



## Elgin Community College International Student Homestay Program

# Program Information, Policies, and Agreement for Host Families



Elgin  
Community  
College

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### Information and Policies

Every semester, Elgin Community College (ECC) welcomes a diverse population of international students and exchange visitors to its campus. The presence of these students on campus contributes to the cultural diversity and global understanding within District 509. It also provides the unique opportunity for local families to host an international student in their home through the ECC International Student Homestay Program. The International Student Homestay Program promotes values of international friendship and cultural exchange and provides students with a clean, safe and caring atmosphere in which to live while attending ECC. A homestay provides students with the opportunity to improve their English, meet new people, participate in homestay program events and outings, and have a positive academic and cultural experience in Elgin.

As a host family, you (reference to “you or your” refers to the host family who is participating in the program) will welcome an international student from ECC into your home and provide a safe and secure environment in which the student can adapt to life and culture in the United States. Welcoming an international student into your home will provide you with the reward of knowing you are helping an individual to understand and adapt to a new culture. ECC’s International Student Homestay Program seeks host families who are genuinely interested in sharing their lifestyle in a positive and mutually fulfilling way. The goal of the program is to connect individuals from the college and the community with international students with the intention of building bridges of cultural appreciation. The International Student Homestay Program is designed to provide ECC international students with the opportunity to experience life as a college student while enjoying daily and personal interaction with a local American family.

Hosts are provided a modest monthly stipend to cover the expense of hosting a student. Hosts choosing to participate in the program primarily for monetary benefits should not apply as these intentions run contrary to the program’s goal of providing a nurturing environment for the student. This is an opportunity for hosts to learn from an international student and share their traditions and culture and contribute to global cultural awareness. Providing a homestay for an international student requires patience and a willingness to share time and knowledge. Overcoming cultural differences are a natural part of the homestay experience. Many hosts and students forge lifelong friendships that enrich family life and intercultural understanding. **The International Student Homestay Program maintains strict standards and guidelines to ensure the wellbeing and quality of the homestay experience for all participants.**

### Placement Standards

Every care is taken to assure a safe, quality homestay program. The preferences of hosts and students provided during the application process are taken into account when making placements. Homestay families are carefully screened through an extensive background check and interview process. International students are screened and interviewed by the Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) when applying for a visa. ECC retains the right to place students with host families participating in the International Student Homestay 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 family, or any external party. ECC is not responsible for the quality of the relationship between the student and the host family.

## The Homestay Student

Participating in the International Student Homestay Program can enrich a student's 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.

Students who thrive in a homestay environment:

- Appreciate and respect different types of family structures
- Are interested in sharing their 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

## The Host Family

The United States 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 ECC International Student Homestay Program. As a public institution, ECC embraces and promotes this diversity and multiculturalism.

Many different types of host families participate in the International Student Homestay Program. Host families may live in condominiums, single family homes, apartments/flats, and townhouses. Host families are made up of people from a variety of family structures.

All host families should share an interest in welcoming international students to ECC and the local community. Host families should be sensitive to the challenges associated with living in a foreign culture and learning a second language and should be committed to supporting a student as they adjust to life in the U.S.

## Screening of Host Families and Background Checks

ECC screens all potential host families. The screening process includes but is not limited to an FBI background check, personal interview with all members of the household, and a site visit to the host's home. The Homestay Coordinator inspects all potential hosts' homes to ensure that the minimum amenities required are provided and that the home and family are a good fit for the International Student Homestay 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 visit on a regular basis. Background checks are required to be on file with the college prior to a placement being made. In the event that a minor child turns 18 or an adult moves into the home during an active placement, an FBI background check must be on file with the college prior to the minor child reaching 18 years of age or an adult moving into the home. In the event of extenuating circumstances (e.g. a minor child or family member moving into the home from outside the U.S., sudden illness, etc.), a grace period of seven calendar days to complete and have the FBI background check on file with the college may be approved at the discretion of the International Student Homestay Program. Such instances are rare; decisions regarding grace periods are final.

FBI background checks are conducted annually. Payment for the background check is made directly by the host to the agency conducting the background check. ECC reimburses all hosts for the cost of the background checks.

ECC recognizes that host families will occasionally entertain short-term guests, family, and/or friends in their home. For short-term, irregular guests (i.e., guests who are not regularly visiting or staying with the host family for more than 10 days) staying in the homestay for 10 days or less, such individuals will require a government-issued ID on file with the college. The International Student Homestay Program will check the individual's details against the sex offender registry. Guests staying in the homestay for 11 days or longer will require an FBI background check on file with the college. In such instances, the background check must be on file with the college prior to the individual staying in the home.

