

## Elgin Community College

### International Student Homestay Program

#### Program Information, Policies, and Agreement for International Students

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The International Student Homestay Program at Elgin Community College (ECC) provides a unique opportunity for international students to reside in an American home as a member of the family. The Homestay Program fosters international friendship and cultural exchange, offering students a welcoming, safe, and supportive environment while they attend ECC. A homestay provides you (reference to “you or your” refers to the student participating in the program) with the opportunity to improve your English, meet new people, participate in homestay program events and outings and have a positive academic and cultural experience while completing your studies at ECC. The program maintains strict standards and guidelines to ensure the wellbeing and quality of the homestay experience for all participants.

As with many community colleges, ECC does not have residence halls on campus. However, the college provides housing support services for international students. International students can choose from a variety of housing options: homestay, apartment living, or in an extended-stay hotel.

#### Student Homestay Agreement

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the policies, terms, and procedures for participants in the program. Please read this document completely, sign it indicating your consent to the terms and return it to ECC with the rest of your homestay application materials. To process your application, this form must be submitted with your *International Student Homestay Program Application for International Students*.

It is very important that you submit your homestay application by the application deadline. Applications are due no later than 60 days prior to your arrival in the U.S. Late applications will be filled based on availability. Applying does not guarantee you a homestay placement. Students on a reduced course load will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### Is Homestay Right for You?

Participating in the homestay program can enrich your educational and cultural experience in the U.S. However, living in a homestay is not for everyone. Students who live in a homestay are members of the host family and not merely ‘guests.’ Students are expected to respect family rules, engage in family activities and appreciate cultural differences.

You may enjoy the homestay environment if you:

- Appreciate and respect different types of family structures.
- Are interested in sharing your culture and traditions with others.
- View living with a host family as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.
- Are open to new experiences.
- Are mature, responsible, open-minded and not afraid to ask questions.
- Are willing to compromise, communicate and cooperate.

## Placement Standards & Participation in the Homestay Program

Every care is taken to ensure a safe, quality homestay program. Homestay families are carefully screened through an extensive background check and interview process. ECC retains the right to place students with host families participating in the program; placements are made at the discretion of the college. Host families, students and students' families must understand that placements are made by ECC and not by the student, host or any external party. Students are placed with hosts based on the information provided during the application process by both the student and host family. ECC is not responsible for the quality of the relationship between the student and the host family.

Students who do not receive a homestay placement are not considered participants in the program and are not covered under the program's policies and agreements.

### The Host Family

The U.S. is a multicultural country with people from many different ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds. This diversity is reflected in the host families who participate in the program. As a public institution, ECC embraces and promotes this diversity and multiculturalism. Host families live in many different types of homes, such as condominiums, single family homes, apartments/flats and townhouses. Host families are made up of people from a variety of family structures.

Host families include:

- Families with young children/teenagers
- Couples with no children or children no longer living at home
- Widowed, divorced or single individuals
- Retired couples
- Multigenerational families

All host families share an interest in welcoming international students to ECC and the local community. Many hosts have traveled extensively, lived abroad or welcomed exchange students in the past. Host families understand the challenges associated with living in a foreign culture and learning a second language and are committed to supporting you as you adjust to life in the U.S.

### Screening of Host Families and Background Check

ECC screens all potential host families. The screening process includes but is not limited to a background check, personal interview with all members of the household, and a site visit to the host's home. The Center for Global Engagement inspects all potential host's homes to ensure that the minimum amenities required are provided and that the home and family are a good fit for the program. FBI background checks are required for every host and any adult age 18 or older living in the host's home, including adult children away at college who return home for vacations, holidays, etc., or who may stay on a regular basis. The screening and background check process is taken very seriously by ECC, and the college reserves the right to decline a host's application for any reason.

For full details on the screening of host families and background check procedures, please refer to the *International Student Homestay Program Information, Policies, and Agreement for Host Families*.

## Homestay Orientation

As a new F-1 student or J-1 exchange visitor, you are required to attend an orientation to become acquainted with the program, meet other homestay participants, and learn about expectations for students and host families. Homestay orientations are offered at the beginning of each semester and the start of each Intensive English Program session.

