

UVIC HOMESTAY Host Information Sheet

Thank you for hosting international students enrolled in the University of Victoria Homestay Program. Please find below detailed information about our programs, host registration procedures, matching procedures, and the host's responsibilities.

Program Types

English Programs

a) Long-Term International Programs

- 12-weeks in length, starting in January, April and September. A shorter program, generally 9-10 weeks, is also offered in July.
- Open to individual students from any country.
- Students study English in either a morning class (8:30am – 12:45pm) or an afternoon class (1pm – 5:15pm) depending on their class level. They can also attend drop-in tutorials, or study privately in the Computer-Assisted Language Lab on campus.

b) Short-Term International Programs

- 3 – 6 weeks in length, starting at various times throughout the year
- Open to individual students from any country.
- Students study English from 8:30am – 3:00pm Monday to Thursday, and participate in various socio-cultural activities on Fridays.

c) Short-Term Group Programs

- 1 – 6 weeks in length, starting at various times throughout the year.
- Custom designed for a specific group from a college, university, or company.
- Students study English from 8:30am – 12:30pm, and participate in various socio-cultural activities every afternoon.

Undergraduate, Graduate & Diploma Programs

- Homestay is available to any international student or visiting faculty/researcher studying or working full-time at the University of Victoria whose native language is not English.
- Course contents and lengths vary.
- Students' English proficiency levels are normally quite high for credit or diploma programs.

Host Registration Procedure

- Once you have been approved into University of Victoria Homestay Program, you will automatically go on our active host list.
- Once you are on our active host list, you will receive an email outlining the upcoming program dates and host registration deadlines.
- Each time you receive the email, please respond to homestay@uvic.ca to provide your availability.
- Please indicate whether you have one, two, three or four available rooms and whether you prefer males, females or have no gender preference. We typically only place four students in a home during peak times (February, March and September). We do not mix genders in placements. If your home can accommodate three students, and you are already hosting a student, you can register for a second and third student of the same gender. UVic Homestay will aim to place only two students from each nationality but may place up to three students of the same nationality during peak times (February, March, August and September).

Matching Procedure

- After the host provides their availability, we will begin matching for the upcoming programs. Normally, we match students with host families approximately 2-4 weeks before the programs begin. For our summer and September programs, we begin to match earlier due to the increased number of students in these peak periods.
- Preference will be given to hosts who live closest to the University of Victoria, who have received excellent evaluations, and who meet the student's specific criteria (ie. pets, children, hobbies etc).
- As we try to make the best matches possible between the student's criteria and the host's lifestyle, we cannot guarantee that every host will be matched with a student each term. We do not guarantee placements.
- If you are not matched with a student, you will automatically be placed on an emergency list in case of any last minute changes or late applications.
- If we do have a suitable student to match with you, we will email you with the specific student details (ie. age, nationality, gender, allergies, food dislikes, hobbies, personal characteristics). At this point, you can accept or reject the placement.
- If you accept the placement, we will email you the placement contract. The placement contract will contain links to further information on the program and other details. Please ensure that you make yourself familiar with the information on the student, placement dates, program information and payment details. Information on the website will outline what you need to do before the student arrives, as well as your responsibilities as a host for the duration of the program.

Pre-Arrival Correspondence

- When you receive your student's contact information, please send an email and photo introducing yourself, home and neighbourhood to your student. We encourage you to send the email as soon as possible to begin forging a relationship with your student – this will make the adjustment process go much more smoothly for both of you. We also recommend not sending a photo with the first email as it will likely end up in the student's junk mail folder.
- Your student will also send a personal introduction letter to you.

- For Long-Term Programs and Short-Term International Programs, students are required to send their arrival details directly to you with their personal introduction letter. You will be required to meet your student individually. As such, we recommend that you hold up a sign with your student's name so that they can easily recognize you.
- For Short-Term Group Programs, our office will send you the group's arrival information. Our staff will be at the arrival location to facilitate the group's travel and ensure you meet your student.