Individuals on a non-immigrant visa without a Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) who visit or reside in the homestay are screened, fingerprinted, and interviewed by the Department of Homeland Security and USCIS when applying for a visa. Individuals without a SSN or ITIN who are in the U.S. temporarily and residing in a homestay are not eligible for an FBI background check. An approved visa by the Department of Homeland Security and USCIS will be considered satisfactory in satisfying the program's background check requirements. Such individuals in the home for any period of time will be required to submit to the college a copy of the identify page of their passport and a copy of their U.S. visa. The International Student Homestay Program will check the individual's details against the sex offender registry.

Students on an F-1 visa residing in a homestay through a private arrangement must apply and become an official participant in the International Student Homestay Program in order for a host family to be eligible for participation in the program.

ECC reserves the right to consider extenuating circumstances regarding the above rules on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, ECC reserves the right to decline a host family application for any reason at any time. Host families agree to abide by all ECC policies and related investigations regarding Administrative Procedure 3.403 Anti-Discrimination, Harassment, Violence, and Retaliation Policy and Procedure.

## Orientation

Host families participating in the International Student Homestay Program are required to attend a New Host Orientation prior to hosting a student to become acquainted with the program and learn about expectations for students and host families. This provides an opportunity for you to meet other host families and ask any questions of the Homestay Coordinator. Homestay orientations are offered at the beginning of each semester and at various times throughout the semester to meet the needs of incoming international students.

## Guidelines for a Successful Homestay Experience

The homestay experience is a very unique opportunity for host families to engage in intercultural learning and contribute to the success of an international student studying at ECC. To gain the most from the homestay experience, it is important to understand and respect the following guidelines:

**Treat the student as a member of the family.** One of the reasons students choose to participate in the International Student Homestay Program is to interact daily with an American family. You should invite the student to participate in family outings and activities and help them learn about U.S. culture and customs.

**Establish and discuss the ‘house rules.’** You should inform the student of the rules and expectations within your home. This can include things such as what days and times laundry facilities can be used, mealtimes, guests in the home, and a curfew. Be sure to write down specific house rules in the space provided on the Homestay Contract.

**Help the student adjust to life in the U.S.** As a host family, you need to help the student with basic necessities when they first arrive. You may need to provide assistance with setting up a bank account, buying a cell phone, getting a driver’s license, and purchasing personal hygiene products. The student is relying on you to help them with the first few weeks of adjustment.

**Speak English in the home.** One of the major purposes of the International Student Homestay Program is to provide students with an environment in which they can practice their English language skills. Many students begin in the ECC Intensive English Program and may not speak English with confidence. Host families must possess native-like English fluency. English must be the primary language spoken in the home at all times. You should create an atmosphere which helps the student further develop their language abilities.

**Keep the student informed of your schedule.** The student needs to know if you will be home late or away for a few days. If you are providing daily transportation for the student as part of the homestay arrangement, it is your responsibility to arrange alternate means of similar transportation. Expecting the student to use public transportation during your absence in a homestay arrangement that provides transportation is not acceptable. Please reference the “Vacation Policy” on page 12 for further details.

**Make sure you carry homeowner’s/ renter’s insurance.** All host families are required to carry and show proof of homeowner’s or renter’s insurance. Adequate insurance should cover accidents, theft, or hazards that may occur in your home or on your property. A copy of the policy must be included with your application.

**Follow the International Student Homestay Program’s rules on transportation.** Host families offering transportation to students as part of the homestay arrangement must transport the student in a personal vehicle. Your personal vehicle must be properly insured as required by the state of Illinois. A copy of your auto insurance policy and valid driver’s license must be included with your application if you plan on providing transportation. Under no circumstance should you permit the student to drive or borrow your personal vehicle. All hosts are encouraged to have current auto insurance and driver’s license on file even if they have chosen not to provide transportation.

**Collect your homestay stipend on time.** The monthly homestay fee is payable to you directly by the student. Provide the student with a written receipt for each 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 are encouraged to review the Student Code of Conduct and become familiar with the rights, regulations, and responsibilities the student 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).

