



# Host Family Handbook



Updated: May 2023

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# Contact Information

## NORTH STAR LEADERSHIP

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Chair	Eric Johnsrud	<a href="mailto:chair@northstarrotary.com">chair@northstarrotary.com</a>	507-450-7946
Vice-Chair	Elaine Baumann	<a href="mailto:elainebaumann1@gmail.com">elainebaumann1@gmail.com</a>	715-307-2694
Executive Assistant	Sara Johnston	<a href="mailto:rotarynorthstaroffice@gmail.com">rotarynorthstaroffice@gmail.com</a>	763-200-4036
Responsible Officer	Mike DeLuca	<a href="mailto:mikedeluca@hotmail.com">mikedeluca@hotmail.com</a>	612-801-5533
Country Officer	Jackie Johnston	<a href="mailto:jackiesuej19@gmail.com">jackiesuej19@gmail.com</a>	612-490-9267
Support Team Leaders	Kelli Tuttle	<a href="mailto:kelli440@gmail.com">kelli440@gmail.com</a>	715-499-5538
Club Support Team Leader	Rita Varner-Otness	<a href="mailto:ritaraevo@gmail.com">ritaraevo@gmail.com</a>	763-226-0326
Host Family Support Team Lead	Mary O'Brien	<a href="mailto:roadnexttaken@gmail.com">roadnexttaken@gmail.com</a>	952-994-1656
Vice Chairs Legal Compliance (Youth Protection)	Brad Frago  Mary Hahn	<a href="mailto:brad@fragolasswell.com">brad@fragolasswell.com</a>  <a href="mailto:mhahn@hvmd.com">mhahn@hvmd.com</a>	507-649-0362  612-876-5286

## LOCAL ROTARY CLUB

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
President			
Youth Exchange Officer			
Club Counselor			

## STUDENT SPECIFIC

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Country Officer(s)			



Dear Host Parents,

Congratulations! Your life is about to change forever as you welcome a new child into your family. This child may not look like you, may not speak English fluently, and will likely have cultural traits different from yours. As a host family for a Rotary Exchange student, you have agreed to assume the parental responsibility for this young International Ambassador.

Your role, as parents, is to provide shelter and sustenance, guidance and counsel, and love and support to the new teenager in your home. We do not ask that you do this alone, as Rotarians in your local community as well as North Star Youth Exchange volunteers will work with you to make this exchange successful. North Star Rotary Youth Exchange will provide you with the necessary information and guidance through training, the information in this handbook and ongoing support. You can always reach out to your local club Youth Exchange Officer, the North Star Host Family support team or the North Star office to answer questions, address concerns, and resolve issues.

Having been a host parent myself, I know that this can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for your family. Your student will be with you for a brief period of time, but will be in your heart forever. We will do all we can to help you have the experience of a lifetime. This handbook provides information that will help you be a successful host family. Please, refer to it often.

Thank you again for supporting the Rotary International Youth Exchange and these amazing students. With your help, we are building world peace, one student at a time!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "EJ", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Eric Johnsrud  
North Star Youth Exchange Chair 23-25  
[ericjohnsrud@gmail.com](mailto:ericjohnsrud@gmail.com)  
507-450-7946

## Objectives of the Program

- **To further international goodwill and understanding** by enabling students to study first hand some of the problems and accomplishments of people in lands other than their own.
- **To enable students to advance their education** by studying for a year in an environment entirely different from their own, and undertaking the study of courses and subjects not normally available to them in their own country.
- **To give students opportunities to broaden their outlook** by learning to live with and meet people of different countries and by having to cope with day-to-day problems in an environment completely different from the one they have experienced at home.
- **To have students act as ambassadors** for their own country by addressing Rotary clubs, community organizations and youth groups in their host country, thereby imparting knowledge of their own country, its attributes and its challenges to the people they meet during their year abroad.
- **To provide sufficient time to study and observe another country's culture** so that upon returning home students can pass on the knowledge they have gained by addressing Rotary clubs and other organizations and assimilate the positive aspects into their everyday living.

**And, perhaps most important, to help promote Rotary's goal of World Peace!**

## The Rotary Support System

### What is Youth Exchange?

Rotary Youth Exchange is a country-to-country exchange of high-school age young people who are at least 15 years of age, and will not turn 19 prior to the time of arrival in the hosting country, for a cultural and educational experience for both the student and those serving as hosts. The duration of the exchange is 10-11 months, and generally follows the school year as defined by the Exchange student's home country.

## What is Rotary?

Rotary International, as the sponsoring organization of the program, is an international volunteer organization of Rotarians around the world dedicated to improving their community, both locally and world-wide, through service to others. A more comprehensive description of Rotary and its structure can be found in Appendix A of this Handbook..



## What is North Star Rotary Youth Exchange?

North Star Rotary Youth Exchange is the Rotary exchange program for Rotary Districts 5950 and 5960. These Rotary districts encompass most of Southern Minnesota and parts of Western Wisconsin. Conduct and administration of the Exchange program is the responsibility of each participating Rotary district under the authority of their respective District Governor, a Rotarian elected for a one-year term to provide leadership to the clubs and Rotarians in that District. All Rotary districts participating in the Youth Exchange program agree to comply with Rotary International guidelines, but retain autonomy in conduct of the program. This responsibility has been delegated to North Star Rotary Youth Exchange by Districts 5950 and 5960.

## The Host Rotary Club's Role

The local Rotary club provides another level of support to you, the student, and the Exchange Program. Most Rotary clubs will identify an individual Rotarian as the **Youth Exchange Officer (or YEO)** to administer the club's Exchange program, including recruiting Outbound candidates and host families. This person, or another member of the Rotary club, will be designated as the Inbound Exchange student's **Club Counselor** for

the duration of the exchange. The **Club Counselor (or CC)** serves primarily as an advisor and advocate for the student, but should certainly also be in contact with the host family on a regular basis, and be available to answer questions or direct host parents to the appropriate resource when needed.

The host Rotary club has made or will make arrangements for enrolling the exchange student in your community's high school or a private school shortly after he or she arrives. The YEO or CC will assist the student in selecting a course of study that should be neither overly-challenging nor boring for the student. As a host parent, you should discuss school work with the student, teachers, and school officials if academic or social problems are becoming apparent.

The host club provides another form of support to the exchange student in the form of a **spending allowance**. Each month the local Rotary club will provide \$100 directly to the student, to be used for incidental personal expenses, entertainment, school supplies, etc. Through the Rotary-provided allowance and parental resources, exchange students are expected to be **financially self-supporting** in terms of personal expenses, clothing, entertainment, and travel when not part of a host family event. **School lunches** will also be provided by the host Rotary club. In addition, North Star requires that students maintain a contingency fund of \$400 for emergency situations. Unused funds will be returned to the student's parents or legal guardians at the end of their exchange. Please discuss any financial concerns with the Rotary club representatives.

The host club will regularly invite the exchange student to attend Rotary meetings and other Rotary events. While students are encouraged to attend Rotary meetings and other events as often as possible, only attendance at the Inbound Orientation, Inbound Weekends, Country Fair and the annual Rotary District Conferences are mandatory for the student. Interference with host family activities from, or transportation to/from, Rotary events should not impose a burden on the host family, and the YEO/CC should be advised before this can occur.

