

### UVic Homestay Program Safe Arrival Protocols for Students

As we welcome international students back to UVic and Victoria, our top priority is the health and safety of our students, host families, campus and community. The UVic Homestay Program is obligated to follow the regulations and recommendations of the federal and the provincial governments, as well as the local public health authority.

The following priority requirements and considerations will be in effect regardless of which phase of BC's Restart Plan that the province is currently in:

- The UVic Homestay Program expects that students and homestays will familiarize themselves with [BC's Restart Plan](#), specifically how to keep transmission low:
  - ✓ Stay at home and keep a safe distance from family when you have cold or flu symptoms,
  - ✓ Continue to practice proper recommended hygiene guidelines,
  - ✓ Practice physical distancing when outside of the home, avoid malls, crowded spaces, etc.
- If a household member (including homestay students) were to contract COVID-19 or express associated symptoms (coughing, sneezing, fever, etc.) during the homestay contract period, the program will work with the student and host to follow public health guidelines.
  - ✓ The UVic Homestay Program aims to avoid spreading COVID-19 with unnecessary relocations. Our preference is to keep the student in place, in accordance with Public Health direction.

Additional program rules and restrictions may be implemented without notice based on requirements implemented by UVic Health & Safety, the BC Government, the Canadian Government, and other governmental agencies.

If the BC Government assesses that the province is to return to a previous phase of BC's Restart Plan, the UVic Homestay Program services and requirements will match those as outlined by the government and hosts and students will be expected to follow those requirements depending on the phase as determined by the Province of BC.

Participants who breach UVic Homestay requirements as outlined below may have their homestay contract terminated and be removed from the program.

#### **STUDENTS: PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION**

##### **Build your Relationship with your Homestay host – Best Practices**

- Begin to communicate and build a relationship with your homestay prior to your departure.
- Have several Skype, FaceTime, or Zoom meetings to get to know one another. Exchange ideas about your hobbies, favourite foods, pets, families and more.
- Exchange emails and phone numbers and program into your mobile phone.

## Packing

The UVic Homestay Program encourages you to bring:

- disposable face masks or cloth face masks (that you should wash regularly)
- bottle of quality hand sanitizer

## TRAVEL TO CANADA

### Travelling

While in transit to the airport, in airports, and during the flight(s), students are encouraged to:

- wear a mask
- practice physical distancing (minimum 2 metres from others) when possible
- wash hands frequently
- use hand sanitizer regularly and as necessary, particularly before eating
- keep mobile phone charged if using throughout the flight to watch movies or play games, clean it with a disinfecting wipe frequently
- bring some food as restaurants or stores may be closed

*TIP: Keep your cell phone charged in case you need to contact your host family with any flight delays and to notify them of your arrival and location at the airport for pick-up.*

Students must also ensure they have the following documents ready in their carry-on luggage for when they arrive in Canada:

- Passport
- Study permit or approval letter
- Letter of Acceptance
- Homestay Contract and contact information

### Arrival – Best Practice

Your host will pick you up at the Victoria International Airport (YYJ) (or other approved arrival location) on the scheduled arrival day. Please read and review [“Flight Details and Arrival in Victoria”](#) document. *Be prepared to pay for a taxi or shuttle if arriving before 8:00am or after 10:00pm on weekends or on a weekday during typical work hours (8:30am-4:30pm).*

1. Once you have cleared customs at the port of entry into Canada, notify your host via text and continue your travel plans as scheduled.
2. Once you have reached your final-destination airport collect your checked baggage.
3. Put on a fresh/new mask and wash/sanitize your hands.
4. Please prepare a sign with your host’s name on it to make it easier to identify each other at the pick-up location.

People may wish to avoid common physical greetings such as handshakes and hugs - please be respectful of people's personal space.

### **When you arrive at your Homestay home – Best Practice**

- Load your own luggage out of the car and into your room.
- Be prepared to remove your shoes prior to entering the home.

