

## **LCI Board Policy Manual**

from Chapter XXIII Youth Programs

### **F. YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM POLICY**

#### **1. Purpose and Objectives**

The Youth Exchange Program was authorized by the Lions Clubs International Board of Directors in early 1961, for the purpose of furthering the first Object of Lionism:

"To create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world."

The objectives of the program are:

- a. To bring young people into contact with youth and adults of other countries;
- b. To share family and community life of another culture;
- c. To promote international understanding and good will throughout the world of Lionism.

These objectives apply to the participating youth, the sponsor and host Lions clubs, and the host families. All participating parties shall conduct the program and themselves so as to preclude any element of personal profit or gain.

#### **2. Operating Procedures**

##### **a. Communications**

(1) Good communications are absolutely vital to operations of the Youth Exchange Program. It is the obligation of all participants to keep all concerned parties informed and to respond promptly to every communication of any type. The sender must be informed promptly, whether the answer is favorable or not, or to be decided at a later date.

(2) Initial communications between an interested sponsor club and host club will be through the district youth exchange chairperson or multiple district chairperson, as appropriate. If name and address are unknown, this communication will be sent to the respective district governor.

A sponsoring club or district is a club or district sending a youth exchange visitor to another country. A host club or district is a club or district receiving a youth exchange visitor.

(3) Full information shall be sent to the Youth Programs Department of international headquarters on the following items: promotion, planning and initial contact; nature of response and decision; basic personal information on each youth, his family and sponsors, host club and family, dates of travel and visit, all contacts in case of emergency.

(4) It will be the duty of the host club to advise in the first communication the detail of the program that will be conducted during the youth exchange visit.

(5) Each youth applicant shall include with his application a personal letter of introduction to the prospective host family, containing information on his:

- interest, studies, and hobbies;
- family members and their occupations;
- home community;
- previous travel;
- expectations for the exchange;
- dietary, health, or religious requirements.

The letter shall be written in the language agreed upon as the language of communication for the exchange.

(6) The host family shall include, with its application to participate in the program, a letter of introduction which shall be communicated by the host Lions to the exchange visitor and his Lions sponsors at the time of the youth's acceptance. The letter shall be written in the language agreed upon as the language of communication for the exchange.

##### **b. Screening Youth Applicants**

(1) Time: All applicants shall be thoroughly screened by the sponsor Lions club prior to acceptance.

(2) Lions Club Member's Children: Unless so stated by the host country or district, such relationship shall not disqualify applicant.

(3) Physically or Economically Handicapped Applicants: May be selected if otherwise qualified and agreed to by host Lions.

(4) Screening factors to be determined by the sponsor Lions club:

(a) Age: Applicant should be from 15 through 21 years (unless variations can be specified conscientiously by the host country or district on grounds of its culture and customs).

(b) Character References: Required from at least two independent sources.

(c) Education: Applicant's performance (or record) and special studies shall be considered.

(d) Language Ability: Preferably, he or she should have at least a basic knowledge of the language of the host country. Some countries, or particular hosts, may require two years study, for example, or a competent conversational ability.

(e) Knowledge of Youth Exchange Program: Familiarity with all aspects of the Youth Exchange Program, its purpose and objectives, by both youth and parents, is a must.

(f) Motives of Applicant: Determine basis of his/her choice of country. He/she should have a desire to contribute to international understanding, and a desire to learn about and from other ways of life.

(g) Health: This does not mean that handicapped youth or those with special needs should be disqualified. However, such factors must be stated clearly for benefit of the hosts.

Particular conditions, allergies to certain foods or medicines, a regular or potential need for some medicine and, in some cases, even religious obligations in health or food matters are to be determined and communicated to prospective hosts.

(h) Appearance: May well be a more serious matter to the people and cultures of his/her host country than of his/her own. The youth should be as understanding in this matter as he/she expects others to be. The photo requested will help prospective hosts identify him upon arrival.

(i) Parents' or Guardians'

Consent: Complete agreement with program objectives are to be verified in writing. It should be made clear that they will bear ultimate financial obligation for emergencies or illness due to health or accident of the youth.

(j) Each host club may require adherence to rules in addition to those set forth in this policy.

