

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.
- In case of a positive COVID-19 test result, discuss what quarantine will look like in their home, and be expected to follow their directions.
- Share how you have been living during the COVID-19 experience and the precautions taken in your country.

- 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
- Official proof of vaccination documents
- 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.

Homestays and students are expected to follow appropriate physical distancing requirements throughout the arrival and move process. People may wish to avoid common physical greetings and goodbyes such as handshakes and hugs.

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?

Students that test positive for COVID-19 will self isolate in their homestay. If a student or family is diagnosed with COVID-19, our protocol is to keep the student in place, in accordance with Public Health direction.

Students are no longer asked to report disclosures of individual cases of COVID-19 illness to UVic.

Students ill with COVID-19, or who are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, should self-isolate, stay at home, and keep away from others to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Students required to self-isolate in homestay due to a positive COVID-19 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 (\$1095 monthly fee + \$25/night self-isolation fee).*

*Homestay fees set to increase as of January 1, 2023 to \$1260/month or \$42/night.

Should self-isolation extend past the planned departure date, or should 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 isolate and arrange for meals. Students will need to pay the additional costs of either \$36.50* per night plus a \$25/night self-isolation 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 January 20, 2022, the BCCDC advises that self-isolation can end when:

For those with mild symptoms where testing was not recommended:

Stay home until they feel well enough to return to regular activities. Avoid non-essential high-risk settings such as long-term care facilities and individuals at higher risk for severe illness for 10 days after the start of symptoms. Mild symptoms are symptoms that can be managed at home.

For those who tested positive – fully vaccinated or less than 18 years old:

End isolation when all three of these conditions are met:

1. At least 5 days have passed since symptoms started, or from test date if the person did not have symptoms.
2. Fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
3. Symptoms have improved.

If the person still has symptoms they should continue to isolate for longer if they have a fever or are not feeling better. Presence of mild symptoms does not necessarily mean that the person is contagious after 5 days. It can take longer to completely recover from the illness.. If unsure or concerned, they should connect with their health care provider, call 8-1-1, or go to an Urgent and Primary Care Centre to be assessed.

For those who tested positive who are 18 years of age or older and not fully vaccinated:

If the person is an adult who tested positive and are not fully vaccinated and are managing illness at home, they can end isolation when all three of these conditions are met:

1. At least 10 days from the start of symptoms, or from the day they tested positive if they did not have symptoms.
2. Fever has resolved for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
3. Symptoms have improved.

If the person still has symptoms they should continue to isolate for longer if they have a fever or are not feeling better. Presence of mild symptoms does not necessarily mean that the person is contagious after 5 days. If unsure or concerned, they should connect with their health care provider, call 8-1-1, or go to an Urgent and Primary Care Centre to be assessed.

Note: Fully vaccinated means the person received both doses of a 2-dose series (e.g. AstraZeneca, Pfizer, or Moderna vaccine) or it has been more than 14 days since they received a single dose of a 1-dose series (e.g. Janssen/ Johnson and Johnson).

For those who tested negative, but who have symptoms:

Self-isolate until symptoms improve and feel well enough to return to regular activities. If fever is present, stay home until the fever is gone (without taking medicine that reduces fever).

For those who are close-contacts of an ill person:

At this stage in the pandemic, the BCCDC advises that close contacts are not required to self-isolate or take any special measures. More information about what actions close contacts should take: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation/close-contacts>

While Self-Isolating in Homestay

- 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 will wear a mask (and may opt for gloves and face shield) and practice social distancing while the student is in quarantine in their home.
- Clean and disinfect touched surfaces after use.
- Find some time to go outside each day only if you can stay in a private place like the back yard. Do not visit the UVic campus, shared spaces, or public areas.
- Eat in your room. Your Host will continue to provide food for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks while you are in quarantine.
- Stay connected with Wi-Fi connection using text, email, FaceTime and be creative to find ways to interact with your homestay family as well as friends and family back home.
- Monitor your physical and mental well-being:
 - If you are not feeling well, complete an [online self-assessment](#) to determine if you need further assessment or testing
 - Self-monitor and check for [symptoms](#)
 - Establish a 'routine' as quickly as possible (don't stay awake all night and sleep all day)

TRAVEL RESTRICTION while in UVIC HOMESTAY

We strongly advise students planning to travel 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.