



2022 Departures: Travel and Logistics Information for Participants

To Volunteers and Host Families – Please ensure that participants have details and understand departure/flight information and other day of travel logistics. They should have the name/phone number of the volunteer assisting with check in at the airport.

AFS Participants: It is time to start thinking about your departure and the actual day of travel and logistics.

- You will receive your e-ticket(s) and emergency contact information from your local AFS Volunteer approximately 10 days prior to departure.
- Your AFS Sending Country should send you an email approximately 2 weeks prior to departure with a link to the COVID test requirements for re-entry to your country (and transit country requirements, if you are transiting through another country on your way home). You must double check to make sure the information is accurate when you are scheduling your COVID PCR test. You **MUST** travel with a hard copy of the test results. In addition, please be sure any required attestation forms (usually online) are completed in advance of your going to the airport, including for any countries through which you are transiting.
- While mask requirements vary from state to state, airlines are still requiring masks. You should pack extra masks and hand sanitizer (100ml) for your trip home.
- Luggage – AFS-USA is not responsible for communicating airline-specific luggage requirements to participants. Please contact your airline and plan for luggage weight limits and costs associated with checking luggage. AFS-USA is not responsible for any luggage costs. **Also, please do not check-in or pre-pay for your luggage on-line before you arrive at the airport. If your flight is delayed/cancelled it will be more difficult to change your flight/receive a refund for luggage fees.**

If you know you will NOT receive your COVID test results in time to travel or you will miss your scheduled flight for any reason, you MUST inform AFS-USA so your AFS Sending Partner office can be notified. If your flight is not cancelled before the flight departs, you will be considered a “no show” and your ticket will no longer be valid for you to fly. During business hours, please contact your Area Team’s Travel Rep or Departure Coordinator who will inform AFS-USA staff. Outside business hours, please call the Duty Officer - 800-AFS-Info (237-4636), press 9.

Day of Travel

Packing

- Remember, you **MUST** have your passport in hand to travel; **passports should NEVER be packed into luggage that will be checked.** Keep a copy of the photo page of your passport in a separate location.
- Pack anything of importance (toothbrush, one change of clothes, mask, hand sanitizer, medication, etc.) in a separate, smaller carry-on bag.
- Make sure your carry-on doesn’t contain any liquids over three ounces or any other prohibited items.

Arrival to Airport

- You and your host family must arrive to the airport **at least three hours** prior to your flight departure time. This will build in time for driving delays, check-in issues due to your COVID test results, and general check in/TSA clearance delays. Should you be denied check in because you have arrived too late – or because of long TSA lines – this may result in your having to pay ticket penalties.
- Be mindful of your possessions - cameras, cell phones, carry-on bags, and passport - at all times!

Checking In

- You must have a hard copy of your e-ticket, your negative COVID test results and any required documentation required by your country. The airlines have a right to deny your check in if you are missing this information. Many countries also have a required on-line form that must be completed prior to checking in. Make sure you have done this **before** you get to the airport.

- Make sure your luggage is checked through to your final airport (called interlining) and you receive the tags back when you check in.
- You should receive boarding passes for all flights home. If you do not, please speak to your local AFS Volunteer at the airport immediately.

Delays/Cancellation

- If you are delayed getting to the airport, you must communicate with your Area Team's Travel Rep or Departure Coordinator.
- If your flight is delayed/cancelled after you get to your gate, you should call your local AFS Volunteer (Travel Rep). You will need to work with the airline at the airport to rebook your flight.
- If an AFS Volunteer is not at the airport for your departure, your host family **must** remain at the airport until your plane is in the air. Sometimes flights get cancelled after you are at the gate/on board the plane. They may need to take you back home if you are rebooked for the next day.
- If you are unsure what to do once you are at the gate or at a transit point, always speak to airline staff.
- If you or your host family need additional assistance on the day of travel, you must contact your local AFS Volunteer contact. If you cannot reach them, you must call the Duty Officer, or the numbers listed below.

Transits within the United States:

- We will have volunteers and/or staff on call should you have any delays or cancellations in a connection airport.
- If your return flights include a domestic flight to an international flight at an airport in the US, you should plan on making the connection from one terminal to the next on your own. We suggest downloading the airport map(s) to assist you in transit.
- Remember, if you are unsure, ask the airline staff that will be by the gate of your arriving flight – and check the departure screens in the airport as gates can change at the last minute.
- If your luggage was checked through to your final airport, you do not need to claim your luggage.

Just in Case you lose your Passport

During normal business hours, the loss of a passport **must be reported immediately to the AFS-USA office at 1-800-237-4636 and press 9.**

Outside normal business hours, contact the **Duty Officer at 1-800-237-4636 and press 9.** You will be given further instructions at that time. Please have the following information handy when you call:

- Your full name as it appears on your passport and AFS country
- If passport is from another country, please let us know.
- Date and place of birth
- Passport number (if known)
- Place where passport was issued and date of issue (if known)

***IF A LOST PASSPORT IS FOUND AFTER REPORTING IT LOST, BE SURE TO CALL AFS BACK IMMEDIATELY, SO THAT REPLACEMENT PROCEDURES CAN BE HALTED. ***

Contact Information:

Questions regarding COVID testing: 800-237-4636, press 9 for Participant Support
Email: Participantport-Staff@afsusa.org

Questions regarding international travel: Local Area Team Volunteer (Travel Rep)

Day of travel:

International travel after office hours: 800-AFS-Info (237-4636), press 9 for Duty Officer
International travel during office hours: 800-221-3998
800 876-2376, press 6 or 9

Remember – if you have problems on the day of travel, you must call your local Travel Representative (no emails)! If you cannot reach your Travel Representative, call the Duty Officer.