### Guidelines for a Successful Homestay Experience

The homestay experience is a very unique opportunity for you to fully participate in American culture. You will gain the most from your time in the U.S. if you understand and respect the following guidelines:

**Respect the host's rules.** Although you are paying for room and board, you should remember that your host's home is not a hotel or dormitory. It is very important that you and your host discuss expectations for your stay in their home. Communicate your needs and ask for advice. Do not worry about your level of English-speaking ability. Your host understands that you are here to learn.

**Ask for help.** There are many times when you may need the assistance of your host, such as shopping for basic necessities. Your host will help you settle in when you first arrive by helping set up a bank account or cell phone plan. You will need to communicate with your host if you need additional assistance. Your host is there to help!

**Help out and clean up after yourself.** Every homestay is unique. You will want to discuss the house rules with your host after you move in. In most homes, it is expected that all family members will help with housework, cooking and cleaning. Keep your bedroom and bathroom tidy and clean. You will be responsible for washing your own laundry, including your bed linens and towels. Remember to say "please" and "thank you."

**Participate in host family activities and events.** Your host family was chosen because of their interest in learning about you and your culture. You will be included in many host family activities or holiday gatherings. You should try to participate in as many activities with your host family as possible. It is common in the U.S. for individuals to pay their own expenses. You can ask your host how much the outing will cost and how much spending money you may need. If you are unable to participate in an activity with your host family, you should let them know a few days prior to the event and thank them for the invitation. It is not considered impolite to occasionally decline an invitation for which you cannot or do not want to attend.

**Respect the roles within the host family.** It is common in the U.S. for men and women to both work outside the home. Most homestays do not have a 'homestay mom' who is at home full-time. Your homestay dad may take on roles that are traditionally occupied by women in your culture, such as washing dishes, cooking meals or cleaning. Children in your host family may seem informal with their parents or more outspoken than children from your country. It will take time for you to adjust to life with your host family. Just as you will respect the roles within the host family, so will the host family respect your privacy and personal space.

**Keep your host informed of your schedule.** Your host needs to know when you will be home. This does not mean you cannot be independent. You are being responsible and proactive when you communicate your plans with your host.

**Be mindful of hygiene.** As in many countries, Americans are very mindful of hygiene and body odor. Americans typically bathe every day, apply deodorant after bathing and wear clean clothes daily.

**Pay your homestay fee on time.** The homestay fee is due on the first of each month. Ask for a written receipt from your host for the payment.

### Student Code of Conduct

All students attending ECC must abide by the college's Student Code of Conduct as outlined in Administrative Procedure 4.402<sup>1</sup>. You should review the Student Code of Conduct and become familiar with the rights, regulations and responsibilities you will undertake as an ECC student. The Student Code of Conduct is available on the college's website by visiting [www.elgin.edu/codeofconduct](http://www.elgin.edu/codeofconduct).

### Homestay Amenities

Your homestay will provide you with the following amenities:

- A safe, caring and comfortable home
- An English-speaking environment
- Shared or private bedroom which includes a bed, study desk, chair, adequate lighting, and clothes storage (dresser and a closet/wardrobe)
- Shared or private bathroom
- Towels, linens, and pillow
- Use of laundry and kitchen facilities and common areas
- Two meals (breakfast and dinner) each day
- Internet access
- Gas, electric, and water bills are paid by the host
- Storage of reasonable items
- Orientation to the local community and services
- Assistance settling in and adjusting to life in America

Your homestay does not provide:

- Non-essential groceries such as snacks and specialty items
- Personal hygiene products
- Cell phone. Your host can help you with purchasing a cell phone and setting up a phone plan.
- Computer/laptop and printer. You may wish to purchase a laptop or computer.
- Maid or turn-down service. Be self-reliant and do not expect to be waited on. Please plan to share in reasonable household duties.
- Use of the host's vehicle
- Renter's insurance. You are encouraged and are responsible for purchasing your own insurance.

