Expectations on Advisor Participating in AEPs or FAMs

Last Updated
December 21, 2025

Being invited to participate in an Agent Education Program or Familiarization trip is a professional honor. Suppliers carefully select agencies who align with their brand, clientele, and sales goals. Your invitation reflects our trust in you as a professional and confidence in your ability to represent their product well.

AEPs and FAMs are not vacations. They are business experiences designed to deepen your product knowledge, strengthen supplier relationships, and improve how confidently and accurately you sell travel to your clients.

Understanding the Investment
Most AEPs and FAMs require advisors to pay for their own travel to the destination, including airfare. Some programs may also require a registration fee or offer participation at a reduced advisor rate rather than being fully hosted.

This financial investment reinforces that these programs are professional education opportunities. Advisors should evaluate each invitation through a business lens and be prepared to maximize the return on that investment through learning, marketing, and sales application.

Understanding the Difference Between a FAM and an AEP
Suppliers may use the terms Familiarization trip and Agent Education Program interchangeably, but there are important differences in structure and expectations. Regardless of the label, both are professional opportunities and should be approached with the same level of respect and responsibility.

Familiarization Trips (FAMs)
A FAM is typically designed to allow advisors to experience a destination, resort, cruise ship, or travel product as a client would. These trips are often more self-guided, giving advisors time to explore the property, amenities, and surrounding area at a natural pace.

There may still be scheduled site inspections, hosted meals, or supplier touchpoints that require attendance. The primary purpose of a FAM is firsthand exposure so advisors can accurately describe the experience to clients.

Because FAMs can feel more flexible, it is especially important to remember that they are still professional opportunities, not personal vacations.

Agent Education Programs (AEPs)
An Agent Education Program includes a structured educational component. Advisors should expect required trainings, presentations, site inspections, and group activities. These sessions are a core part of the experience and are not optional.

AEPs are intentionally designed to deepen product knowledge and improve sales confidence. Advisors are expected to be fully present, engaged, punctual, and prepared to participate.

Important Note on Terminology
Suppliers do not always use these terms consistently. Some programs labeled as FAMs may include required education, and some AEPs may include experiential or self-guided elements.

Advisors should always rely on the itinerary and written expectations, not the title of the program, to understand what is required. When in doubt, assume all scheduled activities are mandatory.

Shared Expectations
Regardless of classification, both FAMs and AEPs require:

- Professional conduct
- Attendance at required programming
- Respect for hosts and fellow advisors
- A focus on education and sales application

Pre-Trip Expectations

1. **Preparation Matters**
   Review all materials provided by the host prior to departure. Familiarity with the brand, destination, and itinerary allows for more meaningful engagement and better questions.
2. **Commitment to the Schedule**
   By accepting a spot, you are committing to attend all required programming. Personal sightseeing, remote work, or leisure activities should not interfere with scheduled events.
3. **Professional Communication**
   All communication with hosts and agency leadership should be prompt, clear, and courteous.

What to Pack

1. **Business Essentials**
   - Business cards
   - Notebook or tablet for notes
   - Phone charger and portable battery pack
   - Copies of the itinerary and supplier contact information
   - Branded agency materials if applicable
2. **Clothing and Footwear**
   - Comfortable walking shoes suitable for site inspections
   - Business casual (see below) outfits for daily programming
   - One polished outfit for evening events or hosted dinners
   - Lightweight layers for varying climates and air-conditioned spaces

What Business Casual Means
Business casual is professional, neat, and comfortable. Appropriate attire includes slacks, skirts, dresses, polos, blouses, or collared shirts. Clothing should be clean, wrinkle-free, and suitable for meeting suppliers and hotel leadership.

Items such as flip-flops, beachwear, athletic wear, or clothing with large logos or slogans are not considered business casual during scheduled programming.

On-Trip Expectations

1. **Be Present and Engaged**
   Actively participate in site inspections, training sessions, meals, and meetings. Listen attentively, ask thoughtful questions, and take notes that support future sales conversations.
2. **Punctuality Is Essential**
   Group schedules are carefully coordinated. Being on time shows respect for hosts, fellow advisors, and operational partners.
3. **Professional Conduct at All Times**
   Social elements may be part of the experience, but professionalism is expected at all times. Moderate alcohol consumption, appropriate attire, and respectful behavior are essential.
4. **Representing the Industry Well**
   You are representing yourself, your agency, and the travel advisor community. Courtesy and gratitude leave a lasting impression.

5. **Thoughtful Social Media Use**
   If posting during the trip, content should focus on education, insights, and professional learning rather than portraying the experience as a free vacation. Accuracy matters.

Educational Responsibility

1. **Learn the Product Thoroughly**
   Return with a clear understanding of room categories, inclusions, exclusions, ideal client fit, and limitations. Knowing what a product is not is just as important as knowing what it is.
2. **Ask Smart, Sales-Focused Questions**
   Use this opportunity to clarify details that impact client experience such as accessibility, dietary needs, family policies, group handling, service recovery, and seasonality.
3. **Document Your Takeaways**
   Capture notes and insights in a way that will be useful for future proposals and client conversations.

Post-Trip Expectations

1. **Express Appreciation**
   A brief thank-you message to the host or supplier contact is expected and appreciated.
2. **Share What You Learned**
   You may be asked to share highlights or insights with fellow advisors. One advisor's participation should benefit the broader team.
3. **Apply the Knowledge**
   Education should translate into stronger recommendations, improved confidence, and increased bookings.
4. **Market Responsibly**
   Marketing and social content should reflect real experiences and set accurate expectations for clients.

A Final Word

AEPs and FAMs are opportunities to grow professionally, build supplier relationships, and better serve clients. Being selected means you are trusted to show up prepared, engaged, and professional. When approached with gratitude, curiosity, and intention, the value of these experiences extends far beyond the trip itself.