

End-of-Stay and Departure Guidelines 2021

Departure Dates 2021 – Based on School End Dates

- ✦ 2 June
- ✦ 14 June
- ✦ 28 June

EOS Planning for Teams for 2021:

Each team is responsible for planning an End-of-Stay (EOS) event for their participants based on the goals put forth in the [End-of-Stay Orientation Leader Guide](#) on MyAFS Help & Learning. Please note that we are in the process of updating the Guide to include updated information related to COVID, in-person events and travel realities.

As COVID and CDC guidelines will impact the ability to hold an event immediately prior to departure, AFS USA is planning for a more flexible approach to the End of Stay activity. All of our sending partners currently require a negative PCR Covid test for entry to the participants' home country. The time frame varies from 48 to 72 hours prior to departure from the US to 72 hours prior to arrival in country. Due to this requirement, there can be no in-person EOS event the weekend before departures. To clarify some mistaken information that was previously provided by AFS-USA, while participant **quarantine is not required prior to departure**, it will be prudent to continue social distancing and mask use in the days leading up to departure in order to reduce the risk of your participant becoming ill and having to delay travel.

With these restrictions in mind, you may choose one of the following options for your Team:

- 1) If CDC, local town/state guidelines permit, hold an in-person EOS two weekends before departures and have host families drop students off at the local airport 4 hours prior to flight.
- 2) Hold a virtual EOS Event in the two weeks prior to departure.

Please see the links below for state-specific information and guidelines. Best practices regarding in-person events will be posted on Help and Learning by early April.

<https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-planner/index.html>

Note: depending upon COVID restrictions, an overnight event may not be advisable.

As they have been doing throughout the year, AFS USA's Support Team will be organizing a final hangout for all our participants. Additional information will be shared in the upcoming months.

What the Teams are Responsible for:

- ✦ Recruiting an [EOS Coordinator](#) for their team or group of teams 45-60 days prior to the first departures
- ✦ **Meeting planning deadlines is as follows:**
 - ✦ **Preliminary EOS plans entered into the Activity Module by 45 days prior to the first departure.**
 - ✦ **Final EOS plans communicated by 30 days prior to first departure.**

- ✦ Recruiting a [Travel Rep.](#) by **1 May or 45 days prior to departure – whichever comes first.** This position coordinates the departures with other airport volunteers and the EOS Coordinator. This job description can be found in Help and Learning/volunteer roles.
- ✦ Entering complete information into the Activity Module in Global Link by each deadline. **We have created templates that are easy to find: Area Team Names (HDS code) EOS 2021. For Example: Mass Bay (BOS) EOS 2021. Specific instructions will be emailed to the EOS Coordinators.**
- ✦ Arranging the EOS site, activities and ensuring all students participate in the EOS. This does not include those students who chose to Program Release prior to EOS.
- ✦ Notifying students, host families and other related volunteers of arrangements in a timely manner.
- ✦ Working with Travel Rep to:
 - Recruit volunteers for airport/logistical support.
 - Schedule volunteers to be at the airport to meet host families and assist with checking students in for their departing flights.
 - Monitoring flights from the airport until departure.
- ✦ To view the return travel itinerary for your participant(s), please use this [Travel Report](#).

What the Travel and Logistics Coordination (TLC) team is responsible for:

- ✦ Working with volunteer teams and Intercultural Education staff to provide EOS Coordinator instructions on EOS activity module and how to access travel reports.
- ✦ Coordinating the mailing (via email) of the general EOS/luggage letter for students by mid-April.
- ✦ For returns in June 2021, TLC will mail e-tickets, luggage tags and return travel instructions directly to participants and their host families. The EOS Coordinator and Travel Rep will be cc'd on the messages.

What AFS-USA Pays for:

- ✦ Domestic flight to international departure airport if partner could not through ticket.
- ✦ For those students who changed gateways or area teams upon arrival or during the year, domestic travel back to the original gateway city if the international ticket cannot be changed. These students may travel to the original departure airport the day prior to their international flight.

What the Teams Pay for:

- ✦ EOS site costs: event space, rooms (**students may not share beds or rooms**), meals, supplies, etc.. Getting students to EOS site if host families are not dropping off at the actual site.
- ✦ Communication with students regarding EOS plans.
- ✦ Getting students to the airport if host families are not dropping off.

Please note that we are confirming return international travel with our AFS Partners throughout the upcoming months. You can access the return international travel via My AFS or by utilizing travel reports in Global Link.

Students Who Choose to Program Release:

Unless a student is releasing at the EOS event (PRES) or at the departure airport (PR), you are not required to provide an individual EOS activity. The status of these students is either Personal Early Return (PRTN) or Return Family Event (RTN).

Luggage Questions:

Prior to coming on program, participants received a luggage letter from AFS USA clearly explaining that they are responsible for contacting the airlines to determine the luggage limits. We also tell students that AFS USA will not pay any luggage fees for any reason. In mid to late April, we will email an updated version of this letter to all participants and their host families. We are attaching a sample version of this information. As we are not able to answer questions related to luggage, should you receive any questions from a participant or host family, please direct them to the airline's website.

COVID Testing Prior to Return

Given the constantly changing environment surrounding COVID entry requirements for returning participants, it is impossible for us to outline each country's restrictions at this time. As of March, all countries have some type of COVID (PCR) negative test result requirement for returning participants. As we get closer to departures, AFS USA will work with our partners to share the specific testing requirements for our hosted participants.

As a reminder, the AFS-provided Medical Plan does not cover the cost of COVID testing unless ordered by a doctor for medical reasons. Our partners have been advised that participants and their families be prepared to cover this cost if needed. If you have any questions regarding COVID testing, please contact our Support Team at Participant-Support-Staff@afsusa.org.

Contact Information

For questions regarding international travel, program releases or other travel related issues, please contact Ryan Tallman at rtallman@afsusa.org or Paula McGrath at pmcgrath@afsusa.org.

For all other questions please email AskAFS@afsusa.org.