Student Orientation

Upon your student's arrival to your home, please orient your student to your lifestyle, home, and neighbourhood:

- Give your student a key to your house so that they can come and go as necessary.
- During the Homestay Orientation, students will be asked to ensure they have your contacts. Please provide your student with your cell phone number, work phone number, full address, bus routes to UVic and downtown, and other useful contacts as soon as possible. Ask your student to enter this information into their phone and have a hardcopy of it in their wallet (should their battery die) so they have the information they need to contact you when away from home.
- Show your student how to use all facilities/appliances in the home (ie. TV, washer, dryer, dishwasher, vacuum, shower, toilet).
- Provide your student with the Wi-Fi password to access internet and discuss usage.
- Outline your normal routines including work schedules, activity schedules, shower schedules, times that you can spend together. Take the time to plan some activities together with your student for the next few weeks.
- We encourage you to escort your student on the city bus both to and from the university and downtown to orient them to the bus system and your bus route.
- Take your student to the grocery store, drug store, post office, bank, and closest shopping area to orient them to the neighbourhood and its amenities.
- Take your student to the nearest bank to set up a bank account if they require one. Suggest to your student that they deposit any cash into a bank account or change it into traveler's cheques.
- Advise your student not to keep valuables (money, passport, laptops, cd players etc.) lying around in their room. Instruct them to keep any valuables locked in a safe place (luggage, safety deposit box, locked drawer etc.).
- International students will be enrolled in medical insurance offered through GuardMe. For information on clinics that offer direct billing and other information, please visit: <https://www.guard.me/uvcs>. Students who are going to be staying in BC for 6 months or longer must register for the BC Medical Insurance Plan. BCMSP Application forms are available online. On the first day of the program, our office will review this information with students; however, they are often overwhelmed by all of the information that they receive in the first week. Please double check to make sure that your student has medical insurance, as well as third party liability insurance (needs to be purchased separately and independently by the student). Please ask them to keep their

policy in a known location (ie. suitcase pocket, desk drawer) so that you can help them to access the resources they need in case of an emergency.

Fee Payment Schedule

- The homestay fee is \$1350 CAD **per program** for Monthly English
- The homestay fee is \$1350 CAD **per month** for programs longer than a full month, and \$45 CAD per night for extra nights or partial months
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We are often asked: “What do I do about the fees if a student arrives early/leaves later?” For the sake of consistency, we ask that everyone follow the same schedule for fee payments. That way, if there is a need for our office to support a discussion between hosts and students regarding fees, we can advise according to our program.

Here’s how we structure payments: Start the schedule with the first night the student stays in your home. Your student then pays you the monthly fee on the corresponding date of the following month. (For example, if your student arrived on September 12, your student will pay you the next month’s fees on October 12). The \$45 CAD per night is then calculated for the final fee payment if the last month is longer or shorter than a calendar month.

Payment schedules can be confusing, but if you remember some simple facts, you and your student will have a stress-free fee payment experience!

Short-Term Program Homestay Fees

- the Homestay fee is \$1350 CAD per month for short term programs, even if the dates listed in the Placement Contract are less than a calendar month
- the student pays this fee directly to the host, unless UVic Homestay has made alternate arrangements for the specific student
- the student pays Homestay fees on the day they arrive

An example of a payment schedule for a student whose homestay placement dates are:

February 4 (arrival) to March 2 (departure):

- February 4 – March 1, inclusive \$1350 CAD

If a student is registered in consecutive short-term programs, or a long term program (such as an ELPI program that runs for 12 weeks), then students pay hosts according to the Long-Term Program Fee schedule below.

Long-Term Program Homestay Fees

- the Homestay fee is \$1350 CAD per month for programs longer than a full month, and \$45 CAD per night for extra nights or partial months.
- the student pays this fee directly to the host, unless UVic Homestay has made alternate arrangements for the specific student

- the student pays Homestay fees on the day they arrive and then on the corresponding day of each following month for the duration of their stay

An example of a payment schedule for a student whose homestay placement dates are Sept. 9 (arrival) – Dec. 8 (departure):

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|-------------------------------|--|-----|
| - Sept. 9 – Oct. 8, inclusive | \$1350 | CAD |
| - Oct. 9 – Nov. 8, inclusive | \$1350 | CAD |
| - Nov. 9 – Dec. 7, inclusive | \$1305 CAD (29 nights at \$45 per night) | |

Late Arrivals

Students planning to arrive in the Homestay home after the homestay placement dates listed must contact the host with their request via email, with at least one week's notice. Students arriving on a weekday are required to take a taxi, at the student's expense, to the host's home. Students arriving early in the day on a weekday are advised to take a taxi to the University of Victoria, Continuing Studies Building, and join the day's activities. In these cases, hosts will be required to pick up their student from UVic after their work day. Please make arrangements with your student directly.

