



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension



# Michigan 4-H International Exchange 2015 Japan Summer Inbound Program Application Packet

Greetings from Michigan 4-H Youth Development!

Thank you for your interest in participating in the 2015 Michigan 4-H International Exchange - Japan Summer Inbound Program! Caring, competent host families who are willing to open their hearts and homes to a visitor from Japan are the most important part of the program, which can have a profoundly positive impact on your family, on our visitors from Japan, and on our world!

The Japanese delegates will arrive in Michigan on July 25, 2015. Upon arrival in Michigan, the delegates will participate in an overnight orientation program before being placed with their host families on July 26<sup>th</sup>. The delegates will live with their host family until August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. The Japanese delegates participate in a overnight debriefing program, and then return to Japan on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. May 1, 2015 is the deadline to apply. Delegates are placed on a first come basis to families that have successfully completed the application process.

There are a few steps that potential host families must go through before they are matched with a youth delegate or adult chaperon. This packet contains instructions and forms needed to apply to become a host family.

## **Before completing an application, please ensure that your family can meet the following basic hosting requirements:**

1. To host a youth delegate, your family must have a child of the same sex and approximate age as the delegate; this child will be considered the primary "host sibling" and will carry the main responsibility for keeping the delegate company. Generally speaking, host families need to have a child between the ages of 10 and 18 who will act as the primary "host sibling" in order to host a Japanese youth. In some cases, exceptions can be made for host siblings that are 9 years old. Families hosting a youth delegate must be able to host the delegate for the entire exchange period (July 26-August 22, 2015)
2. Your family must be able to provide the delegate with a private bedroom or his/her own separate bed in a room shared with a child of the same sex.
3. Families or individual adults with no children, younger children, or older children may choose to host an adult chaperone from Japan for either 2 or 4 weeks (July 26-August 9 and/or August 9 - August 22). Adult chaperones must be provided with a private bedroom during their stay.

After we receive your application forms and complete your background and reference checks, you will be contacted by a 4-H staff member to schedule an in-home interview with your family. Following the completion of a successful application and in-home interview, we will work with your family to finalize the placement of a specific delegate with your family.

Once your family has been approved and matched with a delegate, you will be provided with contact information for your delegate and you may send letters or email to them to start the process of getting to know your delegate and their family. Your family will participate in an online host family orientation in late spring or early summer, during which we will help your family to prepare for a successful and rewarding hosting experience. We will provide you with dates, times, and details on the orientation program once these are finalized.

Again, thank you for your interest in being a 2015 host family! Please feel free to contact me with any questions you have about the program. We look forward to supporting your family's participation in this year's exchange program!

### **Contents of this application packet:**

- Host Family Description (for your information only)
- Step-by-step Application Instructions
- Host Family Reference Form
- MSU Extension Criminal History Check Permission Form
- Central Registry Clearance Request Form

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# Host Family Description

Can't find the time and money to travel? Enjoy the exposure to different cultures which traveling brings? Looking for a low-cost project or experience in which the whole family can participate and grow together? The Michigan 4-H International Exchange - Japan Summer Inbound Program allows families to gain the benefits of international travel right here at home by hosting an exchange delegate from Japan. Families often find they are drawn closer and see their lives in a whole new perspective as they welcome a new son, daughter, brother, or sister into their circle.

## Hosting Summer Inbound Program Delegates

Japanese youth ages 12 - 16 will visit Michigan from July 26 to August 22. The Japanese youth are members of a Japanese organization called Labo which is devoted to the study of foreign cultures and languages and the benefits of international exchange. Youth delegates are placed in homes with a host sibling of the same gender and similar age. Adult chaperones from Japan will accompany the youth delegation. Adults may stay for two weeks with two different host families or with one family for the duration of the program. Host families for chaperones may be singles, retirees or couples with grown or no children.

## Who can be a host or host family to a Japanese delegate?

Michigan 4-H is looking for all types of families to give delegates as broad a perspective as possible about life in the U.S. Urban families, rural families, single-parent families, older couples, singles, couples without children, and families from all religious and ethnic backgrounds are all encouraged and welcomed to become host families. The only requirement for hosting a Japanese youth delegate is that the host family have a child of the same gender and similar age as the delegate. Families do not have to be 4-H members before participating, although they must be willing to help the delegate become involved in local 4-H activities during the exchange.

