

# Host Handbook

Imagine traveling to Switzerland, Japan, Taiwan or Brazil to study at a language center or a university. You are determined to become completely immersed in the culture of your chosen country and study the native language. Anxiously, you envision yourself with a host family that has been assigned to you. What will my room be like? What food will I eat? How will I get to my university? While students have many questions, one of the most important things on a prospective student's mind is their experience with their host family.

With this idea in mind we have written this handbook to ensure both the student and the host family have an enjoyable and memorable experience. Students arriving from foreign countries are faced with cultural differences and language barriers that pose challenges for both them and their host families. We hope that you can anticipate some of your student's anxieties and help to make their stay as comfortable and joyous as possible.

In this handbook we have tried to touch on the most important items that relate to being a host family. Please take time to read this information carefully and if you have any questions or concerns please call us at 888-837-6587. This information should adequately help you to prepare for your students.

## **INTRODUCTION** – Our Host Families are Unique!

Homestay Link prides itself on having host families that have agreed to dedicate their dinner time for interaction with their students; this time spent with your student is essence of the Homestay experience. Remember your home is not just a place for students to sleep! On their first day of class we meet with your students to emphasize that their host family is providing dinner for them and we inform them it is very important that they be home in time for dinner. Schools are also working on scheduling activities to allow the students adequate time to arrive home between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. so they may interact with you at dinner time.

## **PREPARATION** – Before your Student Arrives...

While not everything may apply to your home, we have included a general check list of items that you should complete in preparation for your new student prior to their arrival.

Dust and vacuum the room and make sure the bed sheets are clean.

Remove personal belongings from the room other than those which the student will be allowed to use during their stay (such as a television). The room is private. Be sure to include a laundry basket or hamper for their dirty clothes. Designate a day to allow your students use your laundry facilities. You may assist them or just show them how to operate your machines.

We suggest providing a different color bath towel for each student so that they can differentiate their towels from yours.

Have a key made and place it on a key ring so it is less likely to be lost.

Prepare a card for your student with your home, work and emergency contact numbers. When you give this to the student be sure they place it in their wallet or purse so that they have it in case of an emergency.

Students often make international phone calls. Sometimes they may call collect, however a calling card is usually less expensive. Do not allow any student to use your phone for long distance calling. Homestay Link is not responsible for charges incurred as a result of such calls.

Many families have made welcome banners for their students. Large or small, actions like these help to make sure students feel welcome in your home.

Make a check list tailored to your home so that each time you receive a new student you will be ready!

## **ARRIVAL** – The Day your Student Arrives!

It is usually your responsibility to pick up your student upon their arrival to Salt Lake City. To ensure that you make the best use of your time we have some pointers to help you.

- Call the airlines before you go to the airport to make sure the flight is arriving on time.
- Check which gate the flight will be arriving at to ensure you will be in the correct area when waiting for your student to arrive.
- Always have a banner or sign with your student's name on it as this will help your student find you.
- When you take your student home you may notice they seem quiet or unresponsive. In many cases they have spent a great deal of time on a cramped plane and usually need some sleep to re-energize.
- When you arrive at home briefly show them around, offer them some drink or a light snack, and let them relax.

Remember, if your student seems extremely shy or quiet they are probably just tired from their flight, let them rest; you will have plenty of time over the next few weeks to interact with your new student!

## **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**

Please prepare a card with relevant public transit information that your student will need to use to go back and forth to school. As a courtesy, you may want to note places of interest along their route, such as banks, convenience stores, and shopping centers (a small hand written map usually works great!). It is your responsibility to at least ensure your student will be able to get to and return back home from school via public transportation such as bus or trolley. The website for the TRAXS Metropolitan Transit System is <https://www.rideuta.com/Services/TRAX>. Routes are easy to create and print!

