visa is approved late, your flight could be within a few days of receiving your Visa.

How will I get my visa and airline tickets?

Once you have collected all of the items necessary to complete the visa application forms, have received your guarantee forms and receive a packet or e-mail from your host country, please contact us and we will arrange for the processing of your visa and airline tickets as part of your "one-price fare". If you are required to go to a consulate for an in-person interview, you are responsible for any required travel costs associated with the interview.

Once your passport and visa has been returned by the Embassy or Consulate, we will purchase your ticket. Our agent will contact you to arrange for delivery of your documents. We normally do not use the US mail for delivery of travel

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documents. We will ship them to a designated address where someone will be available to sign for the documents.

You are required to arrive with a return airline ticket in your possession. You will be issued a roundtrip ticket with a return date appropriate for your exchange. Your airline tickets will be non-refundable but can be changed upon the payment of a change fee and any change in fare. This cost can be very substantial. If you wish to return on a different date, or are sent home early, you are responsible to pay for any change fees associated with your actual return.

Will I travel with a group or by myself?

That will depend on your travel dates and if other students are traveling via the same airports. If possible, we attempt to group students.

Tickets / Passports /Money

Do not pack your travel documents in your suitcase. Do not leave home without your documents. You must present your tickets and passports with your luggage at check-in. It is advisable to carry your valuables, airline tickets, itinerary, passport, money, credit cards and prescription medication in your carry-on luggage. Having foreign currency is optional. Having a small amount of host country currency is probably a good idea. This will allow you to tip baggage handlers and make small incidental purchases until you establish a bank account in your host country.

Check-in

You must check-in three (3) hours prior to your departure for your international flights. This is considered mandatory. Be prepared to present your passport, visa and ticket at the airport when you check-in. It is a good idea to re-confirm your flights with the airline 72 hours prior to your departure to ensure that you have the most updated information regarding your schedule.

It is important to wear your Rotary name tag and Jacket on your departure and arrival. This will identify you to other Rotary students as well as any Rotarians traveling throughout the world. Do not joke with any immigration, customs or security offices. Answer politely only questions that are asked of you. Do not volunteer any other information. Some countries will refuse entry to visitors that do not comply with requirements regarding general appearance and clothing. Some countries will refuse entry to visitors who make inappropriate comments upon entry into their country. Remember, you are an ambassador for Rotary as well as your country.

Carry-on Luggage

You will be limited to one carry-on bag and one "small" personal item (purse, laptop, and cameras). Your carry-on can be subject to weight limits on certain airlines.

Check with the airline's web site to get specific information. You cannot carry knives, larger scissors, weapons, and nearly all tools in a carry-on. You are also prohibited from carrying liquids or gels in containers larger than 3 ounces each in a carry-on. All liquids or gels must be contained in a single – one quart – clear plastic bag and this bag must be removed during your security screening.

Luggage:

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Please go to your airline website and/or contact your airline for information regarding baggage allowances and fees. These change so frequently it is impossible to keep this data up to date.

When you check-in; request that your luggage be checked all the way to your final destination. You may be able to avoid some baggage fees by checking this way.

Do not pack or carry wrapped gifts. Do not bring prohibited items to the airport. Please review the [Transportation Security Administration website](#) for a list of prohibited items and other information you will need to travel successfully. If you are Canadian citizen, this site is still appropriate as nearly all of our Canadian students will be transiting through the US.

Please be aware that once you are in your destination country, you may have to take a small regional carrier to your final destination and their baggage allowances may be different. Be sure to check. Additional and overweight items will cost you dearly.

Every bag should be marked clearly with your name on a personal identification tag attached to the outside of the bag. Your name should also be clearly written somewhere on the inside of the bag in case your luggage is lost or misplaced by the airline.

If you wish to lock your luggage, use a TSA approved lock only. TSA screeners have tools for opening and relocking luggage equipped with TSA approved locks. Other locks will be cut off and your luggage could be damaged or destroyed in the process.