(k) Each youth exchange visitor must give evidence of his/her desire to take part in a youth exchange visit and furnish a signed statement that he or she and his or her parents or guardians are familiar with the rules of the program, and agree to abide by said rules and the objectives and purposes of the program.

(l) Travel Quotas, Host Family Availability: The sponsoring Lions are not to accept applicants solely in order to fill group travel quotas or host family availability.

(m) Admission Requirement: The sponsoring Lions are not to admit applicants into the program, or make travel arrangements for them, until host families have been arranged.

### **c. Screening for Host Families**

(1) Potential host families are to be screened by the host Lions club. Insofar as possible, the host family should be a Lion member's family. Potential host families should be willing to have their home and family situation reviewed in the light of the following:

(a) Age: The family should be in contact with youth of the approximate age of the youth visitor. Children in the host family are desirable but not a requirement.

(b) Compatibility: Character traits and attitudes of the host family and its members to be considered are: understanding, interest, and ability to communicate and deal wisely with youth, open-mindedness and tolerance.

(c) Language Ability: It would be helpful if one or more members of the family speaks the youth's language, and may even be necessary in some cases.

(d) Knowledge of Youth Exchange Program: Familiarity of host family members with the Youth Exchange Program, its purpose and objectives, is important to the success of the exchange experience. All members should understand and accept their responsibilities. If a non-Lion host family is considered, they should be well informed on the scope and Objects of Lionism, and on the Youth Exchange Program especially. Meetings including all host families shall be held.

(e) Living Conditions: Need not be luxurious,

but should be adequate to accommodate an additional person in the home without undue discomfort or financial burdens.

(f) Family Preferences: Determine family attitude concerning the youth's nationality, language, religion, sex, age; any special interests should be determined during the screening interview.

(2) Travel Quotas: Hosting Lions are not to select host families simply to fulfill a quota.

### **d. Hosting a Youth Exchange Visitor**

(1) Receiving a youth exchange visitor is an activity and the responsibility of the host Lions club. These responsibilities include arrangements for the youth's arrival and departure, his/her welfare, and his/her social and cultural entertainment throughout the visit.

(2) In the case of problems or incompatibility between host family and youth, appropriate host club officers must be prepared tactfully to arrange transfer of the youth to another qualified host family (for this reason it is advised that one or more alternate families be available).

(3) If an extreme problem cannot be solved after all reasonable efforts have been made locally, it may be necessary to contact the visiting youth's parents, or in some cases, the sponsor club or district officers. If the decision is reached to return the youth to his/her home, whoever may be at fault, arrangements are to be made by the appropriate host club officers.

(4) In the host family's home, the visiting youth is to be treated as a member of the family. This relationship may be quite different from his/her own home and family, but should be kept natural for the hosts. Learning customs and lifestyles is an objective of the exchange.

### **e. Cultural Preparation**

(1) It is an obligation of both host and sponsoring Lions clubs conducting an exchange program, and of the adult and youth participants, to familiarize themselves with customs and expectations of the countries and peoples involved, especially those of the host country.

(2) Government regulations concerning passports, visas, inoculations and customs regulations shall be explained in detail by the sponsoring Lions.

(3) The youth visitor shall be made aware that he/she is bound by the laws of the host country. This is especially important in areas of possession of weapons, alcoholic beverages, use or possession of narcotics, and all sections of the juvenile code of that country.

### **f. Travel Arrangements**

(1) All travel arrangements and the cost of all travel for youth exchange visitors, from home to the host community and return, shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring Lions clubs.

(2) Group travel arrangements must be for purposes of furthering objectives of the program.

Group travel shall not be planned only for the sake of numbers, or for the sake of tourism which places unreasonable obligations on Lions of the host country. Charter flights especially shall be arranged only with a well established airline with excellent international experience.

(3) Lions Clubs International Headquarters shall not plan nor be responsible for travel arrangements.

(4) Dates of the visit and travel shall be agreed upon at least six weeks in advance by sponsoring and host Lions. The schedule and means of travel shall be communicated as soon as arranged.

(5) All changes of plans shall be mutually agreed upon if at all possible. Last minute unavoidable changes shall be communicated at once to the host Lions club and the host family. Where one youth is substituted in place of another, he/she shall be as well screened and qualified as the original applicant.

