Homestay Services
For Host Families

“Open your home to an international language student, and make every day a cultural learning experience”

09. The host family should provide an orientation tour of Edmonton, showing how to get to the U of A campus, the bank, the post office, and other places that are important to the student, using public transportation routes. The student may also need assistance in such things as setting up a bank account or buying a bus pass.

10. The host family should provide the student with a list of contact numbers and any other relevant information to give reassurance to the student in unfamiliar surroundings.

11. The host family should try to include the student in family activities or excursions wherever appropriate. The student should be told what extra costs he/she will incur during these outings.

12. The host family should respect the rights, privacy, religious and political beliefs, and personal possessions of the student. While the student may be invited to a religious or political activity, as a family outing, the student is not obliged, nor should be pressured to attend.

13. The host family may usually have a maximum of two students staying in their home at any given time. Each student must have his/her own private bedroom. Students may not have the same first language, or share a common language that would allow them to communicate with each other in a language other than English.

14. The host family should be aware that there may be minor conflicts arising due to cultural differences or a difficulty on the student’s part to communicate his/her thoughts effectively in English. The host family will try to quickly resolve these issues or any other disputes arising from participation in the Homestay Program, but when it cannot, it will contact the Homestay Coordinator.

15. It is essential that the host family does not negotiate the homestay fee with the student. The student knows the homestay fee upfront and should not try to pay the family a reduced fee. This would undermine the intent of the program and would not be fair to our host families, who are giving of themselves. Should this occur, the host family is to contact the Homestay Coordinator immediately and the situation will be rectified.

16. The host family should write a letter of introduction to the student before he/she arrives in Edmonton. This will help to make the student feel more comfortable in choosing the Homestay Program. The letter should include the host family’s address and telephone number. The student should be reminded to send his/her flight information to the host family.

17. A receipt should be issued monthly to the student after homestay fees have been received.

18. The host family should contact the Homestay Coordinator if the student has given written notice that he/she plans to leave the Homestay Program.

19. All members of the household who are over the age of 18 must have a police information check prior to being considered as a potential host family.

20. The University of Alberta reserves the right to remove the student from the home without notice or reason.

21. When the student informs the host family that he/she is going on a vacation for three or more consecutive days, the host family will charge a reduced rate of $10 per day for the time that the student is away. This reduced rate does not apply to absences when courses are in session.

22. Upon the student’s departure from the Homestay Program, the Homestay Coordinator will return the CDN $300 damage deposit to the student. Expenses caused from normal wear and tear (such as accidentally breaking a dish) should not be deducted from the deposit; however, any damages due to gross negligence on the student’s part, may be deducted from the deposit. Monies owed from long distance telephone bills may not be deducted from the damage deposit. If a host family is concerned about nonpayment of long distance charges, it should take measures to safeguard long distance telephone call access. Telus provides a feature called ‘Callgate’ which requires the caller to provide an access code before long distance calls can be made. Should a student cause any damage to the host family’s home or property, or fail to pay their telephone bill, the host family agrees to release the University of Alberta of all liability.

23. The host family should ensure it has adequate insurance coverage such as: sufficient property insurance for all buildings and contents; a minimum of $1,000,000 third party automobile liability insurance in addition to collision coverage; and a minimum of $2,000,000 liability insurance.

**Application Procedure**

To be considered for the Homestay Program, we request that you complete the following:

- Read all information about ELP Homestay Services, particularly the guidelines.
- Have a police information check completed for each member of the household who is 18 years or older. Forms for this procedure are attached to the application package.
- Please send your completed Host Family application form and your processed police information check to:
  ELP Homestay Services
  Faculty of Extension
  University of Alberta
  Rm 1-025D Enterprise Square
  10230 Jasper Avenue
  Edmonton, Alberta T5G 4P6

  Telephone: (780)492-0071  Fax: (780) 492-1857
  E-mail: elpinfo@ualberta.ca  Internet: www.elp.ualberta.ca
Program Overview

International students quickly learn the benefits of participating in the Homestay Program while learning English. Students live with a Canadian family, experience Canadian culture and are able to practise their English outside the classroom. Both the host family and student have a unique learning experience and often develop bonds that last a lifetime.