## **MEALS**

Unless we tell you otherwise, breakfast and dinner is to be provided seven days a week. As a host family you are responsible to make sure your student knows what food is provided for breakfast and dinner. You need to let your student know at what time dinner will be so that they can plan their schedule accordingly. We have informed your student that breakfast is self-serve. Please inform your student of what is available for them and what they may use to prepare their breakfast on their own. Occasionally your student may want to eat out; your student should contact you during the day to inform you of their plans so that you do not prepare food for them.

If you are not going to be home for dinner please let your student know in the morning or the evening before. You will still be required to prepare dinner that they may eat on their own. Students often volunteer to clean up after dinner, you may ask them to kindly clean after their dinner and put the dishes away. It is not the student's responsibility to clean the kitchen, but we encourage them to help set the table as part of their interaction with your family. This time can also be used to help you get to know your student and will provide your student with the opportunity to practice their English.

## **VALUABLES**

We encourage students to put their valuables in their suitcase and keep it locked. As a host family you are not responsible for lost items, but please advise your student to keep their valuables in a safe and secure place. If you are planning on having guest over that you are unfamiliar with please inform your students to give them the opportunity to secure their valuables.

### **STUDENTS HEALTH – What do I do if my Student gets Sick?**

All of our students have some type of “Health Insurance”. In case of an emergency take the student to the nearest Hospital emergency room or dial 911 if it is not safe for you to transport the student. You may ask to make a copy of your student’s insurance card and keep in their file for emergencies.

### **LEAVING THE STUDENT ALONE – What do I do if I am not Planning on Coming home at Night?**

If your student is at least 18 years of age and has been living with you more than a few weeks they may be comfortable enough for you to leave them home alone, please ask them. Students under 18 years of age are never allowed to be left home alone. If you plan to leave you may tell the student directly or leave a detailed note telling the student about the household procedures while you are gone. Be sure to contact your student often to check on them while you are gone and do not forget to leave a contact number where you can be reached in case of an emergency.

### **CERFEW**

According to Salt Lake [Municipal Code 58.0101, 58.0102, and 58.0103](#), “It is unlawful for any minor to be present in any public place or on the premises of any establishment within the City of Salt Lake during curfew hour.” “Curfew hours’ means the period from 10:00 p.m. any evening of the week, until 6:00 a.m. the following day.”

As a host family it is your responsibility to make sure your student is safe at your home or accounted for before curfew. If you have made arrangements to pick them up at the movies or from a friend’s home then they may be out later than the 10:00 p.m. curfew.

If your student is over 18 years of age there is no legal curfew.

## **STUDENT REMOVAL FROM HOMESTAY**

While it is unlikely, we must mention reasons which would justify student removal from homestay.

A student may be moved to another homestay or removed from the program for any of the following reasons:

- A lack of household hygiene by either the student or the host family
- Lack of interaction either by the student or the host family
- Inappropriate food provided by the host family
- Sexual harassment either by the student, the host family, a resident, or guest
- Stealing, dishonesty, insubordination
- If San Diego Homestay deems it necessary

Hosting a student in your home should be a pleasant experience, most students are here to learn English and to see what it is like to be away from home. Please try to make their stay with you a memorable one.

## **PAYMENTS**

Aside from the personal satisfaction of hosting our students you will usually be paid on a regular basis! Students are required to pay fees directly to Homestay Link. Information on fees collected by Homestay Link is often published by schools. Note that fees may vary from school to school. Homestay Link accounts for its operating costs and gives the rest to you! If you have any questions regarding payments, please feel free to contact San Diego Homestay.

## **REFUND POLICY**

While we attempt to make the experience a great one, sometimes it just does not work. If a student or host family would like to request a termination of homestay due to personal reasons, either party may call us and at our discretion we may move the student to another Homestay. The unused portion of the student's Homestay must be refunded to Homestay Link on the day we remove the student from the home.

## **QUESTIONS**

You may contact our office anytime if you have any questions. We value any feedback you may have, please feel free to leave a suggestions with us. We look forward to working with you. Thank you for choosing to host our students!

Sincerely,

Bryan Whitman  
Homestay Director