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

## Host Homestay Agreement

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the policies, terms and procedures for participants in the ECC International Student Homestay 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. **This form must accompany your *Host Family Application* for the ECC International Student Homestay Program in order for your application to be processed.**

**This is a legally binding contract. Please read this document carefully before signing.**

### Participation in the International Student Homestay Program

Community College District 509, commonly known as Elgin Community College, retains the right to place students with host families participating in the International Student Homestay Program. Students are placed with host families 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 are not issued a homestay placement by the ECC International Student Homestay Program or choose to arrange their own housing accommodations are not considered participants in the program and are not covered under the program's policies and agreements. Individuals not approved as a host for the International Student Homestay Program assume all risks and liabilities associated with privately hosting a student.

Please note that homestays cannot begin nor is airport pickup available on the following state of Illinois recognized holidays:

New Year's Day:	January 1
Memorial Day:	Last Monday in May
Independence Day:	July 4
Labor Day:	First Monday in September
Thanksgiving Day:	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day:	December 25

If you (reference to "you or your" refers to the host family who is participating in the program) celebrate a religious holiday and do not wish the homestay to begin on this day, please communicate this need to the Homestay Coordinator.

### Homestay Amenities

Homestays should ideally be located within District 509. As a host family, you will need to provide the following *minimum* amenities for any homestay student residing in your home:

- 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 your responsibility. Students do not pay utility bills.
- Storage of reasonable items (such as suitcase, etc.)
- Orientation to the local community and services
- Assistance settling in and adjusting to life in America

As a host family, you are not required to provide:

- Non-essential groceries such as snacks and specialty items
- Personal hygiene products, soap, shampoo, and toothpaste
- Mobile phone or payment of long-distance phone calls. If the student wants to make a long-distance phone call, they will need to use a cell phone or a calling card. If the student wishes to have a cell phone while in the U.S., they will need to purchase their own phone and calling plan. You may need to provide assistance in acquiring a cell phone.
- Computer/laptop and printer. The student should make plans to purchase a laptop or computer.
- Maid or turn-down service. You are not expected to wait on the student. You can plan to have the student share in reasonable household duties.
- Use of the host family motor vehicle
- Medical, renter's, or travel insurance for the student. The student is responsible for purchasing their own insurance coverage.

### Homestay Types and Fees

The International Student Homestay Program provides three options for homestay. As a host family, it is important to understand that homestay placements are not guaranteed. Homestay placements begin no earlier than the weekend prior to the start of International New Student Orientation.

Homestay Option	Monthly Fee (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in and the first day of the month thereafter)	Security Deposit (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in)	Prorated Fee (per day)	Airport Pickup Fee (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in)
Homestay <i>without</i> transportation	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$25.00	From Chicago O'Hare International Airport: \$50.00
Homestay <i>with</i> transportation	\$950.00	\$950.00	\$32.00	From Chicago Midway International Airport: \$75.00
Special Program <i>with</i> transportation	Varies	Equal to homestay fee	\$32.00	

If your student arrives for studies mid-semester, you will host the student for remainder of the semester.

## Airport Pickup

Airport pickup from Chicago O'Hare International Airport or Chicago Midway International Airport is provided by you if so agreed and if requested well in advance by the student. The fee for airport pickup from Chicago O'Hare is \$50.00; the fee for airport pickup from Chicago Midway is \$75.00. This fee is payable directly by the student to you along with the first month's homestay fee. If airport pickup is requested, you will need to meet your student at their flight's baggage claim area with a sign with their name on it. Flight information must be received at least 21 days prior to the student's arrival date for airport service to be arranged and finalized. Please note that students must pass through Immigration and Customs upon arrival; therefore, it can take some time for students to meet you after their flight has arrived. It is not unusual to wait from a few to several hours for students to complete this process. ECC has no control over the amount of time it takes for students to pass through Immigration and Customs.

Important: If the student misses their connecting flight or will not arrive as scheduled, the student is responsible for reporting unexpected changes to you and the Homestay Coordinator immediately. The Homestay Coordinator will inform you of these changes.

If you celebrate a religious holiday and are unavailable for airport pickup on that day, please communicate this to the Homestay Coordinator.

