

Equipping students for life and forever



Homestay Guidelines

**For Host Families
&
International Students**



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Introduction to the Homestay Guidelines


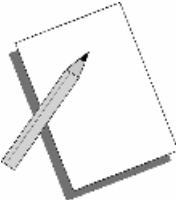

The goal of the MEI Homestay Program is to provide a safe, supportive, English-speaking, Christian family environment for international students attending the MEI. We are grateful to Jesus Christ for this opportunity to share His love with students from around the world.

An excellent homestay environment allows students to improve their English skills in a positive, family environment. It also gives students an opportunity to learn about Canadian culture and traditions. It is our sincere hope that participation in the MEI homestay Program will be a rich and rewarding experience for both students and their host families.

It is our hope that the MEI's International Homestay Guidelines will encourage excellent communication and understanding between the students and host families registered with the International Program. If you have any questions regarding any of these guidelines, please contact our Homestay Coordinator, Ms. Brenda Hansum for clarification.



Homestay Program Guidelines

1. It is not guaranteed that the Student will be matched with a family having children or persons in the same age range as the student, with a one-parent family or with a two-parent family. In every case, the homestay coordinator will make every effort to provide the best situation for the student.
2. The student will carry insurance for medical emergencies. The host family may secure medical treatment for the student in the event of illness without liability.
3. If a difficulty arises between the student and the host family, the homestay coordinator should be notified immediately. The homestay coordinator can be reached for any reason at 604 859-3700 ext. 416 Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time). In the case of emergencies, a coordinator can be reached at home (604-855-6777). 
4. The student shall respect and follow the host family's rules in their home.
5. The student is expected to take part in the host family's daily activities and to participate in some general chores shared by the family (tidy up after yourself, clean up after meals, etc) The Host family will not expect the student to maintain their house or yard, baby-sit their children or cook their meals.
6. The student is responsible for informing his or her host family when making plans to go out on a free day or afternoon. **The student must make sure the family knows where she/he is at all times.** If the student cannot explain where she/he is going verbally she/he should prepare a brief written note outlining his/her plans. If the student spends a night at a friend's house, the host family must be given the **NAME, ADDRESS, and PHONE NUMBER of the friend's parents.** Sleepovers are permitted on weekends only and only at the homes of other M.E.I. students. 
7. The student will be home for dinner with the family each night unless other arrangements are mutually agreed upon.
8. Normally the student will be in the house studying on weeknights between 7:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. 
9. The grade 8 and 9 student will have a curfew on the weekends (Friday and Saturday night) of 11:00 p.m. The grade 10, 11 and 12 student will have a curfew on weekends is 12:00 a.m. Time deadlines may be extended for special occasions, but only with the consent of the host parents.
10. The student shall invite guests to the home only with the knowledge and permission of the host family.
11. The student shall keep his/her room clean and tidy and must vacuum their room and empty the garbage can at least once a week. Perishable food items should not be kept in the bedroom.

12. If the student is doing his/her laundry, it must be done at least once a week.
13. The student shall respect the privacy and belongings of the host family.
14. If the student decides against getting a separate phone line the following guidelines will apply. The student shall ask permission to use the telephone, will keep calls to reasonable length of time and will restrict night calls after 10:00 p.m. Any long distance calls should be “collect” or using “time and charges” or a calling card. Students must pay all outstanding long distance calls made by them.
15. The MEI s academic standards are high and as a result your homestay student will require help at home with assignments from time to time. The MEI international program staff is in constant communications with your student s teachers and will decided based on student marks, attitude and ability that additional tutoring outside of school time would be beneficial. The MEI staff will arrange all tutors from the school at an additional cost to the student.
16. If the student decides to travel during homestay, she/he must obtain permission from the MEI Homestay Coordinator. The student must provide information regarding their travel plans and provide a number where they can be contacted.
17. Within the calendar year (September to July) the homestay students will be allowed one extended leave up to and including 14 days in which their homestay fees will be refunded at \$23.33 per day. All other holidays other than the above stated clause, the student will pay regular homestay fees. During the summer holidays (August) students are responsible to pay regular homestay fees if in Canada. Outside of this agreement it is the student’s responsibility to pack and clean up their belongings so that the homestay can use their room. If the student wishes that the room remain untouched the student will be required to pay 50% of the homestay fees.
18. The International program is successful as a result of positive communication. Therefore any desire to make a significant purchase, ie; T.V., D.V.D. players, automobiles must be communicated to the Homestay Coordinator and the International Program Director. The International Program reserves the right to decline permission to purchase.
19. All homestay parents should have a home insurance policy in place before the homestay student moves in. In case of accidental damage the student will be liable for payment of the deductible up to \$500.00 limit.
20. Airport Pick ups. The homestay will be required to pick up their student from the airport in September and drop them off in July. If the student wishes to travel at Christmas or Spring Break, the cost as the airport drop off and pick up will be \$40.00 each way. This will be paid per trip not per student in the case of carpooling. For example, If a student leaves December 20 they pay \$40.00 and pick up in January will also cost \$40.00.



