

## NH21 Travel Rep Training Webinar Q & A

### ***When will travel reps receive travel information for the team's host families?***

Partners will be uploading travel plans to Global Link as soon as they are finalized. Volunteers can access this information using the Global Link Reports.

### ***On early arrival days, who is the travel rep's direct point of contact in the AFS-USA staff?***

The Regional Travel & Logistics Assistants will be your direct point of contact on all arrival days. For the East Coast area teams, the RTLA will be Callie Kanim. For the West Coast and Texas area teams, please direct your questions to Deniz Sen. For the teams in the Central region, you will reach out to Paula Zhang. After business hours, please contact the duty officer at 1-800-221-3998.

### ***Will travel reps be responsible for ALL students transiting through their airport, no matter what Area Team they belong to?***

The Travel Advisory Group (TAG) is working to identify volunteers willing to meet transiting students at the airport and overnight at a hotel with them should the need arise. The travel rep will not be responsible for this unless they sign up to be an airport volunteer working with transits.

### ***How will the travel rep/team receive changes to travel information?***

If there is a change to inbound travel 1-3 days prior to the student's departure, our partners abroad are encouraged to update that information in Global Link so that that change is reflected in volunteer and staff arrival day reports. If the change occurs the day before or the day of, the travel reps will receive a call. At this point in time, there is no notification feature for travel changes in Global Link, so travel reps will need to make sure that they are staying up to date with their travel reports.

### ***Who will inform host families of any change in students' travel?***

The Hosting Arrival Orientation Coordinator and Travel Rep are responsible for communicating this information and providing host families with emergency numbers.

### ***Will students be informed of what to do in case they experience a delay or cancellation?***

Yes. Every July we send out mailings to our partners that include student nametags, as well as letters to the students detailing airport procedures and what they must do if they experience in any interruption in their journey. This includes emergency contact information.

### ***When will ID cards and nametags be mailed out? Is there liaison information on them?***

Liaison information is on the student ID card but not their nametag, which only has their name, HDS, and gateway. ID cards are not being printed and mailed to partners anymore, as there is a new process. More information can be found at this link on myAFS.

***Can students be provided with hosting coordinators' and travel reps' contact information prior to their departure to the US?***

AFS-USA does not have the capacity to provide 1000+ students with 70+ different phone numbers. It also might remove our office in New York from the chain of communication – all parties should be informed of any issues that arise!

***This year we have started to check student paperwork & passports which we used to do at Arrival Orientation. But since students will be quarantining, we are doing AO virtual and checking passports at the airport. Any guidance for volunteers as to what to look for?***

This information, with regards to checking documents at the airport, will be updated and posted under arrival orientation information on Help & Learning. Travel representatives and Hosting Arrival Orientation Coordinators will work together to ensure that the airport volunteers that are meeting host families are aware the documents they should be checking. If you chose not to have any representative at the airport, you are responsible to figure out how to get the information.

***What is the general guideline if there is a long layover between international and domestic connection?***

Students are required to have at least a three-hour layover if they are transiting in another U.S. airport before arriving at their final destination. When possible, students will connect behind security. If they are required to exit security, they will be met by a volunteer or AFS staff member who will then assist them with checking in to their next flight.

***Is visa information visible to volunteers?***

Yes, it is visible below the student information on Global Link.

***What happens if students cannot get their visas in time for the first departure?***

AFS-USA is working closely with our AFS sending partners abroad to overcome visa-related challenges due to delayed U.S. visa processing as consular offices deal with lock downs, reduced staff, back logs, and local health restrictions due to the pandemic.

AFS USA staff and Board Members continue to advocate on behalf of our students through outreach to various government agencies and individuals and in collaboration with our partners and other J-1 exchange student sponsors. Collectively and individually, program sponsors including AFS have reached out to key government stakeholders responsible for international education advocacy. AFS USA has also been supporting the efforts of AFS partners to reach out to their consulates as necessary. Each context is unique and AFS-USA is working closely with our AFS sending partners to identify the best approach or combination of approaches for those AFS sending partners who have participants facing visa challenges.

If after all methods of recourse have been exhausted – and a suitable visa appointment date that allows for a participant to arrive as planned is still not forthcoming – AFS-USA will work with local teams and host schools to determine next steps. AFS-USA will reach out if/when all methods of recourse have been exhausted on a case-by-case basis.

***Can host families pick up YES students in Newark, NJ before they travel on to Washington D.C.?***

Yes. At this point, YES international travel should be available to volunteers in Global Link. If you are interested in picking up a YES student from Newark International Airport, please contact Lily Wiggins with the Sponsored Programs team.

***How can we establish communication between destination area team travel rep and the travel partner who is making the airline ticket purchases?***

Partners have been notified to book domestic flights with 3 hours connection time in between. In case of any questions or concerns regarding this issue, feel free to email Paula McGrath or Ryan Tallman.