Early Arrivals

You have committed to host the student for the homestay placement dates indicated in the contract you received:

- Students arriving before the start of the program's established arrival date are asked to book their own accommodation until the arrival date listed in your Homestay Placement Contract. Students should arrive between 8:00am and 10:00pm on the weekends or so that you can make the necessary arrangements to pick them up. Please see the Arrival Guidelines here:
<https://continuingstudies.uvic.ca/upload/ELC/PDF/Where-to-stay/Students/YourFlight-Details-and-Arrival-in-Victoria.pdf>
- **It is the student's responsibility to arrange accommodation until the homestay placement date listed in the homestay contract.**
- Once accommodations have been arranged for early arrivals, student must contact their homestay host to tell them where they are staying, so arrangements for pick up can be made.

Departures

- Departure details for your student should match the Program Departure Date.
- Hosts are not required to drop off students before 6:00am or after 10:00pm at any location on the departure date. Students departing outside of these hours will be required to arrange and pay for alternate transportation to their departure location.
- Students should make other accommodation arrangements for any nights outside of the homestay contract dates listed. Hosts are advised not to accommodate late departure requests, and students are advised to make other arrangements for nights after their homestay contract.

- It is the student's responsibility to arrange accommodation for nights beyond the departure date listed in the Hosting Dates of your Homestay Placement Contract.

Travel tips

We suggest that you keep in touch with your student during their travel, in case of delays, changes or cancellations.

Two Week Notice

If students and/or hosts decide to terminate the hosting relationship during the scheduled term, a *Two Week Notice Form* must be completed by host and student. The form must be submitted to the UVic Homestay office. Students are required to pay hosts for not less than two weeks from the day the *Two Week Notice Form* is signed. Hosts terminating the placement shall reimburse the student an amount of the current month's fees proportionate to the portion of the days remaining. Final move out date is subject to availability.

A *Two Week Notice Form* can be obtained by contacting the UVic Homestay office.

Vacation Policy

Students that are away for 5 or more consecutive nights pay a reduced rate. Student will give a completed Vacation Notice Form to Host at least one week prior to travel. If the Student is away from the home for:

- ◆ 1 – 4 consecutive nights— Host and Student are not required to complete a Vacation Notice Form as the home placement fee will not be reduced.
- ◆ 5 or more consecutive nights—Students can keep their belongings in their rooms and the Host will not use their rooms for any other purpose while they are away. During vacations of 5+ consecutive nights the homestay fee will be reduced to half the regular per night rate for each night that the student is away.

Check-Ins for the Duration of their Program

Throughout the program, please check-in with your student to ensure that they are comfortable and adjusting well to Canadian culture and your home environment.

Please take the time to sit down with your students to discuss the topics below. We have included some sample questions that you can ask your students.

Temperature

- We know you come from a different climate, and we want to ensure that you are warm. Do you find the temperature of your room and the home comfortable?
- Do you need extra blankets or a space heater for your room?
- Make sure your students know how to adjust the heat in their rooms if they have individual heat controls.

Food

- What are your favourite Canadian foods?
- Are there any Canadian foods that you do not like?
- Are there any foods that you miss from your own country?
- Is there enough food in the home for you to prepare your breakfast and snacks?
- Are there any other kinds of foods that you would like for your lunches?
- Are there any special food items that you would like us to purchase?
- Would you like to come grocery shopping with us?
- Do you have a favourite Canadian meal that you would like to have for our last dinner together?

Activities

- What have you enjoyed most about living in Victoria?
- What types of activities would you like to do together before you return to your home country?
- Please ensure that you continue to regularly invite your students to join in your daily activities even if they did not accept your offers earlier in the program. This will give your students the option of partaking in your life as they get to know you better.
- Many students may seem quite independent. Students often tell our staff that they go out with friends because they still feel unsure about how to get involved with their host or because they feel like they do not have enough time to spend with their host.

Conversation

- Do you feel comfortable talking with everyone in our household?
- Do you feel shy (talking to any of us)?
- Do you feel like you have enough opportunities for conversation?

Children

- Are you comfortable communicating with each of our children?
- Are the children going in your room without your permission?
- Do you feel like the children are treating you with respect?
- Please tell us if you are having any difficulties with the children.
- Please reassure the students that the children will not get in trouble, but that you will tell the children that they must listen to the students.

General

- Is there anything I can do to make you feel more comfortable?

Please ensure that you ask your students specific questions about their likes, dislikes, and needs as many students will be shy about telling you what they require to feel relaxed and at ease in your home.

Emergency Procedures/Contacts and Information

Contact Information for Hosts

University of Victoria Office Hours are Monday to Friday, 8:30am– 4:30pm.

