



COMPASS USA EXCHANGE PROGRAM FAQs

Q: How will I know what I need to bring with me?

A: We will send you a packing list with the items you'll need in order to be comfortable on your homestay.

Q: Who will I stay with?

A: You will stay with a host family that has been carefully selected by one of our partner organizations.

Q: What will my host family be like?

A: Host families come from many different family circumstances. Just as all of our students are different, so are all of our host families. The members of our families are individuals with specific likes, dislikes, interests, habits and customs that are likely to be charming however different from your own. You will not be treated as a guest, but as a member of your host family.

Q: Who will help me if I need it?

A: The local coordinator in your homestay community is available to help you throughout the exchange experience while your local coordinator will help the exchange in the US.

Q: Will I get to travel with my exchange host sibling?

A: Typically, our students travel together between homestays. That is, if you visit your international family first, you will travel to your international destination by yourself. Then, your exchange sibling will accompany you on the flight back to your home and then return back to his/her home alone.

Q: Since I am traveling by myself, do I need to travel as an unaccompanied minor?

A: It depends upon your age and the airline on which you are flying. Typically, youth, ages 15 years and under, may incur a UM (unaccompanied minor) fee. If this is the case, Compass USA staff will explain the process to you and your parents.

Q: What role does Compass USA play in the Direct Exchange homestay experience?

A: Compass staff is available to you and the host family 24 hours a day. Please do not hesitate to call with questions or concerns. It is extremely important that you contact your coordinator immediately should any misunderstanding occur with the host family or if you should have any complaints or concerns.

Q: Will my family receive a stipend for hosting the mutual exchange student from the family that hosts me?

A: No. Your family will not receive a homestay stipend for hosting a student.

Q: What travel documents will I need to provide for my overseas visit?

A: You must have a current passport that will not expire within six months after you return from your overseas visit. If you are selected for the homestay in China, it will be necessary for you to purchase and obtain a visa. If you are traveling from China to Europe or the USA, it will be necessary for you to obtain and purchase a visa.

Q: What kind of travel insurance is required for recipients?

A: Insurance coverage for your homestay is an important element of security and peace of mind for you, your parents and the host families. Insurance can be provided by Compass USA through AVI international for around \$40 for the three weeks or families can choose to purchase it on their own. If they get their own, we need proof of insurance to send to our partner organization overseas.

Q: What are the fees to join the program and when is the payment due?

A: *The total fee for the program is _____. A \$200 nonrefundable deposit will be due at the time of application. The balance is due _____.*

Q: What does the program cost cover?

A: *The fee covers pay for the local and overseas coordinators, securing the homestay and 24/7 emergency contact during the homestay.*

Q: If the international student backs out, is the deposit still non-refundable?

A: *That has never happened before so it's extremely unlikely. If it were to happen however, Compass USA would definitely refund your deposit.*

Q: How do we arrange airfare and travel insurance?

A: *Compass USA works with the sending organization to confirm dates that work for both families, who then approve flights with the middle portion in common. Once approved, the families purchase the flights themselves.*

Q: Can families host another international student at the same time?

A: *Yes, if the international student is from a different country than your exchange sibling.*

Q: Is there any sightseeing included in the cost of the exchange?

A: *No, however all of the international families we have had are very excited to take their student sightseeing during their stay.*