Host Family Homestay Agreement

1. The host family will provide a room with a separate bed for each student, a chest of drawers, clothes closet, and a study area that includes a desk and a reading lamp.
2. The host family will provide the student with three meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner or a bag lunch) a day or provisions for three meals a day, unless other arrangements have been made. Snacks should also be provided.
3. The host family will provide the student with a clean environment as well as clean linen and towels on a regular basis.
4. The host family is required to arrange for transportation of the student to and from MEI.
5. The host family is not required to pay for additional items such as entertainment for the student if the student wishes to be involved in the family activities.
6. The host family will not hold the employees and Board of the MEI responsible for any inconvenience or property damage, or physical harm incurred and received by the homestay student.
7. The host family will not be held responsible for loss of property or physical harm incurred except in the case where Canadian Law has been breached.
8. The host family may secure medical treatment for the student in the event of illness or injury without liability. This will be agreed to by the student and/or guardian prior to the homestay term.
9. If the host wishes to terminate the homestay before the agreed time, it should be on reasonable grounds, and must allow the homestay coordinator at least one month to find a new home for the student.
10. If the student terminates the homestay in agreement with the homestay coordinator, the host family will receive advance notice of at least two weeks prior to the student leaving.
11. The host family **MUST** notify the Homestay Program Coordinator of any unusual incidents as soon as possible.
12. If the host family is in violation of this agreement, this contract between the MEI and the host may be terminated immediately and payment that has been made to the host family beyond the termination date must be refunded to the MEI.
13. Transportation to different events and for various reasons should be provided by the Homestay parents as long as this occurs on a reasonable frequency. Three times per week is not unreasonable.



14. Payment of \$700.00 per month should be made directly from student to Homestay parents unless other arrangements have been made through the MEI. No lump sum payments will be permitted. Homestay parents are not able to charge students for additional expenses.
15. Hosts are not responsible for long distance telephone calls. Hosts are encouraged to have a separate line installed and paid for by the student if it is anticipated that the student will be on the phone frequently. Internet connection is to be paid for by the student. New students to the program can enjoy the internet connection when the director and homestay allows.
16. Homestay placements are initially made for one month. If the student and host are satisfied after a fair trial then the arrangement will continue until either the host or student gives one-month notice to terminate the arrangement.
17. Hosts must inform the Homestay Coordinator of all residents and pets in the household. Normally, the MEI does not place more than one student in a homestay. Please notify the Homestay Coordinator of all changes to the household.
18. Sometimes a homestay situation deteriorates for some reason or another. Just as there are personality clashes between people of the same culture, so too there may be between a student and a host family member. In a case where a homestay coordinator decides to move a student, two week's notice may not be given depending on the situation.
19. The student is expected to attend church or youth group once per week while living with the homestay.
20. At any one time, M.E.I. will allow up to and including 10% of international students to live with linguistically similar homestays.
21. If the homestay makes a change within the yearly contract (example: moving, transfer) and can no longer host the student, due to the homestay's circumstance, a charge of \$100.00 will be enforced.
22. If the homestay parents are going to be away from the home overnight it is the homestay parents' responsibility to arrange supervision for their student. Under **no** circumstances is the student to be home alone overnight.
23. All homestay parents are required to complete a criminal record check before the student moves in to their home.





**By signing this agreement
you are agreeing
to abide by the conditions
in the homestay agreement.**



Date

Host Father's Name Printed

Host Mother's Name Printed

Host Father's Signature

Host Mother's Signature

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"Your Word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105

Student Expectations

GENERAL

Students must understand that homestay parents are not just landlords. Students are expected to conform to the normal rules of family life and to contribute to the routine operations of the household.

Always ask your host parent's permission before making plans.

Be sure to tell them:

- Where you would like to go?
- How you will get there?
- Who you will be with?
- When you will be home?
- Be sure to be back on time.



Advise your homestay family by telephone if you will be late or if you want to change your plans.

Behave responsibly and you will be given responsibility.

