

**ROTARY DISTRICT 5060**  
**YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Rotary District 5060 YEP Committee Members and Officers  
**FROM:** Carter Fjeld 5060 YEP District Chairman  
**SUBJECT:** U.S. Department of State New Regulations Pertaining To YEP  
**DATE:** October 30, 2010

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The U.S. Department of State issued new rulings pertaining to the operation of all high school youth exchange programs. Many of us involved with youth exchange made comments to the DOS recommendations prior to the regulations going into effect. Most of the comments were not listened to; some appear to have had an ameliorating effect.

Candidly, I am strongly opposed not only on principal but on a practical level to this heavy handed governmental intrusion on a program that we have run for over 70 years. However, it is now a fait accompli and I love the program enough that I want it to survive as I hope does every reader of this memo. Therefore, I accept that the below is or soon will be the regulatory mandates that we in the US will have to comply with if we are to keep this great program alive. So, other than my personal opinion shared above, I won't editorialize further on the rules.

For our Canadian friends, life goes on as before for now.

The following is a summary of **22 CFR Part 62** [Public Notice: 7216] RIN 1400-AC56 Exchange Visitor Program—Secondary School Students. If you would like full text you can cut and paste this citation into Google. The rules were released October 27, 2010.

1. Standard Host Family Application Form. DOS requires that all application forms for host families be standardized. I haven't examined this yet, but when available it will be sent out to all of you.
2. Requiring Photographs of the Host Family Home. DOS requires that the exterior and grounds, kitchen, student's bedroom, bathroom, and family or living room of the potential host family's home be photographed and submitted with the photos.
3. Personal Character References for Host Family Applicants. DOS prohibits host family members, and sponsor representatives from serving as character references for potential host families. This is not really a big change.
4. Measuring Host Family Financial Resources. DOS wants to prohibit the placement of exchange students with host families receiving financial needs based government

subsidies for food or housing. This doesn't sound unreasonable, but then DOS goes on to require that program sponsors collect the range of annual household income of potential host families on the host family application.

5. Criminal Background Checks. We squeaked by on this one. DOS wanted FBI finger print background checks. They've postponed making a final decision on this for now but will revisit the issue in 3 years. So for now no change.

6. Host Family Composition. DOS meant to prohibit single parents without school age kids from acting as host parents. Because of the large outcry against this, DOS backed off back its original requirements but now requires additional screening procedures for exchange student placements involving single adult parents with no school-aged children in the home, including a secondary level of review by an organizational representative other than the individual who recruited and selected the host parent. Such secondary review should include demonstrated evidence from the individual's friends or family who can provide an additional support network for the exchange student and evidence of the individual's ties to the community. Finally, both the exchange student and his or her natural parents must agree in writing to any placement with a single adult host parent without a school-aged child in the home. District 5060 will provide additional guidance on what these "additional screening procedures" will be. Let us know if you need immediate assistance here or when you do.

7. Local Coordinator Training Course. DOS wants some uniformity to the training of those responsible for locally placing the students. I think our District already covers this. If not we'll provide the changed training at District level.

8. Number of Students and Host Families for Whom a Local Coordinator May Be Responsible. DOS abandoned this proposal.

9. Athletic Participation in the United States. DOS wanted to prohibit recruiting of exchange students based on their athletic skills. Totally unrelated to Rotary or at least this District.

10. Prohibition of Payments to Host Families. DOS now prohibits paying host families to host. Many clubs have provided stipends to assist families in compensating for the extra food, gas and sundry costs of having another person in your home. This policy will have to stop. I'm not certain of whether some other form of stipend can be used. We'll look into this.

11. Separate Orientation for Host Families. DOS now requires sponsors to conduct host family orientation at the end of the host family application process. We do that now but not in a standardized way. We will provide more guidance on this in the future.

12. Additional Visit to Host Family Homes. DOS now requires an in home follow-up visit within 2 months after placement of the student in the host family home. Not that much different than the past.

13. Local Coordinator Distance from Exchange Students. DOS backed off on this.

14. Restrictions on Local Coordinators. DOS now prohibits local coordinators from being host families. Also neither teachers that have the student in their class, nor principals who have the student in their high school can be host families.

15. Removing Exchange Student Property. Initially DOS wanted to prohibit host parents and clubs taking passports, phones or computers from the students. DOS backed off the issue of phones and computers, meaning that the host family or club can take away both from the student, but can't prohibit a student from communicating with his parents or family. This has 2 impacts on some club procedures. First, in the past many clubs have safeguarded the passport for reasons of protecting it from being lost. We can't do that anymore. Second, although no Rotarian has ever prohibited communication between students and their family, for good reason at times they have restricted the frequency of such communications. I'm not sure if that can be done. However, I'm sure that if it becomes a problem we can terminate the exchange.

16. Limits to Advertising. This is basically a prohibition on using pictures and personal data of the student to promote the program on web sites. This information stored on web sites must be password protected.