(6) Whenever youth exchange visitors are combined into substantial groups, they shall travel under responsible leadership.

Complete travel expenses plus accommodations and internal expenses within the host country for persons requested by sponsoring Lions to act as group leaders shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring Lions.

(7) Extended personal travel by youth exchange visitors, even if it is to visit close friends or relatives, is not allowed unless permission has been obtained at least one month in advance from each of the following parties: youth's parents or guardian, sponsoring Lions club, sponsoring district youth exchange chairperson, host district youth exchange chairperson, host Lions club, host family.

#### **g. Insurance**

(1) It is the responsibility of the sponsoring Lions club to verify or assure that the applicant has adequate medical, life, personal property and liability insurance to cover any and all contingencies during the entire duration of the exchange visit, including all travel time. Information on the amount of coverage considered necessary shall be obtained from the hosting Lions and/or competent insurance representatives.

(2) Sponsoring Lions shall furnish satisfactory proof of insurance coverage to host Lions for visiting youth before their acceptance.

(3) Sponsoring Lions clubs shall secure release of liability and hold harmless agreements executed by each youth exchange visitor and his or her parents or guardians (if a minor).

(4) The host Lions shall have the option of requiring any inbound exchange youth to subscribe, at his/her own expense, to medical, life, personal property, liability, or other type of insurance, as deemed appropriate by the host

Lions, to cover the duration of the exchange visit, regardless of whether said youth is already insured under a policy issued in the youth's home country.

#### **h. Financial Arrangements**

##### **(1) Sponsoring Club**

(a) All costs related to travel of the exchange visitor, from his/her home to his/her host community and return, shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring Lions club. The may be paid by the club, from district funds if available, by the youth and/or his/her family, or some combination of these sources.

(b) Costs related to travel include actual fares, insurance, airport service fees, customs duties, and any layover or overnight costs en route.

##### **(2) Host Club**

(a) All costs related to board and lodging, and hosting of the youth shall be the responsibility of the host Lions club.

(b) Since host families provide room and board, the host Lions club should pay or reimburse any planned expenses incurred during the visit of the exchange youth. Each host family shall meet with its host club and reach agreement as to those activities for which the host club will provide reimbursement for expenses incurred. Such planned expenses include sightseeing or other local transportation, fees for visitors' attractions or entertainment events, restaurant meals, etc.

##### **(3) Exchange Youth**

Each youth shall have personal funds of approximately US\$75.00 per week for incidentals, minor medical costs, souvenirs, or possible social activities not planned by the hosts.

#### **i. Emergency Situations**

Responsibility for the exchange youth is assumed by sponsoring Lions during travel, and by host Lions during his stay in their country and community.

Emergency situations have been extremely few; nevertheless, they do occur. The following distinctions are made with respect to areas of responsibility.

(1) Unexpected Visitors: No Lions club can be held responsible for extending hospitality or furthering travel arrangements for unexpected visitors, individually or in groups.

(2) Unwarranted Personal Requests: Requests for school enrollment, training or employment, long-term board and lodging, and the operation of motor vehicles (even by bona fide exchange youth) are prohibited.

(3) Accident or Illness: Illness of an exchange visitor will require the attention of the host family and the host Lions club. In case of serious illness or accident, every effort should be made to

contact the youth's parents immediately, and to provide them with diagnosis and recommendations determined by a doctor. All youth must have in their possession written parental or guardian permission for any necessary medical or surgical treatment.

(4) Incompatibility: If relations between host family and the visiting youth become extremely difficult, the matter should be handled tactfully by the host Lions. In extreme situations, it may become necessary to arrange for the return of the youth to his/her home.

(5) Replacement Host Family: If an assigned host family withdraws from the program after a commitment has been made to host an exchange visitor, it shall be the obligation of the host Lions to provide for a qualified replacement host family. The host Lions shall make every effort to avoid canceling an exchange visit.