Return date changes

Your airline tickets will be booked for an appropriate return date. Many students find the wish to extend their stay to participate in a Rotary sponsored tour or to travel with a host family. With appropriate approvals, this can be arranged. However, if your ticket return date needs to be changed, you will be responsible for any change fees.

In the event we are unable to obtain a ticket with an appropriate return date, we will notify you before you leave the US or Canada and District 5060 will cover the cost of one change fee (in October) to schedule your return to your home.

For Country Specific Rotary District 5060 Contacts, refer to [District Committee Members Word document](#) if you have a Rotary logon or to [District Committee Members in ClubRunner](#) if you do not have a Rotary logon.

Cross Boarder Authorization U.S. / Canada

Outbound / Rebound students will need to travel across the boarder to attend Rotary Events. To do so they will need Authorization letters.

Canadian students will use the [Cross Border Travel, Minor Canadian](#) document.

U.S. students will use the document [Cross Border Travel, Minor U.S.](#) document.

Visa Application

A visa is the official document which allows you to enter, stay, and leave your hosting country at the end of your exchange. Not all countries require a visa, IYWT will advise you as we make your travel preparations.

If you need a visa, it is normally stamped inside your passport. IYWT has been obtaining 'Student Visas', in even the most difficult circumstances for over 30 years. We have close relations with your host government's consular representation and will assist you in completing their required paperwork.

Therefore, in most cases you will need to send your SIGNED passport to IYWT so that we can apply for your visa. Officials at the consulate will issue the visa after we send your passport and paperwork to them. Some host governments are requiring an in-person interview at their consulate in the United States or Canada. Be sure to consult the Visa Requirement List in your packet for full instructions.

In order to obtain your visa, you the student/parent provide certain required paperwork, and Rotary both here and in your host country provides required paperwork. Please note, no paperwork can be submitted to the consulate until ALL paperwork is received from all parties.

STANDARD PAPERWORK NEEDED TO APPLY FOR MOST VISAS:

The following list is NOT an official visa requirements list, but rather is intended to give you an idea of the minimal paperwork you normally need to submit to IYWT in order to process your visa. This is ONLY an example of the type of documents that are required for you to submit.

Please refer to your own host country's specific requirements from the packet we provide to you.

Government Issued Passport Book - send your actual passport book "MAKE SURE IT IS SIGNED AND VALID FOR AT LEAST 6 months beyond your intended return" and there is at least one blank page to affix your visa. (Please keep a copy for your records before sending).

Visa Application - This is a standard form from your hosting country's consulate. Often you will need to sign the form after you have completed it, or your parents may need to sign if you are a minor (under 18 years old).

Passport Type Photos - You must buy these photos! Businesses such as Fedex/ Kinkos or Walgreens will take the photos and give them to you directly. Visa Applications are most often rejected due to inappropriate passport type photos! Any photo that you take yourself is not an appropriate photo. Please click here for a fully detailed description of the requirements for your passport/visa type photos.

Parent Permission Form - biological/custodial parents must sign a form authorizing their student's entire exchange while residing in the host country. Any parent exercising custodial authority will need to sign the form. In the event both parents are not able sign, please provide legal documentation to support the absence of a parent's signature, i.e. divorce decree, certification of

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abandonment, 'father not named' on birth certificate, death certificate, etc. Step-parents CANNOT normally sign this form.

Medical Insurance - IYWT doesn't handle medical health insurance policies, therefore your best resource if you are required to provide proof of medical insurance will be checking with both your sending and host Rotary District. You may be required to purchase insurance through your host country's socialized medical plans either prior to your departure or once you arrive in your host country.

Host Guarantee Form - ALL parties involved must review your Host Guarantee Form (the official acceptance form) and agree to accept you. You and your sending Rotary complete your sections. It is then sent to your hosting Rotary and completed and signed by various entities in your host country. It is then returned to your sponsoring District Chairman. Once the form is returned, you're officially accepted as a Rotary Youth Exchange student to that country. The visa process can be quite confusing and frustrating. As stated above, IYWT needs all paperwork from both the student and Rotary before the visa can be obtained.

