

## PROGRAM TERMS & CONDITIONS

[ PUBLIC & PRIVATE SCHOOLS ]

### 01. AMERICAN LAWS

Students are expected to abide by all local, state, and federal laws. If a student fails to comply with any laws or the ExchangeMate Program Rules and Policies, the student will be terminated from the High School Program and will have to return home within 48 hours of termination. All costs with early return home shall be borne by the student's natural parents, and no refunds will be granted.

- a) **Drinking:** In the United States, drinking alcoholic beverages is limited to those who are 21 years of age or older. Severe consequences, such as fines and/or arrest and imprisonment for those found drinking or in possession of alcoholic beverages at ages below 21 can be the result. Students must not drink or possess any kind of alcoholic beverages while in the Program. The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors may lead to criminal charges and immediate termination from the Program.
- b) **Drugs:** Students must not buy, sell, possess, or use any kind of legal or illegal drugs or controlled medication, unless prescribed by a physician or other health professional. If the student is taking prescription medication, the name, dosage, and duration of use must be disclosed on the student application. Student should also attach a doctor's note with details about the medication usage, with an official stamp and signature. Students must never associate themselves with any person involved in legal or illegal drug taking or drug trafficking. Students must not make use of marijuana even in states where this has been legalized. The possession or consumption of any drugs by minors may lead to criminal charges and immediate termination from the Program.
- c) **Smoking:** The purchase and use of tobacco products in the United States is prohibited for persons under the age of 21. This includes cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vapes, pipes and cigars. The possession or consumption of any tobacco products by minors may lead to criminal charges and immediate termination from the Program.
- d) **Employment:** It is illegal for international high school students to take regular employment while in the USA. The only exceptions are occasional odd jobs, such as yard-working and babysitting. Any such jobs must not interfere with schoolwork and the student must have host family and local coordinator's permission. Formal employment for an F-1 visa holder is a serious immigration infraction and may result in visa cancellation and immediate termination from the Program.
- e) **Others:** It is illegal to use someone else's ID or a fake ID for any purpose. Shoplifting and theft are also illegal. Any of these infractions may lead to criminal charges and immediate termination from the Program.

### 02. ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE DATES

- a) **Arrival:** Students must follow the ExchangeMate official program arrival date listed on their Letter of Acceptance (LOA), when booking their flights. Students who wish to arrive before official program arrival date for any reason, must submit an **Early Arrival Request** to ExchangeMate for approval. Early arrival approval is subject to host family availability. If approved, an early arrival fee of \$300 plus a pro-rated amount for the extra days of accommodation at the host family will incur. Students should fly directly to their final destinations. **No concessions and refunds will be granted for late arrivals.**
- b) **Departure:** Students must follow the ExchangeMate official program end date listed on their Letter of Acceptance (LOA), when booking their return flights. Students who wish to stay in the USA after the official Program End Date must follow the guidelines outlined on item 9.2 of this Terms & Conditions. **No concessions and refunds will be granted to students who leave the program, for any reason, before the official program end date.**

## 03. ARRIVAL ORIENTATION

All students are required to attend the ExchangeMate Local Arrival Orientation at their final destination and sign the orientation attendance form.

## 04. SCHOOL

Students must attend school full-time and maintain a full course of studies in their American High School. Students are expected to make every attempt to participate actively in school life, maintain high academic standards and follow all school rules and policies.

### 4.1 Public Schools

- a) **F-1 Visa Regulations:** International students are allowed to attend a Public High School in the USA with the F-1 visa for a maximum of one academy year or two semesters. If students would like to continue studying in the USA after the first year, a transfer to a Private or Boarding School will be required. Students must not have graduated in their home country before coming to the USA
- b) **School Acceptance:** ExchangeMate will enroll the student with the School District and will issue a Letter of Acceptance to the student upon enrollment, based on the eligibility requirements for the district. Some Public Schools may request an interview with the student during the application process. A final confirmation from the school district will be provided when the I-20 is issued. In the event the school district rejects the student's application for any reason, ExchangeMate will present alternative options to the student for review. The students' acceptance is contingent upon their successful completion of the current school semester/year and their continued demonstration of high academic and personal standards.
- c) **Proof of Funds and I-20:** Most Public Schools do not require proof of funds. However, some school districts may request that before I-20 is issued, and ExchangeMate will notify the sending organization when needed. If Proof of Funds is required, the student's natural parents must provide a signed letter from their bank on bank's letterhead, showing enough funds to cover the total program costs. Public Schools usually start issuing I-20s within 60 to 90 days before the official school start date.
- d) **School Registration:** Public Schools will only finalize student's registration upon arrival. Therefore, students and host families will have to go to the school and bring all required documents to complete enrollment after arrival. Students may be required to present additional documents such as, original transcripts and translations, specific state's immunization forms, and school physicals. The registration process may take a few days to be completed by the school, therefore students might miss a few days of school during their first week. ***No concessions and refunds will be granted for any missed days of school.***
- e) **School Dress Code or Uniform:** Most Public schools only have a dress code that students need to follow. Some Public Schools may have uniform, and it is the students' responsibility to check their school website to confirm information regarding dress code and/or uniform requirements. Costs with school uniform are not included in the program and students must purchase their uniform before starting school.

### 4.2 Private Schools

- a) **F-1 Visa Regulations:** International students are allowed to attend a Private High School in the USA with the F-1 visa for multiple years until they graduate.
- b) **School Acceptance:** Students are enrolled directly with their school of choice and the school will issue a Letter of Acceptance to the student upon acceptance. The students' acceptance is contingent upon their successful completion of the current school semester/year and their continued demonstration of high academic and personal standards.

- c) **Proof of Funds and I-20:** Private Schools require proof of funds before the I-20 is issued. Therefore, natural parents must provide a signed letter from their bank on bank's letterhead, showing enough funds to cover the total program costs. This should be sent with the other application documents upon enrollment.
- d) **School Registration:** Private Schools will finalize student's registration before arrival. Additional documents from the school may be required. Most Private Schools require an interview with students during the application process.
- e) **School Dress Code or Uniform:** Most Private schools have uniform, and some may only have a dress code that students need to follow. It is the students' responsibility to check their school website to confirm information regarding dress code and/or uniform requirements. Costs with school uniform are not included in the program and students must purchase their uniform before starting school.