#### **j. Emergency Financial Procedures**

Unexpected, substantial costs requiring advance payments shall be the ultimate responsibility of the youth's parents and they shall be so informed prior to acceptance of the youth. If any such shall arise, the position of the parents and sponsoring Lions shall be sought immediately. Only thereafter shall the host Lions consider contributing to or advancing the same. If expenses are advanced by host Lions to meet any such emergency or other unexpected and necessary action, they may report the same to the parents and sponsoring Lions, detailing the amount of expense, or suggested portion thereof, which they feel should be reimbursed. All involved parties should then endeavor to resolve the reimbursement question in the spirit of complete fairness, understanding and goodwill.

### **3. Youth Exchange Organizations**

a. For applicants for whom hosts cannot be located and for longer term study programs, Lions Clubs International endorses and recommends the programs of American Field Service International Scholarships, the Experiment in International Living, and Youth for Understanding.

b. The international headquarters staff is authorized to provide to Lions basic information on the programs of these three leading exchange organization, and to exchange information with their respective headquarters.

### **4. District Youth Exchange Operations**

a. District governors shall be encouraged to give every consideration to maintaining continuity in the Youth Exchange Program from year to year; (1) wherever feasible, to continue the youth exchange chairperson in office, and (2) when a change is made, to have complete records transferred by the chairperson to his successor.

b. District governors shall be encouraged to establish a "Youth Week" in their districts.

Choice of dates is left to district governors in accordance with geographical and cultural considerations. Further, this shall be placed on the agenda for the district governors-elect seminar at the international convention.

c. District governors shall be encouraged to include participation of clubs in youth exchange in the point system for their district contests; also this factor shall be included in contest guidelines provided by our headquarters.

d. The subject of youth exchange shall be included and given ample time in the district governors-elect seminar. For the Convention Youth Exchange Forum, the Top-Ten Chairpersons shall be invited (if attending) to participate in a panel for discussion, with no additional cost to Lions Clubs International for this purpose.

e. Lions Clubs International recommends and encourages direct relationships and exchange between districts and clubs participating in the Youth Exchange Program.

f. Committees of liaison officers shall be established to coordinate various aspects of youth exchange at the district and multiple district levels where deemed appropriate and advisable.

Youth exchange committee members shall be appointed by the respective governor, at the district level, or council of governors, at the multiple district level. Members of the multiple district youth exchange committee may include the sub-district youth exchange chairpersons.

g. In districts or multiple districts where youth exchange programs extend beyond the end of the fiscal year, the youth exchange chairperson or committee may be permitted by the new district governor or multiple district council of governors, as appropriate, to supervise the successful completion of youth exchanges which had been arranged before June 30.

h. To certify that the district's youth exchange program will comply with board-approved policies, standards, and regulations, the district governor shall complete an Annual District Youth Exchange Certification Form by August 15 each year. Certified Lions Youth Exchange programs and reported district and multiple district youth exchange chairpersons shall be posted on the Lions Web site and in the official Youth Exchange Program Directory.

### **5. Top Ten Youth Exchange Chairpersons Award**

a. The Top Ten Youth Exchange Chairpersons Award shall be granted according to the following rules:

(1) A complete report shall be received at the international office by November 15.

(2) "Top Ten" youth exchange chairpersons will not be selected by the Youth Programs

Committee until the following March/April board meeting.

(3) Following are guidelines for information to be included in the above report:

(a) Number of youth applications received for sponsorship and number of youth actually sponsored.

(b) Number of requests received to host and number of youths actually hosted.

(c) Number of Lions clubs participating in the Youth Exchange Program.

(d) The ages and sex of youth.

(e) Participation of any handicapped youth.

(f) Countries involved in the exchange.

(g) Cooperation with other youth exchange organizations.

(h) Participation in Lions Clubs International Youth Camps and/or Centers.

(4) Chairperson's reports will be accepted by mail at the Lions Clubs International Headquarters, in the form of a report not more than three pages. Attachments may include newspaper clippings, photographs, or other special exhibits.

(5) Due to difficulties of many translations in a short period of time, it is recommended that if at all possible, the reports be submitted in English.

(6) Where the candidate is a club member in a multiple district, the nomination must be made by the multiple district council of governors. If the candidate is a club member in a single district (i.e., a district which is not part of a multiple district), the nomination must be made by the district governor.