### Homestay Fees

The program provides three options for homestay. Homestay fees are the same regardless if you choose a shared or private room. Homestay placements begin the Saturday prior to the start of International New Student Orientation or IEP testing; your assigned move-in date will be noted on your placement letter. It is very important that you arrive on this date as your host family will be expecting you. If you arrive earlier than

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.elgin.edu/aboutus.aspx?id=13758&terms=Administrative%20Procedure>

your homestay move-in date, you will be responsible for arranging your own housing accommodations (e.g. local extended stay) and the cost of transportation and lodging associated with such an arrangement.

ECC charges a one-time, non-refundable placement fee of \$100.00. This fee is due within two business days of a placement being made. If the placement fee is not received, you will forfeit your placement.

If you arrive for studies mid-semester (such as for the Intensive English Program), you will be placed in the homestay for the number of weeks remaining in the semester.

<b>Homestay Option</b>	<b>Monthly Fee (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in and the first day of the month thereafter)</b>	<b>Security Deposit (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in)</b>	<b>Prorated Fee (per night)</b>	<b>Airport Pickup Fee (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in)</b>
Homestay <i>without</i> transportation	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$25.00	From Chicago O'Hare International Airport: \$100.00
Homestay <i>with</i> transportation	\$950.00	\$950.00	\$32.00	
Special Program <i>with</i> transportation	Varies	Equal to homestay fee	\$32.00	

### Airport Pickup

Airport pickup from Chicago O'Hare International Airport is provided by your host if requested well in advance and based on availability. Flight information must be received at least 21 days prior to your arrival date. The fee for airport pickup is \$100.00 and payable directly to the host along with the full homestay fee. If airport pickup is requested, your host will meet you at your flight's baggage claim area with a sign with your name on it. Please communicate with your host and the Center for Global Engagement regarding your flight information.

**Important:** If you miss your connecting flight or will not arrive as scheduled, you are responsible for reporting unexpected changes to the Center for Global Engagement and your host immediately. Please call and do not email with last minute changes.

### Transportation Option

The transportation option includes the following:

- Daily transportation to and from ECC, including the main campus and satellite locations, by private vehicle when classes are in session. Transportation to ECC is to occur not more than 90 minutes prior to the start of your first class and/or 90 minutes after the end of your final class of the day or other mutually agreed time between you and the host. The only exception to this rule is that you should not be dropped off prior to 7:00 AM or picked up after 10:00 PM unless previously agreed upon by both you and the host. On days when you do not have class but wish to be transported to campus, the

above guidelines shall apply. This also includes providing transportation to and from campus for practice if you are a student athlete.

- A weekly shopping trip to a supermarket (such as Jewel, Super Target, Super Wal-Mart, etc.). Host families are responsible for providing transportation to and from the supermarket, so you may purchase food (for lunches and snacks), toiletries, and other personal items. During the first shopping trip, the host should help you become familiar with the store and check-out procedures. You are allowed a minimum of 60 minutes during your weekly shopping trip. You and the host should discuss transportation needs for the weekly shopping trip to occur at a mutually beneficial time.
- Transportation for reasonable errands and 'settling-in' activities during the first few days in the homestay will be provided by the host. Such activities include but are not limited to purchasing a cell phone, buying basic necessities, etc.

In emergency circumstances where the host cannot provide transportation as outlined, the host shall arrange for alternative transportation. Acceptable alternative forms of transportation include taxi or ride share at the host's expense; other host families in the homestay program; or a person who has a background check, insurance, and driver's license on file with the program. In the event you are sick and need to leave campus earlier than the prior agreed upon time, you are responsible for arranging and the cost of your own transportation.

The transportation option does not include:

- Transportation to shopping malls, movie theatres, friends' homes, bank, etc.
- Transportation to games or any other college activities not held on campus.
- Transportation for visiting family or friends.

If you choose a homestay that does not provide transportation, you will be responsible for making your own arrangements for local transportation. Homestays are generally not within walking distance of campus and public transportation within the suburbs is limited. For information on the public bus system that services ECC, visit [www.pacebus.com](http://www.pacebus.com). Elgin is also connected to downtown Chicago by a train system known as Metra; visit [www.metrarail.com](http://www.metrarail.com) for further information.