#### 4.3 Public and Private Schools

- a) **School Physical and Immunizations:** : In some states, international students are required to do a School Physical and have their Immunizations transferred to a specific state's form, by an American doctor. In such cases, the host family and/or local coordinator will assist students to schedule a doctor's appointment after arrival. Medical appointments for school purposes are not covered by the International Insurance plans, therefore students must be prepared to pay for the consultation. The cost for the doctor's visit may vary between \$100 to \$200, depending on location. Students must bring a form of payment (cash or credit card) to pay for their consultation. Students must have all vaccines required to attend school in the state they are going to live in. ExchangeMate highly advises students to take all missing vaccines in their home countries, or they will be required to take these vaccines upon arrival. Schools usually give students 30 days to get any vaccines that are missing, but some vaccines may be required to start school. Students are responsible to pay any fees related to additional vaccines they take after arrival. Vaccine costs vary according to the vaccine and location. A list of required vaccines can be found in the ExchangeMate Immunization Form and the Health Department of each state. Students who wish to play sports at school will also be required to do a Sports Physical and should request that to be done at the same time as the school physical.
- b) **Grade Level:** American schools will place international students in the appropriate grade level based on the review of their transcripts. Students are not guaranteed placement in a particular grade level and must not pressure their high school or ExchangeMate for a specific grade level placement. Any decision regarding grade level is at the sole discretion of the school, based on their policies, requirements, and availability. ExchangeMate will not petition a school for a different grade level placement for any student.
- c) **Classes:** Students are expected to register for a full course load during their Program. Classes must include the following subject areas: American History or Government, English, Math and Science, plus any elective classes of their choice. ExchangeMate does not guarantee placement in specific classes to any student. All classes, sports, clubs, and other activities offered by the schools are subject to change, and availability will only be confirmed upon arrival. Students should discuss class requests with their school counselors at the time of registration, and it will depend on availability and pre-requirements of each class. It is the student's responsibility to verify with their home country school of any classes they may be required to take during their High School Program, to validate their studies upon return. Schools may not be able to accommodate specific classes or lunch break requests. Students may not drop or change any classes without the express permission of their local coordinator and/or student advisor.
- d) **Graduation and Diploma:** 12th grade students should indicate in the Application Form their intention to graduate in the USA. Not all Public Schools allow international students to graduate and receive a diploma, therefore students must make sure the School District they are applying to allows graduation and will issue a diploma. Any decision regarding graduation is at the sole discretion of the school based in their policies and graduation requirements. Students must not pressure their high school or ExchangeMate to be allowed to graduate and receive a high school diploma. ExchangeMate will not petition a school to allow a student to graduate or to grant a diploma to any student.

- e) **School Attendance and Academic Performance in the USA:** Students must not miss more than 5 days of school during each semester without an acceptable reason and must not skip classes and leave school earlier without the host family's permission. International Students are required to maintain high academic standards and must not have any grades below "C" in any of their classes during the Program. Cheating and plagiarism are taken very seriously, and students must never cheat on tests and must never copy texts from websites or books to put on homework or school assignments. If it is determined that the student needs tutoring for any classes, or additional English support, the natural parents will be required to pay for any costs related to these additional services. Low grades, unexcused absences, excessive tardiness, failure to submit schoolwork on time, cheating, and plagiarism are considered serious infractions. Failure to comply with any school policy may result in expulsion from school and immediate termination from the ExchangeMate High School Program without advance notice.
- f) **School Attendance and Academic Performance in Home Country:** Students must provide transcripts for the last 3 full years plus current semester grades (when available) during the application process. American schools are very strict with grade requirements and may reject a student who has poor academic performance. Students must continue attending school in home country during the semester preceding their High School Program. Students must maintain good grades and pass all classes in the semester preceding their arrival in the USA, or they may be at risk of cancellation by the school upon arrival.
- g) **Sick Days:** If the student is sick and is going to miss school, he/she will be required to see a doctor and bring a doctor's note for the missing day(s) to be marked as excused absence. If the student does not go to the doctor, the host parents should send a signed note to school when the student returns. If the student is not feeling well but does not have fever, diarrhea, vomiting, deep cough, or a potentially communicable disease and does not require doctor's care, the student should still go to school and go to the nurse's office for evaluation. If the nurse believes that the student should go home, the school will contact the host parents to come pick up the student.
- h) **Medication Dispensing:** Students who need to take any kind of medication (prescription, non-prescription, supplements, etc.), during school hours, should inform their host family and school to confirm the school's medication dispensing policy. Host Parents are usually required to bring the student's medicine to the school nurse with the doctor's note bearing the signature of the student's physician, name of medication, dosage, and appropriate times for administering. Student will be excused from class to see the nurse or another designated school staff at the time the medication needs to be taken. Any medicine which may be required on an "as needed" basis (e.g., inhalers, pain relievers, etc.) are required to have an accompanying doctor's note as well. Students must never carry any kind of medication in their backpacks around campus and take them without supervision, without written permission from school. All medication taken during school hours must be dispensed by a designated school staff. Permission may be granted for a student to carry and self-administer life-saving medications, such as inhalers, diabetic supplies/insulin or epinephrine injectors, only after the student has completed the required school's medication protocol and approval is filed in the nurse's office. Over the counter medication such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Hydrocortisone, Neosporin, Benadryl, Cough Drops, Antacids, or any like remedies, are usually available at the nurse's office and may be administered in school as needed.
- i) **School's Student Portal:** Students are required to provide their login information (username and password) for their school's student portal to their local coordinators on the first week of school.
- j) **School Conduct:** Students are expected to treat classmates, and school personnel with respect, be on time for classes, turn in all homework and assignments on time, participate in class, and have an overall positive attitude towards school. When communicating with teachers and other school personnel, students must always use Mr., Mrs., or Ms., plus the person's last name. Students are responsible to care for their personal belongings at school and should never leave their things unattended. ExchangeMate, the school and the host family are not responsible for the loss or theft of student's personal belongings in or outside school.

American schools have very strict policies related to the use of cell phone on campus and dress code. It is the student's responsibility to read their school rules and policies before starting school and to comply during their participation in the Program.

Possession or use of legal or illegal drugs, medications, tobacco products (including cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vapes, pipes and cigars), possession or consumption of alcohol, and possession or use of any kind of weapon on school campus will result in immediate expulsion from school and termination from the ExchangeMate High School Program.