(7) Each single district (i.e., a district which is not part of a multiple district) is limited to one nomination each year. Each multiple district having from two (2) to fourteen (14) sub-districts is limited to one nomination each year. Multiple districts with fifteen (15) or more sub-districts are allowed a maximum of two (2) nominations each year.

(8) Nominations shall be made and submitted by the multiple district council of governors (or district governor of a single district) in office during the year in which the awards will be issued, that is, immediately following completion of the nominated chairperson's term.

b. The Top Ten Youth Exchange Chairperson Award shall be presented to each winner at a suitable, prestigious occasion by the highest ranking Lion officer available.

#### **6. Reporting of Youth Exchange Statistics to International Headquarters.**

a. Each district youth exchange chairperson or multiple district youth exchange chairperson, if appointed, shall prepare an annual report on youth exchanges in his/her respective district or multiple district and submit it to the international office no later than November 15 of each fiscal year. The report form shall be mailed from the

international office to district governors and multiple district council chairpersons, where appropriate, for distribution to the respective youth exchange chairpersons. It shall be the responsibility of the district governor and the council chairperson, where appropriate, to ensure that the report is completed and submitted by the deadline date specified.

b. The annual Youth Exchange Report shall contain the following information:

(1) Number of boys and girls hosted in youth exchanges and international youth camps or centers.

(2) Number of Lions clubs participating in the program within the district or multiple district.

(3) Number of host families participating within the district or multiple district.

(4) Number of boys and girls sponsored in youth exchanges and international youth camps or center.

(5) Countries involved in the program.

#### **7. Youth Exchange for Political Purposes**

It is expressly prohibited to use the Youth Exchange Program, its contacts or functions, for political purposes.

### **G. INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CAMP PROGRAM POLICY**

#### **1. Purposes and Objectives**

a. The International Youth Camp Program was authorized in 1974, for the purpose of furthering Lions Clubs International's first Object:

"To create and foster a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world."

b. The objectives of the program are: (1) To bring young people of different countries into meaningful contact with each other;

(2) To facilitate the sharing of ideas, customs and cultural viewpoints;

(3) To promote international understanding and goodwill, and to work toward the goals of world peace;

(4) To develop leadership potential in youth;

(5) To encourage respect in young people for the thinking of others.

(6) To provide a range of activities that promotes a healthy learning experience, both physically and intellectually.

c. A Lions Clubs International Youth Camp shall not be conducted for the purpose of tourism. All participating parties shall conduct the program and themselves so as to preclude any element of personal profit or gain.

d. To qualify for the designation "Lions International Youth Camp," a camping activity shall:

(1) Use the name "Lions" in its official title in compliance with policy requirements established by the International Board of Directors.

(2) Be of at least one week in duration.

- (3) Involve the participation of youths from different countries.
- (4) Offer a schedule of activities to be determined by the camp organizers, consistent with the program's objectives.

## **2. Operating Procedures**

### **a. Camp Sponsorship**

- (1) A Lions club, district, or multiple district, whether singly or jointly, may sponsor and organize an international youth camp.
- (2) Camp sponsors in making arrangements for a camp should coordinate with the district or multiple district youth exchange chairperson where one has been appointed.

### **b. Promotion**

- (1) The promotion of each camp will be handled by its camp committee in conjunction with the district or multiple district youth exchange chairperson. The district or multiple district youth exchange chairperson should report the scheduled dates and location of the camp; the name, address, telephone and fax numbers and E-mail address of the camp director; the official languages of the camp; and the theme of the camp to international headquarters as early as possible, at least six months before the established deadline for applications to the camp. A list of camps with the above information will be compiled by the international office and published on the association's official Web site and in other communications as appropriate.
- (2) Addresses of district and multiple district youth exchange chairpersons shall be made available on the association's official Web site and by the international office to chairpersons of international youth camps for the purpose of announcing and promoting camp programs.