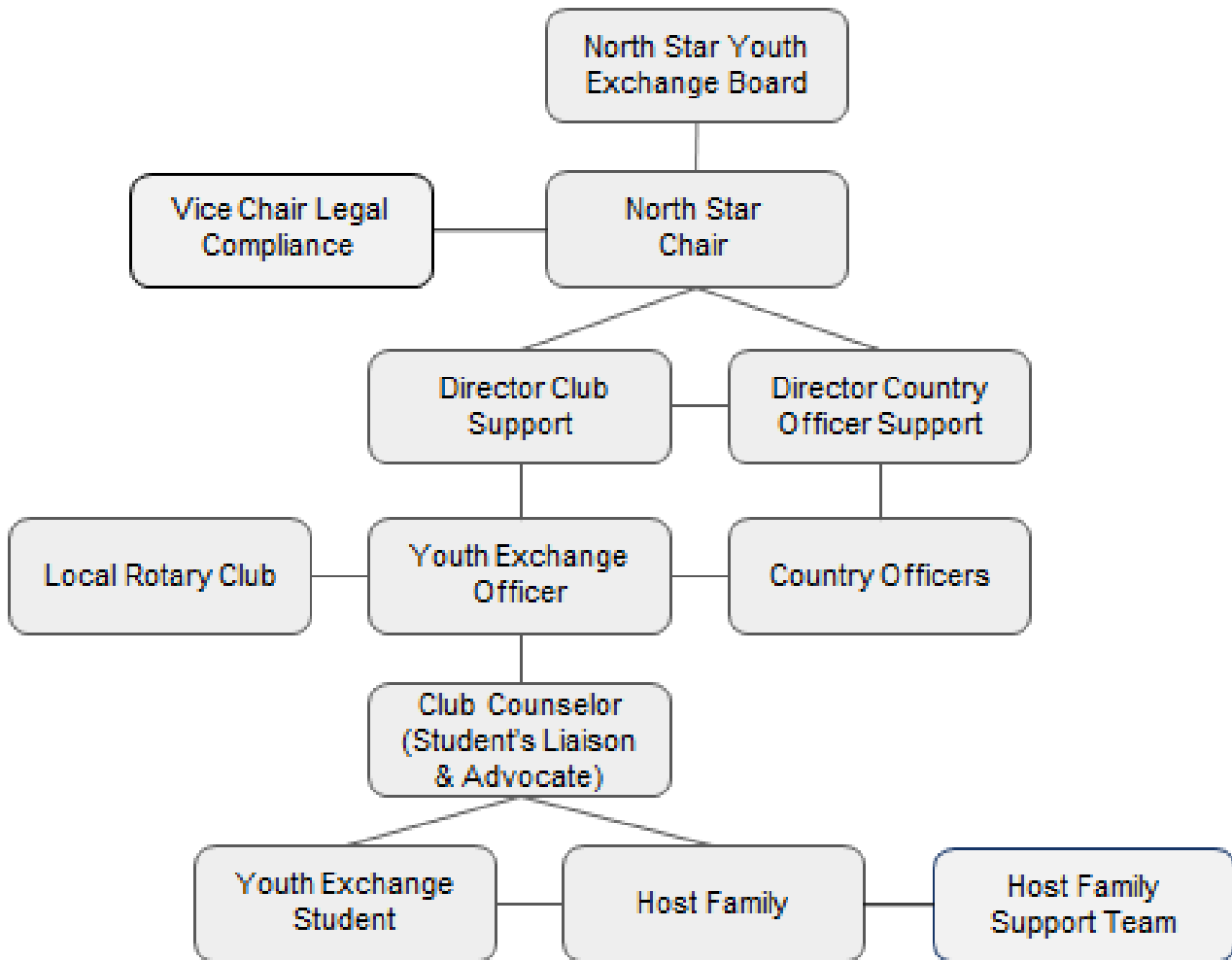
### **North Star Rotary Youth Exchange Structure**

North Star Rotary Youth Exchange, the local Rotary Club Youth Exchange Officer and the Club Counselor are here to help the Exchange student and host family have a successful exchange experience. They are available to you, 24 hours a day, to provide you with

assistance on any matters of concern. We strongly urge you to seek our involvement before problems become too large for simple solutions.

The diagram below shows the general structure of North Star.

### North Star Youth Exchange Support Structure





## How it works:

1. Issue Arises
2. Host Family-Typically made aware of issue by student- school/family attempts to resolve. If unable to resolve, contacts Club Counselor.
3. Club Counselor-if unable to resolve, contacts Youth Exchange Officer
4. Youth Exchange Officer-if unable to resolve, contacts student's Country Officer
5. Country Officer-if unable to resolve, contacts Country Office Support team
6. Country Officer Support team -if unable to resolve issue, contacts Chair
7. Chair-Typically works with District Governor or foreign District Chair to resolve issue

During the entire process, our counterparts in the student's home country are informed of the situation, if appropriate. North Star works hard to ensure fair and proper resolution of issues and privacy is respected as best as possible. Students are sent home as a last resort. We prefer the student or host family to inform us early of an issue- especially those involving a rules violation- so that we can work to resolve the issue and preserve the exchange. However, certain rule violations can result in immediate termination of the exchange year.

## The Host Family Support Team

North Star has organized a support team for host families to help with your questions on being a host family. The members of the team are North Star volunteers who have served as host parents for inbound exchange students and have experience dealing with the day to day questions that may come up while a student is living with your family. Their names and contact information are listed below.

Host Family Support Team Lead: Mary O'Brien

Host Family Support Team Members: Susie Beaumaster, Jackie Johnston, Kari Johnsrud

### **Contact Information for the Host Family Support Team**

Email - [hfsupport@northstarrotary.com](mailto:hfsupport@northstarrotary.com)

Phone - 952-994-1656 (Mary O'Brien)

## The Exchange Student's Role

North Star Rotary Youth Exchange provides a comprehensive orientation to our inbound students shortly after their arrival. Even before the student's arrival, North Star Rotary Youth Exchange establishes and maintains communications with the inbound students.

We expect the inbound students to be involved in your family, involved in school, the community in which you live, and in Rotary. To do this successfully, most exchange students must do two things: **learn to communicate in English, and learn to adapt.**

### Learning English

All students arrive with some understanding of the English language, and most can speak and understand our language well, having studied English for several years in school. But for most, considerable effort will be needed on their part to understand the English we *speak*, which is often different from the English they were *taught* in school. Practice, by engaging in real conversation, reading, and writing our language is necessary to develop true proficiency. You can help by asking questions that require more than “yes” or “no” answers, having patience when communications are not clear, and consciously speaking slowly and clearly, with frequent checks for understanding.

### Learning to Adapt

Learning to adapt means, for most students, being willing to try new things, do things differently, recognize the cultural basis for the environment they are used to, and accepting that our cultural differences are neither “better or worse,” simply “different.”

### Comply with Our Rules

All inbound exchange students, and their parents, agreed to comply with the rules, regulations, and guidelines that are part of the Rotary Youth Exchange application. These are common sense conditions that are intended to ensure their safety, comply with the standards of the international organizations monitoring exchange programs, and assure that their conduct does not impose a burden on the families who open their homes to these students - you host parents. **The Program Rules & Conditions of Exchange** are located in Appendix B of this handbook for your information. A summary of the more important rules are listed below.