- k) **School Lunch:** Students are expected to purchase their own lunch at school during the week. If students would like to bring their own lunch to school, they must buy lunch items and prepare at home.
- l) **Additional Fees:** Students are responsible for all non-mandatory school fees. Such fees may include but are not limited to, uniform, books, laptop rentals, lockers, laboratory fees, tutoring, AP or Dual Enrollment class fees, gym or physical education attire, yearbook, class ring, sports fees, student activities, testing and graduation fees, etc.
- m) **Athletics:** Students are not guaranteed participation in any interscholastic sports. Athletic eligibility is determined solely by the high school, school district, and the appropriate regional or state High School Athletics Association. Each state has different rules for sports participation. Students can find more information about sports regulations on the High School Athletics Association website of each state. Please note that each sport is played in a specific season, therefore it is the student's responsibility to check when a specific sport will start in their high school, and when the tryout dates will be.

Students must never contact the school coach to inquire about sports participation prior to arrival in the USA and final registration at the school and should inform ExchangeMate immediately if a school coach contacts the student before coming to the USA. Sports participation should be considered a recreational activity and must not be the main purpose of the student's participation in the High School Program.

- n) **Schoolbooks & Laptop Computers:** Students are responsible for returning their schoolbooks and laptop computers and chargers at the end of the school semester or year. Failure to do so may result in additional charges by the school and delay in receiving school transcripts. Students are fully responsible to pay any additional fees related to damage or loss of schoolbooks or laptop computers, and any other school property item.
- o) **Change of Schools:** Students may not, under any circumstances, change schools without the express permission of the ExchangeMate Head Office. Change of schools during the program is very hard and unlikely to happen; however, if the student would like to change schools during the program for any reason, a Change of School Request must be submitted to ExchangeMate for approval.

**Public Schools:** Students are usually required to attend the school designated to the host family's address; therefore, a change of school may result in a change of host family as well.

- **Change of School within the same School District:** For changes within the same school district a \$500 Change of Placement Fee will incur, if change of school is approved.

- **Transfer to another School District or to a Private School:** If a school transfer is approved to a school in another school district or to a private school, a \$500 Change of Placement Fee plus the new school district/private school fees will incur. An additional host family stipend will incur if the host family stipend is higher in the new location the student is transferring to. Public School Districts do not refund any fees to students after the beginning of school; therefore, in such cases the student will lose the fees paid to the first district and will be required to pay the new school district/private school fees for the transfer to be completed. Any change of school is subject to School District's approval and school availability.

**Private Schools:** Each Private School has its own refund policy, but most schools do not refund any fees after the beginning of school. Therefore, if a school transfer is approved, a \$500 Change of Placement Fee will incur plus the fees for the new school the student will be transferring to. An additional host family stipend will incur if the host family stipend is higher in the new location the student is transferring to. Any refund granted by the first school will be applied towards the new school fees and student will be required to pay the remaining balance.

## 05. HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS & APOSTILLE

- a) **Transcripts:** Students are responsible to request their final transcripts at school at the end of the program and pay for any related fees at school before departure. Students shall request for transcripts to be mailed to the ExchangeMate Head Office at 1450 Lake Baldwin Lane, Unit A - Orlando, FL 32814. ExchangeMate will mail all Transcripts and Program Certificates to the sending organization upon receipt of transcripts. ExchangeMate is not responsible to request students' transcripts and is not responsible for the delay in the issuance of school transcripts. A service fee of \$50 will be charged for students who do not request their transcripts before departure and need ExchangeMate to do that. An additional \$50 will be charged for transcripts that need to be notarized.
- b) **Apostille:** ExchangeMate does not provide Apostille services. Therefore, students who require their transcripts to be Apostilled, must contract a third-party for this process before the end of the program. On these cases, students should request their school to send the transcripts directly to the Apostille service provider.

## 06. STUDENT CONDUCT AND ACTIVITIES

- a) **Weapons:** Students are not permitted to handle, possess, or operate firearms or any other weapons or equipment, including for the purpose of hunting, target shooting, and axe throwing (e.g., bow and arrow, crossbow, knife, bb guns, nerf guns, axe etc.). Students must not commit or take part in any act of violence against another person or property. Any act of violence may lead to criminal charges and immediate termination from the Program.
- b) **Driving:** Due to the danger and liability involved in operating motorized vehicles, students are not allowed to drive or operate any kind of motorized vehicle during the Program. This includes, but is not limited to, cars, boats, jet skis, golf carts, motorcycles, electric scooters, electric bikes, snowmobiles, 4 wheelers, quad bikes, and aircrafts. Students may take Driver's Education Classes in school or in a private driving school while participating in the ExchangeMate High School Program if natural parents have agreed to the participation of such activity in the Program Waivers Form. In such cases, students will only be allowed to drive accompanied by his/her driving instructor during classes.
- c) **High-Risk Activities:** Students are not allowed to participate in "high-risk" activities, including but not limited to hang-gliding, sky diving, scuba diving, bungee-jumping, mountaineering, or any other activity deemed high-risk by ExchangeMate, local coordinator and the host family. Students may ski or snowboard during the program if natural parents have agreed to the participation of such activities in the Program Waivers Form. Students who intend to ski or snowboard during the program must buy an additional insurance coverage for the practice of such sports.
- d) **Conduct:** Students are expected to become an integral member of the host family, school and community. Students must always be respectful towards others, including host family members, school staff, other students and all the ExchangeMate team members and representatives. Students must never yell, nor show a disrespectful or violent behavior towards anyone during the program. ExchangeMate reserves the right to submit the student to an evaluation if the student's social behavior and conduct becomes a concern to the host family, local coordinator, and/or the school. ExchangeMate reserves the right to request students to remove any inappropriate pictures and comments from their social media platforms. Students must not engage into any type of bullying practice during the program. Bullying is considered any form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort. Bullying can take the form of physical contact, words or more subtle actions.
- e) **Sexual Behavior:** Students are to refrain from sexual and promiscuous behavior and activity. Students found to be sexually active during the program, pregnant or responsible for a pregnancy will be sent home immediately. Distribution and receipt of sexually explicit material or images are also prohibited during the Program. ExchangeMate reserves the right to request students to remove any inappropriate pictures and comments from their social media platforms.