## 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 the student's first class and/or 90 minutes after the end of the student's final class of the day or other mutually agreed time between the student and the host family. The only exception to this rule is that students should not be dropped off prior to 7:00 AM or picked up after 10:00 PM unless previously agreed upon by both the student and the host family. On days when the student does not have class but wishes to be transported to campus, the above guidelines shall apply. Host families agreeing to provide transportation will transport the student in their own insured private vehicle. Students paying their host family for transportation to and from campus are not expected to use public transportation for this purpose. In emergency circumstances where the host family cannot drive the student to ECC, the host family shall arrange for alternative transportation. Acceptable alternative forms of transportation include taxi, Uber, or similar service at the host family's expense; other host families in the International Student Homestay Program; or a person who has a background check, insurance, and driver's license on file with the International Student Homestay Program. Hosts are prohibited from supplying transportation outside of the guidelines listed above. Supplying other forms of transportation can lead to removal of the host from the International Student Homestay Program. In case of an emergency when a student is sick and needs to leave campus earlier than the prior agreed upon time by the host and student, the student is responsible for their own transportation expense.
- A weekly shopping trip to an appropriate supermarket (such as Jewel, Super Target, Super Wal-Mart, etc.). Host families are responsible for providing transportation to and from the supermarket so the student may purchase food (for lunches and snacks), toiletries, and other personal items. During the first shopping trip, the host family should help the student become familiar with the store and check-out procedures. Students are allowed a minimum of 60 minutes during their weekly shopping trip. Students



and hosts should discuss transportation needs for the weekly shopping trip to occur at a mutually beneficial time for both parties. Students paying their host family for transportation to and from the supermarket are not expected to use public transportation for this purpose. In emergency circumstances where the host family cannot drive the student to the supermarket, the host family shall arrange for alternative transportation. Acceptable alternative forms of transportation are outlined above.

- 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: setting up a bank account, acquiring a driver’s license, purchasing a cell phone and plan, and buying basic necessities.

The transportation option does not include:

- Unlimited transportation to shopping malls, movie theatres, friends’ homes, bank, etc.
- Transportation between buildings at ECC. Students are expected to walk to classes on campus.
- Transportation for visiting family or friends.

Any transportation needs that arise outside of the regular homestay agreement should be discussed between you and the student. If you choose to provide a homestay with transportation, you are required to provide such service as outlined in the transportation guidelines. Your student is relying upon you to meet their transportation needs and to provide prompt transportation to and from ECC. If you choose to host a student without the transportation option, you will need to help the student learn local public transportation. For information on the public bus system that services ECC, visit [www.pacebus.com](http://www.pacebus.com).

### 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 homestay fee. The security deposit is due by the student to the college by 5:00 PM the business day following the student’s arrival. The security deposit is managed by ECC, and is not to be used as payment for the monthly homestay fee.

The security deposit ‘lives’ with the student and will be returned to the student no later than 30 days after their departure from the homestay program if no alleged damage has been formally reported by the host family. 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 the student. Damage beyond normal wear and tear may be compensated from the security deposit.

In the event of any alleged damage caused by the student to the host’s property, the host must contact the Homestay Coordinator in writing within three business days of the damage allegedly caused by the student. The process for filing a damage claim is outlined in the *Damage Claim Policy and Procedure* detailed at new host family orientation, contained in the International Student Homestay Program Host Family Handbook, and is available by request from the Homestay Coordinator. No repairs or replacements to damage allegedly caused by the student should be undertaken until the Homestay Coordinator has approved the damage claim and the procedure has been followed as outlined in the *Damage Claim Policy and Procedure*. Any funds deducted from a student’s security deposit must follow the *Damage Claim Policy and Procedure*; failure to adhere to the procedure will result in the damage claim being denied. Payment of any verified damages caused by the student will be remitted to the host from the student’s security deposit per college financial policy and procedures; such payment may

take up to several weeks to process. ECC is committed to an equitable, fair, and timely resolution of any damage claims that honors due process and input from all parties.

If the student has departed the homestay and left behind considerable damage to the homestay, please contact the Homestay Coordinator for assistance within 24 hours of the student's departure from the homestay.

Failure to follow and comply with the damage claim process (e.g. as noted in the *Damage Claim Policy and Procedure*) may jeopardize your future participation as a host family.

### Payment of Homestay Fees

The initial homestay payment is due by 5:00 PM the day following the student's arrival. Payment should only be made after the Homestay Contract has been signed by you and the student. The monthly homestay fee is payable to you by the student by cash, money order, or check drawn on a US bank. Provide the student with a written receipt for each payment. If the student arrives in the middle of the month, the first month will be prorated at the prorated fee per day associated with the homestay choice. Thereafter, the homestay fee is due on the first day of each month. Homestays end the day after graduation or the day after classes end in the summer. If the homestay ends before the end of the month, the last month's homestay fee will be prorated.

