

Summer Short Term Exchange Program (STEP)

Frequently Asked Questions by YEO's

The Commonly Asked Questions by Students and Parents document will answer many of your questions and can be forwarded to families that inquire about the Summer Short Term Exchange Program (STEP) which was new in 2017.

Here are a few additional questions/answers just for YEO's and other Rotary leaders. Remember this is a new program so don't worry if you don't know the answers. Refer students to the website and you or the student can contact STEP Officer Melanie DeLuca at rotarymelanie@gmail.com with your questions.

What is a student asks which program they should apply for – long term or short term?

Both programs promote world peace and understanding and provide an exchange experience but otherwise they are very different.

- Encourage young students (freshman/sophomores) or those who might not have the confidence to go away for a year to do STEP first.
- Short term is only one month in another country + one month hosting – Long term is 10-11 months – these are different experiences.
- Long term exchange students become fluent in another language and culture. STEP students get a taste of exchange and build a lasting friendship with their matched sibling and family.
- STEP applicants and their families must be excited and ready to host a student for a month in the summer and must have the time to spend sharing their culture with the host student in order to pack in lots of experiences in just one month.
- The cost is less for STEP but families are still responsible for purchasing a round trip airline ticket and providing spending money for their student. Overall cost is less but if calculated as a per month cost, it would be higher.

What is our Rotary Club and YEO responsible for?

- Promote the opportunity for both school year long and summer short term exchange programs to students in your community.
- Sign the application form for the applicant if you believe the student and their family would be a good fit for the program. For STEP you can choose to interview the student or just talk by phone. All applicants will be interviewed at the district level on December 9th.
- List a counselor on the application form as an emergency contact - there are no formal duties for the counselor for short term exchange – just a contact in the event of an emergency.
- If the applicant is accepted for the program – the Rotary Club or YEO will be notified and asked to do a home visit to complete the family's host family application process. This will happen sometime January-April.

- Invite the student and their host sibling to a Rotary meeting during their month in the USA. This can be informal but is a chance to promote Rotary and learn about their STEP experience.

What are the costs for STEP?

- The STEP Family to Family fee which is paid by the family is \$400 plus purchase Rotary approved insurance (\$80-\$210 depending on length of stay). Families will send payment directly to the North Star office once they receive confirmation of their match. This information will be included in their confirmation letter.
- Students who might participate in a Rotary Camp or Tour overseas will pay \$250 directly to North Star after being accepted to the camp.
- There are no costs to clubs for sponsoring a STEP student.

How will offering the Summer STEP affect the School Year Long Term Exchange Program?

- Summer STEP can engage younger freshman and sophomore students who might get so excited about youth exchange that they apply for long term exchange in a future year.
- Families who host for a month and love the experience might want to host a long term student during the school year and they are already approved as a host family so they are ready to go which helps clubs with host family recruitment for school year students!
- Students who can't go away for a year can still enjoy the benefits of youth exchange and they and their families are exposed to the world of Rotary. Every student who has an exchange experience – long term and short term furthers Rotary International's goal of promoting world peace and understanding.