- f) **Bike Riding:** In many locations riding a bike can be a very convenient way of transportation for teenagers. Students are allowed to ride a bicycle within their neighborhood during the program, as long as the natural parents have provided permission for that in the Program Waivers Form. In such cases, students are required to always wear a helmet, and to get and use a lock for their bikes. Students must always lock the bike when “parking” outside. If the host family lends a bicycle to the student and the student damages the bike or the bike is stolen, the student will be responsible to fix or replace the bike. Students must never ride a bicycle in major roads and highways, must never wear headphones/earbuds during rides, and are only allowed to ride a bike during the day, and only within their neighborhood.
- g) **Scooters, Rollerblades and Skateboards:** Students are allowed to ride scooters, rollerblades and skateboards only within their neighborhood or at a skate park during the program, as long as the natural parents have provided permission for that in the Program Waivers Form. In such cases, students are required to always wear a helmet, ride only during the day, must never wear headphones/earbuds when riding on the street, and must never ride in major roads and highways.
- h) **Riding with Teenager Drivers:** In most states teenagers are allowed to drive at 16 years of age. Therefore, students may have host siblings or friends who drive. Students are allowed to ride in a car with a teenager driver only within the host family community (maximum 30 miles/48 km from the host family’s home), as long as the natural parents have provided permission for that in the Program Waivers Form.
- i) **Uber/Lyft Rides:** Students are allowed to ride Uber or Lyft during the program, as long as the natural parents have provided permission for that in the Program Waivers Form. The following conditions must be followed: students must never ride alone, must never ride at night, and must notify their host parents when they start the ride, providing them with their estimated time of arrival at their final destination. Students must check-in with their host parents as soon as they have arrived at their final destination.
- j) **Activities:** Local coordinators and schools may organize field trips, excursions, activities and travel for students during the program. Students will be responsible to pay for the costs incurred in their participation in such events.
- k) **Personal Hygiene:** It is customary in America to take a shower every day, put on deodorant afterwards, wash hair frequently, and change clothes daily, especially in warm locations. Students are expected to maintain a basic hygiene routine for a healthy and comfortable stay. ExchangeMate reserves the right to intervene and establish a hygiene protocol if the student’s hygiene becomes a concern to the host family, local coordinator and/or the school.
- l) **Friends:** Students are expected to initiate contact with classmates and make friends with American students, and not hang out with only international students during the program. Getting involved in school activities, attending church with the host family, participating in youth groups, and attending events in the community are great ways to meet other teenagers in the area. Students must be aware that being in the presence of minors drinking alcohol or consuming drugs can have serious consequences and may lead to repatriation, even if the student was not consuming. Students must remove themselves immediately if they are at a gathering or a party where this is taking place. ExchangeMate reserves the right to ask the student to stop seeing or hanging out with a particular person or a group of people if the host family, local coordinator and/or school believe they may cause any harm or danger to the student or may have a bad influence on the student in any way. That applies to boyfriends, girlfriends, or other friends. The host family, school and local coordinator’s opinion will be taken into consideration when making such decision.
- m) **Life-changing Decisions:** Students are not permitted to make life-changing decisions while in the program, including but not limited to marriage, religious conversion, body piercing, tattoos, or other decisions with legal, political, religious and/or social ramifications.
- n) **English Only Policy:** Students are expected to speak only in English during the program, even among other students of the same nationality. Speaking a language other than English in the presence of host family members and American friends who don’t speak the student’s language, is considered rude and may result in uncomfortable situations. Speaking only English will also help students to improve their English faster and help them socialize with host family and other students in school who only speak English.

- o) **End of Program Responsibilities:** Students are responsible to make sure they don't leave any outstanding debts before returning home. This includes but is not limited to outstanding medical bills not covered by the insurance, missing or damaged schoolbooks and computers, long distance phone call bills, etc. If students leave before taking care of any outstanding debts, the natural parents will be responsible for payment in addition to a \$100 surcharge to cover the costs of ExchangeMate's collection of funds and payment allocations. Payment must be submitted to ExchangeMate within 48 hours of receipt of the bill.

## 07. HOST FAMILY

Host families participate in the High School Program because of their sincere desire to have a cross-cultural experience and learn about other cultures while sharing the American way of life. American families who join the ExchangeMate High School Program have various household sizes and are from diverse cultures, religions, and educational backgrounds. Host families can range from a single parent to a mother and father with many children. Each family will have their own lifestyle, which often results in a variety of home types and sizes. ExchangeMate does not guarantee placement with a particular type of host family (for example, with a teenager in the home, specific family structure, race, ethnicity, religion, etc.).

- a) **Expectations:** Students must integrate themselves in the host family's life and routine, participate in family activities and become a valuable member of the family. Students must not treat the host family like a hotel, should not spend time isolated in their rooms when the family is home, should initiate interaction with host family members and offer to help around the house as the other members of the family.
- b) **General Rules:** Students are expected to obey all reasonable host family rules. Host families will share their household rules and expectations with students shortly after arrival. All students must always keep their bedroom and bathroom clean and organized, make their own bed in the morning before leaving to school and do their laundry on a weekly basis, unless the host family offers to do it for them. In America everyone helps around the house and as a member of the family the student will be expected to do the same. Student must always ask the host family about any chores they are expected to do during their stay. Students must never close their bedroom doors when other people are in their bedroom. Students must never allow younger children in their bedroom and must never stay in younger siblings' bedrooms. Interactions with younger siblings shall be made in common areas of the home only.
- c) **Plans:** Students may not have guests in the host family's home without their permission. Students must always ask permission before making plans with others. Students must communicate with their host families about any change of plans and/or routine and must always follow the curfew established by their parents. If a student is on the host parents' location sharing app, such as FindMy or Life360, it must never be turned off. Students are required to always communicate clearly and honestly with their host parents about their whereabouts.
- d) **Dress Code:** Most American families are very cautious and conservative with the way their children dress and will not be comfortable if their international student wears something that they do not allow their own children to wear, or that they do not consider appropriate for this age group. Students must not bring or buy clothes that contain offensive or inappropriate language or images (such as marijuana leaf, alcohol bottles or glasses, drugs of any kind, naked people, etc.). Girls shall not wear shorts that are too short, tops without a t-shirt over it, blouses or dresses that are too revealing, and string bikinis. Students must keep in mind that they will be living in someone else's home, and they shall understand that the dress code established for the host family's own children will also apply to them. Students must always get dressed in the bathroom after taking a shower and should never walk around wrapped up in a towel. Boys must never walk around the house without a T-shirt on or in their underwear, and girls must never walk around in small pajamas or underwear.
- e) **Computer and Cell Phone Usage:** Students must not be on their phones and computers excessively, as this may interfere with the student's adjustment at school and interaction with the host family at home. Students should not use host family's phone for long distance phone calls. There are several phone apps that can be used for these purposes. In case that happens, students must pay for all long-distance phone calls when phone bills arrive. Calls home must be limited to two times per week.