1. **Driving:** Exchange students are **not** permitted to operate motor vehicles, including but not limited to cars, trucks, motorcycles, aircraft, all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, boats, and other watercraft, or participate in driver education programs.
2. **Drugs:** Exchange students are not allowed to possess or use illegal drugs. Legal medications that are prescribed to the student by a physician are allowed.
3. **Drinking:** The illegal drinking of alcoholic beverages is expressly forbidden.
4. **Smoking:** Smoking is discouraged. If you state in your application that you do not smoke, you will be held to that position throughout your exchange.
5. **School Attendance:** This is an educational and cultural exchange, and students are **required to attend school regularly**, and maintain satisfactory class work. As the host parent, you are responsible for determining the appropriateness of any school **absence requested by the student**, as you would for your own children.
6. **Travel:** Travel for the exchange student as part of your family, or with school or church groups, is highly encouraged and will provide the student with opportunities to learn about the host country. However, **independent travel, or travel without adult supervision** is not allowed except in extraordinary circumstances and with prior written approval of the Chair. Additionally, the host club Youth Exchange Officer and the student's Club Counselor need to know where exchange students are in the event of an emergency. The **Travel Guidelines for North Star Rotary Youth Exchange Inbound Exchange Students**, contained in Appendix C, will be reviewed in detail with your exchange student, and **compliance with this policy is a condition of the exchange**. We ask that you be familiar with this policy, and enforce it with your student. ***Please know that we will always support the host parents when you say NO to travel by your student that YOU are not in agreement with.***
7. **Visits by the student's parents, family, and friends:** We discourage any visitors from the student's home country during the first 6 months of the exchange year, and **specifically at any time that will interfere with school or that will cause an inconvenience to the host family**. On the other hand, parental visits near the conclusion of the exchange year are great opportunities for the student to share their mastery of our language and knowledge of our culture, and introduce natural parents to all of the host families they've lived with. **Any such visits planned by the student or his/her parents must have the prior approval of you and the Club YEO.**
8. **Use of Cell phone and Internet:** Students who frequently communicate with family and friends "back home" by telephone or email often delay their own adjustments and adaptation to the exchange, and extend, rather than reduce, feelings of homesickness. Constant emailing or texting/instant messaging also prevents a student from becoming part of the host family and community. Students are told to limit that kind of electronic communication with home to once per week. Host clubs have different policies about

providing for Cell phone service and you should discuss with the Club YEO and/or student's Club Counselor.

## The Host Family's Role

The operative word here is **Family**, and we ask you to help your exchange student become a part of your family during the period that he or she lives with you. That means treating this young person as you would your own child, not as a guest, exercising all of the **parental responsibilities and authorities** you would normally use. While many factors will influence to what extent you may need to focus on this role, such as your own experience as a host parent, ages of your own children, and whether you are the first, middle, or final host family for this student, here are some suggestions that previous host parents have provided to us:

- ❖ **Establish a clear understanding of expectations** soon after your student arrives. Appendix D is a listing of **First Night Questions** that we provide to both students and host parents that cover most of the topics that will help define those expectations. Cultural differences as well as personality differences often lead to misunderstandings unless these topics are discussed and clarified. Many students will use the questions as a “check-off list” to make sure nothing has been overlooked during the first few days; we suggest that host parents also review this list for any topics that are important to them.
- ❖ Be prepared to help your student recover from **homesickness**. This can take many forms, from simply general sadness to wishing to stay in his or her room alone. It is perfectly normal for Exchange students to have bad days and experience homesickness. If you are sensitive to this, you will be able to reassure your student that their reactions are perfectly normal. Help them to keep busy and involved. These feelings will pass.
- ❖ Encourage your student to **get involved**. School extracurricular activities, sports, community activities, church groups, and family activities may be new and unfamiliar to your student, and will likely be very “different” from those activities he or she was involved in back home. If you sense that your student is bored and reluctant to participate in available activities, it may simply be because no one has asked him or her to join in. Try to introduce the student to some people who will help overcome this reluctance.
- ❖ **Understand “culture shock,” and help your student learn our culture.** Appendix E in this booklet provides the article ***How To Cope With Culture Shock*** which may help you understand some of the feelings your student may experience as a result of the differences between our culture and the one they have known since birth.

## Other Information Needed by Host Parents

### Insurance

All inbound exchange students must have a medical/accidental injury policy that meets Rotary's requirements, either through CISI Bolduc Insurance or an insurance policy originating from their home country. Instructions for submitting a claim are included in Appendix F.

**The cost of any medical treatment is the responsibility of the student** and his/her natural parents, and the insurance provides for either payment or reimbursement of a portion of those expenses (usually after a nominal deductible has been met). Students should have the financial ability to pay for any medical expenses at the time provided, and host families should not incur any costs in this regard.

**However, as host parents, you are asked to make arrangements for medical treatment when necessary**, as well as to determine when medical treatment is called for. Your student may be reluctant to discuss medical problems initially, and their own culture or medical system at home may be quite different from ours, so you may need to patiently ask questions and offer suggestions when you observe conditions that may be medically-based. Many Rotary clubs have connections with local medical-services providers (often a member of the Rotary Club), and you should be apprised of these arrangements by the Rotary YEO or Club Counselor before a medical problem arises.

**It is always advisable to inform the Rotary YEO and Club Counselor of any medical treatment or medical problems that have occurred so that information is made available to subsequent host families. Serious illnesses or injuries must be made known to the North Star Chair immediately (refer to the first page of this manual for the North Star Chair's email and phone number.)**

### Anxiety, Depression and Eating Disorders

These important medical conditions have impacted youth exchange participants world-wide. Anxiety and Depression in teens has increased since the Covid pandemic, while studies show that 13% of adolescents will have an eating disorder by age 20. What are some signs of these conditions? How should host families and youth exchange officers deal with these problems when they occur?

The hallmark symptom of depression is a depressed or irritable mood and markedly decreased interest in almost all activities, to the point of occurring most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks. Other symptoms are also likely to coexist and include changes in appetite or weight, sleep difficulty, fatigue, feelings of worthlessness, poor concentration and even recurring

thought of suicide. The important point is the pervasive nature of the symptoms occurring for days at a time. While normal stresses in life do not cause depression, unrelenting stress can bring on depression or make it worse. Current treatment of depression may involve medication and, frequently, psychological counseling.

Eating disorders may involve self-starvation (anorexia nervosa) or self-purging behaviors after eating (bulimia). With anorexia, the patient experiences weight over 15% below ideal body weight, fear of weight gain, altered body image ("too fat," despite being dangerously thin), and loss of menstrual cycles in women. Bulimia involves repeated self-purging behaviors (vomiting or laxative abuse) that accompany binges of overeating along with dissatisfaction with body shape and weight. Treatment of these disorders is complex and often involves a team of health professionals and sometimes medications.

