

## **CLUB OFFICER GUIDELINES – LONG TERM EXCHANGE PROGRAM (LTEP)**

### **YOUTH EXCHANGE OFFICER GUIDELINES FOR INBOUND STUDENTS**

***Overview:*** Inbound students usually arrive in August. The Rotary Club provides a basic introduction on the Exchange Program through advertising and promotion within the club, at the high school and through the local news media. The first step is to appoint a Youth Exchange Committee. Many other exchange programs require that all expenses be paid by the participants. Although there will still be considerable financial cost to participating families, Rotary does provide some assistance, for example, in providing incoming students with an expense allowance and transportation to orientations and conferences. It is important for your community to recognize that your Youth Exchange Committee is designed to provide the service of placement of Inbound Students and selection of Outbound Students. Providing for the student's needs and requirements is part of our community service.

Notify the Club Coordinator for your country (US or Canada) that your club is willing to receive one or more students. Be sure to receive your club's board approval of the program and the expenditure involved. The club committee must then contact the local high school to arrange for placement of the inbound student. The committee must arrange for host families. Host families may be either Rotary or non-Rotary approved homes. A minimum of three families is recommended.

When an inbound student has been assigned to your club, your Youth Exchange Committee, and in particular the Youth Exchange Officer/Committee Chairman, shall appoint a counselor who will help coordinate student visits within the club, helping to enhance the student's experiences. The Youth Exchange Officer and host parent(s) are not eligible to serve as student counselors. The Youth Exchange Officer is responsible for corresponding with the student while still overseas, with the student's family, and with the student's sponsoring Rotary Club. Inform student about your club, community, school, the first host family, and other topics of interest.

When a Youth Exchange Officer receives the application for the inbound student, you should first study it carefully. Identify the background of the student, observing such things as the occupation of the father and mother, religious affiliation, type of school or community activities in which the student has indicated interest. Also notice the number of brothers and sisters (is it a large family or small?) This information can help in selecting host families. Determine if the student has studied foreign languages, with special reference to the amount of English instruction. Give a copy of the application to the school so as to enable them to determine the correct school curriculum. If your student has had little or no English skill you may want to find someone with appropriate language ability to go with you to the airport to help greet the student upon arrival.

Nothing can bring a smile more quickly to the face of a lonely, tired student who is far away from home and maybe already a little homesick, than to hear a few familiar words in his own language. The host family or families and a few Rotarians should be at the airport to meet the student. At busy airports it helps to hold a card or sign with your student's name to avoid missed

connections. Our outbound students have repeatedly told us that one of the most appreciated events during the year was the warm reception they received at the airport. However, it really only requires one genuinely friendly person to greet a student and make him or her feel at home. The important thing is to be sure that you know exactly when your student will arrive and be there with a smile.

When enrolling the students at the appointed school do not overload the curriculum. Students must adjust to many things in the school, in the home, and in the community. Your student needs time to make these adjustments before you can expect much in the way of scholastic achievement.

Selection of host families is very important. Families should be friendly, well-adjusted, acceptable members of the community. If possible, the first family should contain at least one brother or sister who attends the local high school and can introduce your exchange student to many friends and associates. It is best if subsequent families also have host siblings about the same age as your exchange student, but this is not necessary. The Rotary club should have within its membership three (3) or more families for hosting your student. If not obtain non-Rotary families by referral (i.e. Interact, outbound students, professional colleagues, etc.). This is an outstanding way to introduce Rotary service in your community.

District 5020 Youth Exchange Program defines a host family as any family or person hosting a student for a consecutive period of seven (7) days or more. If, however, the club or district was to place a student for a temporary hosting period of less than 7 days (making that family a program participant) the host family screening procedure applies. All host families will be required to have the host family affidavit, reference check, home inspection & background check completed.

Individuals in casual contact with students are not subject to the home inspection and background check requirements. Casual contact is defined to include, but not be restricted to: shopping, dinner invitations, weekends, activities (sports, theatre, etc.) and invitations by school friends or by other exchange students or their host families for up to 72 hours. Such activities would be at discretion and authorization of the host family and or student counselor / YEO.