f) **Transportation and Rides:** host families are willing to help students with occasional rides during the program, just as they do for their own children. Students should always discuss the need of rides with their host families in advance, as host families may not be able to assist with last minute ride requests. In some areas, students will have access to public transportation, and should ask their host families to help them familiarize themselves with bus routes and schedules, that way they can be more independent.

- **School:** Students may take the school bus or public transportation to and from school, whichever is available. If a student lives within 2 miles from school, they will be considered in a walking distance zone, therefore they shall walk or ride a bike to school. Host families are not responsible to transport students to and from school, however they may be able to assist on occasions.

- **After School Activities:** It is the student's responsibility to arrange transportation to and from any after school activity, including sports practice, games, club meetings, rehearsals, etc.

If the student requires the host family to provide regular rides to and from school or after school activities and if the host family agrees with such arrangements, an additional transportation fee will incur. The total amount will be calculated based on the Standard Mileage Rate and shall be paid by the student's natural parents in a lump sum for the entire duration of the program and/or activity.

g) **Meals:** Host families will provide breakfast and dinner during the week and breakfast, lunch and dinner on weekends and holidays (non-school days). American families usually have busy lives, and during the week dinner is normally the only meal that families will eat together, schedules permitting. In most American families, teenagers prepare their own breakfast in the morning, so the host families will provide students with breakfast items for them to make their breakfast before going to school. Dinner is prepared by the host family, although students are usually welcome to assist. Students are responsible to buy their own lunch at school, which may vary from \$2 to \$10 per day, depending on the school and what the student would like to eat. If the student prefers to bring a prepared lunch from home, they must buy and prepare those lunch items. Students are also responsible for the purchase of their own snacks to keep at home or to bring to school. Host families will purchase regular brands and types of food items that they normally buy for the whole family. Students who would like specific brands or types of products, must purchase these items for themselves.

h) **Special Diet:** Special diet may be accommodated by the host family, but it is not guaranteed. Students who have food allergies or special dietary needs are expected to assist in the preparation of their meal and will be responsible to buy their special items to accommodate their needs. Students should specify their dietary needs and food allergies in the application form and provide as much detail as possible.

i) **Eating Out and Take-out Food:** Students are responsible to pay for their own meals when eating out. If the host family offers to pay for the student's meal, student should be considerate of the host family's offer and should order a meal that is in the same price range as the meals ordered by the other family members. If the host family orders take-out food (delivery), for the whole family they will be responsible to pay for the student's meal. If the student chooses to have food delivered to the house because he/she does not want to eat the meal prepared by the host family, the student is responsible to pay for his/her meal.

j) **SIM Card:** All students are required to have an American cell phone number during the program to facilitate communication with school, host family, local coordinator, and local friends. ExchangeMate provides all students with an American SIM Card, and students are responsible to make sure their phones are unlocked to be used in the USA. Students are responsible for the payment of their monthly phone bill. Cell phone charges range between \$35 to \$50 per month, depending on the plan. An activation fee between \$10 to \$20 is normally charged in the first month.

k) **Money:** Students must never borrow money from the host family nor give or lend money to them. Students are responsible to pay for any damage caused by them at the host family, including the repair or replacement of damaged items or products. In such cases, ExchangeMate will communicate with the sending organization to inform about the incident and will send an invoice to the sending organization to collect necessary funds from natural parents. ExchangeMate will reimburse the host family upon receipt of funds. Students must never pay the host family directly, unless authorized by ExchangeMate.

- l) **Monthly Allowance:** Natural parents must provide students with an adequate amount of spending money during the program. Anything between \$300 - \$500 per month should be sufficient to cover their basic needs and allow for some entertainment activities. Students are responsible for all their personal expenses such as clothes, gym memberships, cell phone plans, school lunches, and anything else they want to buy or do during the program. Therefore, natural parents and students should agree on an amount that will be sufficient to cover all these expenses. Students are responsible to manage their money during the program and should budget their expenses accordingly.
- m) **Activities:** Students are expected to participate in family activities with their host families while in the program, including going to church, family get togethers, cook outs, camping, going to the movies, going bowling, going to parks, and any other activity. This is a good opportunity for students and host families to spend quality time together and to develop deeper bonds with one another. Students are responsible to pay for their own activity costs when doing an activity with or without the host family (e.g., purchase of park tickets, movie tickets, entrance fees for events, etc.).
- n) **Location Sharing and Communication with Friends' Parents:** For safety reasons, it is customary for American parents to use location sharing apps such as FindMy or Life360 with their teenager children, and they must always leave it on. Therefore, students will be required to follow the same protocol. American parents usually communicate with one another when their teenager children are making plans to hang out together. Therefore, host families may request students to provide their friends' parents contact information prior to authorizing an outing with friends, and/or meet the student's friends.
- o) **Holidays:** Students are expected to spend major holidays with their host families unless their program ends before such occasions. Student travel during major holidays may be permitted if the host family, natural parents and ExchangeMate agree to the travel arrangements. Required travel forms must be submitted according to the travel guidelines outlined in item 9 of this agreement. Student must be back to the host family at least two days before the beginning of school and must not miss any days of school because of a holiday travel, without written permission from school and ExchangeMate.
- p) **Travel Expenses:** Students are responsible to pay for their own travel expenses when traveling with their host families. Travel costs should be discussed and agreed by student, natural parents, and host family, prior to making any travel arrangements. Required travel forms must be submitted according to the travel guidelines outlined in item 9 of this agreement.
- q) **Change of Host Family:** Students may not, under any circumstances, change host family without the approval of the ExchangeMate Head Office. In case of a problem between student and host family, the local coordinator will mediate the situation and will take necessary action to resolve the problem. If a change of family is deemed necessary, the ExchangeMate Head Office will be notified by the local coordinator and a change of family will be granted. ExchangeMate will try to keep the student in the same school zone, but a change of school might be necessary if a change of host family occurs. Students may request one change of host family during the program and a \$500 Change of Placement Fee will incur. Please note that ExchangeMate will assign the student to the new host family and will provide the new Placement Confirmation to the student and the sending organization. ExchangeMate will not consult with the student during this process, and students will not be allowed to communicate nor meet the new host family before the placement is confirmed.