NOTE: Your homestay family may refuse you permission to participate in some activity. Reasons for their refusal could include: Concern for your safety, conflict with family plans, the amount of homework you have.

INTERACTION WITH FAMILY

The way to make the most of your Canadian living experience is to come with an open mind. Come prepared to participate in family life and share in the responsibilities of being a family member. The homestay experience you have will largely depend on you, your friendliness and your attitude.

The first few weeks living in a new country with a new family will, at times, be difficult. You may feel homesick and frustrated with your new environment and the language. This is natural. Give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings.

If you choose to participate in family holidays and/or travel where costs are incurred, you are expected to assist in bearing the costs. Where you choose not to participate in the activity, then you and the homestay parents must make alternate arrangements that are acceptable to everyone.



DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

Your homestay experience is an important part of your stay in Canada. It gives you the opportunity to become a member of a Canadian family. If you are having difficulty adjusting to your host family, try to communicate your problems and concerns with them. Often, problems and misunderstandings can be resolved in this way. If they cannot, your Homestay Coordinator is always available to help you resolve your problems.

Families and students are expected to make every effort to make the homestay a success. In the unlikely event that families and students are incompatible, and every effort has failed to improve the situation, then another homestay will be arranged. You will be charged \$100 to change homestays, unless the Coordinator decides otherwise. If you are involved in a serious violation of the homestay rules then you may be sent home.

MEDICAL

If you become ill or injured and require professional care, the homestay parent is authorized to give permission for treatment. Medical insurance policies and emergency medical treatment indemnity agreements are the responsibilities of each student.



INSURANCE

Students must have their own private medical insurance until Medical Services Plan coverage is arranged from the Province of BC. The M.E.I. International Program will make these arrangements. Parents should review their home insurance policy with respect to liability and coverage.

TELEPHONE

Ask permission to use the telephone. Do not talk for a long time (more than 25 minutes). Do not place calls after 10:00 p.m. Pay for all long distance calls you make. Use of the phone is a privilege. It may be revoked if abused.

You are strongly encouraged to consider getting your own phone line at your own expense. Talk to your homestay family about this, to see what would work best for all of you.

TRANSPORTATION

- Do not rely on your host family to drive you everywhere.
- Use public transportation (bus or Skytrain) or bicycle when possible.
- Your homestay parent will make arrangements for transportation to and from school.
- The homestay parent may be available to drive you to activities at the school or in the community if you make polite requests in a reasonable amount of time.
- The host family or school will provide transportation to the hospital or to the doctor if you are sick or injured.



DRIVERS LICENSE

It is at the sole discretion of the International Program Director in agreement with the homestay coordinator that International students be allowed to acquire a Canadian Drivers License. If allowed, the Driving and Vehicle Guidelines Policy will be implemented. No International licenses will be accepted. Please obtain a Driver and Vehicle Policy from the International Program office.

ROOM

You will have your own room that will be furnished with a bed, dresser, closet, mattress, pillow and bed linens. Your room will have an adequate study area with a suitable lamp, chair and desk.

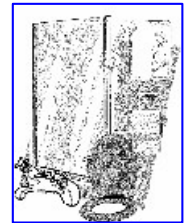
You and your homestay parents will need to talk about how much time you'll want to spend alone. Respecting privacy is important, but too much time spent alone or writing/talking in your own language means less time spent practicing English.

BATHROOM USE

Canadian bathroom routines can be very different. Some of the main differences are as follows:

Canadians

- prefer taking showers to baths
- often shower in the morning
- bathe inside the bathtub, drain and clean the tub after use
- have no drain in the bathroom floor
- keep the bathroom floor dry
- usually shower once per day



You should find out what your family's expectations are concerning the use of the bathroom. It is important to know when you can shower or bathe and for how long. It is not necessary for you to wait until your host parents have showered before taking your shower, but you should be sure to leave enough hot water for everybody. You should not take showers after 10:00 p.m. if it disturbs the family. Your family will provide necessary bathroom items such as toilet paper, soap and towels but you will need to supply your own personal items such as toothpaste, shampoo and hand-cream. You should try to leave the bathroom clean and dry after you use it.

TELEVISION

You may choose to watch television and take part in other family entertainment during normal hours, just like other family members.

CHORES

Your host family will welcome you into their home as a member of the family. This means that you will be treated more informally than a “guest” would be. Families appreciate it when you offer to help in the home by keeping your room clean and doing general chores, such as setting the table, doing the dishes, or helping to prepare dinner.