It is important that you collect the homestay stipend on time each month. Homestay fees paid five days late will accrue a \$25.00 late fee. If the student has not paid the homestay fee by the 15th day of the month, they will be considered in violation of the homestay agreement and will be asked to leave the homestay immediately. In such instances, the student will be directed to a local extended stay and will be responsible for the costs associated with lodging. Any late payments beyond five days or difficulty collecting payment should be brought to the attention of the Homestay Coordinator immediately and in writing.

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:

The student arrives on August 10 at 1:00 PM for classes that begin on August 17. You have chosen to host a student in a homestay with transportation and agreed to airport pick up at Chicago O'Hare International Airport. The first month's fees would be calculated as follows:

Fees payable directly to you:

1. Cost of first month's homestay fee for a student living in a homestay with transportation:  
\$32.00 (per day) x 21 nights = \$672.00
2. Airport pickup fee:  
\$50.00

Total fees due by 5:00 PM on August 11 (the day following the student's arrival): \$722.00

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 the student's arrival): \$950.00

The monthly fee of \$950.00 would then be due to you on September 1, October 1, etc. until the end of the homestay contract.

### Vacation Policy

If the student decides to go out of town or take a holiday while in the International Student Homestay Program, the following procedures will apply:

- The student must discuss with you their vacation plans at least two weeks prior to their departure. Plans must be agreeable to both parties.
- If the student is away for 14 nights or less during the official contract period, there is no discount for vacation.
- If the student is away for 15-30 nights during the official contract period (e.g. emergency in home country), the rate during their absence is 50 percent of the daily pro-rated homestay fee (example: \$16.00 per night for a student living in a homestay with transportation).
- During official contract periods, the student should not be away from the homestay for longer than 30 nights. If the student will be away for longer than 30 nights, the student must contact the Homestay Coordinator immediately.
- Many students may want to return to their home country over holiday breaks or during the summer vacation. However, ECC understands it is unfair to you, as a host family, to hold a spot for the student without compensation. If the student will be returning to your home and you agree to hold the student's belongings during such breaks, the student will be responsible for a \$5.00 daily fee payable directly to you for the storage of personal belongings and to retain the homestay placement upon the student's return. "Belongings" refers to tangible items such as clothing, shoes, and personal effects that the student intends to use or retrieve upon return to the homestay. Hosts will not be compensated for storing items that a student may have inadvertently left behind or after a student's participation in the program has ended.
- Student belongings will not be held for longer than 120 days. Student belongings in the homestay for longer than 120 days will be donated to charity. Host families are not responsible for mailing student belongings to the student. The student is responsible for the timely transportation and cost associated with moving any belongings.

For assistance or questions regarding this policy or in calculating vacation rates, please contact the Homestay Coordinator.

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 day

ECC acknowledges that many host families may take vacations or weekend trips. You may take a vacation and invite the student to join you if it does not conflict with the student's school schedule. If the student participates,

they will be responsible for any expenses. It is very important that these expenses be discussed beforehand. Participation by the student in such activities is voluntary, and the student assumes all risks and responsibilities.

If you will be away from home at all during the student's stay (outside of your normal working schedule), this must be discussed with the Homestay Coordinator before the student arrives or as soon as your vacation plans are known. The Homestay Coordinator, in consultation with you and the student, will determine whether or not the student should be moved to another home temporarily during your absence. This policy is not in effect to deter you from taking a family vacation. Rather, it is in place to ensure that students' needs are met while participating in the International Student Homestay Program.

### Placement and Cancellation Policy

After you have been accepted as a host into the International Student Homestay Program, you should be prepared to accept an international student into your home. When a potential placement is made, the Homestay Coordinator will contact you to discuss the potential student and will follow up in writing with the details of the placement. You have two business days to accept or decline the placement in writing.

After a potential student has been placed, you will receive the student's arrival information approximately two weeks prior to the student's anticipated arrival date. Placements are not guaranteed. It is important to understand that delays in visa processing or changes in a student's personal situation may prohibit a student from attending ECC and their participation in the program. Students may cancel prior to arrival, and you will not be compensated for student no-shows.

### Termination Policy

The student may terminate their stay in the homestay by giving 30 days' written notice (letter or email) to you and the Homestay Coordinator. You 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 International Student Homestay 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 International Student Homestay 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 you by ECC after the student vacates the homestay. Please note that processing time can take several weeks.

