



Dear Future AFSeR/Applicant,

Please find enclosed general instructions on obtaining a **Tourist Visa** for China. **AFS will obtain this visa for you.** As you will note, obtaining a visa is a detailed and time consuming process, and for this reason, visa information is sent not only to students who are guaranteed, but also to students whose applications are still in review. It is important that you begin preparing for this process immediately.

Obtaining a Passport

If you still do not have a passport, you must apply for one **immediately!** You cannot obtain any other type of travel or residence authorization without a valid passport and it will take approximately 4-6 weeks to obtain one. **If you delay in obtaining your passport, you will need to request that your passport application be “expedited” (rushed) which will mean an additional cost.**

Domestic Travel

Regarding your domestic travel to the gateway orientation site, please do not book any tickets until you receive what we call the Travel Notification Packet in the mail from the AFS USA Travel and Logistics Department. This packet will give you important detailed information about travel and logistics for your trip. AFS always recommends that participants book domestic tickets that are both refundable and changeable. This is due in part to the possibility of changes in international flights students will be taking to return home, but also due to the fact that complications may arise in obtaining visas and these complications can at times delay a student's departure.

Please note that participants will be responsible for paying any penalties incurred for changes they may need to make in their domestic travel in the event that they are not able to obtain their visa in time for their scheduled departure.

Taking Trips Before the Start of Your Program

You should not plan any excursions outside of the United States prior to your program. As mentioned before, obtaining a visa takes time and your passport will be required. **Should you choose to travel before the start of your program and not allow enough time for AFS to procure your visa, you will run the risk of not being able to participate on this program.**

Getting Started

Please read the enclosed materials carefully and begin assembling the required documents immediately. AFS will obtain this visa for you. It is very important, however, that you follow the accompanying instructions very carefully and comply with all the requirements and deadlines.

Should you have any questions or require assistance, do not hesitate to contact your **Admissions Advisor in Portland at 1-800-237-4636**.

Sincerely,

AFS Visa Team



VISA INFORMATION

CHINA SHORT SUMMER PROGRAM 2008

A visa is required for your entry and stay in China. **AFS will obtain this visa for you.** To do so, we must receive the following items from you as soon as possible or no later than **June 10th**. Please follow instructions carefully as any errors or omissions will cause delays, which can jeopardize your travel arrangements.

1. UNITED STATES PASSPORT

- Must be *signed* and valid through February 2009 with at least 2 blank pages.
- If you have a passport from a country other than the United States, please contact us immediately, as additional documents may be needed.

2. VISA APPLICATION (enclosed)

- Complete application in full. Please put “not applicable” where appropriate.
- Please note the date format (YY-MM-DD).
- See the enclosed sample on information on how to fill out the application, as well as for the AFS China contact information and date of entry into China.

3. PARENTAL CONSENT FORM (enclosed)

- Both parents must sign this document except in the case of death, where this fact must be documented with a certificate or affidavit.
- In the case of divorce, legal guardianship must be documented.
- Both natural parents must sign the parental consent form if either one has visitation rights. Please submit a photocopy of documentation if either of these conditions apply.
- Please refer to the enclosed Parental Consent Form Fact Sheet for further inquiries.
- The consent form must be **notarized by a notary public**.

4. ONE PASSPORT-TYPE 2x2 PHOTO

- Digital prints, snapshots or graduation photos are not acceptable
- Frontal face view, no hats.
- Write your name on the back of the photo.

5. MONEY ORDER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$130.00

- This money order must be made payable to The Consulate General of China.
- Personal checks will **not** be accepted.

BE SURE TO SIGN AND DATE YOUR APPLICATION!

Please send the above items to us **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** or **no later than June 10th**. Please use a traceable mail service such as UPS, DHL or Federal Express and remember to retain your tracking number. *Do not use regular, certified, priority or delivery confirmation mail. The US Postal Service will not be able to locate your package should it become lost in their care.* Please send these items to:

AFS-USA
International Documents/ China NH08
One Whitehall St., 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10004

NOTE: Please do not call AFS to check if your documents were received. AFS will contact you in case something is missing or if documents are not received in time. You can also check with your carrier to see if the package was delivered.

