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## **Certified Student Travel Organization Overview of Certification Process**

### **Definitions:**

**Applicant** – Travel organization applying for certification

**Application and Fee** – Online registration of travel organization applying for certification

**Center** – The Center for Student Travel Safety: a nonprofit managed by SYTA staff to administer SYTA certification programs

**Center/Center Staff** – Administers the certification process. Katy Summers is the Center contact

**SYTA Staff** – Henry De Leon is the SYTA staff processing the applications and fees

**Basecamp** – Online project management system. Each applicant will be provided their own project to upload and manage their certification process.

**Certifier/Verifier** – Third party that comes onsite to travel organization to verify standards are met

**Self-Assessment** – Travel organization completes annual assessment each year until they recertify in third year from original certification.

## **Steps to applying for CSTO Certification:**

- Travel organization participates in CSTO Workshop
- Travel organization applies online and submits application fee to SYTA
- Once payment is received and processed by SYTA staff, travel organization will receive a confirmation email from the Center and will include:
  - Checklist with descriptions of standards
  - A due date (30 days out) of when paperwork must all be submitted to the Center
  - Unique link to Basecamp to upload documents
- When all documents are uploaded, a notice will be sent to the Center and staff will confirm all documents are uploaded.
  - If complete, the Center will send an email to travel organization confirming their application package was received and is fully complete and will include next steps.
  - If incomplete, the Center will send an email to travel organization informing them the application package is incomplete and will be returned to them with a list of what was missing.
- Third-party certifier will email travel organization that they have received the application package from the Center and will begin review process within 10 business days. Invoice for balance due is sent to travel organization.
- Certification on-site visit is scheduled and completed
  - If successful but travel organization still needs to complete consumer protection requirement, the travel organization will receive congratulatory letter stating they passed thus far and once completion of consumer protection has occurred, they will receive their full certification.
  - If on-site visit is unsuccessful, certifier will work with Center to build a certification checklist of any missing items or items that need to be re-done. The center will work with travel organization on discrepancies.
- Travel organization receives official certification, marketing materials, and CSTO logo to use on their website.