### Security Deposit and Damage Claims

A security deposit equal to one month's homestay fee is payable by the student to ECC and held by the college. The security deposit for Special Programs is equal to the full homestay fee. The security deposit is due by you to the college by 5:00 PM the business day following your arrival. The security deposit is payable in U.S. dollars only. Payment can be made in person at ECC Student Accounts, online at [elgin.edu/AccessECC](http://elgin.edu/AccessECC), or via international bank wire through Flywire at [flywire.com](http://flywire.com) (if you are outside the U.S.). The security deposit is managed by ECC, and is not to be used as payment for the monthly homestay fee.

The security deposit will be returned to you no later than 30 days after your departure from the homestay program if no alleged damage has been formally reported by the host. The security deposit will be returned only if the host is not owed for any unpaid bills or property damage. Normal wear and tear of appliances and furniture should be expected and not charged to you. Damage beyond normal wear and tear may be compensated from the security deposit.

In the event of any alleged damage caused by you to the host's property, the host must contact the Center for Global Engagement in writing within three business days of the alleged damage. If damage is allegedly caused by you, the college and host will follow the damage claim process as outlined in the *Damage Claim Policy and Procedure* detailed at orientation, contained in the International Student Homestay Program Student Handbook, and is available by request from the Center for Global Engagement. Payment of any verified damages caused by you will be remitted to the host from your security deposit per college financial policy and procedures. If you are a continuing participant in the homestay program, you must remit the difference between the required homestay security deposit and your current security deposit balance on file with the college (balance reflecting damage claim payment to your host) within five business days.

If you are no longer a participant in the homestay program, ECC will issue you a refund of any security deposit balance minus funds paid to the host for an approved damage claim. Such payment may take up to several weeks to process. You are required to provide the college with a forwarding address for any refund due of your security deposit. All refunds are issued in U.S. dollars. ECC is committed to an equitable, fair, and timely resolution of any damage claims that honors due process and input from all parties.

### Payment of Homestay Fees

The initial homestay payment is due by 5:00 PM the day following your arrival. Payment should only be made after the Homestay Contract has been signed by you and your host. Thereafter, your homestay fee is due on the first day of each month. All homestay fees, security deposit, and airport pickup must be paid by cash, cashier's check or money order drawn on a U.S. bank and paid directly to the host. Your host will provide you with a written receipt for each payment. Homestays end the day after graduation or the day after classes end in the summer. Homestays are prorated if a student is in the home for less than the full month.

It is important that you pay your host on time each month. Homestay fees paid five days late will accrue a \$25.00 late fee. If you have not paid your homestay fee by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month, you will be considered in violation of the homestay agreement and will be asked to leave the homestay immediately. In such instances, you will be directed to a local extended stay hotel and will be responsible for the costs associated with lodging. Your host will contact the Center for Global Engagement regarding any late payments or difficulty collecting payment. In the event that a student has excessive and/or reoccurring late payments, the College reserves the right to remove the student from the program for failure to adhere to program policies.

#### *Example:*

You arrive on August 10 at 1:00 PM. You have chosen to live in a homestay with transportation and requested airport pickup. Your homestay fees will be calculated as follows:

Fees payable directly to your host:

1. Cost of first month's homestay fee for a student living in a homestay with transportation:  
\$32.00 (per night) x 21 nights = \$672.00
2. Airport pickup fee:  
\$100.00

Total fees due by 5:00 PM on August 11 (the day following your arrival): \$772.00

Fees payable directly to ECC:



1. Security deposit for a student living in a homestay with transportation:  
\$950.00

Total fees due by 5:00 PM on August 11 (the day following your arrival): \$950.00

Your monthly fee of \$950.00 would then be due to your host on September 1, October 1, etc. until the end of your Homestay Contract.

