



ED300.001 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HOMESTAY GUIDELINES

Policy Type: Education
Adopted: 08 2021

1. POLICY STATEMENTS

- (a) In fulfilling our mission and vision, LCS values our international students and endeavours to create inclusive, welcoming learning environments supported by loving, hospitable Christian host families.
- (b) Federal, provincial and municipal laws apply to homestays. It is the responsibility of each of the groups described in this document to be familiar with applicable legislation.
- (c) These policies and procedures outline minimum requirements for the LCS International Student homestay program, as well as responsibilities expected of homestay families, international students and third-party agents.
- (d) Upon request, LCS administration will provide a translation of this document.
- (e) These policies are directed by BC Ministry of Education guidelines for international student homestay programs: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/internationaleducation/home_stay_guidelines.pdf
- (f) Unless otherwise specified, all other LCS policies apply to international students and host families.

2. DEFINITIONS:

- (a) **International students** are students from outside Canada who do not meet the Ministry of Education's funding eligibility requirements and typically pay international student tuition fees to LCS. Many international students will have to obtain the authorization of the Canadian government to enter Canada with the intention of pursuing studies longer than six months.
- (b) **Short-term international students** are students studying in short-term programs at LCS for durations less than 6 months. These students often require homestay placements. All policies and procedures that apply to long-term students also apply.
- (c) **Parents** are the biological or adoptive parents of an international student. **Guardians** are persons who have been legally authorized to act in place of the student's parents. The legal guardian is distinct from a custodian.

3. HOMESTAY PROGRAM HANDBOOK

The LCS International Student Program will maintain a handbook for homestay students and host families:

<https://www.langleychristian.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Homestay-Program-Guide.pdf>

4. HOMESTAY PROGRAM PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

To promote the best possible homestay experience for international K-12 students, the LCS homestay program provider will:

- (a) Maintain a homestay screening process for host families and for international students to determine suitability. The host family screening process should be published and should include:
 - Scheduled home inspections and host parent interviews
 - Scheduled criminal records check for all adult household members
 - Reference checks for the host family parent(s) where required
- (b) Gather appropriate and up-to-date personal records/ contact information for the student, parent/guardian, custodian and/or host family, including:
 - Legal first and last names (i.e. as they appear in a passport)
 - Gender
 - Age
 - Relevant medical information
 - Country of residence
 - Address
 - Contact phone number and email address
- (c) Ensure that all data collected and any information distributed by the homestay program provider complies with protection of privacy legislation.
- (d) Develop and deliver a comprehensive training program for new host families to ensure familiarity and understanding with best practices and develop a process for regular host families to stay current with best practice.
- (e) Place no more than two international students with a host family at the same time.
- (f) Avoid concurrently placing both adult and minor international students in the same home unless there is a clear rationale for how this benefits the students.
- (g) Inform the host family of potential student placements by using a standardized student profile form that includes the dates of accommodation, special requirements, and relevant medical and behavioral background.
- (h) Liaise with the student, school, host family and parents/ guardian and provide each with support.
- (i) Communicate with international students and host families on a regular basis.
- (j) Provide 24-hour emergency contact for international students and homestay families.
- (k) Implement and maintain quality assurance and program evaluation mechanisms.
- (l) Offer conflict resolution services (and the opportunity to reach consensus) to both the host family and the international student.

- (m) Maintain clear, published standards and procedures relating to homestay, including procedures for the dismissal of host families in warranted cases and procedures for transferring students to a different host family.
- (n) Develop separate reference manuals for host families and for international students (and their parents) that describe relevant legislation, standards and procedures.
- (o) and procedures applicable to the full range of a host family's and an international student's homestay experience.
- (p) Maintain clear, published fee information including:
 - Terms of Agreement – payment of fees to whom and when
 - Per diem and monthly homestay fees
 - Services included with fees
 - Additional fees (e.g. airport pick-up or drop-off or storage fees)
 - Refund policy
- (q) Provide, as appropriate, the international student with access to a person who can speak the student's primary language.
- (r) Share medical or mental health concerns that arise during the course of the homestay with the international student program, the host family, the custodian or the student's parent/guardian(s) as appropriate.
- (s) Provide additional standards and procedural supports and requirements for younger homestay students as appropriate.
- (t) Publish the homestay program provider's legal limitations.
- (u) Inform international students who are about to be placed with a host family about the following resources:
 - B.C. Helpline for Children (Tel: 1-800-663-9122) May be called to report when a child or youth under 19 years of age is being abused or neglected. There is a legal duty to report your concern to a child welfare worker.
 - Kids Help Phone (Tel:1-800-668-6868) Counselling and mental health support.
 - Kelty Mental Health Resource Center (<http://keltymentalhealth.ca/>) Resources regarding mental health issues, substance use, medications and healthy living.

5. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES:

To promote the best possible homestay experience for international K-12 students, international student programs should:

- (a) Identify the custodian, appointed by the parent/guardian, who is responsible for the care of each international student. The international student program should articulate its expectations of a custodian.
- (b) Develop clear procedures for host family parents in connecting with their international student's school. Host family involvement with ELL/ESL or with French language learning/French as a second language support,

attendance, and extra-curricular activities will promote “school connectedness” and support student learning and success.

