

# What is an AFS Chapter?

A local, community-based group of volunteers that carry out AFS programs such as hosting, sending, support, and/or fundraising.

An AFS chapter is the embodiment of the vision of AFS as an international, intercultural volunteer-based exchange organization. Nearly 60 years ago AFS-USA commenced its volunteering efforts in supporting young people from overseas to live and learn in the U.S. These young people were supported by local, community volunteers who together formed chapters to support the aims of the program.

Today the AFS chapter continues to represent the true volunteer spirit, the nature of community volunteering and the willingness of volunteers around the U.S. to embrace the mission of AFS.

Chapter volunteers are the advocates for AFS in their community, sharing their belief and passion for AFS. Local AFS chapters help AFS to grow and develop. Through their presence they promote not only the spirit of volunteering for AFS, but also the benefits of international intercultural exchange.

There are two types of Chapters in AFS-USA:

1. Affiliated Chapter which operates under the supervision and support of an Area Team in partnership with the Regional Staff
2. Unaffiliated Chapter which operates as a stand-alone local volunteer unit in partnership with the Regional Staff

## Area Team

An Area Team is a local group of AFS Chapters and individual volunteers in a defined geographic area who as a group decide to organize and work together. The volunteer leadership, mutual support and economies of scale provided by Area Teams are valued as important benefits to AFS-USA.

For more information on the Area Team go to AFS Wiki  
[http://www.afswiki.org/index.php/Area\\_team](http://www.afswiki.org/index.php/Area_team)

## **Chapter Criteria**

All chapters (affiliated and unaffiliated) must:

- Have two or more registered volunteers, not from the same family or household
- Have at minimum a Chapter Chair
- Host or send at least one student per 3-year period
- Complete an annual report
- Participate in an Annual Review of performance and quality standards

Unaffiliated chapters must additionally:

- Have a Treasurer because to manage and receive co-support funds

Affiliated and Unaffiliated chapters that fundraise and/or maintain a local AFS bank account must:

- Account for all local funds in accordance with AFS-USA corporate financial requirements
- Have all local accounts held with Bank of America or Wells Fargo (exceptions do apply)
- Have all local funds in excess of \$1,000.00 on deposit with AFS-USA