### Vacation Policy

If you decide to go out of town or take a vacation while you are in the program, the following procedures will apply:

- Discuss with your host your vacation plans at least two weeks prior to your departure. Plans must be agreeable to both parties.
- If you are away for 14 nights or less during the contract period, there is no discount for vacation.
- If you are away for 15-30 nights during the contract period, the rate during your absence is 50 percent of the daily pro-rated homestay fee.
- During the contract period, you should not be away from the homestay for longer than 30 nights.
- If you will be away for longer than 30 nights, you must receive permission from your host and the Center for Global Engagement to continue in your homestay.
- ECC understands that you may want to return to your home country over holiday breaks or during the summer vacation. However, it is unfair to your host to hold a spot for you without compensation. If your host and the Center for Global Engagement agree to hold your belongings during such breaks, you will be responsible for a \$5.00 daily fee payable directly to your host for the storage of personal belongings and to retain the homestay placement upon your return. "Belongings" refers to tangible items such as clothing, shoes, and personal effects that you intend to use or retrieve upon return to the homestay. You are expected to remit payment to your host prior to your departure. Hosts will not be compensated for storing items that you may have inadvertently left behind or after your participation in the program has ended.
- Your belongings will not be held for longer than 90 nights. Student belongings in the homestay for longer than 90 nights will be donated to charity. Host families are not responsible for mailing your belongings to you.

For assistance in calculating vacation rates, please contact the Center for Global Engagement.

Number of Nights Away from the Homestay	Homestay Rate
14 nights or less	No discount
15-30 nights	50% of the daily pro-rated homestay fee
31 nights or more	\$5 per night

Many host families may take vacations or weekend trips. You may be invited to join your host family if it does not conflict with your class schedule. If you participate, you will be responsible for any expenses. It is very important that these expenses be discussed beforehand with your host. Participation by you in such activities is voluntary, and you assume all risks and responsibilities.

If your host will be away from home at all during your stay (outside of their normal working schedule), this must be discussed with the Center for Global Engagement before you arrive or as soon as your host's vacation plans are known. The Center for Global Engagement, in consultation with you and your host, will determine



whether or not you should be moved to another home temporarily during your host's absence. This policy is in place to ensure that your needs are met while participating in the program.

### Placement and Cancellation Policy

After you have been accepted into the program, you will receive a homestay confirmation email from the Center for Global Engagement prior to your arrival in the U.S. You must confirm your acceptance of the homestay placement via email within two business days of your homestay confirmation and pay the \$100.00 Placement Fee. Failure to respond in the set time frame and pay the placement fee will result in the forfeiture of your homestay placement.

ECC will make every attempt to place you in a homestay. However, please note that placements are not guaranteed.

### Termination Policy

The student may terminate their stay in the homestay by giving 30 days' written notice (letter or email) to the host and the Center for Global Engagement. The host must provide the student with a refund of any homestay fees paid in advance beyond the date they are expected to exit the homestay (30 days after written notice of termination is received). A cancellation penalty and early termination fee will apply if the student elects to terminate their homestay prior to the contract end date and they exit the program. These fees are as follows:

- Cancellation penalty when providing 30 days' written notice: \$250.00
- Early termination fee when providing 30 days' written notice: equal to one month's homestay fee

Failure by the student to provide 30 days' written notice will result in the forfeiture of the balance of the homestay fee paid for that month as well as a cancellation penalty and early termination fee if they elect to terminate the homestay prior to the contract end date and they exit the program. These fees are as follows:

- Cancellation penalty without providing 30 days' written notice: equal to one month's homestay fee
- Early termination fee without providing 30 days' written notice: equal to one month's homestay fee

Early termination and cancellation penalty fees are paid to the host by ECC after the student vacates the homestay.

#### *Example:*

You are living in a homestay that provides transportation. You pay your host \$950.00 on the first day of each month. After two months in your homestay, you decide you would rather live with your friend who has a local apartment. You provide your host and the Center for Global Engagement with a 30 days' written notice. A cancellation penalty of \$250 and early termination fee of \$950 are due and payable to ECC prior to you leaving the homestay.

A host may end the homestay agreement with 30 days' written notice to the Center for Global Engagement. They must provide the student with a refund at 100 percent of the daily prorated fee for any nights already paid in the remaining month. Refunds are payable in the form of cash, money order, or cashier's check.

A host who withdraws or is removed from the program must remit any refund of the daily prorated fee for any nights already paid in the remaining month to the student prior to the student leaving the homestay. If any

damage is incurred by the host from the student, the return of the security deposit must follow the policies as outlined in the *Security Deposit and Damage Claims* section of this agreement.