YOUR PASSPORT AND VISA WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU AT YOUR GATEWAY ORIENTATION.

Before sending your passport, remember to retain a copy for your records. Please check with your airline carrier for an alternative form of identification for domestic travel.

If you have questions regarding these instructions, please do not hesitate to contact your **Admissions Advisor** in Portland, Oregon at **800-237-4636**.

AFS will apply for your visa. Visa requirements, issuance regulations and fees are established by government authorities and/or consular officials, who reserve the right to make changes at any time. Please note that AFS cannot intercede to revoke decisions made by these authorities. Therefore AFS is not responsible for any changes in requirements or fees that occur after we have provided you with these instructions.



AFS PARENTAL CONSENT FORM (PCF) FACT SHEET

Many consulates/ foreign governments require proof that the legal parents have given their permission for their minor child to travel abroad without them. This is done in order to avoid problems with runaways, international custody battles and other lawsuits. Generally, Both natural parents must sign the PCF. Both signatures must be notarized by a Notary Public.

Students Over 18

Students who will be over 18 one month before departure need not submit a PCF, except for countries where the legal age is higher (in Argentina, Japan and Chile, the legal age is 21).

Divorced Parents

Both parents must sign if they were granted rights of visitation. If visitation rights were not granted, and a photocopy of the divorce papers are submitted as proof of this fact, then only the custodial parent need sign the PCF. Copies of the parental consent form may be made to be signed and notarized by each custodial parent separately.

If the parent has full custody and the absent parent needs written permission to visit the child then the signature of the non-custodial parent is not required. Legal proof of this situation must be presented to the Consulate.

The divorce decree must be reviewed to assure that the visitation situation is clearly spelled out. If the non-custodial parent has not taken advantage of the visitation rights, and has no contact with the child, a statement from a lawyer must be presented (see AWOL section in this document).

Name Differences

When parents use a different last name from the child, consulates often feel insecure about whether the signer is in fact the parent of the child. Name difference may occur because:

- Mother has remarried.
- Mother is using her maiden name.
- Child never took father's name.
- Child is using stepparent's name.
- etc.

The most common document to submit in such a case is a photocopy of the divorce decree but in some cases the child's birth certificate showing parents names, name change paper (copy of marriage license) or adoption papers will suffice. In selecting a document, remember that the purpose is to establish that the signer is the natural parent of the child.

Living In Different Cities

If one parent does not live at home photocopy the Parental Consent Form and send a copy or copies to the absent parent. If AFS is obtaining the visa the form can be sent to AFS directly. If the student is obtaining the visa through the Consulate of Jurisdiction the form must accompany all other documents. It is acceptable for a parent to draw up a facsimile form. The facsimile must include a statement to the same effect as that on the AFS form, and it must be notarized.

One Parent Deceased

The surviving parent must sign the PCF and attach a photocopy of the death certificate.

Both Parents Deceased

The legal guardian(s) of the child must sign the PCF and attach proof of legal Guardianship. Copies of the death certificates may be required.

Stepparents

Unless they are legal guardians of the child through adoption or custody agreement, Stepparents must not sign the PCF. Legal guardianship must be documented.

AWOL

If one parent is missing or completely out of touch, a recent notarized affidavit from a lawyer should be submitted to the effect that the absent parent has been out of touch for a significant period of time. Even with this documentation, it is uncertain that the consulate will issue a visa in this situation.

If there are any questions about any of these issues please contact AFS at 1-800-237-4636.



PARENTAL CONSENT

Date: _____

I/we the parent(s) of _____
(Name of student)

grant my/our permission for my/our _____
(Son/daughter)

to travel between the USA and **China** under the auspices of AFS Intercultural Programs.

Signature

Signature

Print name

Print name

Sworn before me on this day of _____

Signature of Notary Public

My commission expires on _____
Date