

PASADENA SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

STUDENT EXCHANGE POLICY

1. POLICY

The purpose of the Pasadena Sister City exchange program is to offer students a safe, affordable, and meaningful learning experience in a foreign country. The exchange students will study/work in the chosen sister city while being hosted by local families during the period of their stay. All students living or attending school in the city of Pasadena may apply to the program.

2. ORIENTATION PROGRAM

- 2.1 An orientation is given for students, and their parents, selected to visit one of our sister cities. This orientation covers the purpose and guidelines of the exchange program and includes an introduction to the language and culture of the destination city, host family gifts, packing, and homesickness. All students are required to attend. Parents of students under 18 years of age are required to attend along with their child.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOST FAMILIES

- 3.1 Host families welcome exchange students into their homes as members of the family. For host families, it is an enriching experience. For the student, it is an opportunity to experience life in another culture in all its richness and diversity.
- 3.2 Host families are *unpaid volunteers* who provide the students with a room and most morning and evening meals. They also offer the students the invaluable opportunity to experience foreign family life and opportunities to participate in various planned activities.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT

- 4.1 Student must have a passport. Upon selection, please give a PSCC member a copy of the passport page with your photo. Or, immediately begin the process to acquire a passport and provide a copy of this page as soon as possible.
- 4.2 In the city and country of their destination, students shall be prepared to adapt to living as their host families do.
- 4.3 Students shall abide by PSCC guidelines, fitting themselves into the routines of their host families.
- 4.4 Students shall adapt to host family meal times, sleep time, and other aspects of the host family's normal daily life.
- 4.4 Students shall be relatively self-reliant and not expect their hosts to do everything for them.

5. RECOMMENDED BEHAVIOR

The following points are recommendations and are not intended to be a complete list.

- 5.1 Since the host family assumes responsibility for student's welfare while a guest in their home, it's important for the student to let them know of his/her plans. These include where the student plans to go, with whom, and when he/she plans to return. If the student changes his/her plans, be sure to let the host family know.
- 5.2 Be on time for meals, social events, and all planned activities.
- 5.3 Carefully make the bed each day. Keep your room neat. Offer to help with tasks, such as setting the table, preparing the meal, or washing dishes – just as any family member might.
- 5.4 Be considerate in your use of electronic devices. Do not spend a lot of time on a device for entertainment or with friends and family. Discuss with your host family their policy for wi-fi/internet and device use.
- 5.5 Do not expect the host family to do everything for student, such as driving him/her places and providing entertainment.
- 5.6 If something is puzzling or confusing, ask a member of the host family for clarification. Cultural differences can sometimes be challenging. This is also a good opportunity for mutual learning.
- 5.7 If the student needs something that does not seem to be available, ask the host family for assistance. Sometimes one small item can make a big difference.
- 5.8 Dress appropriately and respectfully, especially when meeting with city officials.

6. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Students pay for airfare to nearby city. For Mishima, students pay train fare from Narita Airport to Mishima.
- 6.2 Students should expect to pay for all expenditures beyond room and board.
- 6.3 Expenditures include--but are not limited to--lunches, meals in restaurants, entrance fees to museums and entertainment events, special foods, and all personal items.

7. SUMMARY REPORT

- 7.1 All students are expected write 'thank you' notes to their host families.
- 7.2 Returning students are expected to present an oral report at the October general Pasadena Sister Cities Committee meeting.
- 7.3 To prepare for this report, it is recommended that the student keep a journal and take pictures. This will help make the experience more meaningful and the presentation of a summary report easier.