### Homestay Program Activities

Special activities and events are organized for host families and students participating in the program. To promote international friendship and multicultural awareness, you are encouraged to attend as many events as possible with your host family. Price and payment will vary according to activity, and participants may be responsible for the cost of their participation.

### Insurance and Vehicle Access

Students are required to carry medical insurance and are automatically enrolled in the college's sponsored insurance plan each semester. You are also encouraged to carry renter's insurance that will cover your belongings in case of accident, theft, or natural disaster. Your host is required to carry homeowner's/renter's insurance for their belongings. Your host's insurance does not cover your belongings.

You are not permitted to drive the host's vehicle under any circumstances. If you purchase your own vehicle, you are required to maintain auto insurance in accordance with state and local law.

### Meals and Kitchen Access

Your host will provide you with two meals each day – breakfast and dinner. The meals should be balanced and include a healthy selection of items. You must provide and prepare your own lunch.

**Breakfast:** Some host families will cook breakfast for you; other host families will provide a continental breakfast that you can prepare on your own. Either is acceptable. Breakfast is usually eggs, meat, breads, cereal, toast and/or fruit, and juice/coffee. You should discuss with your host what foods you enjoy eating. If your host prepares breakfast for you, be on time or you may cause a delay in the host family's morning schedule. If you prepare your own breakfast, be sure to clean up the kitchen when you are finished, including washing dishes and turning off electrical appliances

**Lunch:** You will need to buy your own food and prepare your own lunches, even on the weekends. You can bring a lunch or purchase a meal at ECC. You should not use your host's food to prepare your lunch.

**Dinner:** Dinner is usually the main meal of the day for Americans. It is the time of day when many families gather together and share their day's experiences. You should discuss with your host what time dinner takes place. It is important you are on time for dinner. If you prepare your own dinner, make sure you clean up after yourself. Although you are not required to eat dinner with your host family every day, we encourage you to eat as many meals as possible with your host family as your mutual schedules permit. The dinner meal should include a balanced selection of items (e.g. serving pizza or fast food every night is unacceptable).

**Snacks:** Non-essential groceries such as snacks are not included in the cost of your homestay fee. You should make plans to purchase any snacks or special food you would like during your weekly shopping trip.

You will have full access to the homestay kitchen. Before using appliances like the stove, oven, dishwasher, toaster, or microwave, ask your host how to operate them. You should also offer to help out with general

kitchen duties such as meal preparation and cleanup, and ensure you tidy up after you have used the kitchen for your own meals.

### Laundry Facilities

You will have access to the homestay laundry facilities and are responsible for doing your own laundry. You are allowed to do laundry once or twice a week depending on your host family. Your host family will provide laundry detergent and provide you with instructions on how to operate the washer and dryer. Most American homes do not have outside clotheslines to dry clothes; clothes are typically dried in a dryer. If your host family's home uses shared, coin-operated laundry facilities with other units (such as in a condominium or apartment complex), you need to pay for your own laundry costs. Be considerate when using the laundry facilities and remove clothes quickly when they are finished being laundered.

### Cleaning and Household Chores

You are expected to keep your room and bathroom clean and tidy. You should clean your room and bathroom at least once a week. Your host family will provide cleaning supplies. You should wash your linens and towels each week. You are expected to keep common areas of the homestay tidy, but you are not responsible for weekly household chores such as washing floors, vacuuming, cleaning windows, etc.

American bathrooms may be different than those in your home country. Do not flush anything other than toilet paper down the toilet. Feminine products, personal hygiene products and other toiletries should be disposed of in the garbage. The sink is for brushing your teeth or washing your face and hands; do not wash your clothes or linens in the bathroom sink. Keep all water in the bathtub or sink. Most American homes have a dedicated shower or bath stall with a drain inside the stall and a shower curtain to keep water off the floor. If you have questions about how to operate the shower or sink, ask your host family.

### Internet and Computer

Your host family will provide Internet access for you in the home. Your host family will not provide a personal computer or printer for you to use. You should make plans to bring or purchase a computer or laptop. Do not download illegal or illicit software, images or content. If you are using an Internet connection to video chat with family or friends in your home country, please remember to not disturb your host family at a late hour. Please keep the volume on your personal computer or laptop at a reasonable level at all times.