### **What if you develop COVID-19 symptoms or test positive while in Homestay?**

The following are recommendations from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to keep yourself, our campus, and the Victoria community healthy and safe. Students ill with COVID-19, or who are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, should stay at home, and keep away from others to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Self-isolation for a defined period of time is no longer required.

If a student or family member is diagnosed with COVID-19, our protocol is to keep the student in place, in accordance with Public Health direction.

Always do a daily health assessment (<https://covidcheck.gov.bc.ca/>) before coming to campus, and let your teacher or instructor know about any absences.

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*PLEASE NOTE: Should self-isolation be once again required by the BCCDC, students ill with COVID-19 (due to a positive test result) will need to pay an additional \$25/night homestay fee for the duration of their self-isolation period on top of the regular monthly homestay fee.*

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Should a student's home country require a negative PCR test for entry, and a student receive a positive travel PCR test result just prior to their departure, we will try to arrange for the student to stay in their current homestay. However, if this is not possible, students should be prepared to secure a hotel, at their own expense, where they can stay and arrange for meals. Students will need to pay the additional costs of either the program's per night fee to their homestay family or as per the hotel and meal charges incurred.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to the UVic Homestay Program.

## **As of November 17, 2022, the BCCDC recommends the following:**

If you have symptoms and/or test positive for COVID-19, you should stay home until your fever is gone, without the use of medications, and you feel well enough to participate in daily activities.

Always do a [daily health assessment](#) before coming to campus, and let your teacher or instructor know about any absences.

Vaccines are the most effective way to reduce the risk of COVID-19 on campus. Everyone eligible is strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and receive recommended booster doses. COVID-19 is now managed in a manner similar to other vaccine-preventable respiratory illnesses.

### **Prevention:**

1. **Hand washing:** One of the best things you can do to prevent infection is to wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face.
2. **Physical distancing:** It is more important to respect people's personal space. Limiting close contact with other people and keeping two metres (six feet) away from one another can help reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses like COVID-19.
3. **Wearing a mask:** We encourage you to wear a mask in indoor public spaces, particularly if you are close to others or feel more comfortable doing so. Masks are most effective when fitted, worn and handled correctly. They act as a barrier and, in combination with other measures, can help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
4. **Cleaning and disinfecting:** Cleaning with household cleaning and disinfectant products can help prevent the spread of illness including COVID-19. Frequently touched surfaces such as toilets, sink tap handles, doorknobs, light switches, and tables should be cleaned at least daily.

### **Staying home while sick:**

- Keep your room well-ventilated and clean – open your window to let the air circulate
- Practice good hygiene:
  - wash your hands frequently with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  - use a separate towel which is kept away from others.
  - cover your mouth and nose with your elbow (or use a tissue) when coughing or sneezing - avoid coughing into either your hands or into the air. Dispose of used tissues right away into a trash bin and immediately wash your hands.
- Use a separate bathroom if possible:
  - Clean and disinfect the bathroom with products provided after each use (frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, countertops, dressers, and other surfaces).
  - Flush the toilet with the lid down
  - Keep personal items (toothbrush, cups, cell phone, tablets, laptops, etc.) separate from those belonging to others
  - Package up your garbage. Empty garbage frequently and wash your hands immediately.
- Hosts and students should wear a mask (and may opt for gloves and face shield) and practice social distancing.
- Clean and disinfect touched surfaces after use.
- Your host may encourage you to eat at in your room or at a different time to the rest of the family to practice physical distancing. Your Host will continue to provide food for breakfast, lunch, dinner.

**TRAVELLING while in UVIC HOMESTAY**

We strongly advise students planning to travel during scheduled breaks to communicate their plans with their homestay host. Depending on host comfort level, availability and travel advisories, students may need to revise their plans or travel after their placement contract ends. For students that insist on travelling, and go against the wishes of their current homestay host, the UVic Homestay program cannot guarantee another homestay placement due to limited host availability.