Therefore, to guide and keep both you and Rotary updated, we send to the student, parent(s) and sponsoring Rotarians an Acknowledgement Letter. This Acknowledgement Letter lists ALL of the documents required to successfully obtain your visa for your assigned country. It is divided into TWO SECTIONS:

- **Student/Parent Responsibility:** You the student only need to be concerned about completing and submitting to IYWT your Student/Parent section.
- **Rotary Responsibility:** Rotarians are very responsible and feel it is their primary duty to provide, on a timely basis, the documents they are responsible for, so you can depart at the correct time and have a successful and legal exchange year.

In both sections, it reveals when we have received certain documents, and if they are complete or we need to send them back to the sender for correction or completion.

(Please note your Rotarian may send the documents they are responsible for directly to you, instead of IYWT - if so, and they are missing from your Acknowledgement Letter, please make a copy and send the originals on to us).

Lastly, a note of caution! You may receive advice from truly concerned individuals--including Rotarians, here and overseas, and Host Families. They may advise you, with the very best of intentions on procedures you should undertake, or answers for certain visa documents. Even if you contact the correct consulate directly, there may be some confusion as to the 'type' of visa you are applying for and you will get further misdirection. All of this can lead to unnecessary expense, time, and even wasted trips to the consulate.

SO, PLEASE, verify any suggestions or answers you receive from these parties with us at IYWT before you take unneeded action and delay your visa issuance due to faulty answers on documents we have provided to you.

Required Travel Agency

The Travel Agency used by Rotary District 5060 is:

"It's Your World Travel"

1969 SW Hillcrest Road
Seattle, WA 98166
Toll Free 800-955-6077
Direct 206-370-9243

Summary of Services:

- Host Country contact:
 - Determine Legal Entry Requirements
 - Grant Legal Entry Document
 - Post Arrival Requirements
- All Travel Arrangements

Contact details and other information will be handed out at the Outbound Training session.

NOTE: It's Your World Travel's website makes reference to Open Tickets for flexible return dates and we have chosen to **not use that option in most cases.**

Students will be issued a Closed Ticket with a fixed return date. The Airlines will allow the date to be changed, but there is a fee of around \$250 but is subject to change plus the cost difference in the flight. Parents and Students should be prepared to pay this fee as we have found that about 50% of students will make changes and want to stay longer at the end of their trip.

So why do we not use Open Tickets to make this process easier? It's to save you money as generally the cost of Open Tickets is about \$500 to \$800 more and in most cases, the cost to pay for the change in ticket price and change fee will come in less. There is a bit of a gamble here as the airlines could charge more based on economic challenges, fuel surcharges, etc. But it's been our experience that this is the cheaper option and it reduces the One Price Fare that you are paying.

To ensure we don't have unhappy students and parents next spring when changes are being made, please remember that there will be a small fee to change.

Key Process Dates

February

- Get personal documents in order:
 - * Passport
 - * Photo ID

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* Birth certificate

*Custody documents

March

- IYWT coaches should have all legal entry information posted

April – July

- Rotary documents should arrive from host countries

June / July

- Processing timer for legal entry process
- Online travel training

July – September

- Depart for Host Country

Early January

- Deadline for getting the best return flights

May / June / July

- Return dates, depending on host country

Appendix of Document Links

Clicking on a link below will display that linked document in a web browser

[*Bob Winter Memorial Fund*](#)

[*Centers for Disease Control*](#)

[*CISI Claim Form*](#)

[*Cross Border Travel, Minor Canadian*](#)

[*Cross Border Travel, Minor U.S.*](#)

[*Culture Shock*](#)

[*District Committee Members in ClubRunner*](#)

[*District Committee Members Word document*](#)

[*Insurance Coverage*](#)

[*It's Your World Travel*](#)

[*Navigating Anxiety & Low Mood*](#)

[*North American Youth Exchange Network*](#)

[*Out of Country Claims*](#)

[*Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines*](#)

[*Sexual Abuse Response*](#)

[*Transportation Security Administration website*](#)

[*World Health Organization*](#)

[*www.travel.gc.ca*](#)

[*www.travel.state.gov*](#)

[*Youth Protection Policy*](#)

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