- (c) Develop procedures and templates for communicating with the parent/guardian and custodian.
- (d) Support host families with conflict resolution procedures and processes to resolve the variety of issues that may arise during the homestay. A clear outline of when and who to contact should additional support be required is highly recommended.
- (e) Encourage homestay families to be specific and thoughtful regarding household expectations.
 - Considerations such as church attendance, curfew, internet use, chores, etc. should be clearly outlined and communicated to the student.
 - Ensuring that all responsibilities are developmentally appropriate and suitable within the context of the home is important.
- (f) Provide host families with a variety of resources to support their international student in acquiring English or French as an additional language.
- (g) Publish the international student program’s legal limitations.
- (h) Develop a participation agreement with the student and parent/guardian that includes expectations of student behaviour, conflict resolution processes and grounds for dismissal from homestay and/or the school/district program.

6. HOST FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

To promote the best possible homestay experience for international K-12 students, host family parent(s) should:

- (a) Provide a caring, nurturing and supportive environment for international students.
- (b) Abide by all rules/guidelines established by the homestay program provider when hosting a student placed by that provider
- (c) Be 25 years of age or older, or receive approval from the international student program as an approved exception.
- (d) Agree to scheduled in-home inspections by either the international student program or the homestay program provider or both and criminal record checks (for anyone living in the home who is 18 years or older).
- (e) Have no more than two international students in the homestay at the same time.
- (f) Avoid concurrently hosting both adult and minor international students.
- (g) Provide food for three nutritious meals per day.
- (h) Provide a clean and tidy home with a private, adequately furnished bedroom, with access to:
 - An area with a desk, chair and adequate lighting for homework
 - A bathroom, linens and use of laundry facilities
 - entry into the home like any other member of the family (e.g. house key and alarm code, if applicable)
 - Where possible, access to the Internet to support educational goals and consistent communication with home

- (i) Ensure the house is safe and complies with the BC Building Code and/or the local building bylaw, as applicable, and with the local fire code.
- (j) Ensure a student's general well-being, seek medical attention when necessary, and report any significant medical or mental health issues to the school, the custodian, the homestay program provider and the international student program.
- (k) Inform the school or international student program if the student drinks alcohol, takes or possesses non-prescribed, illegal drugs or breaks the law.
- (l) Ensure the home and auto insurance policy adequately covers students residing within their home; some policies do not cover homestay students.
- (m) Promote strong connections between an international student and their parents, schools and communities by:
 - Using the student's desired language of study (English or French) in the home
 - Imposing reasonable limits on the student's personal use of the internet (i.e. number of hours/ day and appropriate times of day)
 - Negotiating and enforcing an appropriate and reasonable curfew and house rules for the student
 - Assisting the student in seeking extra- curricular activities and sports
 - Attending the LCS orientation for host families and other cultural or education events

7. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

International students coming to B.C. and entering a homestay should:

- (a) Abide by all rules/guidelines established by the homestay program provider when staying with a host family arranged by that provider.
- (b) Engage with the host family and the school and seek out opportunities to become involved in the school and family life.
- (c) Communicate regularly with their parent/guardian and with their host family.
- (d) Communicate significant issues or concerns to the host family, parent/guardian, custodian, school principal, vice-principal or teachers, homestay program provider or international school program as appropriate.
- (e) Understand that the school district or independent school international student program may require a student to move homestays or withdraw from the international student program in cases where accommodation that has been arranged privately is deemed to be unsafe or unsuitable.
- (f) Respect and be responsible toward the homestay home and property and pay for any damage to family property if found to be responsible for the damage.

8. PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

An international student's parent/guardian should:

- (a) Accurately complete the application and in-take materials and disclose all of the student's relevant information, such as medical conditions, to the homestay program provider and the host family so that they are fully able to support and care for the student for the duration of the homestay.
- (b) Be familiar with the rules/guidelines established by the homestay program provider arranging the host family placement for the student and help ensure that the student abides by those expectations.
- (c) Stay in regular touch with the student to monitor that the student is coping well with the pressures and stresses that come with living and studying in a new country and learning a new language.
- (d) Report significant concerns to the homestay program provider.
- (e) Understand that the school district or independent school international student program may require a student to move homestays or withdraw from the international student program in cases where accommodation that has been arranged privately is deemed to be unsafe or unsuitable.
- (f) Understand that there are the following resources regarding child health and safety:
 - B.C. Help line for Children (Tel:1-800-663-9122) May be called to report when a child or youth under 19 years of age is being abused or neglected. There is a legal duty to report your concern to a child welfare worker.
 - Kids Help Phone (Tel:1-800-668-6868)
 - Provides counselling and mental health support.
 - Kelty Mental Health Resource Center (<http://kelymentalhealth.ca/>) Provides resources regarding mental health issues, substance use, medications and healthy living.

9. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AGENT RESPONSIBILITIES

International students and their families sometimes hire agents to help place the student in an international student program. International student agents should:

- (a) Provide support to international student programs, homestay program providers, and international students and their families, particularly in regard to communicating with the parent/guardian if and when requested by the homestay program provider or the international student program.
- (b) Be familiar with the LCS Homestay Guidelines and the best practices expectations of the homestay provider
- (c) Help students to understand and abide by all rules/guidelines established by the homestay program provider when staying with a host family arranged by that provider.