*Example:*

You are hosting a student in a homestay that provides transportation. The student is paying you \$950.00 on the first day of each month to live in your home. After two months in your home, the student decides they would rather live with their friend who has a local apartment. The student provides you with a 30 days' written notice. A cancellation penalty of \$250.00 and early termination fee of \$950.00 are due and payable to ECC prior to the student leaving your home.

You may end your homestay agreement with 30 days' written notice to the Homestay Coordinator. You must provide the student with a refund at 100 percent of the daily prorated fee for any days already paid in the remaining month. Refunds are payable in U.S. dollars only in the form of cash, money order, or cashier's check.

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

### Program Activities

Special activities and events are organized for host families and students participating in the International Student Homestay Program. These activities may include movie nights, bowling, potlucks, and holiday celebrations. To promote international friendship and multicultural awareness, you are encouraged to attend with the student as many events as possible. Price and payment will vary according to activity, and participants may be responsible for the cost of their participation.

### Insurance and Vehicle Access

You are required to carry homeowner's/renter's insurance. Adequate insurance should cover accidents, theft or hazards that may occur in your home or on your property. A copy of the policy must be included with your application. A lapse in coverage will result in the student being placed with another host family. Students participating in the program are encouraged to carry renter's insurance to cover their belongings.

If you are applying to host a student and provide transportation, you are required to complete the background check process, and submit a copy of your automobile insurance and a copy of a valid driver's license for every licensed driver in the homestay. Your automobile insurance must meet state minimum requirements. All hosts are encouraged to have auto insurance and a driver's license on file.

Any individual who provides transportation for a student in the homestay program on behalf of the host family, including activities outside of school, is also required to have these documents on file. Students who make their own personal transportation arrangements on an ad-hoc basis are exempt from this policy (e.g. a host family is out of town and a student requests a friend to provide them with transportation to and from ECC).

Students are not permitted to drive the host family's vehicle under any circumstances. If a student purchases their own vehicle, they are required to maintain automobile insurance in accordance with state and local law.

### Meals and Kitchen Access

As a host family, you will provide the student with two meals each day – breakfast and dinner. The meals should be balanced and include a healthy selection of items. The student must provide and prepare their own lunch.

**Breakfast:** You may cook breakfast for the student or provide the food and allow the student to prepare their own breakfast. Either is acceptable. For example, breakfast may include eggs, meat, breads, cereal, toast and/or fruit, and juice/coffee. You should discuss with the student what foods they enjoy eating. If you prepare breakfast for the student, please communicate the time the student is expected to join the family for breakfast.

**Lunch:** Students need to buy and prepare their own lunches, even on the weekends. Students can bring a lunch to or purchase a meal at ECC. Students should not use your food to prepare their lunch. It is important that you discuss the guidelines of food preparation and meal times with the student and detail these items on the Homestay Contract.

**Dinner:** Many international students consider dinner to be the main meal of the day for Americans. You should discuss with the student what time dinner takes place. Please discuss with the student what foods they enjoy eating for dinner. Although you are not required to eat dinner with the student every day, we encourage you to eat as many meals as possible with the student 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 the homestay fee. Students need to plan to purchase any snacks or special food they would like during the weekly shopping trip, if transportation is provided.

The student will have full access to the homestay kitchen. Show the student how to operate kitchen appliances (such as the stove, oven, dishwasher, toaster, microwave, etc.) before using them. The student should also offer to help out with general kitchen duties such as meal preparation and clean-up, and tidy up after they have used the kitchen for their own meal preparation. It is important that you show the student how to use the kitchen facilities and where kitchen utensils are stored. The student is expected to have unrestricted access to the kitchen, including use of the refrigerator, freezer, and a place to store their personal groceries. Detail specifics of kitchen access in the Homestay Contract.

### Laundry Facilities

The student will have access to the homestay laundry facilities and is responsible for doing their own laundry. You should discuss with the student what days and times they are allowed access to the laundry facilities. The student must be allowed unrestricted access to the laundry facilities at least once per week. As a host family, you will need to provide laundry detergent and provide the student with instructions on how to operate the washer and dryer. If your home uses shared, coin-operated laundry facilities with other units (such as in a condominium or apartment complex), the student needs to pay for their own laundry costs, excluding detergent.

Laundry facilities should not be used by the host family during the student's pre-determined time for laundry access. Help the student the first time they use the laundry facilities; for many students, this may be the first time they will be responsible for laundering their own clothing. Students are expected to remove clothes quickly when they are finished being laundered. Terms for using the laundry facilities are provided by you and should be outlined in the Homestay Contract.