For information during regular office hours, please contact:

Homestay Office

Email: HomestaySupport@uvic.ca

Phone: 250-472-4268

Only in the event of an emergency outside of regular office hours, please contact:

UVic Campus Security (24hours) - Phone: 250-721-7599 (Emergency ONLY)

Please provide UVic Campus Security with the following information:

Identify that you are an UVic Homestay Host

Your student's name

Nature of injury

The hospital that the student is receiving care from and any contact information that you can provide

****Campus Security will have a Homestay Coordinator contact you as soon as possible****

In case of an EMERGENCY, Campus Security staff can assist you by:

- providing information and contact numbers for appropriate-community support services who may assist you in dealing with your situation (eg. municipal police departments, local emergency health services, etc.)
- and advising Homestay staff about your situation during office hours on the next business day. A staff member will contact you on the next business day to follow up and facilitate support as appropriate.

What should I do if...?

My student needs to see a doctor or has a medical emergency?

Students will have medical insurance while attending English language programs at the University of Victoria. In the first day or two, check in with your student about their medical insurance policy and make arrangements for your student to store the policy in a central location. This way both of you will know where the policy is located in case of a medical situation. Students will be insured through GuardMe insurance. For more information on clinics that offer direct billing, the claims process and other information, please visit <https://www.guard.me/uvcs>.

If your student needs immediate medical assistance, either call 911 for ambulance service or take your student directly to the nearest hospital. If you are unable to drive your student to a clinic or hospital, GuardMe will cover a taxi for transportation, so please remind your student to keep receipts. If the

emergency occurs during office hours, our office will contact you directly. You are expected to join your student as soon as possible. If the emergency occurs after office hours, please call UVic Campus Security and report the incident. They will contact all individuals who need to be informed. Payment for medical services is solely the student's responsibility.

My student didn't come home on time after school?

First thing, do not panic! Usually, when a student is not home on time, it is because they have missed the bus or are out with friends. Wait a reasonable period of time. If you are concerned because your student is not home by 11:00pm, and they had not informed you that they would be late, please call UVic Campus Security at 250-721-7599. They will assess the situation and take appropriate action. In the meantime, if your student contacts you or arrives home, please call Campus Security again to let them know that your student is safe.

What if my student gets injured or sick while on campus?

If staff is present, your student will be taken to a nearby walk-in clinic, hospital or, if necessary, an ambulance will be called. Students are often accompanied by Cultural Assistants or other staff, and updates are generally provided to the Homestay staff so that we can inform host families. Any required follow-up will be communicated.

To look up walk-in clinics with the shortest wait times, visit: www.medimap.ca

Safety Tips

Canada is a wonderful place to visit and study - a peaceful and friendly country. This may be your student's first time away from home and living on their own. Here are some safety tips that all international students should know to help them feel more comfortable and be safe in their new surroundings:

- Introduce your student to your neighbours.
- Encourage your student to meet their classmates, and the international student support people at UVic.
- Remind them to keep an eye on their belongings in public places.
- Your student should not carry too much cash. They should keep their passport and valuables at home in a safe place.
- When your student goes out, they should know where they are going and how to get there.
- When they go out at night, they should go out with friends.
- If your student will drink alcohol - tell them NOT TO DRIVE or get in a car where the driver is also intoxicated!
- If someone bothers your student, tell them it is ok to ask them to stop, and ask for help if needed.
- Let your student know that they can ask Canadian police for help-they are friendly and professional.
- In an emergency, they should phone 911 (Police, Fire, Ambulance).

- Your student should buy health insurance for their time in Canada.

Important Numbers for Help

- **EMERGENCIES ONLY: 911**
- **Victoria Police: 250-995-7654**
- **Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (24 hour crisis and information line) 250-383-3232**
- **Anti-Violence Project (On campus sexual assault support centre): Ph: 250-472-4388/ Location: Student Union Building (SUB), lower level, room SUB B027/ Details: www.uvss.uvic.ca/avp**

Students will receive a Program Welcome Guide with this, and other information.

Medical Insurance

All students will have medical insurance through GuardMe. This plan will ensure that your student has adequate emergency medical coverage while they are in Canada, and for long-term students, during the three-month waiting period for the B.C. Medical Services Plan.

Visit <https://www.guard.me/uvcs> for more information.

Canadian students from other provinces are advised to inform your provincial health provider that they will be living in BC and attending UVic.

We look forward to placing students in your home. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office.

UVic Homestay Team

Tel—250-472-4268

Email—HomestaySupport@uvic.ca