



Group Flight FAQs

Do you offer group flights for your programs?

Yes! As a service to our students, we arrange group flights for most of our programs. For our Cuba program, the group flight is mandatory.

What is the advantage of taking a group flight?

A group flight gives students the convenience of having an experienced travel agent make their flight arrangements, as well as the reassurance of airport pickup upon arrival abroad. Flying together as a group also allows our students to meet each other before beginning the IFSA-Butler orientation.

Is the group flight a good deal?

We think so. Though a group ticket is sometimes slightly more expensive than an individual ticket found on the Internet, taking a group flight may save a student money in the long run, because group tickets often include low-cost date or routing changes. Individual plane tickets generally incur change fees that can amount to almost half the cost of the original ticket or are non-refundable. In addition, our group flight travelers typically do not have to pay extensive baggage fees.

Who arranges the group flight?

An experienced travel agency makes group flight arrangements on IFSA-Butler's behalf. The agency works with various airlines to negotiate each group flight's cost, number of seats, ticket change fees and more.

When can I sign up for my program's group flight?

Details of the group flight are generally available in the first Essentials Newsletter two to three months before a program's start date, and students are able to sign up at that time.

I applied to your program early, so can I sign up for the group flight early?

Because of the nature of most airlines' group contract policies, we are not able to provide specific group flight details, such as the flight number or exact cost, earlier than two or three months before departure. However, we work hard to secure enough seats to ensure that students who want to take the group flight can do so, provided they contact the group flight travel agency by the published deadline in the *Predeparture Essentials* newsletter.

Is the group flight a charter flight?

No. The group flight is a group of seats on a regularly scheduled commercial flight on a major airline.

Is there a domestic group flight?

Our group flights are for the international portion of travel only. Our students come from throughout the United States, so we do not have enough students in any one location to offer domestic group

flights within the U.S. However, our group flight travel agency is happy to help students with domestic flight arrangements.

Where does the group flight depart?

Our group flights depart from various major cities throughout the U.S., depending on destination. Typical departure airports are Los Angeles or San Francisco for Australia and New Zealand programs; JFK, Newark or Boston for programs in Ireland and the U.K.; New York, Atlanta, Houston or Miami for programs in Latin America.

Why isn't there a group flight for some programs?

Airlines require a minimum of 10 participants in order to offer group travel. If a program does not have at least 10 students who are interested in the group flight, we are not able to offer group travel for those students.

Are group flights optional?

Group flights are optional except for our program in Cuba, whose group flight is mandatory.

Is there a return group flight at the end of the program?

No. Even students attending the same university abroad have different exam schedules, plus many choose to travel after the end of their program, so we are not able to offer group travel for the return flight home. However, the cost of the group flight ticket includes return airfare to the U.S. Each student chooses his or her own return date.

Who can help me if I have questions about travel?

Email [Donnetta Spears](#), Students and Parent Services Manager. Donnetta is happy to help with both group flight and independent travel questions.

When should I arrive?

Individual program calendars can be found on your program home page. Students are required to attend an IFSA mandatory orientation prior to moving in on campus.

When do I book my return?

The program end date is the last day of paid housing and the last date any student would be required to stay. Most students depart on this day.

Can I enter on a one-way ticket?

No, students must show proof of departure when entering the country. Airline policy does not allow booking a ticket more than 140 days in advance. Academic year students will need to book a ticket and change the return once abroad.

When will I get my group flight conformation?

Once a reservation has been made, the travel agency will work to secure your itinerary. An email itinerary will then be sent for your approval. Once approved, an e-ticket conformation will be sent which you will use to check-in at the airport.

When will I receive arrival instructions?

The *Travel Essentials* newsletter is mailed to the student's home address. This newsletter contains arrival instructions, orientation location, contact phone numbers and more. We encourage students to pack this in their carry-on as it may come in handy upon arrival.

*Students who book independently to Australia and New Zealand will be required to book the same domestic flight to the host city as the group flight travelers. See the *Predeparture Essentials* newsletter for flight details.