Any continuous contact for more than a 72 hour duration falls under the guidelines of Continued Contact and is required to have a complete Volunteer check prior to the students participation in the event.

The following qualifications will serve as a guide in identifying good potential host families:

1. A family that has a sincere and willing desire to host.
2. It is preferable that an inbound student has a private bedroom, but this is not mandatory. Students must have their own bed and only share a room with a person of the same gender.
3. All host families should live in the same district as the high school that the student will be attending. In some circumstances, the host family may live in a different school district if the host parents are willing to transport the student to and from school.

The youth exchange officer must ensure the following documents on file:

1. Youth Volunteer Affidavit completed and references checked.
2. A completed Host Family Interview and Home Inspection Form. Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include announced and unannounced visits, both prior to and during the placement. The unannounced home visit may be met by visits conducted on short notice, such as calling ahead to ensure that the family is home and able to receive visitors.
3. A completed criminal background clearance for all full-time residents of the home over 18 years of age. Including students that reside in the home for school breaks.
4. Record that the Youth Protection Training was completed by host family.

A host family is responsible for Students socially, emotionally and physically. Students are expected to become a part of the family and to assume their share of the duties and responsibilities in the family.

Examples - making their bed, helping with housework, cutting the lawn, etc. A discussion should be held with Students concerning curfew, dating limitations and use of the computer and phone. The host family and student should agree on the names to be used when addressing host mom and dad. Do not let Students use “Mr. and Mrs.”, have them try, “Mom and Dad” or “Aunt and Uncle”; this will help immeasurably to personalize the relationship.

Rotary strongly discourages frequent and prolonged use of the internet by students as it reduces their opportunity to participate with others and become involved, and may delay becoming proficient in English. Accordingly, host families should set limits for students regarding the amount of time that they spend on the internet. The Rotary YEO and counselor will provide guidance on appropriate limits –no more than half an hour to an hour a day maximum is suggested.

Meeting and transporting the inbound student from the point of arrival, if within 100 miles, is the responsibility of the club committee. Students should be met by the YEO, host families and as many Rotarians as possible.

The host club has the financial obligation to pay students a minimum of \$60.00 US per month for spending and incidentals (most clubs are \$100 or more). The Youth Exchange Officer should make sure that this is paid monthly to save students the embarrassment of having to ask for it. The club will also pay for Rotary meals, school fees and for all required district events including meals associated with these events.

Medical insurance for the inbound student is a requirement. It is the Students’ parents’ responsibility to purchase this insurance before arrival. The County Officer shall assist in forwarding the premium, along with the name of Students and the date of arrival to our insurance agent within 15 days prior to the student’s arrival. Regular medical care is the responsibility of the student’s natural parents but the Rotary Club usually takes care of routine medical matters.

The Youth Exchange Officer (YEO) shall be responsible for the general welfare of the inbound student. Make sure that student is happy, content, well settled, and that student, the host parents

and the natural parents know that the Rotary Club is maintaining a positive interest. The most common complaint received from host families is “Rotary has never done a thing for this student”. “The YEO never inquires about the student and we have had to do everything that needed to be done”.

The Youth Exchange Officer should try to arrange and approve additional families to host the student for weekends, or for the student to go with other families on special outings. The student should attend the club meetings and must be brought to at least one meeting a month. The YEO should also make arrangements for the student to be a guest speaker at other groups and organization when possible. The YEO shall arrange transportation for the student to and returning from the Rotary District Conference and other district functions. If the YEO and the student’s club counselor finds any element of discontent in the host home and if counseling with the host family and the student does not resolve the problem; it is recommended that the student be moved on to the next host family.

In solving problems between the student and the host family, you are a mediator, not a judge. The YEO should call the County Officer and work to resolve the problems. Never accept the implication that the student is “all wrong”. In many instances moving the student to a new host family immediately solves the problem. Be patient and work out the problems. Sometimes the student will come to you with problems. Your role will be to listen, to evaluate, and sometimes to mediate. Above all, listen to both sides of any problem. If there are no workable solutions between the parties refer to the Early Return Policy. See Appendix section.