### Cleaning and Household Chores

The student is expected to keep their room and bathroom (whether private or shared) clean and tidy. You will provide cleaning supplies. The student is responsible for washing their linens and towels each week. The student

is expected to keep common areas of the homestay tidy but is not responsible for weekly household chores such as washing floors, vacuuming, cleaning windows, etc. The student should be treated with respect in all matters related to household cleaning.

American bathrooms may be different than those in the student's home country. You should provide instruction on how to use the bathroom. Remind the student not to flush anything other than toilet paper down the toilet and that feminine products, personal hygiene products, and other toiletries should be disposed of in the garbage basket. The sink is for brushing teeth or washing the face and hands; tell the student it is not for laundering clothes. You will need to provide instruction on how to operate the shower/bathtub. Write down operating instructions for the student if needed.

The student cannot provide childcare services while residing in your home. Unauthorized employment by the student without prior approval from the Designated School Official (DSO) and the Department of Homeland Security maybe a violation of visa regulations and could result in the termination of the student's visa.

### **Internet, Computer, and Phone**

All homestays are required to provide internet service for the student. The use of high-speed internet is encouraged. The connection need not be wireless, but may be easier for the student to use if there is no internet connection in their room. You do not need to provide a personal computer or printer for the student to use. The student is responsible for bringing or purchasing their own personal computer or laptop.

Many students enjoy video chatting with family or friends in their home country. The student should keep the volume on their personal computer or laptop at a reasonable level at all times. The student should respect the host family schedule. Likewise, you should keep personal use of your music or video connections via the internet at a respectable level.

The student is asked not to make long distance phone calls from your phone; they should instead purchase a cell phone.

### **Visitors and Overnight Guests of Students**

Family, friends, or agents that accompany the student to the U.S. or come to visit the student should not stay overnight with the student in your home. The student is expected to make hotel reservations and separate airport pick up/transportation arrangements. You should discuss with the student rules for family or friends to visit the homestay. Overnight guests in any capacity are not allowed. Terms for having guests visit should be outlined in the Homestay Contract.

### **Personal Belongings**

The student is responsible for their own personal belongings whether in your home or at school. ECC is not responsible for the student's personal belongings. The student is encouraged to purchase renter's insurance as your homeowner's insurance is not expected to cover the student's property in case of loss or damage. Please refer to the Vacation Policy section in this agreement for details on student leaving personal belongings with the host family over an extended break.

## Pets

ECC recognizes that many families have pets. Individuals with pets are welcome to host a student as long as all pets are disclosed on the host application. Many students may not be accustomed to living with an indoor pet, and it is important you introduce the student to your pet in an appropriate fashion. The student is not expected to care for your pet; the pet is your own responsibility. The student is not expected to walk, feed, or clean up after your pet. If your home has any pets, they must be disclosed on your application. Discuss with the student expectations for interacting with any indoor pets. All pets within a homestay should be social with other people. Hosts that have vicious or aggressive animals or animals with a bite history on record with the county of residence will be denied.

If, during the course of a student residing with you, you or a member of your household acquires a pet, this must be disclosed to the Homestay Coordinator within five calendar days. If the student residing in your home requested a homestay without pets and you subsequently acquire one, the student may need to be moved to another homestay. In accordance with the refund and cancellation policy, you will forfeit any monies paid to you by the student if the student must be relocated to another home due to the introduction of a pet in a previous pet-free household.

The student is not allowed to own a pet of any kind (including fish) and bring them into your home. Failure to follow this policy will result in the student's immediate removal from the International Student Homestay 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 with the student. Upon the student's arrival, discuss any house rules with the student. You should also discuss a curfew and appropriate use of common areas. Write these house rules in the space provided on the Homestay Contract. You and the student must both sign this document and return it to the Homestay Coordinator within two calendar days of the student's arrival.

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

## Smoking, Alcohol, and Drug Use

The student should not smoke in your home unless you permit them to do so. Remind the student to always clean up cigarette remnants and dispose of them properly. If smoking is allowed inside the home, please indicate this to the student. You and members of your household, along with the student, are expected to follow all U.S. laws, including the legal drinking age. The legal drinking age in many countries is 18 (or lower). If the student is under age 21, they should not consume alcohol. If the student is of legal drinking age, discuss with them whether drinking alcohol in the home is allowed. The use of illegal or recreational drugs is prohibited by law. Any use of illegal or recreational drugs by anyone in the homestay is prohibited and will result in the immediate expulsion of the student and/or you from the International Student Homestay Program. ECC is not responsible for any legal action that may be brought against you or the student because of illegal activities.