As a family member you may be asked to make your own breakfast and lunch, or to do your own laundry because this is what most family members do.

Remember that you are not staying in a hotel where maid services are provided.

Helping with these chores can also give you the opportunity to talk to a family member, to practice your English and to be part of the family.

MEALS

Three meals per day are normal. If parents happen to be away then food would be made available for you to prepare. Often, Canadian students prepare their own lunches to take to school.

Weekdays, breakfast is a quick, light meal. Families may prepare breakfast together; this meal may include bread / toast, jam, juice, milk, cereal, eggs, or other foods.

Lunch may include sandwiches, raw vegetables, cookies, milk, juice, and fruit.

Dinners may include rice, meat, cooked vegetables, salad and dessert.

Your host family will ask you what foods you like and dislike, so that they can try to meet your needs.

You should politely inform your host family if you do not like a particular food.

Some common Canadian eating habits are as follows:

Canadian

- may not take long to prepare meals
- usually have potatoes instead of rice
- may use canned or frozen food
- do not eat much fish or raw fish
- eat raw vegetables, such as broccoli, and cauliflower, carrots, and celery
- do not always peel their fruit



You might offer to share your culture by preparing a dinner for your host family.

CURFEW

These are broad reasonable guidelines for secondary school students. They may be adjusted slightly depending on the student’s maturity and age. The grade 8 and 9 student will be in the house on weekends (Friday and Saturday night) by 11:00 p.m. The grade 10, 11 and 12 student will be in the house on weekends by 12:00 a.m. Time deadlines may be extended for special occasions, but only with the consent of the host parents.

Weekdays

Normally, school nights are work nights; therefore, senior students should be in bed by 12:00 a.m. Junior students should be in bed between 10:00 and 11:00 p.m. Time in the evenings will be required for homework and study.

Exceptions are special family activities, school events, and sports.

Homestay parents may encourage you to go to bed earlier on occasion if they notice that you look stressed or very tired.

Weekends

Your homestay parents must approve destinations, transportation, curfew and activities.

Be home by the time as per arrangements agreed to by your homestay parents.

Overnight Stays outside the family home and out of town travel with persons other than homestay family members are subject to the approval of homestay parents and the homestay coordinator and the International Program Director.

INTERNET USE

Content: Internet content is subject to the guidelines in the MEI Student Agenda Handbook given out at the beginning of each year.

Time: Time online should be limited to approximately 1 hour per day.

If abuse of these privileges takes place, access to the Internet will be denied.



RESTRICTIONS

As an International Student in Canada on a student visa, you may not use alcohol or illegal drugs.

Immigration Canada does not permit you to take a paying job in Canada.

CRIMINAL OFFENCE

If you commit an offence under Canadian law, then you will be dealt with by the RCMP and Immigration Canada, as necessary. Homestay parents are not held accountable for offences committed by students.



SMOKING Smoking is not allowed in this program.

HAIRCOLOUR

It is only with the consent of the international program staff that an international student be allowed to dye their hair.

SUSPENSION POLICY

School: If after repeated warnings you continue to disobey the rules of the school, you will be expelled from the International Students Program and sent home.

Homestay: If after repeated warnings you continue to disobey the homestay guidelines, you may be asked by the school to withdraw from the school program.

TUTORING: Homework help and after school tutoring

The MEI's academic standards are very high and as a result additional tutoring and homework help may be needed. After reviewing student's grades, the international program staff will require the student to have additional tutoring after school hours. The MEI staff will contact and organize the tutors for the student if needed. This will be at an additional cost to the student.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

If you neglectfully or willfully damage property at home, in the school, or in the community, your parents will be notified and you will be billed for the amount. Students are required to pay the home insurance deductible if applicable up to a maximum of \$500.00.

AIRPORT PICK UPS:

The homestay will be required to pick up their student from the airport in September and drop them off in July. If the student wishes to travel at Christmas or Spring Break, the cost as the airport drop off and pick up will be \$40.00 each way. This will be paid per trip not per student in the case of carpooling. For example, If a student leaves December 20 they pay \$40.00 and pick up in January will also cost \$40.00.

FINAL NOTE

You will find that if you treat the homestay family in the way that you would like to be treated you will get along very well with them. This attitude will help you to become a successful international student! If you have any difficulty with your homestay, please notify Ms. Brenda Hansum, the Homestay Coordinator.

**By signing this agreement
you are agreeing
to abide by the conditions
and rules set out in this document.**

Date

Student's Name Printed

Student's Signature

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