### Visitors and Overnight Guests of Students

Family, friends or agents that accompany you to the U.S. or come to visit you cannot stay with you overnight in your homestay. Please make hotel reservations and separate transportation arrangements. You should discuss with your host the rules for family or friends visiting you at the homestay. Overnight guests are not allowed under any circumstances. Terms for having guests visit are provided by your host and will be outlined in the Homestay Contract.

### Personal Belongings

You are responsible for your own personal belongings whether at your homestay or at school. ECC will not be responsible for your personal belongings. Do not carry a large amount of cash with you and always keep your valuable belongings secure and locked. You are encouraged to purchase renter's insurance. Your host's

homeowner's insurance does not cover your property in case of loss or damage. Please refer to the *Vacation Policy* section in this agreement for details on leaving personal belongings with your host over an extended break.

## Pets

It is very common for American homes to have indoor pets. Your host may have a dog or cat, and you may request a homestay without indoor pets if you prefer. You are not expected to care for your host's pet(s), but it is important to discuss with your host any expectations for interacting with them. Do not be surprised if your host's pet is treated like a member of the family and allowed on furniture.

If, during the course of your homestay, a member of your host family acquires a pet, your host must disclose this to the Center for Global Engagement within five calendar days. If you requested a homestay without pets and your host subsequently acquires one, you may choose to be moved to another homestay. In accordance with the refund and cancellation policy, the host will forfeit any monies paid to you if you must be relocated to another homestay due to the introduction of a pet in a previously pet-free household.

You are not allowed to bring pets (including fish) in your homestay. Failure to follow this policy will result in your immediate removal from the program.

## Family House Rules and Interpersonal Relationships

Every homestay experience is different, and different host families have different rules. You are expected to act in a friendly, responsible and respectful manner at all times in your homestay. Upon your arrival, discuss any house rules with your host. The host should also discuss a curfew and appropriate use of common areas. You and your host must both sign this document and return it to the Center for Global Engagement within two calendar days of your arrival.

Your relationship with your host family members can be a very unique experience as you pursue your education in the U.S. Many host families and students become lifelong friends. However, while living in the homestay, it is strictly prohibited to engage in any sort of romantic or sexual relationship with any member of the host family, regardless of age. Failure to follow this policy will result in your immediate removal from the Homestay Program.

## Smoking, Alcohol, and Drug Use

Be responsible about smoking, drinking alcohol, and operating motor vehicles. Do not smoke in your host's home unless they permit you to do so. Always clean up cigarette remnants and dispose of them properly. The legal drinking age in the U.S. is 21. Do not consume alcohol if you are underage, and discuss with your host whether you are allowed to drink alcohol in the home even if you are of legal drinking age. Do not drink alcohol and operate a motor vehicle. The U.S. has very strict laws against drinking and driving. Do not use illegal or recreational drugs. If you are arrested by the police for using drugs, you will go to jail. Any use of illegal or recreational drugs in the homestay is prohibited and will result in the immediate expulsion from the homestay program. ECC and your host are not responsible for any legal action that may be brought against you because of illegal activities.

### Removal of a Student from Homestay or the International Student Homestay Program

A student may be removed from the program for failure to adhere to the guidelines, values and spirit of the program. If the student is removed from the program by ECC, the situation will be reviewed by the Center for Global Engagement to determine if a refund of any homestay fees is warranted. Possible reasons for removal include but are not limited to:

- Incompatible living styles between the student and host.
- Non-payment of homestay fees, security deposit, or chronic lateness in payment.
- Personal misconduct in the homestay.
- Failure to adhere to the terms of the *International Student Homestay Program Information, Policies, and Agreement and Homestay Contract*.
- Failure to respect the house rules and property of the host.
- Change in personal behavior or discovery of an undisclosed illness, health issue, etc. that prohibits the homestay placement from being mutually beneficial to all parties.
- Change in a student's financial status or inability to afford the homestay.
- Personal ownership of a pet in the homestay.
- Excessive use of foul language or alcohol abuse.
- Illegal drug or alcohol use or other violations of the ECC Student Code of Conduct, local laws, state laws, or federal laws.
- Failure to maintain F-1/J-1 status, continue as a full-time student at ECC (unless on a DSO approved temporary reduced course load) or asked to leave the country by USCIS.