English Language Program

Our program helps the student to develop the communication skills necessary to function efficiently and effectively in academic, professional, and social settings. The four skills — listening, speaking, reading and writing — are balanced during class instruction. The student will also have the opportunity to practise English skills and experience Canadian culture through field trips and cultural events. Classes last four hours per day (8 a.m. to Noon or 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday through Friday. Some students attend the evening classes in addition to the daytime program.

The Students

Students usually range from between 18 to 25 years of age and for many this is their first time away from their families and out of their home country. Both male and female students participate in the program. The majority of our students come from Japan, Korea, China and Taiwan, but we do get a smaller number from Latin America and other countries around the world.

The Host Family

University staff carefully selects families who have a real desire to share their family life with an international student. Host families provide a comforting and supportive home environment, making students feel at ease to practise their English outside the classroom. Both the host family and student have a unique learning experience and often develop bonds that last a lifetime.

Home Visit

After receiving your application, the Homestay Coordinator will contact you. If your application fits our program’s requirements, we will arrange a suitable time to meet with you at your home to discuss the program and see whether it would fit in with your family’s lifestyle.

Potential host families should be aware that student homestay applications vary from term to term and the university may not always be looking for new host families.

Fees

The current homestay fee is $850 per month. The student pays the fee directly to the host family on the last day of each month. The Homestay Coordinator collects a $300 Damage deposit and the last month’s homestay fee from the student. The student pays the $50 airport pick-up fee directly to the host family.

Important to Note

The University does its best to find a good match between student and host family. However, if the Homestay Coordinator finds the match not to be suitable, the University will remove the student from the home without notice. For this reason, the host family should not consider the monthly homestay fee to be guaranteed income.

Guidelines for the Host Family

To satisfy program requirements, a police information check must be completed for each member of the host family who is 18 years and older before the University can consider it for participation in the Homestay Program. Forms required are attached to the application package.

01. The host family should use English as its sole language of communication in the household.

02. The host family should provide the student with a safe, well-lit private bedroom that is furnished, including a desk. The bedroom may be in the basement or in the main part of the house and should be of a similar quality to other bedrooms in the house. The bathroom may be private or shared with other members of the host family. The student should be provided with towels and linen.

03. The host’s home should not be farther than a 45-minute bus ride to campus. Homes must be close to a bus route and transfers must only take place at a heated transit centre. Students should not have to take more than two buses to get to campus.

04. The host family should provide three healthy meals per day and will try to eat dinner together as a family. This is an excellent time for the student to practise his/her English skills, and for both the family and student to have cultural exchanges. A packed lunch should be provided during the school week.

05. The host family should do its best to become the student’s extended family, providing emotional support, and showing interest in exchanging cultural ideas. The host family will offer its time to the student as it would other family members.

06. The host family should discuss house rules within the first few days of the student’s arrival. Because of cultural differences, it is unwise to assume that your expectations will be met without having discussed them clearly with the student at the outset. Suggestions for discussion include curfews, smoking policy, use of telephone, drinking, overnight guests, use of household items such as washer/dryer, stereo equipment, etc. Also let the student know of any areas in the house that are private.

07. The host family should expect the student to keep his/her room tidy and do his/her own laundry. The student should clean up after himself/herself in common areas of the house and from time to time assist the family in doing the dishes after dinner. However, the family should not expect the student to do any major household chores. The host family should not ask the student to provide babysitting services.

08. Upon the student’s arrival in Edmonton, the host family should arrange to greet him/her at the airport, and take him/her to their home. Once home, the host family is not expected to provide daily transportation for the student.