When decisions are made to move the student from family to family, be sure that you inform the student immediately. A 16 or 17 year old lives in a world of insecurity and needs to know what is going on.

Traveling in company with any Rotary or Rotary approved family is encouraged. Students who wish to travel need to refer to RYE District 5020 Inbound Student Travel Policy.

Our inbound students have come to a foreign country. They are in the upper 1/3 of their class academically and are capable of adjusting very rapidly, but a great deal of tolerance must be exercised. It is the responsibility of the Youth Exchange Officer to facilitate a stress-free move to the next family. There is a natural reluctance by the student to move from the first family. Once students are settled with the new family, they are immediately happy with the new circumstances and welcome the opportunity to broaden their scope and understanding. Every family lives life just a little differently and thus provides another opportunity for the student.

Students in the USA portion of our district come to us on a DS 2019 Form (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitors [J1] Status). They are allowed to study up to one year in the USA. Students in the Canadian portion of our district require a Declaration of Responsibility. Similarly, they are allowed to study up to one year in Canada. The YEO and the club counselor should examine the student’s passport and papers so as to become familiar with them.

In all cases, students hosted in the USA will also visit Canada and must travel with their Passports, including their US visa, multi-entry Canadian visa, DS 2019 form and I-94. Students

hosted in Canada must have their passport, Canadian Study Permit, Temporary Resident Visa and a US Visitors Multi-Entry Type B2 Visa to present at the American border. If the student fails to have the required documents, they will be turned back at the border. Every student must retain the required documents with their passport at all times when traveling, but should store them safely when staying with a host parent.

For all inbound students hosted in the United States, every change in residence, or contact information, (including street address of the new host family) must be immediately recorded in the WESSEX database and an email to the Country Officer and the Alternative Responsible Officer, ARO, (our liaison to the State Department) indicating that a change has been made.

No student is allowed to drive or operate a motorized vehicle (land, water or air). There are no exceptions.

Students are to attend school faithfully unless excused for a special opportunity, or Rotary meetings or events. They must maintain satisfactory grades. Transferable credits for school courses cannot be assured. The transfer of credits is at the discretion of the School Districts involved. The student must return home at the end of the one-year. There are no exceptions.

Although all students act as unofficial ambassadors for their countries, their activities are to remain within the purposes of the program. They are under the direct control and guardianship of Rotary and are subject to immediate repatriation if their conduct is not acceptable to the Club or District Committee. Students will be eager to please if you provide the framework of rules and regulations you expect them to follow. Although students are encouraged to develop friendships, a romantic entanglement can be a reason to be returned to their country.

If the student has any friends or relatives that are visiting in the district, approval for visitation must be obtained by the student from their YEO and Country Officer. Any travel involved will be governed by our travel policy. Relatives will have no jurisdiction during the course of the student exchange year. If the student has relatives in the area, visiting privileges with the relatives will be limited.

For each sponsoring country our District has a Country Officer (CO) who is a member of our District Youth Exchange Committee. That officer will monitor the student's well being and be your primary contact should you have problems or need assistance with your student. A list of COs and other committee members can be found under "Committee Members" in this website.

## **Communication**

The student's Country Officer should be the primary person to initiate communication with the student's sponsoring district or the student's parents or legal guardians if concerns arise. Any questions concerning these policies and procedures should be directed to District 5020's Youth Protection Officer or members of the District Youth Exchange Committee, who are ready to help you through the process.

**Only the District Exchange Chair or designated representative has the authority to send a student home for disciplinary reasons.**

Every Host Family should be furnished with a copy of “A Guide for Host Families”, “General Information and Rules”, “District 5020 Additional Rules of Exchange”, and “Questions for the First Night with a New Family”. In addition each family should have a copy of the student’s insurance card and the travel permission form signed by the natural parents.