## 08. NATURAL PARENTS/RELATIVES VISIT OR TRAVEL WITH THE STUDENT DURING THE PROGRAM

Visits by members of the student's natural family or friends from home country can be disruptive to the adjustment of the student and an inconvenience to the host family. Therefore, all visits during the program are discouraged until the very end of the program. Any visits during the program must be communicated to the ExchangeMate Head Office by the sending organization and will be subject to approval. Program rules for Natural Parents/Relatives' visit and travel with students during the program are as follow:

- Natural Parents/Relatives are not allowed to visit/travel with the student within the first 3 months of the program. Exceptions may apply on special circumstances and any decision regarding this matter is at the sole discretion of ExchangeMate.
- Friends, Boyfriends and Girlfriends' visit during the program will not be authorized under any circumstances.
- If Natural Parents/Relatives would like to visit the student during the program, they must submit the Natural Parents/Relatives Visit Request Form to ExchangeMate at least 30 days prior to the intended arrival date in the USA. ExchangeMate will notify the student, host family, and sending organization, of visit approval status.
- Natural Parents/Relatives' visit/travel during major holidays is not encouraged, as students are expected to spend these special occasions with their host families.
- Natural Parents/Relatives must never stay in the host family's home and are responsible to make their own accommodation and transportation arrangements. Host family should not be requested to pick up or drop off visitors at the airport.
- Natural Parents/Relatives should not expect the host family to change their routine to accommodate their visit.
- Visits should not interfere in the student's schedule and routine. Students will only be authorized to miss school during natural parents/relatives visit if written permission from school is granted.
- If Natural Parents/Relatives would like to travel with the student during the program, they must submit the Natural Parents/Relatives Travel Request Form to ExchangeMate at least 30 days prior to the intended travel date with their child during the program. Students will only be authorized to miss school for travel with natural parents/relatives visit if written permission from school is granted. ExchangeMate will notify the student, host family, and sending organization, of travel approval status.

Failure to comply with the ExchangeMate Visit and Travel Rules may result in immediate termination of the student's program and early return home, without any reimbursement of program fees. ExchangeMate reserves the right to deny any Natural Parents/Relatives visits or travel with the student during the program.

## 09. TRAVEL

### 9.1 Travel Guidelines

- Travel with the Host Family (Domestic Travel within the USA with no cost to student):** Students are allowed to travel with their host families within the country without the need of additional travel release to be signed by the natural parents, as long as the permission has been given in the Program Waivers Form, as the host parents are the student's temporary guardians during the program. If the travel will not incur any costs to the student, no additional travel forms are needed.
- Travel with the Host Family (Domestic Travel within the USA with additional cost to student):** Students are allowed to travel with their host families within the country without the need of additional travel release to be signed by the natural parents, as the host parents are the student's temporary guardians during the program. If the travel will incur any costs to the student, the following form is needed:
  - **Host Family:** *HF Travel Invitation Form* with details of travel costs for the student. ExchangeMate will submit this form to the sending organization to be approved and signed by the natural parents.
  - **Natural Parents:** Sign the Agreement & Release part of the *HF Family Travel Invitation Form*. Submit payment for all travel costs directly to the host family before travel date.
- Travel with the Host Family (International Travel):** The following forms will be required:
  - **Student:** I-20 Travel Endorsement page signed by the Designated School Official (DSO) of the school or school district.
  - **Host Family:** *HF Travel Invitation Form* with details of travel costs for the student. ExchangeMate will submit this form to the sending organization to be approved and signed by the natural parents.
  - **Natural Parents:** Sign the Agreement & Release part of the *HF Family Travel Invitation Form* and submit the *NP International Travel Release Form*. Submit payment for all travel costs directly to the host family before travel date.

d) **Travel with a Third Party (Domestic Travel within the USA):** If the student is traveling with a third party, including, but not limited to, another ExchangeMate's host family, local coordinator, friend's family, school, church, club, etc., the following forms will be required:

- **Student:** *Student Travel Request Form*
- **Host Family:** *Host Family Travel Permission Form (For Travel with a Third Party)*
- **Person who will be responsible for the student during travel:** *Third Party Agreement*
- **Natural Parents:** *NP Domestic Travel Release Form (For Travel with a Third Party)*

(Natural Parents do not need to provide additional release form for travel organized by ExchangeMate, or any ExchangeMate's local coordinators or representatives, if permission was given in the Program Waivers Form)

e) **Travel with a Third Party (International Travel):** If the student is traveling internationally with a third party, including, but not limited to, another ExchangeMate's host family, local coordinator, friend's family, school, church, club, etc., the following forms will be required:

- **Student:** *Student Travel Request Form & I-20 Travel Endorsement page signed by the Designated School Official (DSO) of the school or school district.*
- **Host Family:** *Host Family Travel Permission Form (For Travel with a Third Party)*
- **Person who will be responsible for the student during travel:** *Third Party Agreement*
- **Natural Parents:** *NP International Travel Release Form*

f) **Travel with Natural Parents during the program:**

- **Student (for international travel only):** *I-20 Travel Endorsement page signed by the Designated School Official (DSO) of the school or school district.*
- **Host Family:** *Host Family Agreement (For Natural Parents/Relatives Visit/Travel with Student During the Program)*
- **Natural Parents:** *NP Travel Request Form (For Travel with Student During the Program)*

g) **Student Travel Home during the program:** If the student would like to travel home during school breaks and holidays, the following forms will be required:

- **Student & Natural Parents:** *Student Travel Home Form* signed by the natural parents.
- **Student:** *I-20 Travel Endorsement page signed by the Designated School Official (DSO) of the school or school district.*

Students shall communicate any travel plans to their local coordinators and request travel forms at least 30 days prior to their intended travel date. ExchangeMate will provide all travel forms to be signed by all parties. Students will not be allowed to travel until all signed forms have been submitted.

