

Guidelines for Host Families

This guide serves as a general introduction to Happy Homestay Adelaide (HHA) services and provides an overview of host family expectations and responsibilities. Families wishing to host international students through HHA are required to comply with this guideline. Please read the following information carefully. Once you have understood the contents of this guideline, please sign at the end of the document.

1. INTRODUCTION

A host family is a vital part of the experience of international students in Adelaide. Host families can offer students a great opportunity to experience a meaningful cultural exchange while also learning and improving their English language skills. The following information provides a guideline and code of conduct expected from host families to enhance a student's cultural exchange experience in a safe and welcoming home environment.

2. COMMON CHALLENGES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Moving to another country can be challenging for some students. Some students may experience:

- Homesickness.
- Language difficulty.
- Challenges making new friends.
- Difficulty interpreting culture-specific social cues.
- Host-family conflicts.
- Different rules and expectations from their home.
- Various emotional difficulties.

2.1 Identifying Difficulties

Students experiencing difficulties adapting to their new environment may display the following behaviours:

- Being uncomfortable communicating in English.
- Not able to make new friends or engage in school or extracurricular activities.
- Spending excessive time alone.
- Calling home frequently or spending too much time online.
- Becoming irritable or has angry outbursts.
- Showing signs of anxiety or depression.
- Not perform well in school.

If you observe these types of behaviours, make an effort to talk to the students or seek help from HHA or the education provider's International Student Coordinators (ISC). Do not hesitate to contact HHA if you have any concerns regarding your student's welfare.



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3. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A HOST FAMILY?

Hosting a student can be an extremely rewarding experience for everyone in the family. There are however some important responsibilities associated with being a homestay.

3.1 Before the student arrives

- Become acquainted with the cultural and linguistic background of your student.
- If possible, establish communication with the student before his/her arrival.
- Review and understand all the HHA guidelines and procedures that host families and students must follow.
- Know how to contact key HHA staff and the education provider's ISC in case of an emergency.

3.2 Expected Conduct of hosts families

- Provide a safe and welcoming environment for trust and friendship to develop between the student and your family.
- Support and make the student feel like a part of the family, with the same privileges and obligations. Treat students as members of the family (not as tenants).
- Gently encourage the student to learn and adopt most of your household rules.
- Provide a place in the home where the student may study in private.
- Recognize the student's birthday and other special occasions.
- Ensure the student knows how to contact family members, friends, and other support networks.
- Accept the student's cultural traditions and values.
- Endeavor to be understanding, supporting, and patient toward the student.
- Speak English at all times to improve the student's communication skills.
- Provide a quiet environment for the student to study, rest, and sleep.
- Help the student access public transport and provide initial orientation to travel to school.
- In case of an emergency, know how to access and use the student's health insurance policy.
- Voice any concerns and questions regarding the student to the HHA coordinator or the education provider's ISC, including serious homesickness, difficulty adapting to family life or education provider, or illness.
- Maintain close contact with the HHA and the education provider's ISC, and address problems and concerns quickly.
- Exercise supervisory and parental responsibility to ensure the student's well-being.
- Encourage involvement in community life by introducing the student to neighbors, friends, and local groups.
- Teach the student about the local culture, and learn about the student's own culture.
- Advise the student about matters related to school, family, and community.
- Refrain from inviting or pressuring students to attend religious or political activities.



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4. DUTY OF CARE

4.1 Duty of Care

While a student is under your care you must ensure your student is safe and under appropriate supervision. Although the level of supervision can be varied depends on student's age and maturity, it is important that you understand what Duty of Care means and that in your capacity as a host family your conduct is not in breach of this duty. You must:

- Nature support and assist when required or requested, appropriately to the ages of student
- Support your student in their studies
- Respond and report to education provider/HHA of any suspicion of abuse and/or neglect of student
- Ensure family members, other residents and visitors are respectful towards your student
- Ensure your student does not move in or out of your home without approval from HHA and education provider
- Never leave your student to supervise younger children, even for a short time
- Immediate advise HHA if you have any concern for your student's health, safety or wellbeing
- Advise HHA if there are any changes with your health or physical capacity that may impact your ability to care for the student in your home

If you are unsure as to the extent of your duty of care, or what circumstances would give rise to a breach of this duty, you should seek advice from a lawyer or a free community legal service.

Please note that HHA cannot provide you with legal advice. Nothing contained in this Guideline should be interpreted as such. Please seek independent legal advice if you require it.

4.2 Student Code of Conduct

Students are required to comply with the HHA Student Code of Conduct. You must notify us immediately if you suspect or become aware that your student has been involved in a breach of the student code of conduct, for example, use of illegal drugs, and breach of student visa conditions.