How might we react to these conditions in North Star Rotary Youth Exchange? The best approach is prevention! If the medical examination form shows depression or eating disorder history it is important to have these conditions under excellent treatment for two years before an exchange experience, which usually means students should be denied participation in the program and consider overseas travel at a later time in life. Occasionally we have had students participate sooner IF the accepting host Rotary Club is fully aware of the pre-existing condition, the condition has been treated and is stable, and the host club can set up medical monitoring during the year. If problems become significant, students will likely be returned home to get appropriate help. When significant depression or eating disorders have occurred during the Youth Exchange year, early return home has been the most helpful to the student, family and program in the long run. Participant safety and well-being are the top priorities with these medical conditions, which can sometimes lead to hospitalization and even death.

Remember that most exchange students have "bad days" or difficult weeks of adjustment, especially in the second to third exchange month. Most students survive "the blues" with family and counselor support. Encourage student participation with the host family, minimize time alone in a bedroom, and discuss observations with the student in a supportive manner. Encourage students to share their feelings and be non-judgmental about what they share. If signs of depression or eating disorder persist, contact the Country Officer or Youth Exchange medical director for further help.

## **Youth Protection**

North Star Rotary Youth Exchange strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. If the student should report any form of abuse or harassment, immediately contact the Youth Exchange Officer. For further guidance, consult Appendix G - Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines

## **Being the First Home Family**

While being “first” often provides the greatest challenges for dealing with things like language difficulties and cultural differences, it also provides the opportunity to form a lasting emotional bond with the student that can continue after the student moves on to subsequent host families, since he or she will remain part of your community for the balance of the exchange year.

When the time comes for the student to move on, be prepared for the emotions that come with separation and fear of something new, both for the student and you. It will help to make this transition go smoothly if the student has met the new family, perhaps first in your home, and then later for a visit in the next host family home, to provide opportunities to become familiar with the family and surroundings.

Once your student has moved, maintain contact without undermining the development of relationships with the next family. Inviting your student to share special family events, like birthdays, will reinforce the relationship you developed earlier, and will usually be welcomed by the current host family, just as you welcomed others’ invitations to the student when part of your family. When it is finally time to return home to the student’s own family, they will be leaving not one but several families that they will consider “home” for the rest of their lives.

## **Being the Final Host Family**

Being the host family at the conclusion of the exchange year could involve dealing with many of the same emotions the student had upon arrival, but this time caused by the realization that the “familiar” is now *our* culture, and the “unknown” involves *returning home*. Understand that the exchange student **must** return home at the conclusion of the exchange year. **A sign of a successful exchange is the student’s reluctance to go home, and we wouldn’t want it any other way.**

You may need to help your student prepare mentally for this departure, in addition to the many physical aids that will be needed. **Start by selecting an actual departure date** that everyone involved agrees with (including the student’s parents), and help the student make the necessary airline reservations. (Although we require all students to have round-trip airline tickets, many students may need to change the initial return date 4-6 months before departure once they know graduation and Tour dates, etc.). As the departure date approaches, help the student with packing and luggage, recognizing that much has been collected since their arrival, and it may be necessary to ship some of the student’s possessions home to keep suitcases below the airlines’ quantity and weight limits.

Help the student wrap up any financial obligations with you and others, especially regarding cell phone charges, medical expenses and excess baggage and/or shipping charges. Discuss with the

student and the Rotary Club Counselor the return of the student's emergency fund, which should only be returned after all expenses have been covered.

Involve the prior host families, and the host Rotary club, in planning a farewell event before the student departs. And allow sufficient flexibility in your schedule during the final few days to provide your student with the opportunity to say goodbye to the many friends made during the past year. In many cases, these "good-byes" will be even harder for the student than those said 11 or 12 months earlier, and your understanding and support will make this a happy time for everyone involved.

### **Lastly, if there are Questions or Problems...**

While there is no way we or you can guarantee that every exchange student and host parent will enjoy a completely successful exchange, we do our best to help them, and you; and the percentage of unsuccessful exchanges is very small. Most problems that do occur can be taken care of satisfactorily if addressed early, before they become too big to handle.

**IF YOU DO HAVE A CONCERN, AND NEED TO DISCUSS SOMETHING, please contact the local Rotary Club Youth Exchange Officer or the student's Club Counselor.** If he or she is not available, please contact the student's Country Officer or the Chair of the Program.. They will get in touch with the student, and if appropriate, the counterpart in the sponsoring district for further information and help, if needed.

**Please do not dismiss non-compliance with our rules, or try to solve major problems yourself.** Because this is an international program, there may be cultural and/or Rotary subtleties of which you are unaware, and there may also be long-range implications affecting future exchanges. Please call or give us the opportunity to show you that we are as concerned about the exchange student and the host family and club as you are. We can't help you or the student if we don't know that there is a problem.

Included in this Handbook are a Thank You Letter from Karen S. Ward, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Exchange (Appendix H) and the Exchange Visitor Program regulations. (Appendix I). These are documents required to be provided to you by Federal law.

Finally, while much of this booklet addresses rules, regulations, and "dealing with problems," we want you to know that being a host parent is also a lot of fun and full of rewards! You will get to know, and love, someone from another country, another culture, and another part of the world. You will have the opportunity to watch, and help shape, the development and maturity of a young person. You will have opportunities to learn of another culture yourself, and in the process of sharing our culture and our country with this student, gain knowledge and understanding for you and your family. And at the end of the exchange, you will have added to your family a son or



daughter who may live in a “foreign” country the rest of their life, but will always be a part of **your** family.

## Appendix A - What is Rotary?

### The History of Rotary

Rotary was born on February 23, 1905 in Chicago, Illinois, the world’s first and most international service club. The founder of Rotary was attorney Paul P. Harris (1868-1947), who gathered with three others to discuss his idea of a group of businessmen from different professions getting together periodically to become better acquainted. They decided to limit membership to one representative of each profession and to rotate the meeting site among each member’s place of business, to acquaint each other with their various vocations and to promote business. The rotation of meeting places is the source of the name “Rotary.”

Club membership grew rapidly. The second Rotary Club was founded in San Francisco in 1908. When clubs were formed in Canada and Great Britain in 1912, Rotary became an international organization.

Since 1905, the ideas of Paul Harris and his friends have become ideals which have been accepted by people of practically all nationalities, and of many political and religious beliefs. Today there are Rotary Clubs in more than 200 countries. The universal acceptance of Rotary principles has been so great that there are now more than 34,000 Rotary clubs, with a membership of over 1.2 million men and women.

### Rotary Motto and Themes

Rotary International has adopted as its motto, “*Service Above Self*” - A second theme of Rotary is “*He profits most who serves best*”. Additionally, each year, the Rotary International President coins a theme for that Rotary year.

Rotarians throughout the world quote the Four Way Test of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

### The Rotary Foundation

In 1917, The Rotary Foundation was born. The mission of The Rotary Foundation is to enable Rotarians to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the alleviation of poverty.

The Foundation is a not-for-profit corporation supported solely by voluntary contributions from Rotarians and friends of the Foundation who share its vision of a better world.

Highlights of the Foundation include PolioPlus (Rotary’s global effort to eradicate polio); Peace Fellowship (preparing Fellows for a leadership role in peace and conflict resolution); and Foundation grants.

## Rotary at the Local Level - The Rotary Club

The “personality” of each Rotary club is a reflection of the community it serves and the membership of that club. Even within our own Districts, club size ranges from less than two dozen members to well over one hundred members. Rotary clubs usually meet weekly throughout the year; some for a breakfast meeting, others during lunch or dinner. Some Rotary club meetings are quiet and “serious,” staying to a tight schedule so the members can return to work on time, while other club meetings are less formal and structured.