### **Finding Host Families:**

Survey your club. Contact all members’ spouses to determine if they would consider hosting a student for 3 months. (Yes, No or Maybe) Would the Yes’s and Maybes prefer to host a boy or a girl?

Other sources to contact: previous host families, church members, and friends and spouses from other organizations. If your incoming student has a special talent or interest (i.e. swimming, music etc) contact the school’s swim coach, music teacher, choir director, etc. It is ok to ask for referrals. Keep a list with potential host families; sometimes a family may not be ready this year, but maybe ready in the future. **Host Families do not need to be Rotarians.**

Make copies of the Inbound Student application and deliver it to potential host families. Find out what time frame fits their situation.

- 1st Family      mid August to mid November
- 2nd Family      mid November to end January
- 3rd Family      end of January to mid April
- 4th Family      mid April to mid July.

For non-Rotary host families – make them “Friends of Rotary” for the year by inviting them to meetings, picnics, or club functions. Put the non-Rotary host family on the mailing list to receive your club bulletin for the full year and not just the time they have the student.

Once you have secured your host family (s), set a date for a 1-2 hour host family orientation. Have host family information packets and topics of discussion to give them. If you have multiple families secured you may choose to invite them as a group to your home for an orientation. Every volunteer must have the Youth Protection Awareness training that is provided by a certified Rotarian or the online training.

It is ideal if the first family has a teenager in high school. This helps the exchange student get into the stream of classes, study, meeting friends, activities, etc. After the first family, it is not as important that the remaining families have teenagers. The exchange student by then is used to our school system, has made some friends, language skills have improved, etc.

Families 2, 3 and 4 can be families with no children or grown children, both parents working, families with small children, retired couples and appropriate single parent families.

Our exchange students are selected as mature young people. They should not need after school supervision until parents get home. They will be either going to after school activities or will come home to do their homework, household chores, etc.

The bottom line is that you are trying to find two (2), three (3) or four (4) loving and caring families who are going to be fortunate enough to be chosen to enjoy the benefits of having a foreign student at their home for approximately three (3) to five (5) months.

## **Counseling Policies, Procedures and Guidelines**

### **Inbound Exchange Students**

- Every inbound student must have a club counselor, preferably of the same gender.
- The counselor may not be the YEO or a member of the student's host family.
- The counselor will monitor the student and act as the student's advocate in order to maximize the student's experiences and protect the student's interests.
- The counselor should check on the student's progress frequently with the student, host parents and school counselor particularly early in the exchange. The YEO is expected to brief the host families on the rules of conduct for students, methods of communication, and the student's role in the family.

### **Club Counselor Handling of Problems:**

- The club counselor should be trained in responding to any problems or concerns which may arise during the exchange including allegations of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.
- The counselor, in concert with the YEO, and the CO needs to determine the sources of any reported problems; i.e. the student, the host family, poor communications, etc. Please refer to the Early Return Policy.
- Prompt counseling is necessary to effect performance modification. Counseling may have to be both individual and joint with host parents or school counselor to result in the required changes. If repeat counseling for the same problem is required, it should be done with a witness and should be documented.
- Any significant student problem must be reported immediately by the YEO to the Country Officer (CO) assigned to the student's country on the District Youth Exchange Committee. The CO will monitor the progress and assist the club. This officer will investigate any problems and notify the District Youth Exchange Chair of the situation with a recommendation for action if necessary.
- Problems involving drugs, public drinking or drunkenness, driving, proven sexual activity or breaking the laws of the host country may result in the immediate termination

of the student's exchange and a return home. Romantic involvements or sexual activity by the student must be discouraged. Counseling should be used to try to modify the student's behavior.

**TERMINATION OF THE STUDENT'S EXCHANGE WILL ONLY BE DONE ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE DISTRICT YOUTH EXCHANGE CHAIR OR DESIGNEE.**

This guideline is only designed to assist YEO's. It may contain information that is different than the official policy. All discrepancies should revert to the official policy.