### **c. Program**

- (1) The details and theme of the camp program are the responsibilities of the camp organizers, whether Lions clubs, districts or multiple districts. The theme of the camp program may relate to Lions activities.
- (2) Although the particular format of the camp may, for example, include travel, focus on a cultural heritage, or be structured for the handicapped, every international youth camp may include such activities as:
  - (a) Visits to historical sites, industries, educational and scientific institutions, religious centers or areas of environmental interest;
  - (b) Seminars and presentations on current events and issues;
  - (c) Visits to the homes of representative families;
  - (d) Discussions on pertinent issues among camp participants and with Lion leaders, as well as business, education, and government representatives;

(e) Presentations about the camp's host country through lectures, tours, seminars or other camp activities.

(f) Educational presentations by campers about their own country and culture.

(3) A variety of recreational activities.

(4) Camp activities and presentations should encourage an open discussion and debate of world events and issues, while avoiding the promotion of political or nationalistic positions.

### **d. Communications**

- (1) Camp organizers shall keep all concerned parties fully informed, including camp applicants and their parents or guardians, youth exchange chairpersons and the Youth Programs Department of the International Office. All inquiries shall be responded to promptly.
- (2) Initial communications between a club interested in sponsoring a youth at a camp and the camp organizers will be through the district youth exchange chairpersons or multiple district chairperson where appropriate. If the name and address of the chairperson are unknown, initial communications will be through the district governor.
- (3) If a stay with a host family is planned in conjunction with the camp, the name and address of the family are to be communicated to the youth participant, his parents or guardians, and the sponsoring district youth exchange chairperson well in advance of the youth's departure from home to the camp.
- (4) Where an international youth camp is conducted separately from a district's or multiple district's youth exchange program, the camp coordinator is encouraged to keep the respective district or multiple district youth exchange chairperson informed of all travel and hosting arrangements made for each youth participating in the camp.

### **e. Youth Protection**

Host Lions shall operate their camp programs in compliance with local laws governing youth protection.

## **3. Selection of Youth Camp Participants**

- a. Each youth camp applicant must be sponsored or endorsed by a Lions club, regardless of whether the club will assist in financial arrangements or not. The application may also be endorsed by the district and multiple district.
- b. Prospective applicants may be selected by means of any of the following procedures:
  - (1) Through organized competitions.
  - (2) By nomination by a school or community organization.
  - (3) On recommendation of a Lions club member.
- c. Each applicant shall be personally interviewed by the sponsoring Lions club before an

application is submitted to the international camp director or committee.

d. The number of youths to be accepted into the camp will be determined by the camp organizers and announced in its first promotional mailing. It is generally recommended that a camp have a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 60 youths.

e. Each camp committee will determine criteria for camp participants based on the following:

(1) Age: Each camp may set its own age range. It is, however, recommended that the age range of youths at a given camp generally span no more than three years and exclude youths younger than 16 or older than 22 years of age.

(2) Education: The applicant's school records and special studies shall be considered. Applicants should have a sincere desire to broaden their education through international experience.

(3) Language Ability: Each participant in an international youth camp shall be able to communicate in the official language of the camp.

(4) Attitude: Applicants shall demonstrate maturity and open-mindedness and desire to learn about the ways of life in different countries.

(5) Health: Lions Clubs International encourages young people with disabilities to apply for participation in youth camp programs. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate disabilities so that the youth may benefit from the experience provided by the camp. Lions clubs and districts may sponsor camp programs specifically for youth with special conditions, such as diabetes, or physical handicaps. Applicants with disabilities may be eligible to participate in other international camp programs, provided they meet the requirements established for the particular program. At the time of application, the youth must explain any special needs or conditions that would substantially limit his or her participation in the activities of the camp or exchange. Such conditions must be brought to the attention of the camp committee at the time application is made. Particular medical conditions, allergies to certain foods or medicines, a regular or potential need for medication, and specific requisites of hygiene or diet dictated by religious obligations are to be communicated to the camp committee.

(6) Gender: Camps may be coeducational or structured exclusively for either young women or young men.

(7) Appearance: The camp committee may specify dress codes or standards of appearance in keeping with the requirements of the camp and the cultural norms of the host country.

(8) Special Abilities: Certain skills such as musical or athletic ability may be required to gain admittance to a particular camp.

(9) Character: Applicants should furnish at least two character references.

(10) Financial Ability: Financial assistance where offered should be given to applicants with demonstrated financial need.