Exchange students often find that the Rotary club **hosting** them will be very different from the Rotary club **sponsoring** them, and both will be very different from other Rotary clubs they may have the opportunity to visit during their exchange year. But Rotarians around the world all share the common philosophy for Service to Others, and as an exchange student, they are there to help provide a successful exchange experience.

## Appendix B - Rules and Conditions of Exchange

1. You must obey the laws of the host country. If found guilty of violating any law, you can expect no assistance from your sponsors or native country. You must return home at your own expense as soon as you are released by authorities.
2. You will be under the host district's authority while you are an exchange student and must abide by the rules and conditions of exchange provided by the host district. Parents or legal guardians must not authorize any extra activities directly to you. Any relatives you may have in the host country will have no authority over you while you are in the program.
3. You are not allowed to possess or use illegal drugs. Medicine prescribed to you by a physician is allowed.
4. **The illegal drinking of alcoholic beverages is expressly forbidden.** Students who are of legal age should refrain. If your host family offers you an alcoholic drink, it is permissible to accept it under their supervision in the home. Excessive consumption and drunkenness is forbidden.
5. You may not operate a motorized vehicle, including but not limited to cars, trucks, motorcycles, aircraft, all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, boats, and other watercraft, or participate in driver education programs.
6. Smoking is discouraged. If you state in your application that you do not smoke, you will be held to that position throughout your exchange. Your acceptance and host family placement is based on your signed statement. Under no circumstances are you to smoke in your host family's bedrooms.
7. Body piercing or obtaining a tattoo while on your exchange, without the express written permission of your natural parents, host parents, host club, and host district, is prohibited, for health reasons.
8. You must make every effort to learn the language of the host country, and may be responsible for any costs for tutoring, language camps, or other instruction.
9. Limit your use of the Internet and mobile phones, as directed by your host district, host club, and host family. Excessive or inappropriate use is not acceptable. Accessing or downloading pornographic material is expressly forbidden.
10. You must attend school regularly and make an honest attempt to succeed.
11. You must have health and accident or travel insurance that provides coverage for accidental injury and illness, death benefits (including repatriation of remains), disability/dismemberment benefits, emergency medical evacuation, emergency visitation expenses, 24-hour emergency assistance services, and legal services, in

- amounts satisfactory to the host Rotary club or district in consultation with the sponsor Rotary club or district, with coverage from the time of your departure from your home country until your return.
12. You must also have liability coverage through a travel insurance or other applicable policy, in amounts satisfactory to the host Rotary club or district in consultation with the sponsor Rotary club or district.
  13. You must have sufficient financial support to assure your well-being during your exchange. Your host district may require a contingency fund for emergency situations. Unused funds will be returned to you or to your parents or legal guardians at the end of your exchange.
  14. You must follow the travel rules of your host district. Travel is permitted with host parents or for Rotary club or district functions authorized by the host Rotary club or district with proper adult chaperones. The host district, host club, host family, and your parents or legal guardians must approve any other travel in writing, thus exempting Rotary of responsibility and liability. You must return home directly by a route mutually agreeable to your host district and your parents or legal guardians.
  15. Students participating in the East Coast Trip (year-end trip) must leave within the week of returning home from the trip. Students not going on the East Coast Trip (year-end trip) must return home within the week after the farewell/year-end event.
  16. Any costs related to an early return home or any other unusual costs (language tutoring, tours, etc.) are the responsibility of you and your parents or legal guardians. Visits by your parents or legal guardians, siblings, or friends while you are on exchange can distract from the exchange. Such visits may only take place with the host club's and district's consent and within their guidelines. Typically, visits may be arranged only in the last quarter of the exchange or during school breaks and are not allowed during major holidays.
  17. Serious romantic activity is to be avoided. Sexual activity is forbidden.
  18. Talk with your host Club Counselor, host parents, or other trusted adult if you encounter any form of abuse or harassment.

## Appendix C- Travel Guidelines

Prior to making any travel plans, consult with the YEO on any required approvals or documents.. Telephone numbers and an itinerary must be provided to the YEO, Club Counselor and to the student's Country Officer.

Travel within the United States with host families, with host club members and for district functions is permitted. Travel without a host family, or club member is not allowed.

International travel while on exchange requires the completion of special U.S. Department of State paperwork. This will require guidance from the Country Officer. The Country Officer should be contacted early so that this paperwork can be completed well in advance of any international travel.

**Unaccompanied travel is not allowed. Any exception to these policies will require the prior written approval by the North Star Chair.**

## Appendix D - Questions for “First Night” with Host Family

1. What do I call you? “Mom,” “Dad,” or given (first) name?
2. What am I expected to do daily other than:
  - a. Make my bed
  - b. Keep my room tidy
  - c. Clean the bathroom up after I use it
3. What is the procedure for dirty clothes? Where do I keep them until wash day?
4. Should I wash my own clothes?
5. What is the procedure if I need to iron my clothes?
6. May I use the iron, washing machine, sewing machine, etc.?
7. Where can I keep my bathroom accessories?
8. When is the most convenient time for me to use the bathroom on weekday mornings?
9. When is the best time for me to shower or bathe?
10. When are mealtimes?
11. Do I have a regular job at meal times?
12. May I help myself to food and drinks (non-alcoholic) at any time or must I ask first?
13. What areas are strictly private e.g. your study, bedroom, pantry, etc.?
14. May I put posters and pictures in my room? On the walls? How do you want things hung?
15. What time must I get up on weekday mornings?
16. What time should I get up on weekends and holidays?
17. What time must I go to bed on weekdays? Weekends?
18. What time must I be in on school nights if I go out? (Expectations by special arrangement.)
19. What time must I be in on weekends if I go out?
20. What dates are the birthdays of family members?
21. May I have friends stay overnight?
22. What is your rule on entertaining friends in my room with the door closed?
23. Can I invite friends over during the day? After school? When no one else is home?
24. What are the rules about phone calls? Local? Long distance? Overseas? How and when may I pay for calls I make? How do you want me to keep track of my pay telephone calls?
25. What are the rules about access to the Internet and e-mail if there is a computer in the house? Are there time limits or time periods that use is permitted or prohibited?

26. May my friends call me? What times are not good?
27. What is the procedure about posting mail?
28. Do any of you have any personal dislikes? e.g. chewing gum, music types, being late, wearing a hat or using a cell phone at the dinner table, being interrupted while reading, etc.
29. How do I get around? bus, bicycle, be driven, riding with friends, etc.
30. What about transportation to the mall or movies?
31. May I play the stereo or TV?
32. May I use kitchen appliances? Microwave? Dishwasher? Stove?
33. What are the rules about going to church?
34. May I smoke? Where? (Rotary discourages smoking in general and forbids smoking in bedrooms)
35. If I have something bugging me, how do you want me to handle it?
  - a. Write a note explaining it
  - b. Ask for a heart to heart discussion
  - c. Tell my counselor
  - d. Keep it to myself and live with it
36. How often can I go out each week?
37. Who pays for "event" expenses? me? you? Rotary? (movies, sports events, concerts/shows)
38. Can I use the shampoo and toothpaste or buy my own?
39. What do I do about school lunch? Buy - who pays - me? you? Rotary? Bring food from home?
40. Are there any eating habits or foods I need to discuss? I don't like\_\_\_\_\_.

