

**Rotary District 5160 Youth Exchange Program**

**Youth Exchange Student Travel Policy**

**June 2017**

**Background and Purpose**

The District 5160 Youth Exchange Committee is strongly committed to providing safe experiences for our exchange students.

Student travel is welcomed as part of the District 5160 Youth Exchange Program. The purpose of this travel policy is to provide guidelines that ensure the safety of the student, the ability to contact them in the event of an emergency, and to ensure that the student’s travel plans have the necessary approvals.

**Unauthorized travel is travel undertaken by a District 5160 Youth Exchange student without the appropriate approval from their Host Family, Counselor/YEO, and District 5160 Youth Exchange Committee. Unauthorized travel is not permitted, and a student that travels without consent of the District 5160 Youth Exchange Committee may be subject to having their exchange terminated and being returned to their home country.**

**Travel Types**

There are three types of acceptable student travel outlined in this policy:

1. **Local travel**
2. **Regional travel**
3. **Extended travel**

One-on-one travel with a single adult, that has not completed a District 5160 Youth Exchange Program -approved, basic background check is not permitted under ANY travel type. One-on-one travel with a single adult involving overnight contact or multiple-day contact requires a District 5160 Youth Exchange Program Volunteer application including, a background check and Department of State training (“Vetted Volunteer”) and/or Host Parent as defined by the District 5160 Youth Exchange Program. Please contact a District 5160 Youth Exchange Committee member for assistance in vetting individuals.

Students are permitted to travel with appropriate approval. Different travel types require different approvals. Policies for each travel type are provided below with a summary chart to assist in understanding the appropriate approvals for each travel type.

1. **Local Travel –** Local travel commonly includes travel within the area in which the student spends the majority of his/her time, including: the area in which they reside, the area in which the student’s school is located, the area in which the student’s hosting Rotary club is located and adjoining communities/neighborhoods frequently visited throughout the course of day to day life (“Primary Community”). For travel within these areas, the Host Family is responsible for approving the activity for the student. No further consent is needed. For travel outside of these areas, please see below.
2. **Regional Travel -** Regional Travel includes long, day trips and overnight travel outside of the student’s Primary Community. Regional Travel does not include out of state travel and/or use of air travel (see Extended Travel below). Examples of Regional Travel includes: camping trips, ski trips, club-sponsored activities or service projects, sports or school trips, and Host Family vacations. For Regional Travel, approval is required from BOTH the Host Family and Counselor. No further consent is needed. Students may not engage in Regional travel without being accompanied by a Vetted Volunteer and/or Host Parent.

Prior to approving a request for Regional Travel, Counselors should be provided with information including the name and contact information of the Vetted Volunteer and/or Host Parent the student will be traveling with, the student’s departure/return dates, emergency contact information, and trip schedule.

1. **Extended Travel** – Extended Travel y includes out of state travel and/or the use of air travel. Extended Travel requires approval from the Host Family, Counselor, Natural Parents AND the completion and approval of the Request for Student Travel Form, which shall be submitted to the District 5160 Youth Exchange Committee no less than 45 days prior to the date of departure. Students may not engage in Extended Travel without being accompanied by a Vetted Volunteer and/or Host Parent, and without the express written consent of the District 5160 Youth Exchange Committee. The District 5160 Youth Exchange Committee is available to provide guidance and support in completing these requirements.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Type of Travel | You need approval from… |
| **Local Travel** | Host Family |
| **Regional Travel** | Host Family AND Counselor |
| **Extended Travel** | Host Family, Counselor, Natural Parents, District 5160 Youth Exchange Committee, AND approved Request for Student Travel Form |