### Removal of a Host from a Homestay or the Homestay Program

A host may be removed from the program for failure to adhere to the guidelines, values and spirit of the program. Possible reasons for removal include but are not limited to:

- Incompatible living styles between a host and the student.
- Failure to adhere to the screening process, including up-to-date FBI background checks on file with the college.
- Personal misconduct in the homestay.
- Failure to adhere to the terms of the *International Student Homestay Program Information, Policies, and Agreement and Homestay Contract*, and related policies and procedures.
- Failure to respect the student's property.
- Change in personal behavior or discovery of an undisclosed illness, health issue, etc. that prohibits the homestay placement from being mutually beneficial to all parties.
- Change in housing circumstances.
- Addition of a pet to a previous pet-free homestay without disclosing such addition to the Center for Global Engagement
- Excessive use of foul language or alcohol abuse.
- Illegal drug or alcohol use or other violations of the Host Code of Conduct or local laws.
- Hosting a student through a private arrangement and not through the program.
- Renting or leasing the homestay to a third party while a student resides there (e.g. Airbnb, VRBO, vacation rental sites, etc.).
- Any behavior or actions that are in direct conflict with the values and goals of the program.

## Terms and Conditions

The terms, conditions and provisions hereof shall remain in effect for at least the duration of the Homestay, and shall not be modified except by writing signed by the host, student, and ECC representative. It is expected that this placement shall last at least one semester (16 weeks). Problems can and do arise between host families and students from time to time, and it is expected that the parties will communicate freely with each other in a reasonable attempt to work out such problems respectfully and informally. If the student and host family cannot work out their problems in a manner that is respectfully and informally, the parties should agree to speak with the Center for Global Engagement.

Additionally, the student is responsible for carrying valid medical insurance through the entire homestay period. The student authorizes ECC, its representatives, and the host to seek medical attention for the student in the event of sickness, accident, or other emergency during the time the student is living with the host. Permission is also granted to release information regarding the student's health and insurance to outside physicians and facilities. In all cases, the student agrees that ECC and the host are not to be held liable or responsible for any aspect of medical treatment received. The student agrees that ECC will not be held responsible and that the student will reimburse the host for the repair or other reasonable costs incurred by the student and/or the student's guests, visitors, family, friends or other invited individuals in case of damage to the host's home or property. ECC will not be held responsible for negligence on the part of the host or the student pertaining to home or person when or if damage, injury or death results. Any report of damage must be made within three business days of the damage allegedly caused by the student. The host must send a written, detailed claim of the damages and include pictures by email to the Center for Global Engagement. The student agrees and is subject to all ECC student policies and procedures in addition to what is specified in this document.

## Indemnity

By signing below, the student hereby releases, waives, discharges, covenants not to sue, indemnifies, saves and holds harmless ECC, its trustees, officers, servants, agents, employees and the host family (hereinafter referred to as "Releasees") from and against any and all loss, liability, damages, costs (including reasonable attorneys' fees) claims, demands, actions and causes of action whatsoever, arising out of or relating to any loss, damage or injury, including death, that may be sustained by the student, or to any property belonging to the student, or any claim for injury or damages by a third party, while participating in the International Student Homestay Program. The student voluntarily assumes full responsibility for any risks of loss, property damage or personal injury, including death that may be sustained, or any loss or damage to property, as a result of the student's participation in said program. It is the student's expressed intent that this Release shall bind the members of the student's family and spouse, if the student is alive and the student's heirs, assignees and personal representative, if the student is deceased, and shall be deemed as a Release, Waiver, Discharge, and Covenant Not to Sue the above named Releasees.

I, the undersigned student, acknowledge that I have read and I understand this entire ECC International Student Homestay Program Student Application and Homestay Agreement. I agree to abide by and be bound by the terms of this Application and Agreement.