**In general, ask about those things you feel are most important the first night, and then others over the next couple nights. Try to always keep an open and honest communication with your Host Family & Rotary.**

# Appendix E - How to Cope with Culture Shock

The Rotary Youth Exchange Experience:

## Culture Shock

By Dennis White, Ph. D.

Most of us are familiar with the term “culture shock”. We may think of it as the temporary disorientation that comes from being exposed to a different language, different customs, food, etc. What we don’t often realize is that it is usually a rather profound reaction to fairly significant other differences; in the way people view the world, in the way they think and what they value. Tourists often experience culture shock at a superficial level. People who actually live in another culture can experience culture shock as an on-going reaction and adaptation to basic differences. 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.

Most exchange students in year-long programs go through a fairly identifiable profession of adjustment to culture shock, although each student’s experience is unique. It must be emphasized that while culture shock can be very uncomfortable, there is nothing wrong with it, or with the person experiencing it. It is also quite common for students to have a very positive and rewarding experience, despite having on-going adjustment problems with culture shock. Many would argue that the most rewarding exchanges come only when there is a pronounced experience of culture shock.

Culture shock usually involves at least four stages. It is quite common for these stages to repeat themselves as students become more and more successfully immersed in the host culture. These stages are:

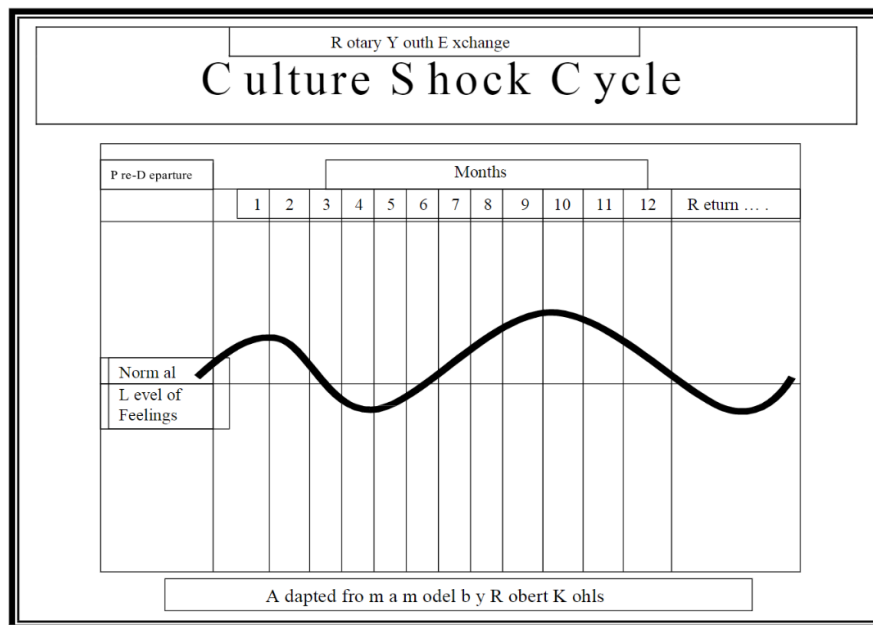
- 1. Excitement and Enthusiasm.** This is the feeling of excitement and enthusiasm that accompanies travel to a new place, seeing and doing so many new and different things, and meeting new people. It is most prominent at the beginning of the exchange year, but can repeat itself as students continue to have new experiences, like changing host families, meeting new students, or continued travel. Sometimes it can be the excitement that comes from developing a new skill or increased understanding of the host culture.
- 2. Irritability.** This is the stage most readily associated with culture shock and occurs when the initial excitement wears off and real differences become evident. These are differences that go beyond food and language, and they are often indescribable to the person experiencing them. No matter how understanding and accepting the student may try to be, there will be many times when they just don’t like or understand why their host culture is the way it is, and they can’t seem to make the feeling go away. Irritability can come at any time that a student is confronted with differences they may not have experienced or perceived previously.
- 3. Adaptation.** This is the longest, most difficult and most rewarding stage. This is when students learn to accept that they will have to adapt if they are going to be successful in their host culture. They work at adapting to customs and habits that they may not understand, and may not like. Sometimes even when they try very hard, they have difficulty, because so much of this adaptation depends on learning the native language. They know they are adjusting when they begin to think



and speak using idiomatic expressions (expressions that have meaning beyond a literal translation). They know they are adjusting when they notice that they are doing things without thinking, and these are the very things they never thought they could become comfortable with. An example would be when someone from a very formal culture becomes comfortable standing very close to other people, frequently touching them and being touched, during a conversation. Adaptation is a continuous process, and it requires added attention as some of these newly discovered differences become apparent to the student.

4. **Biculturalism.** This stage comes very near the end of the stay, or sometimes doesn't really emerge until the student returns to their native countries. This is when they realize that they have become competent in another culture, and can see the world and function from another, very different point of view. When this stage emerges toward the end of the exchange year, it all seems very unfair to the student. Just as they are getting to experience the benefits of really knowing how to function well in their host culture, they have to go back home.

In Table 1, below, a model of a typical year of adaptation and adjustment to culture shock is pictured. The bold line that waves up and down represents the high and low feelings that students experience as they go through the various stages of adjustment to culture shock.



**Table 1.**

The first few months, including the period just before departure, coincide with the initial excitement stage. This peaks when the excitement wears off, or what is sometimes referred to as the time when the “honeymoon” is over. This is when reality sets in, often very quickly. At times, however, this irritability can come fairly slowly, but it is almost inevitable as the confrontation of one’s own ethnocentrism occurs.

The lowest point typically comes at about four months, or near the middle of December, for students who start their exchange in August. For Christian students, this also coincides with what is probably the first Christmas they have spent away from their families. As a result, there is a sort of double negative of culture shock and homesickness.

Following the irritability stage is the much longer stage of gradual adjustment and adaptation where the student really learns the cultural tools necessary to function competently in the host country. This stage can actually involve the recycling of prior stages, when deeper and deeper understanding following periods of confusion, frustration and irritation.

The final stage, shown as coming around the time of returning home, can involve another plunge into a period of feeling low. If the student is not already sad at the prospect of returning home, “just when it’s getting good”, they will almost inevitably feel sad shortly after they return, when they go through a “reverse culture shock”. This phenomenon is less well understood, and less often anticipated, but just as common as initial culture shock. The degree to which students go through reverse culture shock is a rough measure of the success of their immersion in the host culture, and not a sign that something is wrong. Only after experiencing reverse culture shock can students really appreciate the extent to which they have changed, and, as a result, the extent to which they have become truly bicultural.