## What do host families do?

Being a Michigan 4-H International host family is easy, fun, rewarding and educational. Host families welcome the delegate into their home and treat him or her like one of the family. The delegate will want to join in everyday activities, help with chores and otherwise fit in as a brother, sister, son or daughter. No special activities need to be planned, although many families and visitors enjoy the opportunity to take occasional sightseeing trips to local attractions and landmarks during the visit. Host families appreciate the chance to develop friendships that reach around the world. They find that the delegate teaches them not only to understand other ways of life, but also to understand and appreciate their own way of life as well.

## Expectations of host families are:

- Have fun!
- Provide the delegate with meals and lodging.
- Include the delegate in all family activities.
- Read the materials sent by the Exchange Coordinator.
- Participate in host family orientation. (Host Family Orientations are held in the spring using a web-based conference system.)
- Contact your Exchange Coordinator immediately if illness or other major problems arise.
- Be flexible, patient, and willing to communicate both verbally and non-verbally with your delegate. Most of the participants will have limited English communication skills.
- The host sibling of the delegate must keep the exchange uppermost in mind during the hosting month, and make sure the delegate feels comfortable around friends and is included in activities.

# Step-By-Step Application Instructions

Families applying to host a Japanese delegate should use the following instructions to complete their application. If you are unable to complete the online portion of the application on the States' 4-H website (which is the preferred method), please contact Heather or Brian to receive an application in PDF format.

## Application Instructions

1. Complete a "States' 4-H International Exchange - 2015 Summer Inbound Host Family Application"
  - a. To begin your application go to <http://www.states4hexchange.org/host-families/>
    - i. Create a new account (or sign into an existing account) by entering your email address and a password. (You will be able to save your application and return to it later to make changes or add information)
    - ii. On page 2 of the application, you will enter contact information for two family references. You can download the **reference forms** from the website and email forms to your references to complete or you can provide printed copies of the form (included with this packet) to your references.
      1. Completed reference forms must be emailed, mailed, or faxed to Heather Gray by the person completing the reference for your family.
      2. These references can also be completed via phone interview. If your references would prefer this option, please let Heather know so that she can arrange brief phone interviews with them.
  - b. On page 4 of the online application, you can upload a picture of your family. If you don't have a digital photo of your family, or if you're unable to upload a photo to the website, send or email a photo to Heather to add to your application materials.
  - c. On page 8 of the application, you will review all the information you have entered for accuracy, and you may edit your application information at this time. Once you are satisfied with your application, scroll to the bottom and click "Submit My Application".
2. For each person who will be living in your home during the exchange, who is, or will be, over the age of 18:
  - a. Complete a "**MSU Extension Criminal History Check Permission Form**"
    - i. A separate form for each person aged 18 or older who will have ongoing or unsupervised access to a Japanese delegate during their visit must be completed.
      1. "Ongoing" is defined as more than four meetings or gathering times or in-depth contact (such as overnight events). "Unsupervised" would mean that the person is alone with a delegate for significant periods of time (15 minutes or more). At a minimum, a form for each adult living in the host family home must be completed.
    - ii. Submit completed Criminal History Check Permission Form(s) to Heather Gray by mail, fax, or email.
  - b. Complete a "**Central Registry Clearance Request**" form (required for each person aged 18+ at time of exchange)
    - i. Michigan's Central Registry is a list of people who have committed child abuse or neglect. The Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) will check the registry based on the information you provide on the clearance request form and notify the State 4-H office if there is **NOT** a record of an individual in the registry. If an individual is listed in the Central Registry, the results will not be sent to the State 4-H office, but will be mailed to you.
      1. Fill out all the fields in Section 1 of the Central Registry Clearance request form included in this packet.
      2. Make a copy of your photo identification (driver's license), (can be made on a separate piece of paper)
      3. Fax, mail, or drop-off the completed form **and** the copy of your photo ID **to the DHS office in the county in which you are a resident.**
        - a. A directory of county office addresses and fax numbers is available at: <https://www.mdhs.michigan.gov/CompositeDirPub/CountyCompositeDirectory.aspx>
3. If you have questions or need assistance completing or submitting any of the forms, please contact Heather Gray.