

FAQ's Departure Logistics & Travel

1. **When will international flight information be available for volunteers to view?**

Our AFS Sending Partners are responsible for booking the return flights and entering this information into Global Link. We ask that all international flights and updated e-tickets be available and accurate no later than two weeks prior to departure.

2. **How are students getting their travel details and e-tickets?**

Area team volunteers will share the flight details with students as they become available or as part of the Departure Webinar. Most partners will also share travel information (including COVID testing requirements, which AFS Sending Partners are responsible for sharing with their participants) with sending families who, in turn, will share with their children.

E-tickets will be available to download by the [Departure Coordinator](#) and [Travel Rep](#) in the two weeks prior to departure. We are looking at streamlined IT solutions and will share this information closer to departures.

3. **How will students know what testing requirements are needed for the country they are transiting through and their home country?** Our AFS Sending Partners are responsible for emailing each of their students the information for return testing, including transit country requirements. Most AFS Sending Partners are sending a link to their ministry of health's website since the requirements often change.

4. **Can I see a list of COVID testing requirements for each country?**

A link will be made available in MyAFS Help & Learning shortly before departures to a Google document for Travel Reps and Departure Coordinators to reference and share with host families/participants. (Insert link to spreadsheet Steve is creating)

5. **Who is transporting the students to the airport?**

Host families are expected to drop students off at the airport. This drop off should be done in accordance with AFS USA's requirements and/or local Area Team plans.

6. How early should host parents & students arrive at the airport before the flight time?

We require that families be at the airport at least 3 hours prior to domestic flights and 4 hours for international flights. This allows for any issues related to COVID testing, required forms, international ticket problems and/or long TSA lines. We have had students miss their flights home because host families insisted that 2 hours was enough time. AFS USA accepts no responsibility for students who miss flights due to late arrival at an airport and subsequent check-in/TSA delays. Some area teams may wish to have all students dropped off at one central location and then take students to check in throughout the day to ensure/track all departures. This is discussed in our Travel Rep/Departure Coordinator training webinars.

7. Who will be at the airport to help answer questions and guide the students? A

volunteer is required to be at the airport for CORE/CBYX departures. The Area Team Travel Rep will work with the Departure Coordinator to recruit/assign volunteers to be at the airport to check in students, track departure flights and remain until the last flight departs.

8. Will AFS pay for an overnight hotel stay if a student has a very early flight?

No. As there is no longer a required End of Stay/Gateway activity, should Area Teams have families that will not be able to drive students to early morning flights, each Area Team's Departure Coordinator is expected to either identify event families near the airport or provide a hotel room.

9. Will there be an orientation at the end of the program?

AFS USA requires an End of Stay Orientation (EOS) (previously called the Pre-Return Orientation) approximately 6-8 weeks before the end of a participant's program. In addition, participants and their host families must attend a Departure Webinar within 2 weeks of the participant's program end date. Please reference these pages regarding the [EOS](#) and [Departure webinar](#) requirements.

10. What if a student tests positive for COVID-19 in the days before their due to fly home?

If a participant tests positive for COVID-19 in the days leading up to departure, the Departure Coordinator/Travel Rep should immediately contact the Duty Officer so that

appropriate steps can be taken, including informing the Sending Partner and working to adjust the return ticket. (1-800-AFS-INFO, then press 9)

If a participant tests positive for COVID-19, the Departure Coordinator/Travel Rep should contact the Duty Officer (1-800-AFS-INFO, then press 9). The Duty Officer will then take appropriate next steps, including contacting the AFS Sending Partner and working to rebook the return ticket for a later date.

11. Who do I call if there is an emergency outside office hours?

AFS volunteers should continue to call the AFS duty officer number at (1-800-AFS-INFO, then press 9). If host families on your team have problems during the weekend/night prior to departure, they should contact the AT's Departure Coordinator and/or Travel Rep.

12. We usually have an end of program picnic a few weeks before departure, can we still do that?

Yes, however please keep in mind that bringing students together in the weeks leading up to their departure can increase risk of contracting COVID-19. Participants who test positive for COVID-19 cannot travel as planned (see above question 11).

13. We still receive so many questions about luggage; how do we manage this?

Students need to contact the airlines directly. This can be a challenge as some airlines have different luggage allowances based on the class of service their ticket is booked in. Please direct students to their sending families to work with the sending partner for this information. AFS USA's Travel and Logistics Coordination department does not answer questions about luggage.