The journey through culture shock has also been described as moving from **Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism**. All cultures are ethnocentric. They teach their members that their way is the right, natural and preferred way of doing things. When someone is exposed to another culture, with different values, behaviors and beliefs, there is a tendency to respond with defensiveness, labeling one’s own practices as right and the other culture as wrong, silly or even stupid. Ethnorelativism is the awareness that develops as one realizes there are other valid ways of dealing with the world - whether we agree with them or not. When the exchange student gets through the initial denial (which is what happens in the irritability stage) they can begin to develop the skills necessary to adapt and be competent in the new culture. They then develop an ethnorelative worldview. Their thinking may follow this progression:

1. I don’t like the way they do this - it’s stupid.
2. But they seem to be doing o.k. doing it this way.
3. If I want to survive here, I’d better learn to do it this way.
4. Now that I can do it this way, it doesn’t seem so bad, even though I may still prefer to do it my way.

Developing the competence to succeed in another culture - that is - going through the process of culture shock, may be better understood by analyzing the process of developing competence at anything.

Essentially, we go through four stages:

1. Unconscious Incompetence. This is a stage when we not only don’t know how to do something, we don’t even know that we don’t know how to do it. We are ignorant. Most of us think we know the proper way to greet someone. For example, when we go to another culture where greetings are done quite differently, we may just breeze along doing it our way, not even knowing that what we are doing may be perceived as rude or insulting.
2. Conscious Incompetence. In this stage we may be aware that we are doing something wrong. But we just may not have the skills yet to do it properly. We may know that another culture spends more time in greetings inquiring about one’s relatives, but if we are not skilled at the language, we may have trouble doing it, even if we want to.
3. Conscious Competence. In this stage we have developed the necessary skills to do what is necessary, but we still have to consciously remind ourselves to do it. We may think it is a waste of time to stop and discuss the well-being of all of our family members when we greet a friend, but we know how to, and more importantly, we know it is important to do so in this culture in order to appear “civilized” and polite.

4. Unconscious Competence. In this stage we have become so skilled at the new cultural behavior that we do it without thinking. We may find that it becomes very natural to stop and chat with friends as we greet them, inquiring about the mutual health of both families, as if it is the most natural thing in the world to do.

When exchange students get to this point - unconscious competence, they have gotten to the bicultural stage of adjustment to culture shock. They have developed an effective ethnorelative worldview. So one can seek that culture shock is not a problem to avoid. Instead, it is a necessary discomfort that one must go through to really experience the rich and varied joys of intercultural living.

*(note: Additional articles by Dr. White on related topics include “The Middle Stage of Culture Shock” and “So You Think You’re Home Now”. Both may be obtained by contacting Dr. White.)*

***About the author:***

***Dr. Dennis White is a Psychologist, a former U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer and a member of the Rotary Club of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, USA. He makes training presentations for Rotary Youth Exchange Programs and other intercultural training programs in many locations.***

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Email: [dkwhite@itol.com](mailto:dkwhite@itol.com)***

## Appendix F - How to File an Insurance Claim



### Claim Submission Instructions

1. Insured participants are required to submit a completed medical claim form to CISI for each accident or sickness. Claim forms may be downloaded from our website, [www.cisi-bolduc.com](http://www.cisi-bolduc.com), by going to the Medical Benefit Info tab and selecting "Benefit Information." Be sure that all questions are answered and all blank spaces are filled with an appropriate statement such as "Not Applicable." Claim forms can be mailed or faxed to CISI at the contact address or number below:

#### Send All Completed Medical or Personal Liability Claim Forms To:

Cultural Insurance Services International  
1 High Ridge Park  
Stamford, CT 06905

If you have questions regarding benefits, or claim submission, contact:

Cultural Insurance Services International  
**Telephone:** (800) 303-8120  
**Outside USA:** (203) 399-5130  
**Fax:** (203) 399-5596  
**Email:** [cisiwebadmin@culturalinsurance.com](mailto:cisiwebadmin@culturalinsurance.com)

2. Please contact Team Assist 24-7-365 at the numbers below for pre-departure, medical, legal, and travel assistance, and to help facilitate billing directly with a foreign provider.

**Telephone:** (877)-577-9504  
**Outside USA(Call Collect):** (240) 330-1520  
**Email:** [ops@europassistance-usa.com](mailto:ops@europassistance-usa.com)

Underwritten by ACE American Insurance Company.

**Team Assist:**

One of the most important features of this plan is a worldwide assistance program. Upon enrollment in the Plan, you are eligible to use any of the assistance services that make up this comprehensive program. An outline of the assistance services appears below; additional information is contained in the Summary of Benefits.

**Pre-Departure Assistance:**

- Advice on required and recommended immunizations.
- Passport and visa information.
- Health information and precautions for medically remote or underserved areas.
- Information for handicapped or disabled travelers.
- Help in arranging special medical services needed while traveling.

**Telephone:** (877)-577-9504

**Outside USA(Call Collect):** (240) 330-1520

**Email:** [ops@europassistance-usa.com](mailto:ops@europassistance-usa.com)

**Medical Assistance**

- Worldwide, 24-hour medical care locating service.
- Medical case monitoring, arranging communication between patient, family, physicians, consulate, etc.
- Medical transportation arrangements.
- Emergency message service for medical situations.

**Legal Assistance**

- Worldwide, 24-hour contact for legal emergencies.
- Legal referral, to help you locate a consular official or attorney.

**Travel Assistance**

- Worldwide, 24-hour telephone contact for advice on handling losses and delays.
- Help with lost passports, tickets and documents.
- Advice on filing insurance claims.
- Arranging shipments of forgotten, lost or stolen items.
- Relaying emergency messages.

**Claim Procedures:**

If any covered loss occurs or begins, the Insured must send us written notice within 30 days or as soon after that as is reasonably possible. This notice should include written proof of the

occurrence, type and amount of loss, and should state the Insured's name and policy number. This notice should be sent to the address shown on Page 1 of this booklet. Claim forms must be sent to the Cultural Insurance Services International no more than 90 days after a covered loss occurs or ends, or as soon after that as is reasonably possible.

#### **Payment Of Claims: When Paid**

Claims will be processed as soon as due proof of loss is received. If a claim covers benefits for more than a month, all amounts due at the end of each month will be paid. If there are any benefits due at the end of the period claimed, they will be paid when due proof of loss is received.

#### **Payment Of Claims To Whom Paid**

Death benefits, if any, will be paid to the beneficiary chosen by the Insured. This choice must be in writing and filed with us. If the Insured has not chosen a beneficiary, or if there is no beneficiary alive when the Insured dies, we will pay:

- (a) Parents or legal guardian, if the Insured is a minor.
- (b) Otherwise, we will pay the Insured's estate.

If the Insured is a minor; or is unable to give a valid release because of incompetence, any amount due will be paid to a parent, guardian, or other person actually supporting him or her. Any payment made in good faith will end our liability to the extent of the payment.

Any other benefits will be paid to the Insured, if he is living. If not, we will pay the estate of the Insured. All claims for medical expense benefits submitted for payment by an Insured will be paid directly to the provider of medical services. If an Insured has already paid a provider for medical services, a written request must be submitted to Cultural Insurance Services International, accompanied by a copy of the paid bill and a completed claim form indicating that payment should be made to the Insured or the individual or organization who paid the bill. Change of Beneficiary - The Insured has the right to select or change the beneficiary without the beneficiary's consent. Any such selection or change must be in writing. We will not be bound until we have received a signed copy of it. We are not responsible for its validity or sufficiency. If the Insured is a minor, his or her parent or guardian may exercise this right for him or her.

