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## YPscNH17 ECU – Arrival & Orientations FAQ

### Arrival in Ecuador and “Arrival” Orientation

#### **Who will meet me at the airport and where?**

You will be met by staff and/or volunteers outside the International Arrivals Lounge upon your arrival in Quito.

#### **How will I recognize the AFS staff and/or volunteers meeting me at the airport?**

Staff and volunteers will bring an AFS sign.

#### **Where will the orientation take place?**

Within the Quito metropolitan area, at a site located about one hour by bus from the airport.

#### **How will I get to the orientation site?**

AFS-Ecuador charts vans or buses to bring participants to the orientation site. Participants travel with a staff member or a volunteer.

#### **How long is the orientation?**

2 nights/1 day. All the program participants arrive on Friday, and overnight Friday and Saturday at the orientation camp.

#### **In what language(s) will the orientation be conducted?**

English .

#### **Will there be language lessons at the orientation?**

No .

#### **What will happen during orientation?**

The Arrival Orientation focuses on expectations and clarifying them. There will be discussion about:

- Basic survival
- Expectations
- Information on logistics
- Safety and security

#### **Will there be participants from different AFS countries attending the orientation?**

Yes, there will be 61 participants in total, coming from the following countries: Belgium (both from the Flemish- and French-speaking areas), Bosnia & Herzegovina, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States.

**What materials should I bring to the orientation?**

A pen and a notebook. You will also have to have your passport and visa certification at hand.

**Will I have access to my luggage during the arrival orientation?**

No, so please be sure that passports, money and other valuables are not left in your luggage.

**Will I need to pack a separate bag for the orientation? Should I pack a towel?**

Yes to both questions.

**Will I need money during the orientation?**

Yes, for snacks between meals.

**Will I have a chance to exchange money between the time of arrival and the end of orientation?**

No. We use the US dollar as our legal tender, and no other currencies are accepted.

**Will I have access to a telephone which can accommodate long distance calls by using a phone card? Will there be Internet access?**

No. Natural families should not expect the participants to call home until they reach the host family, approximately 48 hours after arrival in Ecuador. There won't be internet access during the arrival orientation either. Remember, no news is good news!

**How will I travel to my host family and when?**

Participants will meet their host families right after their arrival orientation camp, i.e. two days after they arrive in Ecuador.

Students staying within the Quito metropolitan area will be picked up by their host families from our national office (approximately one and a half hours from the orientation site.) All others will travel by plane, if placed in a community served by commercial flights (no flight longer than 45 minutes, usually 35), or by bus (no bus ride longer than 6 hours).

**What are the luggage weight requirements if I am flying to my host community?**

This may vary from one airline to another, but in general, the allowed checked baggage is one suitcase weighing 23 kg (50 pounds), one carry-on (8 kg or 17 pounds) and a personal article.

However, our recommendation to all students coming to Ecuador is that they travel with no more than one suitcase, a small duffel bag and a computer bag or backpack, since our buses do not have much space to accommodate luggage.

**Second "Adjustment" Orientation****When and where will this orientation take place?**

This orientation takes place nationally 4-5 weeks after your arrival in your host community. Please note that this is in addition to the Immediate Arrival Orientation, described above. The Adjustment Orientation deals with cultural differences, after you've had a chance to experience them first hand through the contact with your host family and other nationals.

**How will I get to the orientation site?**

By bus

**How long is the orientation?**

Three nights/two days (from dinner on Friday to breakfast on Monday).

**What will happen during this orientation?**

We will talk about how to deal with cultural differences after experiencing them in daily life.

### **Mid-Stay Orientation**

#### **When and where will the orientation take place?**

The mid-stay orientation will take place nationally five months after your arrival.

#### **How will I get to the orientation site?**

By bus

#### **How long is the orientation?**

Three nights/two days (from dinner on Friday to breakfast on Monday).

#### **What will happen during this orientation?**

Reflections on personal learning/growth and goals for the second half of the program.

### **Final Orientation and End-of-Stay**

#### **When and where will the orientation take place?**

There will not be an in-person final orientation as such. Three weeks before the end of your program and departure from Ecuador, our national office will email you some materials so that you start reflecting upon your year here and your return home. These will be discussed later, at the end-of-stay camp.

You will have your final meeting within the Quito metropolitan area, at the same site as your Arrival Orientation, located about one hour by bus from the airport.

#### **How will I get to the end-of-stay site?**

The same way you went to your host families/communities at the beginning of the program. Students staying within the Quito metropolitan area will be picked up from our national office (approximately one and a half hours from the orientation site.) All others will travel to Quito by plane, if placed in a community served by commercial flights (no flight longer than 45 minutes, usually 35), or by bus (no bus ride longer than 6 hours).

#### **How long is the end-of-stay?**

Two nights/one day.

#### **What will happen during this meeting?**

You will have the opportunity to share your impressions of the year spent in Ecuador with other participants, and AFS staff and volunteers.

#### **How will I travel from the end-of-stay site to the airport?**

AFS Ecuador will charter vans or buses to bring participants from the end-of-stay site to the airport. International travelers are expected to be at the check-in counter at least three hours before their flight.