



Youth For Understanding USA has a responsibility to assure student safety to the greatest extent possible; have knowledge of a student's location; and ensure that students participate in host family activities and school programs. All travel that might have an impact on any of these factors requires advance approval from the YFU USA district director.

Following are steps that must be taken prior to student travel:

- ❑ For all student trips with the host family within the US, lasting more than two days and where the student will not miss school, the host family need only submit a completed Permission to Travel Form to the district office and notify their area rep of their plans. No approval process is required.
- ❑ For the following cases, the Permission to Travel Form and other supporting documents are required to be submitted to the district office, *and* YFU USA approval granted, before travel can commence:
 - travel with the host family outside of the United States
 - travel that interferes with school attendance
 - independent travel to visit an authorized "host"
 - accompanied travel without host parents
 - sponsored trips

Permission to Travel Procedures:

1. Complete all applicable sections of the Permission to Travel Form.
Forms can be obtained from a YFU rep, on line at www.yfu-usa.org or by calling the district office at 1-866-4YFU-USA (1-866-493-8872).
2. Attach all additional required paperwork (invitations, natural parent permission, trip itinerary).
3. Get required signatures (principal, host parents, responsible officer).
4. Forward the paperwork to your district office and notify your area rep.
5. YFU will contact you regarding trip approval.

The YFU district director has final authority to grant or deny permission to travel. Unauthorized travel may result in a YFU determination that the student has taken him or herself Off Program and result in dismissal of student from the YFU program and termination of visa status.

Students should not purchase any airline, bus, or train tickets prior to receiving YFU approval, as many tickets are non-refundable. YFU USA will not reimburse, nor accept any responsibility for financial loss incurred by purchasing tickets or paying deposits prior to obtaining approval from the YFU district office for such activities.

Please review the following definitions and policies prior to completing the Permission to Travel Form.

School Attendance

YFU USA does not allow travel to interfere with school attendance. Students may not travel during school days unless they have the permission of the district director and the school principal (or someone authorized to give this permission). The district director has final authority, and may deny approval of a trip even if the school grants permission to be absent. YFU USA will not consider requests to miss school when the travel is to accompany visiting natural parents or friends from the native country or if the travel is independent travel.

Travel Outside the US

Travel to Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean with the host family will usually be allowed, except for Chinese students. Other travel outside the United States is normally not allowed. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis. All such travel must be approved by the natural parents and district office in advance of arrangements being made.

Most countries have additional visa requirements for entry and many of our students do not meet these requirements without completing an application for a visa. To check these requirements, visit the website of the country's consulate. A student must have a multiple entry visa to re-enter the US, and must get the **"Certificate of Eligibility, Form DS-2019 Travel Validation By Responsible Officer"** signed by the YFU USA responsible officer prior to any travel outside the US **or the student will be denied re-entry at the border. This is a Department of Homeland Security requirement.** Travel Validation, once secured, is valid for up to one year.

To secure the required responsible officer signature, send the "Certificate of Eligibility, Form DS-2019", which should be located with the student's passport, by a traceable method to: **Responsible Officer, Youth For Understanding USA, 6400 Goldsboro Road, Suite 100, Bethesda, Maryland 20817.** Please include a check or money order payable to YFU USA for \$10 to cover return of the documents by express service. You may also enclose pre-paid return postage for a traceable method. This process must be initiated no later than two weeks prior to the departure from the USA to ensure documents are received on time.

Means of Travel for Independent Travel

For independent travel of a student, commercial air travel is usually acceptable. Travel by train is approved on a case by case basis. Travel by commercial bus is rarely allowed. Students must travel directly point to point; touring the US en-route is not permitted. The student's natural family must give written permission and relieve YFU of any responsibility for student safety during the trip.

Authorized Hosts and Responsible Adults/Accommodation

An authorized host for independent travel or a responsible adult for accompanied travel is defined as an adult age 25 years or older who has a strong relationship (friend or relative) with the host or natural family. Overnight (or longer) visits to stay with anyone who is not an adult age 25 years or older is not allowed. Visits to stay in hostels, college dormitories or hotels without an authorized adult or host parent will not be permitted. Natural parent permission is required. Under no circumstances may a student miss school to undertake such travel.