## **Appendix G - Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines**

Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of all youth program participants and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or

harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines. The safety and well-being of young people must always be the first priority.

## Definitions

**Sexual abuse.** Engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a young person or forcing or encouraging a young person to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age, of the same or opposite sex. This includes non-touching offenses, such as indecent exposure or showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.

**Sexual harassment.** Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is used by sexual predators to desensitize or groom their victims.

Some examples of sexual harassment include:

- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, talking about one's sex life in the presence of a young person, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings
- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments

## Who should determine if it is abuse or harassment?

Upon hearing allegations, adults should not determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual abuse or harassment. Instead, after ensuring the safety of the student, the adult should immediately report all allegations to appropriate child protection or law enforcement authorities. In Minnesota and Wisconsin, this reporting is required by law.

## Allegation Reporting Guidelines

Any adult to whom a Rotary youth program participant reports an allegation of sexual abuse or harassment must follow these reporting guidelines:

1. Receive the report.
  - a. Listen attentively and stay calm. Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse or harassment. Be encouraging; do not express shock, horror, or disbelief.

- b. Assure privacy but not confidentiality. Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment in order to make it stop and ensure that it doesn't happen to others.
- c. Get the facts, but don't interrogate. Ask questions that establish facts: who, what, when, where, and how. Reassure the young person that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking "why" questions, which may be interpreted as questioning the young person's motives. Remember that your responsibility is to present the story to the proper authorities.
- d. Be nonjudgmental and reassuring. Avoid criticizing anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It's especially important not to blame or criticize the young person. Emphasize that the situation was not his or her fault and that it was brave and mature to come to you.
- e. Document the allegation. Make a written record of the conversation, including the date and time, as soon after the report as you can. Try to use the young person's words and record only what he or she told you.

## 2. Protect the young person.

Ensure the safety and well-being of the youth program participant by removing him or her from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Reassure the youth that this is being done for his or her safety and is not a punishment.

## 3. Report the allegations to appropriate authorities - child protection or law enforcement.

Immediately report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment - first to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for investigation and then to the club and district leadership for follow-through. In North Star, the appropriate law enforcement office is first the local police and then the Youth Protection Officer for North Star.

In most situations, the first Rotary contact is the North Star Youth Protection Officer, who is responsible for seeking the advice of appropriate agencies and interacting with them. If the allegation involves the conduct of this Rotarian, the district youth program chair will be the first Rotary contact.

North Star will cooperate with police or legal investigations.

North Star has researched local, state, and national laws related to sexual abuse and harassment prevention and notes the following legal requirements of which all adult volunteers participating



in the program must be aware: Minnesota and Wisconsin state mandatory reporter guidelines apply to all adult volunteers.

4. Avoid gossip and blame.

Don't tell anyone about the report other than those required by the guidelines. Be careful to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation.

North Star maintains the privacy (as distinct from confidentiality) of any accused person by enforcing the following procedures: the names of the student and the alleged perpetrator will be held as private by the reporter, the Youth Protection Officer, the North Star Chair, and the student's Country Officer(s).

5. Do not challenge the alleged offender.

Don't contact the alleged offender. In case of abuse, interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. In cases of noncriminal harassment, the district governor is responsible for follow-through and will contact the alleged offender after the young person has been moved to a safe environment. The district governor may designate this task to a district youth protection officer or district review committee.

### **Follow-through Procedures**

Either the district youth programs chair or district youth protection officer must ensure that the following steps are taken immediately after an abuse allegation is reported.

1. Confirm that the youth program participant has been removed from the situation immediately and has no contact with the alleged abuser or harasser.
2. If law enforcement agencies will not investigate, the district youth protection officer or district review committee should coordinate an independent review of the allegations.
3. Ensure that the student receives immediate support services.
4. Offer the young person an independent, non-Rotarian counselor to represent his or her interests. Ask social services or law enforcement to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian or in any way involved with the youth program.
5. Contact the student's parents or legal guardian.
  - a. If the student is away from home, the student and his or her parents should decide whether to stay in country or return home. If the student stays in country, written authorization from the student's parents or legal guardian is required. If the student and the student's parents choose for the student to return home, consult

with police before making travel arrangements. If an investigation is pending, the police may not approve of the student leaving the country.

6. Remove alleged abuser or harasser from all contact with any other young participants in Rotary programs and activities while investigations are conducted.
7. Cooperate with the police or legal investigation.
8. Inform the district governor of the allegation. **Either the district governor, district youth protection officer, or other district youth program chair must inform RI of the allegation within 72 hours and provide follow-up reports of steps taken and the status of investigations.**
9. After the authorities have completed their investigation, the district must follow through to make sure the situation is being addressed. Specifically, North Star will conduct an independent and thorough review of any allegations of sexual abuse or harassment.

### **Post-allegation Report Considerations**

1. Responding to the needs of the youth program participant North Star will adopt a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting a young person after an allegation report. The youth program participant is likely to feel embarrassed or confused and may become withdrawn.

After a report of harassment or abuse, students may have mixed feelings about remaining on the exchange. If they do choose to stay, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with their hosting Rotary Club. In some cases, a student may wish to remain in country but change to a different host club.

Although club members and host families may have trouble understanding how the student is feeling, the student would find it helpful to know that the club continues to be reassuring and supportive. Club members and host families may feel ambivalent about their roles and unclear about their boundaries. However, they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the student of their support at all times.

#### 2. Addressing issues within the club

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of youth. Club members should not speculate or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any police or criminal investigations. Rotarians must not become involved in investigations. Making comments about alleged victims in support of alleged abusers violates both the Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth and Rotary ideals.

Comments made against an alleged abuser could lead to a slander or libel claim filed against Rotarians or clubs by the alleged abuser.

### **Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth**

Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

*Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002*

# Appendix H - Letter from US State Department to Host Family



**U.S. Department of State**  
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs  
Private Sector Exchange



February 15, 2023

Dear Secondary School Student:

Welcome to the U.S. Department of State's BridgeUSA Exchange Visitor Program! This is the beginning of one of the most important and exciting adventures of your life. During your time in the United States, you will obtain an American high school education and experience life as part of an American family. You will make friendships that will last a lifetime, get lots of practice in speaking English, and partake in family traditions. Since 1949, thousands of students from around the world have come to share their language, culture, and customs with their American host families, American schools, and the broader local community. Your participation in this exchange program fosters a greater understanding between our two countries and works towards peaceful relations throughout the world.

We want you to have a meaningful and successful experience. Your new school and host family 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. 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, classmates, and friends.

Your U.S. sponsor is your first point of contact throughout your stay in the United States. Their information 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, need assistance of any kind while you are here, or if something just does not feel right, immediately contact your U.S. sponsor. It is their responsibility to help you with any problems, needs, or concerns you may have. Their emergency telephone contact number can be found in your program orientation materials and identification card, and is 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 available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or by e-mail at [JVisas@state.gov](mailto:JVisas@state.gov). Your sponsor and the Department of State are here to ensure your success and safety on the program.

We are pleased that you made the decision to study in the United States and hope you enjoy your stay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen S. Ward".

Karen S. Ward  
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Private Sector Exchange

# Appendix I - U.S. Department of State Program Regulations

## § 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 coursework 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 extracurricular 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.

(1) ***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.