Students will only be authorized to miss school to travel during the program if written permission from school is granted. Students are not allowed to travel without adult supervision by bus or train, and in vehicles with drivers under 25 years of age, if travelling outside of the host family community. Outside of the host family community is defined as more than 30 miles from the host family's home. Students are not allowed to hitchhike or to get rides with strangers.

**International Travel:** For international travel during the program, students are required to request permission from the school or school district and have the Travel Endorsement page of their I-20 signed by the Designated School Official (DSO) of the school or school district to be able to re-enter the country. It is the student's responsibility to complete this process before traveling. Failure to comply may result in denial of re-entry in the USA upon return. It is the student and natural parents' responsibility to confirm travel requirements for the country he/she will be traveling to, including vaccination and visa requirements. Natural parents must also contact student's insurance to confirm if coverage is included for travel outside the United States, and purchase additional insurance coverage for the international travel, if necessary.

Students who withdraw from the program or who are terminated by ExchangeMate, must depart the United States within 48 hours of withdrawal or termination. Travel within the country after withdrawal or termination is not allowed.

ExchangeMate reserves the right to deny any travel request during the Program.

## 9.2 Student stay/travel after official program end date

F-1 visa holders have a 60-day grace period to remain in the USA after the official school end date listed on the I-20 form. Students must not depart and return to the United States during this grace period, as they will not be able to re-enter the country and the rest of the grace period will be lost. Students who stay beyond 60 days will be in violation of their visa status.

The ExchangeMate official program end date is always 3 days after the official school end date. For students who would like to stay after the official program end date, the following forms will be required.

- a) **Student Stay/Travel with the host family after official program end date:** If the student would like to stay/travel with the host family after the official program end date, the following forms will be required:
  - **Natural Parents:** *NP After Program Stay/Travel Release (For Student Stay/Travel with the Host Family)* & Proof of Extended Insurance.
  - **Host Family:** *Host Family Invitation Agreement Form (For Student Stay After Program)*
- b) **Student Stay/Travel with a third party after official program end date:** If the student would like to stay/travel with a third party after the official program end date, the following forms will be required:
  - **Natural Parents:** *NP After Program Stay/Travel Release (For Student Stay/Travel with a Third Party)* & Proof of Extended Insurance.
- c) **Student Travel with natural parents after official program end date:** If the student would like to travel with the natural parents after the official program end date, the following forms will be required:
  - **Natural Parents:** *NP After Program Travel Release (For Travel with Natural Parents)* & Proof of Extended Insurance.

Approval to stay with the host family after the official program end date is subject to host family availability and willingness to continue hosting the student voluntarily for the additional time. If the host family agrees to continue hosting the student after the program end date, this will be considered a personal invitation from the host family and the student will no longer be under ExchangeMate's supervision. Natural Parents will be required to submit the release form and proof of extended insurance, outlined in item 9.2.a above, at least two weeks before the official program end date. All arrangements, including any financial compensation to the host family for extended stay, shall be discussed between natural parents and the student's host family directly.

For students who would like to stay/travel with a third party or with the natural parents, the release forms outlined in items 9.2.b and 9.2.c above and proof of extended insurance, will be required at least two weeks before the official program end date.

## 10. COMMUNICATION DURING THE PROGRAM

Students and natural parents must respect the following line of communication:

Student/Host Family/School → Local Coordinator → Student Advisor → Sending Organization → Natural Parents

Natural Parents → Sending Organization → Student Advisor → Local Coordinator → Student/Host Family/School

**Natural parents must not contact the ExchangeMate team members and schools/school districts directly at any time. Communication with student's natural parents shall be handled exclusively by the sending organization. Exceptions will only be made in case of emergencies.**

Natural Parents and students should refrain from daily communication with each other during the program. Students need time to adjust in their new lives in America and everyday contact with natural parents and home country friends will interfere with this process. ExchangeMate reserves the right to ask students to limit communication with natural parents and home country friends if that is interfering with the student's adjustment in the program, host family and school.

**For Reference:**

**Local Coordinator** - ExchangeMate's local person of support for students and host families during the program.

**Student Advisor** - ExchangeMate's additional person of support for students during the program, and responsible to communicate with sending organizations regarding their students.

**Sending Organization** - International organization that helped students and natural parents in their home country during the application process and that continues to provide support to natural parents during the program.

## 11. PHOTO AND DATA USE

ExchangeMate reserves the right to take and publish photographs, videos and testimonials of all students who participate in the program for promotional purposes of its High School Program only. Marketing can be print or digital media (promotion, publicity, and advertising), social media platforms and website. Promotional materials, videos, photos, and testimonials may be shared with ExchangeMate's partners for the same purpose. No marketing material will disclose the student's full name or any other personal information, only the first name and country if any remarks are made.

## 12. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

For students to maintain the F-1 visa, they must follow school and immigration regulations and respect the five (5) following conditions:

1. Students must follow all local, state and federal laws.
2. Students must follow their school policies and regulations.
3. Students must follow all the ExchangeMate program rules outlined in this Program Terms & Conditions.
4. Students must follow all rules set forth by the host family.
5. Student must carry proper insurance during the program.

Students who are found to be in violation of any of the conditions listed above, will be subject to disciplinary actions and will be at risk of termination from the ExchangeMate High School Program.

A small infraction will result in a Warning Letter to the student, outlining the infraction and the expected behavior modification. Student will be given a time to show improvement and the local coordinator will follow up with the student, school and/or host family to monitor student's progress and improvement.

A serious infraction, or another infraction committed after the student has already received a Warning Letter will result in a Probation Letter. A Probation is the last chance the student will receive to show improvement and change of behavior. Students who are put on Probation will be required to follow the expected behavior modification until the end of the program.

Students who commit another infraction after being put on Probation will be immediately terminated from the Program. Students who commit a very serious infraction or who are expelled from school, will be immediately terminated from the Program without any previous warning or probation.



The seriousness of the infraction and course of action will be at the sole discretion of ExchangeMate. Students and Natural parents will have 48 hours to return the signed Warning or Probation Letters to ExchangeMate. Failure to comply will result in immediate termination from the Program. Students who are terminated from the program must return home within 48 hours of termination.

