



## **International Programs Homestay Program Student/Host Expectations**

Whatcom Community College's Homestay Program provides the opportunity for international students to live with an American host family. Living with a host family allows students a chance to learn about American family life by participating in the families day to day activities. Students build a foundation for understanding the culture of the U.S. by learning about family values, beliefs, outlook and historical roots through involvement with family, community and school. The Homestay Program works well for students who want to interact as a family member, often sharing in meals and activities.

Host families come from various ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic levels, religions and lifestyles. Host families include married and unmarried couples, single parents, retired couples all with or without children. Hosts families may have a large, elegant home, some may have small, modest home, some live in town and some outside of the city. Although we do our best to make appropriate host family matches, we cannot accommodate requests for hosts of specific backgrounds, religions, number of children or any other characteristic. Students who wish to be a part of the Homestay program must be open minded to experiencing the cultural diversity of the U.S. and our local area.

By committing to Whatcom Community College's Homestay Program both the Homestay host and student must agree to the Homestay Program Student/Host Responsibility Agreement as outlined below.

### **Living Together:**

1. The student and host will communicate regularly to clarify hosting issues and expectations.
2. The student and the host will review their relationship on a regular basis to assess whether the homestay is continuing to be a positive experience for everyone involved. If there are changes that need to be made, the host and the student will discuss these together.
3. Discussion of religious, political and cultural views is encouraged in an open manner. It is not o.k. to force any opinions or beliefs onto anyone participating in the homestay program.
4. Both the host and the student will contact the Housing Coordinator if conflicts come up that cannot be resolved. Students and hosts are encouraged to contact the WCC Housing Coordinator anytime there is a question or concern. The Housing Coordinator can help solve any misunderstandings or problems that may arise.

### **Host Responsibilities:**

1. Hosts must welcome the student as a member of the household and invite the student to participate in household activities.
2. The host will explain all household rules to the student. These rules will vary from homestay to homestay.

3. The host will explain procedures to be taken in case of an emergency and the student will follow these instructions.
4. The host will provide internet and “Room and Board” for the student, including a furnished bedroom with linens, adequate lighting and storage as deemed suitable by the Housing Coordinator.
5. Included in “Room and Board” are daily meals: students will prepare their own breakfast and lunch with provisions supplied by the homestay host. 4-5 warm evening meals per week will be provided by the homestay host. The student is encouraged to help with cooking these meals together. When away from the family’s home, students are responsible for their own meals.
6. The monthly hosting fee (stipend) is paid to families to help cover the cost of their student. **Please do not rely on the stipend to budget your family expenses.** There is no guarantee that any student will stay for any length of time. Both parties, the host family and the student, must be happy, otherwise the student may move out or the family may ask the student to move out. There is no lease or requirement for students to stay with a family. Please remember that hosting should not be considered a money making program. Students are required to give two weeks written notice when moving out, unless unforeseen circumstances arise.
7. The host will notify the Housing Coordinator of any changes in the home that may affect the student such as: illness, a change in household members, etc. Further, if the homestay hosts plan to be away, alternate arrangements and/or events acceptable to the student and the Housing Coordinator will be made well in advance.
8. The homestay host agrees to respect the student’s privacy, personal property, and individual rights and make every effort to understand the student’s culture.
9. In the event a student is under the age of 18, the host agrees to secure medical treatment for the student as needed.
10. Hosts are encouraged to help with transportation for International Friendship Club weekend activities.
11. Abuse of alcohol is not permitted by any member of the Homestay Program.
12. Illegal drugs are not tolerated, and use or possession of illegal drugs will result in immediate termination from the Homestay Program.
13. Other expenses including bus fare, personal items, long distance phone use and cell phones are NOT responsibilities of the homestay host.

## **Student Responsibilities:**

1. Students must respect all household rules. These will vary from Homestay to Homestay.
2. Students will follow emergency procedures outlined by the homestay Host.
3. The student will pay the host directly for the homestay fee. This fee is due on the first day of each month. **\$575.00 (\$19.16 per day)-over 18, \$625.00 (\$20.83 per day) – under 18.**
4. The student is responsible for purchasing personal items such as shampoo, toothpaste, bus passes, cell phones, etc.
5. Students will be open to adjusting to American culture, including food and customs and communicate with their homestay hosts or Housing Coordinator about any problems.