(11) Previous Attendance: Preference should generally be given to applicants who have not already participated in a Lions Clubs International Youth Camp.

f. Each individual desiring to attend an international youth camp shall submit an application with a photograph of himself or herself to the camp committee. The application must be signed by the sponsoring Lions club and in it the applicant must agree to the purpose and requirements of the camp. The application may also be endorsed by the district and multiple district if required by the camp.

g. Camp organizers shall determine whether children of Lions club members are eligible to participate. Eligibility shall be announced in the camp's promotional materials.

h. Parents or guardians of applicants shall verify in writing their complete agreement with the camp's objectives and their understanding that they will bear ultimate financial responsibility for any emergency, illness, accident or unexpected costs involving the youth and not covered by insurance (see Section 8).

i. International youth camps are not to accept applicants solely in order to fill quotas, to meet host family availability, or to promote tourism.

j. Campers may be required to adhere to rules in addition to those set forth in this policy.

#### **4. Camp Leadership**

a. Camp leadership includes Lions who, together with the camp committee, plan and promote the camp, as well as professional youth workers who have experience relevant to the nature of the camp.

#### **5. Orientation**

a. All camp participants, young and adult, shall strive as ambassadors of goodwill to create and foster a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world.

b. The sponsoring Lions shall provide all participants with information pertaining to government regulations concerning passports, visas, inoculations, and customs regulations.

c. The laws of the host country and its juvenile code, especially those pertaining to the areas of use and possession of weapons, alcoholic beverages and drugs, shall be explained to all camp applicants.

d. An orientation meeting for youth participants and, if possible, their parents or guardians is recommended to explain the purposes and objectives of the camp and of Lionism and to review in detail all items pertaining to the youth's stay at the camp.

#### **6. Travel Arrangements**

- a. All travel arrangements for youth camp participants from home to the camp and return shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring Lions.
- b. Group travel shall be arranged only to further the objectives of the program. Group travel shall not be planned to fill quotas or promote tourism. Charter flights, if utilized, shall be arranged only with well-established airlines with excellent international experience.
- c. Lions Clubs International Headquarters shall not plan nor be responsible for travel arrangements.
- d. The applicant's travel arrangements should be provided to the camp committee at least three weeks before departure to the camp.
- e. Unavoidable changes or cancellations shall be communicated immediately to the camp committee. As a way of reducing the number of last minute cancellations, the camp committee may require the payment of a guarantee fee to ensure commitment to the Youth Exchange program. Alternate applicants shall be as well qualified as the original applicants.
- f. All travels groups must have proper adult supervision.
- g. Extended personal travel by youth camp participants or leaves of absence from the camp, even if to visit close friends or relatives, are not allowed unless permission in writing has been obtained at least one month in advance from each of the following parties: parents or guardians of the youth, sponsoring Lions clubs, sponsoring district youth exchange chairperson, host district youth exchange chairperson, camp director, host Lions club, host family (if applicable).

## **7. Financial Arrangements**

### **a. Sponsoring Lions**

- (1) All costs related to travel of the youth camp participant from his or her home to the camp and return shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring Lions club. These costs may be paid by the club, from district funds if available, by the youth, by the youth's family, a benefactor, or some combination of these sources.
- (2) Costs related to travel include actual round trip fares, insurance, airport service fees, customs duties and any layover or overnight costs incurred en route.
- (3) All youths attending the camp must have prepaid return tickets with reservations, as well as necessary passports, visas and required health certificates.
- (4) The youth's parents or guardians shall be informed of their responsibility for any unexpected or emergency costs requiring immediate payment by the hosting Lions.