## 13. HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Students must provide the following health forms as part of the application process: Medical Information, Physician's Statement of Health, and Immunization Form & Card from home country. Students and natural parents shall provide as much information as possible regarding the student's current and past physical and mental health history, including any allergies and chronic health conditions.

Students who have Diabetes, Asthma, Gluten allergy or any other chronic health conditions or life-threatening allergies, must provide the following:

- Signed statement from Physician with official seal, providing details of the condition and plan of care. Physician must also indicate if the student has any restriction of activities, including participation in physical education classes and sports, and releasing the student to participate in the High School Program abroad.
- If any medication is being used, details of the medication, dosage, and frequency.

Failure to disclose full and accurate information about the student's current and past physical and mental health history, allergies and chronic health conditions during the application process is considered omission and misrepresentation and it is grounds for termination and immediate return home.

### 13.1 Mental Health

It is the natural parents' responsibility to ensure full disclosure of details if their child has had any history or currently has any of the following conditions: panic attacks, anxiety, OCD, ADD, ADHD, self-harm, eating disorders, depression, gender identity questions, autism spectrum, mood swings, and any other mental health condition. Natural parents must also disclose if their child has ever received any type of counseling, including life coaching, therapy sessions, psychological or psychiatric examination or treatment, diagnosis, etc.

- a) **Past Mental Health Condition:** Students who have had any mental health condition, must provide the following:
- Signed statement from Mental Health Professional with official seal, providing details of the condition and treatment received.
  - If any medication was used, details of the medication, dosage, and duration of treatment.
  - Signed recommendation from Mental Health Professional with official seal, stating the date that the student completed treatment and confirming that the student is released to participate in the High School Program abroad. Professional must also indicate whether he/she believes the student can cope with everyday situations without presenting a disruption or expected harm to himself/herself or others during this time abroad.
- b) **Current Mental Health Condition:** Students who are currently being treated for any mental health condition, must provide the following:
- Signed statement from Mental Health Professional with official seal, providing details of the condition and treatment plan.
  - If any medication is being used, details of the medication, dosage, and estimated duration of treatment.
  - Information if the student will need to continue treatment while in the program.
  - Signed recommendation from Mental Health Professional with official seal, releasing the student to participate in the High School Program abroad. Professional must also indicate whether he/she believes the student can cope with everyday situations without presenting a disruption or expected harm to himself/herself or others during this time abroad.

Current or past physical or mental health conditions do not result in immediate refusal of the student's application for the ExchangeMate High School Program. ExchangeMate will take into consideration the student's medical and mental health history and physician's statements before making a final decision.

For any student who needs additional time for testing due to a health condition, a signed statement from the doctor must be submitted with the application. Students must also bring the original doctor's note to present at school during the final registration process upon arrival.

ExchangeMate reserves the right to submit any student to a mental health evaluation at any time during the program, if there is any indication that the student is having mental health issues and/or if the student's mental health state becomes a concern to the host family, local coordinator and/or the school. Refusal to be assessed by a Mental Health Professional is grounds for repatriation and immediate termination from the ExchangeMate High School Program.

ExchangeMate reserves the right to terminate a student's participation in the program at any time, if in the judgment of ExchangeMate, the local coordinator, host family and/or school, a condition arises that is likely to be detrimental to the health or safety of the student, the host family, and others. Students who are terminated from the program will have to return home within 48 hours of termination. If a student's condition is such that a Mental Health Professional does not recommend the student to fly home alone, natural parents must make arrangements to come pick up their child or ExchangeMate may make arrangements for a team member to accompany the student on the flight back home at the natural parents' expenses.

ExchangeMate cannot be held liable, financially or otherwise, for a participant's withdrawal or termination as a result of a pre-existing physical or emotional/mental condition that was not disclosed on the student's application, or for a new condition that has arisen after arrival. No refunds will be made in such cases, and travel expenses arising from premature return home, either alone or accompanied, must be borne by the student's natural parents.

### **13.2 Insurance**

International students are required to have insurance coverage for the whole duration of the program. Insurance may be offered through the sending organization or ExchangeMate. The insurance must have a minimum coverage of \$100,000 and must include Mental Health Coverage. If the student is planning to play sports in school, the international insurance must cover interscholastic sports participation. Students who intend to ski or snowboard during the program must buy an additional coverage for the practice of such sports.

Insurance companies usually have their own network of providers. Students should always contact their insurance before going to a doctor in the USA. It is the student's responsibility to look for doctors within their insurance network. Some insurance plans will require students to make a payment and file a claim later for reimbursement, others will have a flat co-payment amount that the student needs to pay upfront, and others will not require payments upfront and will send a bill for any outstanding balance that is the student's responsibility to pay. Students must read their insurance information and make sure they know what the procedure is in case they need to use the insurance during the program.

If the insurance is issued by the sending organization, ExchangeMate must receive insurance information for all students 2 weeks prior to arrival. All insurance cards must have an American contact number to be used during the program.

Natural parents are responsible to pay for any outstanding medical bills that are not covered by the insurance. Payment must be submitted within 48 hours of receipt of the bill. If students leave before taking care of outstanding insurance bills, the natural parents will be responsible for payment, in addition to a \$100 surcharge to cover the costs of ExchangeMate's collection of funds and payment allocations.

## 14. EXTENSIONS

Students may request to extend their program after arrival in the United States by submitting a ***Program Extension Request*** to their sending organization. The extension request must be initiated by the sending organization and will be conditional to the host family and school availability. Once the extension is granted, the sending organization will present the extension costs to the student and natural parents.

Students are responsible for any change fees to their domestic and/or international airline tickets and for the extension of their international student insurance.

## 15. CANCELLATION POLICY

- **Cancellation before arrival:** Students must follow the cancellation policy established in their contract with the sending organization.
- **Cancellation after arrival or termination from the program and/or school:** No refunds will be granted.

**Students and Natural Parents shall sign the respective Program Agreement Pages to confirm acknowledgment and acceptance of the ExchangeMate Program Terms & Conditions.**

ExchangeMate reserves the right to make any changes to the High School Program Terms & Conditions or other application documents at any time during the application process. In such cases, the new documents will be sent to students and natural parents for review and signature. New documents replace and supersede any documents previously signed.