Sponsored Trips

Trips sponsored by the high school, or religious or youth organizations of which the YFU student or host family is a member, will usually be permitted. YFU will determine if there is appropriate adult supervision, that the trip is fully sponsored by the organization or school, and that the cost seems reasonable. The student's natural family must give written permission and relieve YFU of any responsibility for student safety during the trip. For safety and legal reasons, approval will not be given for students to travel with other groups and/or organizations.

Travel with Student's Natural Family

Such visits and/or travel are strongly discouraged by YFU. If a student and his or her natural family are considering traveling together, the approval process for **Accompanied Travel** must be followed. It is important to remember that such visits or travel may cause adjustment problems so serious that YFU may have to consider an Early Return of the student. Under no circumstances may a student miss school to undertake such travel.

Youth For Understanding USA Trips

YFU area representatives are permitted to arrange trips for students that cost less than \$300 per student. Any trips that will cost more than that amount, according to YFU policy, must be operated by a YFU approved tour operator, and announcement of such trips will be made by mail from the district office. A student approached concerning trips outside of this policy, should contact the district office at 1-866-4-YFU-USA for clarification.



Permission to Travel

All travel (except that in Section A) requires YFU USA approval prior to finalizing plans. Failure to obtain approval from YFU USA may result in forfeiting any monies paid if permission to travel is denied. Your District Office has the final authority to give or deny permission for travel. Unauthorized travel may result in a YFU determination that the student has taken him or herself Off Program.

Complete all sections of this form that apply to your proposed travel and return it to your YFU District Office at least **two weeks** prior to travel.

Student / Host Family Information

Student Name: _____

Host Family Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email address (for trip approval notification): _____

Proposed Travel Information (Attach Planned Itinerary)

Departure Date: _____ Return Date: _____

Where are you staying?

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

(If lodging at more than one location, attach an additional sheet detailing above information for each.)

Traveling by: Commercial Airline (attach planned itinerary) Train (attach planned itinerary)
 Private Auto (complete details below) Other: _____

Vehicle make, model, license #: _____ Names of Adult Driver(s): _____

Name of Auto Insurance Provider and Policy Number: _____

What Type of Travel is This (Check Appropriate Box)

- A. Travel with Host Family for more than 2 days, not missing school, not leaving USA**
- B. Travel with Host Family and**
 - Student will miss school (complete section G)
 - Travel outside the USA (complete section F)
- C. Accompanied Travel without Host Parents**

Accompanying Adult: _____ Date of Birth (must be 25 or older): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Relationship to host family or student: _____

Written natural parent permission is attached (or will be faxed to district office).

D. "Independent" Travel Out-of-Town

Receiving Family's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Relationship to host family or student: _____

- Written natural parent permission is attached (or will be faxed to district office).
- Letter of invitation from receiving family, accepting YFU policies, is attached. If traveling further with receiving family, attach additional page with itinerary and information on where student can be reached.

E. Sponsored Trips (school, church)

Sponsoring Group: _____

Name of Adult in Charge: _____ Phone: (_____) _____

Emergency Cell Phone numbers during trip: (_____) _____

Student or host family is a member of sponsoring group: Yes No

Fee paid by student is \$ _____ which includes: Transportation Food Lodging Other

- Please confirm that:
- Bus, if used, is a fully insured commercial carrier with professional driver.
 - Other vehicle drivers are age 21+ and have \$300,000 combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage auto insurance.

- Written natural parent permission is attached (or will be faxed to district office).
- Additional page with sponsor trip information and itinerary is attached.

F. Travel Outside the United States*

What country will the exchange student be travelling to? _____

On what date does the student's passport expire? _____

Confirm that these US documents are stapled in the Passport:

Certificate of Eligibility (DS-2019) I-94 - Arrival Departure Record

US Visa is "Multiple Entry" and valid until: _____

Does country being visited admit persons from student's home country? Yes No

Does country being visited require a visa for student to enter? Yes No

(Note: The answer to this question may be different for non-US citizens.)

- Written natural parent permission is attached (or will be faxed to district office).
- Certificate of Eligibility DS-2019 mailed to YFU USA national office with a \$10.00 check for travel validation.

**Chinese students are not permitted to travel outside the US.*

G. School Absence

The student will miss _____ days of school for this trip.

Has the exchange student missed school before to travel? Yes No If yes, how many days? _____

School Authority grants permission for the student to be absent from school. Yes No

School Authority's Signature: _____

Print Name and Title _____ Telephone: _____

Signatures

YFU Area Representative was notified by host parent on (date) _____

Host Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Host Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

YFU District Director Approval: _____ Date: _____