### **b. Host Lions**

- (1) All costs related to board and lodging at the camp and to hosting of the youth while attending the camp shall be the responsibility of the host Lions.
- (2) Costs related to the camp will vary according to the program planned, travel involved, campsite selected, and other factors, but should be kept to a reasonable minimum. Methods of financing international youth camps may include:
  - (a) A voluntary contribution by each club in the host district.
  - (b) An assessment of each club in the district or multiple district by action of the district or multiple district convention.
  - (c) Distribution of expenses among several cooperating clubs.
  - (d) Voluntary contributions from benefactors.
  - (e) Reasonable fees for special cultural and educational activities that are part of the camp experience.
- (3) Since host families, where involved, provide room and board, the host Lions should pay or reimburse any planned expenses incurred by such families during the visit of the participating youth. Each host family shall meet with the host Lions to reach an agreement on those planned expenses, which the host Lions will reimburse. These planned expenses may include local transportation for such activities as sightseeing, fees for visitors' attractions or entertainment events, restaurant meals, etc.
- c. Youths attending the camp shall have personal funds sufficient for incidentals, minor medical costs, souvenirs, or possible social activities not planned by the hosts.
- d. Lions Clubs International headquarters shall not be responsible for any financial arrangements.

## **8. Insurance and Indemnity**

### **a. Sponsoring Lions**

- (1) It is the responsibility of the sponsoring Lions to verify and ensure that the applicant has sufficient travel and accident insurance to cover any and all contingencies during travel from the home country to the camp and return.
- (2) The sponsoring Lions shall verify that the youth has sufficient medical insurance to cover expenses resulting from illness or hospitalization during the camp stay. Costs of this insurance protection may be borne by the youth, his or her parents or guardians, the sponsoring Lions or a combination of these or other sources as agreed upon. Sponsoring Lions shall furnish the camp organizers with satisfactory proof of such insurance coverage for the youth with the application.
- (3) The sponsoring Lions shall secure release of liability and hold harmless agreements executed by each youth applicant and, if a minor, from the youth's parents or guardians. Sponsoring Lions

shall furnish the camp organizers with satisfactory proof of such indemnity with the final application.

**b. Host Lions**

(1) It is the responsibility of the host Lions or camp organizers to verify or ensure that the camp applicant has sufficient accident, life, personal property, health and liability insurance to cover any and all contingencies during travel to and from the camp and attendance at the camp. Costs of such insurance coverage may be reimbursed to the camp organizers through camp fees, if any.

(2) Camp organizers shall provide to sponsoring Lions certificates of insurance coverage for camp participants at the time initial application to the camp is made.

**9. Emergency Situations and Procedures**

a. The sponsoring Lions assume responsibility for the youth during travel to and from the camp. The host Lions are responsible while the youth is staying in the host country and is at the camp.

b. Unauthorized Campers: Camp organizers shall not be obligated to extend hospitality or further travel arrangements for unauthorized campers, whether these be individuals or groups.

c. Personal Requests: Participating youth may not request to be enrolled in school, trained, or employed. Requests for long-term boarding and lodging or the right to operate motor vehicles will also be denied.

d. Accident or Illness: Any illness or accident involving a camper shall require the prompt attention of the camp director and local Lion officers. In the event of serious illness or accident, every effort shall be made to contact the youth's parents or guardians immediately to provide them with complete information, including a doctor's diagnosis and recommended treatment. All youth participants must have included in their application written permission from parents or guardians for any necessary medical or surgical treatment in the event parents or guardians cannot be reached during an emergency. Each camp is required to make arrangements for medical care and to have a licensed physician available.

e. Disciplinary Action: Each camp shall reserve the right to terminate the youth's participation in the camp for reasons of misconduct. In the event of disciplinary action resulting in expulsion of the camper, the parents or guardians of the youth shall be advised of this action and shall assume responsibility for any expense involved.

f. In the event that immediate payments have to be made for the youth concerning unexpected, substantial costs, the youth's parents or guardians and the sponsoring Lions club shall be informed immediately and agreement reached as to how these costs will be covered.

**10. Youth Exchange**

This policy shall also apply in instances where an international youth camp is combined with family hosting.

**H. YOUTH PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT**

1. The Youth Programs Department of the headquarters will act as a clearing house for:

- a. preparation, publication, and distribution of materials;
- b. evaluation of the program;
- c. providing assistance in problem solving;
- d. promotion and implementation of the "Top Ten Youth Exchange Chairpersons Award" annually.

**I. COMPLIANCE**

It is the responsibility of the sponsor and/or host Lions to verify or ensure that youth programs, including but not limited to Leo Clubs and Districts, Youth Exchange and International Youth Camps, shall be operated in compliance with governing laws and with appropriate insurance coverage in effect.