4.3 Conduct by you, your residents and guests

You must ensure yourself, other family members, other residents, and guests in your home act appropriately toward students and be respectful to each other, for example:

- Your student is not alone with other people (e.g. other children/family member/ resident) in a bedroom or bathroom with the door closed



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4.4 Behaviour Management

You must notify the school/HHA immediately if you encounter a behaviour management issue that you are unable to resolve informally with your student. HHA has a range of strategies and full of experiences to deal with student misbehaviour. In serious cases, the student might face enrolment cancellation and reported to the Department of Home Affairs. However, you must never subject your student to physical punishment or verbal abuse.

4.5 Non-discrimination

HHA has a zero-tolerance policy towards any discriminatory behaviour towards students. International students come from a diversity of cultural, social, and religious backgrounds. HHA recognizes and fosters cultural diversity and requests that all host families respect the rights of students to express their cultural heritage without reservations.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOMESTAY FAMILIES

Please read this section carefully and make sure that every member of your family becomes acquainted this below information. As a host family you are responsible for:

5.1 Household

- Providing and maintaining a clean and tidy home environment.
- Readily available kitchen utensils and toiletries.
- Working appliances and devices.
- Appropriate laundry facilities (student's laundry to be washed **at least once a week**. Please notify the student on what days you can do their washing).
- Appropriate home security and emergency planning. Ensure that students understand how to evacuate the premises in case of a fire or any other type of emergency.

5.2 Student's bedroom

- appliances must be in good working order.
- vacuum student's bedroom at least once a week.
- appropriate lighting and prompt replacement of globes as required.
- adequate heating and cooling.

5.3 Breakfast

To consist of at least two of the following: bread/toast and jams, cereal and milk, Asian/Australian noodles. This is generally self-served. Please show the student/s where these items are located.

5.4 Lunch

Whilst the student/s is attending school provide:

- a packed lunch ready before they leave.



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- lunch can consist of one or two pieces of fruit, yogurt, muesli bar, or a piece of cake and one or two nutritious sandwiches and a drink bottle or rice/noodle dish with one or two pieces of fruit and drink bottle.
- Please discuss with each student what they would prefer as most are unfamiliar with our Australian style lunches.

5.5 Dinner

Students are expected to eat dinner with their host families. This will help you and the student/s feel more comfortable with each other and also improve the student/s' conversation skills. Dinner is one of the most important times during the week where international students can build relationships with their host families.

- Provide good tasting, fresh, and nutritious food.
- Ask the student what food they like or dislike and whether they are allergic to any foods.
- Bear in mind that students from Asian backgrounds are used to eating rice or noodles with their dinner.
- Students should not be asked to prepare their food, except for breakfast.

5.6 Snacks

Fruit, cakes, etc. Make sure to indicate to the student what foods or snacks they can access by themselves in case they feel hungry.

5.7 Internet use

Most students prefer having internet access from their bedroom through WIFI. It is the responsibility of the host family to ensure that the internet is used by students for proper purposes, e.g. school work, safe online entertainment, and email access.

It is not uncommon for international students to spend a long period on the internet. Make sure you discuss your expectations with the student in respect of proper use and adequate time on the internet.

5.8 Family Holidays

Where possible, host families should involve students in family outings and holidays bearing in mind the following:

- The student is responsible for paying admission tickets and other personal expenses.
- The cost of accommodation while on family holidays is the responsibility of the host family.

5.9 Insurance

The host family must have a **house, contents, and liability insurance**. HHA will not take any responsibility for any injuries, damage to property, or stolen items whilst the student is under the care of the homestay family. Please check with your insurance company if the student's belongings are covered by your policy.



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5.10 Damage

Students and their parents are responsible for covering costs of any damage caused by the student to the host families.

“Damage” does not include normal wear and tear on household items, fixtures, and fitting. Dirty marks/stains on carpets or walls are considered as “damage” other than in exceptional circumstances.

A conversation between the host and student is necessary regarding the damage that causes by the student, then report to HHA.

A “[Homestay Damage/Loss Claim Form](#)” will be sent through and host families are required to complete the form and return it to HHA at your earliest convenience. Please noted that host families need to claim through their home content insurance provider if the damage exceeds \$400.

6. STUDENT HOLIDAY

Students may decide to take holidays during their school holiday period. If the holding day will be more than one week, the holding fee will be applied/paid.

7. SAFETY AND MEDICAL

7.1 Medical

You must assist your student to attend any routine medical, dental, or other health-related appointments if requested by your student.

7.2 Safety

You must:

- Contact HHA 24 hours emergency phone (0421 192 265) immediately if you suspect or become aware that your student has been harmed or is at risk of harm
- Notify HHA immediately if you suspect or become aware that your student has engaged in or is at risk of engaging in inappropriate or unlawful sexual conduct

7.3 Emergencies

If any emergency or critical incident occurs, you must:

- Call 000 for an ambulance for any medical emergency
- Call 000 for police assistance in any other emergency
- Notify HHA immediately



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8. INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

8.1 Communication with your student

Daily conversation with your student to understand his/her study, health, and wellbeing. Contact the education provider/HHA for assistance if you need help communicating with your student.