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

ECC may exercise the authority to remove a student from a homestay. Possible reasons for removal include but are not limited to:

- Incompatible living styles between you and the student.
- 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 your family.
- 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 student 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.
- Voluntary or involuntary removal/withdrawal of a host family from the International Student Homestay Program.

If the student is removed from the International Student Homestay Program by ECC, the situation will be reviewed by the Homestay Coordinator to determine if a refund of any homestay fees is warranted.

### Removal of a Host Family from the International Student Homestay Program

A host family may be removed by ECC from the International Student Homestay 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 you and the student.
- Failure to adhere to the screening process, including up-to-date FBI background checks on file with the college, as outlined in this agreement.
- 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 Homestay Coordinator as outlined in this agreement.
- Excessive use of foul language or alcohol abuse.
- Illegal drug or alcohol use or other violations of the ECC Host Family Code of Conduct or local laws.

- Hosting a student through a private arrangement and not through the International Student Homestay 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 International Student Homestay Program.

### Reinstatement of Host Family to the International Student Homestay Program

ECC recognizes that some host families may require a break from hosting responsibilities and may voluntarily withdraw from the program. A host family who voluntarily withdraws from the program must remit any refund of the daily prorated fee for any days already paid in the remaining month to the student prior to the student leaving the homestay. If any damage is incurred by the host family from the student, the host must follow the policies as outlined in the *Security Deposit and Damage Claim Policy and Procedure* sections of this agreement. Proof of the refund due to the student must be on file with ECC prior to be considered for reinstatement to the program.

Host families who are in good standing and wish to be reinstated into the ISHP must complete the following items:

- an updated application if the application on file is more than two (2) years old or if substantial changes have occurred in the location of the residence or preferences of the host family; and
- an updated *Program Information, Policies, and Agreement for Host Families* for the ECC International Student Homestay Program; and
- up-to-date background checks on file with the college; and
- up-to-date homeowners/renter's insurance policy on file with the college; and
- up-to-date copy of the automobile insurance policy and copies of valid driver's licenses for all licensed drivers living in the host home (if providing transportation);

Host families will be considered to be in good standing if they have met all requirements for participation in the International Student Homestay Program, abide by all procedures and policies of the program, and have not violated any of the program's terms and conditions. Attendance at a refresher host family orientation must also be completed prior to a student being placed in the home, or in extenuating circumstances, within three business days of the student being placed in the home. Host applications are accepted throughout the year. The International Student Homestay Program does not guarantee a homestay placement.

### 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 family, student, and ECC representative. It is expected that this placement shall last at least one semester (16 weeks) or for the remainder of the semester if a student is in the Intensive English Program. 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 informally. If the student and host family cannot work out their problems informally, the parties agree to speak with the Homestay Coordinator.

Additionally, the host family is responsible for carrying valid home owner's/renter's insurance through the entire homestay period and if providing transportation for the student, valid automobile insurance that meets the State's minimum requirements. The host agrees that ECC will not be held responsible and that the student will reimburse the host family 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 family's home or property. ECC will not be held responsible for negligence on the part of the host family or the student pertaining to home or person when or if damage, injury or death results. Any report of damage must be made within 3 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 Homestay Coordinator. The host agrees and is subject to all ECC policies and procedures in addition to what is specified in this document.

### Indemnity

By signing below, the host hereby releases, waives, discharges covenants not to sue, indemnifies, saves and holds harmless ECC, its board of trustees, officers, servants, agents and employees (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 host, or to any property belonging to the host, or any claim for injury or damages by a third party, while participating in the International Student Homestay Program. The host 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 host's participation in said program. It is the host's expressed intent that this Release shall bind (1) the members of the host's family and spouse, if the host is alive and (2) the host's heirs, assignees and personal representative, if the host is deceased. Further, this Release shall be deemed as a Release, Waiver, Discharge, and Covenant Not to Sue the above named Releasees.

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have read and I understand this entire ECC Host Family Homestay Agreement. I agree to abide by and be bound by the terms of this Agreement.

Signature of Host #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Host #2: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Adults Living in the Home (age 18 and older)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**This form must accompany your *Host Family Application* for the ECC International Student Homestay Program in order for your application to be processed.**