



INDEPENDENT TRAVEL RULES

ESSEX has recently had to deal with students who wanted to terminate their experience and travel on their own. In our opinion, this represents a significant risk to Rotary and to the students.

1. The students and parents have signed agreements to come to their host family/district directly and return by a direct route at the end of their experience.
2. The RI guidelines require that when in a host District's care, a student not travel alone nor be accompanied only by other students. District **MUST** approve all travel outside the boundaries of the District.
3. The Insurance coverage obtained for the young people is rated with the expectation that students are under the protective umbrella of Rotary. Continued eligibility for the coverage requires that they be Rotary Exchange Students and under the guidance and supervision of Rotary.
5. The Rotary Youth Exchange Program is not a travel program. Any opportunity to travel is at the discretion of the Rotary District with the permission of the natural parents.
6. You may, with the approval of your Host District/Club and with the approval of your natural parents, enroll in Rotary approved tours that are available to students. Travel on commercial airlines is acceptable for these tours with approved/responsible adults meeting the student at each end.

Therefore, all travel that does not follow these guidelines is not approved for ESSEX students. There may be an occasion when a student elects to leave the host district without the approval of Rotary. In this event, the following steps should be taken:

1. Advise the ESSEX country contact who will communicate with the sponsoring district chair.
2. Advise the student and parents that the student has undertaken travel or left the district without the approval of Rotary. Due to this, **the student has elected to end his/her relationship and terminate Rotary's responsibility for the individual.** Due to this decision and action of the student (and parents, where applicable), the following steps are taken:
 - A. The appropriate branch of the host country **government is notified** that the student's visa is no longer sponsored by Rotary and the individual is no longer a student in the school system
 - B. The Insurance carrier is notified that the student is no longer with the Rotary Youth Exchange program and **coverage** should be **cancelled** immediately.
 - C. The student should receive no assistance from the host or sponsoring Rotary clubs or districts since this may imply a continuing relationship that the student has terminated.
 - D. The student should **not be permitted** to leave items **with host families** nor be permitted to return there.
 - E. The student's **return travel** to the home country is **the sole responsibility of the student** and his/her family.

These procedures have been developed to protect the students and to protect Rotary and the host families from liability and potential litigation. In the event that this situation should arise, please refer to this document. Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated and is necessary for continued successful exchanges of our young people.

Print Student Name

Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Parent Signature