8.2 Communication with HHA

You must:

- Maintain regular contact with HHA to discuss the homestay placement and your student's wellbeing
- Use reasonable endeavors to attend orientation, meetings and information sessions arranged by education provider/HHA about your student and/or homestay program
- Inform HHA if you are seeking additional students (through another agency) to live on the premises at the same time as an HHA student.

8.3 Information collection and privacy

HHA holds your right to privacy as an absolute priority. We collect, hold, and work with personal information solely for the purpose of conducting our Homestay Agency duties. HHA will not disclose your personal information to any third party not directly involved with the homestay arrangements.

When a student is placed in your home, your name and contact details will be provided to the education provider and Education Agent and/or overseas family.

8.4 Student privacy

You must respect your student's privacy. This includes ensuring that your student is provided with privacy in their bedroom, in the bathroom and toilet (e.g. knock and seek permission before entering)

In Australia, it is an offense to do any of the following:

- Use a camera and/or other recording devices without the consent of the person being recorded/photographed.
- Secretly make a video or voice recording and distribute it to a third party without the consent of the person being filmed and / or recorded.
- Distribute and upload any of those photos/videos/recordings to a third party or social media.



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9. MOVING STUDENT TO A NEW HOMESTAY

9.1 Moving a student by HHA

HHA reserves the right to relocate a student to another homestay if a request has been made by the student, natural parents, or education provider if necessary and appropriate. HHA may move a student from your home immediately and without notice, if we believe some circumstances warrant urgent and instant action. Circumstances that warrant urgent action may include:

- If there is a breach of homestay service agreement
- If HHA suspect or become aware that your student may be at risk of harm (without investigating the truth of any allegations or concerns)
- If you fail to provide the latest and update accurate information about you
- In an emergency or critical incident

9.2 Moving a student at your request

HHA promotes the right of homestay families to safe home environments. Homestay families are encouraged to contact HHA as soon as possible if students behave in the ways that can endanger, offend, intimidate members of the family, or consistently ignores the house rules to the detriment of the household.

Students who physically and verbally abusive should be reported to HHA. We will, as soon as practicable, remove the students from the homestay. HHA will also take steps to report such behaviour to the authorities when warranted.

If you are unable, unwilling to host, or wishing to terminate hosting your students for any reasons you must notify HHA as soon as possible. If you are able to but would require HHA to move your student temporarily or permanently by giving **a minimum of two weeks' notice**. HHA will use best endeavors to look for an alternative homestay.

If a student is relocated, the host family required to refund the balance of unused homestay fees to HHA immediately.

10. ACCURATE AND LASTEST HOMESTAY INFORMATION

Homestay families are required to provide their information to HHA accurately and notify us as soon as possible of any changes, such as:

- Name(s) of the principal host, other family members and other residents living at the home
- Address, including unit, apartment and street number, city and postcode
- Phone number including home, office, and mobile;
- Email address (if applicable);
- New pets in the household;
- Major works or renovations to house or student's bedrooms; and



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- Account information for Direct Deposit purposes.

11. HOMESTAY FEES

HHA will charge students directly for the homestay fees. Homestay fees cover the host family's weekly fee and HHA's management service for homestay families and students which including a 24-hours emergency phone service. Host families will receive fortnight payments directly into the host family nominated bank account.

In the event of a homestay fee overpayment (i.e. administrative error or overpayment due to student's early departure from homestay), you will be required to return the funds to HHA. A homestay overpayment notice will be sent via email. All homestay fee overpayments are expected to be returned within 14 days of issue homestay overpayment notice.

Hosting student is not intended to be an income generator for host families. The weekly homestay fee is a contribution to cover the costs associated with accommodating your student.

For further information about homestay reimbursement and HHA's management services, please visit our website <https://happyhomestay.com.au/host-reimbursement-schedule>

12. DISCLAIMER

By signing this Guideline, you agree that you have thoroughly read and understood the terms and information contained herein. You also agree that understand and accept that HHA makes every effort to select honest and bona fide host families. Each home is regularly inspected for suitability to host an international student. While all care is taken in ensuring prospective student and host families meet our guidelines, HHA will not be liable for any loss or damage including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage, or any loss or damage whatsoever arising of any negligent actions or damaged caused by the host family or a host student.

HHA makes every effort in ensuring that homestay host:

- Hold contents insurance policy and that this insurance is inclusive of incidents caused by host students.
- Hold Home Building Insurance Policy that includes Public Liability cover.



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AGREEMENT

Families wishing to work with HHA must agree and comply with these **Guidelines**.

I have read and understood **the Happy Homestay Adelaide (HHA) - Guidelines for Host Families** and **Happy Homestay Adelaide (HHA) Homestay Student Code of Conduct**.

I hereby agree to the terms and conditions set out in the above host family guidelines.

Signature of Host 1 Print Name of Host 1 Date

Signature of Host 2 Print Name of Host 2 Date