6. The student is a member of the household and not a guest in the home. The student should be open to doing activities with the host and sharing some experiences together.
7. The student agrees to respect the family's privacy, personal property and individual rights.
8. Students may not bring guests into the homestay without permission of the homestay host.
9. The student will keep his/her room tidy, clean and undamaged. The student will also keep themselves, their clothes, linens and bathroom clean.
10. The student will help to keep areas of the home that they use clean, in the manner of helping with chores like all the household members.
11. The student is usually responsible for preparing their breakfast and lunch. This is an "American style" breakfast and lunch. Breakfasts typically consist of something to be eaten quickly as household members rush out the door. Some examples of American breakfasts are: cold cereal and milk, toast and jam and maybe eggs, yogurt and fruit or oatmeal. American lunches available for homestay students to pack are a sandwich or leftovers and fruit or crackers. When away from the family's home, students are responsible for their own meals.
12. The student will be responsible for any household items damaged due to carelessness on the part of the student. If damage occurs, the student is responsible for reporting the damage to the host immediately.
13. Students are never allowed to smoke inside the house. Students who are smokers must discuss with their homestay hosts areas outside of the home where smoking is permitted.
14. All students under 18 must sign a WCC Parent/Student Authorization form to allow medical treatment in the event of illness or injury.
15. Living in a homestay means being part of an American family. Families want to interact with their students and the students are encouraged to plan their schedule around the host family in order to make interaction possible.
16. Students are generally not allowed to use the host's computer.
17. Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from school. Nearly all students walk, ride bikes or ride the bus to school. Hosts are not responsible for providing transportation to or from the college. Most homestays are approximately 35 - 45 minute bus ride from Whatcom Community College.
18. Host families generally do not permit drinking alcohol in their home. If you are under 21 years old, you are not permitted to drink alcohol in Washington State. If you are legal drinking age (21 years old) and choose to drink alcohol, you may be asked to do so away from the home. Abuse of alcohol is not permitted by any participant of the homestay program and the student and/or host will be terminated from the program if alcohol is abused. Illegal drugs are not tolerated, and the use or possession will result in immediate termination from the Homestay Program.
19. Students are required to notify hosts if they change their plans for housing, or have a change in their schedule that will impact the homestay host.
20. If the student leaves for an extended vacation the Housing Coordinator should be notified.
21. In the event of a vacation, if the student is away for longer than 2 weeks (14 days) the student will pay ½ the daily rate for those days they are away. If the student is on vacation for less than two weeks, there is no reduction to the homestay fee.
22. Energy Conservation: Most families are very conservative and care about the environment. Please be conservative by turning off lights when you leave a room, taking short showers, if you are cold

please wear extra sweaters and ask your family for extra blankets. In the US the washing machine and dryer is very big and therefore families usually do laundry once a week.

## Moving out of Homestay:

1. If the student decides to move out of the homestay into other housing (ex: apartment), the student must fill out a "Homestay Advance Notification Form" obtained from the Housing Coordinator. This should be filled out and signed by the student, host and Housing Coordinator 2 weeks before moving out of the homestay. The host will then refund any pre-paid monthly payments. If the student does not give the host two weeks' notice, they will be responsible for the homestay fee for 2 weeks payment, even if they move out before.
2. Students are expected to return the house key and leave their bedroom as clean as they found it when moving out. The student will be responsible for any damages caused to the home while in a homestay.
3. The host and student are expected to go through the bedroom together when the student moves out to assess any damages caused during the duration of the homestay. If there are damages which need to be paid for, the host and student will agree together on a proper fee. The WCC Housing Coordinator should be notified about any damages and extra fees. Students should pay for damages before they move out, as it is very difficult to recover any damages after such time.
4. The student is **required** to fill out an "International Student Biographic Change" form in the International Programs office within **10 days** of moving.

## Please Note:

Failure to follow the guidelines outlined above by any participant in Whatcom Community College's Homestay Program may result in termination of the homestay host or student by International Programs.

Whatcom Community College reserves the right to refuse service to any student or host who is found to be a threat to the Homestay Program.

I have read and understand the information provided above by the Homestay Program at Whatcom Community College. I understand that by signing this form, I am responsible for the responsibilities as described above. The information I have provided to Whatcom Community College is truthful and accurate.

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NAME

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DATE