



VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
3461 HENDERSON RD.
VICTORIA, BC
V8P 5A8

VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION HOMESTAY HANDBOOK



WELCOME TO THE GREATER VICTORIA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S HOMESTAY PROGRAM

Thank you for your interest in providing a welcoming and nurturing environment for an international student. Host families play an important role in the international student experience and we hope that you will find hosting enriching and rewarding!



Victoria International Education wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn and we do our work.

CONTENTS

1.0 Contact Information	5
2.0 When To Contact Vie	6
3.0 Host Family Responsibilities Snapshot.....	7
4.0 Preparing To Host	8
4.1 POLICE INFORMATION CHECKS	8
4.2 PRE-HOSTING HOUSEKEEPING	8
4.3 HOST FAMILY ORIENTATION.....	9
4.4 HOME VISIT.....	9
4.5 STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCESS.....	9
5.0 Preparing For Arrival	10
5.1 RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	10
5.2 GETTING THE BEDROOM READY	10
5.3 COMMUNICATION TOOLS.....	11
5.4 ARRIVAL	11
6.0 The First Week.....	11
6.1 HELPING YOUR STUDENT FEEL WELCOME IN THE HOME	11
6.2 GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START	12
6.3 BUS FAMILIARITY	12
6.4 FOOD	13
6.5 BEDROOM ETIQUETTE	14
6.6 BATHROOM ETIQUETTE	14
7.0 Culture Shock.....	15
8.0 Host Family Procedures	16
8.1 MISCOMMUNICATIONS & PROBLEM SOLVING	16
8.2 HOST FAMILY CONDUCT	17
8.3 HOMESTAY MOVES.....	17
8.4 HOST FAMILY AWAY (RESPITE CARE/TEMPORARY STAYS)	18
8.5 NATURAL PARENT VISITS	18
9.0 Financial Information.....	19
9.1 HOMESTAY FEES.....	19
9.2 WHO PAYS FOR WHAT ?	19
10.0 Rules & Expectations	20
10.1 CURFEW	20
10.2 DRUGS & ALCOHOL	20
10.3 DRIVING A MOTORIZED VEHICLE.....	20
10.4 SLEEPOVERS	20

11.0 Student Medical Information.....	21
11.1 MEDICAL INSURANCE	21
11.2 ACCESSING HEALTH CARE IN VICTORIA	22
12.0 Travel.....	24
12.1 STUDENT TRAVEL PERMISSION	25
12.2 DEPARTURE INFORMATION.....	25
13.0 Damage Claims	26



1.0 CONTACT INFORMATION



Website: studyinvictoria.com
Main Office Phone: 250-592-6871
Homestay Office Phone: 250-475-4224



After Hours Emergency Line: 778-676-3781

Program Director

Jeff Davis	Director	jedavis@sd61.bc.ca
------------	----------	--

Leadership Team

Pilar Divoky	Senior Manager	pdivoky@sd61.bc.ca
Cythera Carlson	Programs & Promotions Manager	cycarlson@sd61.bc.ca
Mary Shi	Senior Manager	zshi@sd61.bc.ca
Reid Litster	Senior Manager	rlitster@sd61.bc.ca
Shandi Clague	Homestay Manager	sclague@sd61.bc.ca

Office Staff

Heather Clark	Registrar Secretary	hclark@sd61.bc.ca
Angela Leong	Registrar Clerk	aleong@sd61.bc.ca
Irene Truong	Registrar Clerk	itruong@sd61.bc.ca
Brittany Donnell	Registrar Clerk	bdonnelly@sd61.bc.ca
Miyako Saito	Registrar Clerk	msaito@sd61.bc.ca
Leslie McLaren	Accountant	lemclaren@sd61.bc.ca
Adrian Ho	Accounting Clerk	aho@sd61.bc.ca

Homestay Coordinator Contacts

Lynne Yarmoshuk	Vic High, Oak Bay S-Z	lyarmoshuk@sd61.bc.ca
Tiffany Gilbert	Esquimalt, Shoreline & Rockheights	tgilbert@sd61.bc.ca
Jenny Stark	Spectrum, Colquitz & Glanford	jestark@sd61.bc.ca
Christina Wong	Lambrick Park, Mt. Doug S-Z & Gordon Head	cyee@sd61.bc.ca
Subreena Dronzek	Mt. Douglas Last Name A-R & Arbutus	sdronzek@sd61.bc.ca
Tricia Sturgeon	Oak Bay A-R, Monterey, Lansdowne	tasturgeon@sd61.bc.ca
Nadia Cantera	Reynolds & Cedar Hill	ncantera@sd61.bc.ca

2.0 WHEN TO CONTACT VIE



Victoria International Education
After-Hours Emergency Line
778-676-3781



All students living in the Victoria International Education's registered homestay program are under the custodianship of the Program (custodianship is taken on by members of the Leadership Team.)

Please inform the Homestay office of any serious matters, including:

- ✓ If there is a serious urgent event, such as a student not coming home, requiring acute medical care or being involved in a police incident
- ✓ If you have concerns about your student's physical or mental wellness (i.e. low mood, suspected eating disorder, pregnancy, disrupted sleep patterns, suicidal thoughts, etc.)
- ✓ If you suspect your student may be experiencing discrimination, harassment, threats or inappropriate advances
- ✓ If you notice a sudden change in your student's behaviour
- ✓ If charges are laid by the police against a resident of your home
- ✓ If your student is planning on changing or leaving school or homestay and you have not heard from the Program
- ✓ If you believe your student may be experiencing emotional or financial difficulty
- ✓ If you suspect that your student may be involved in violent acts or acts of bullying either as a victim
- ✓ If you are planning to move or your home is listed for sale
- ✓ If there is a theft in your home

This list is not exhaustive. We would like to hear from you anytime that you feel you would like guidance, support or feedback.

3.0 HOST FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES SNAPSHOT

A Quick Snapshot of Host Family Responsibilities**Host Families:**

- Maintain a safe, supportive and caring environment
- Provide 3 meals a day, plus healthy snacks – at least one meal per day should be a hot meal (students can prepare their own breakfast and lunch with food provided by the host family)
- Provide clean bedding and towels, as well as key or key code access to the house
- Support students in following the Program rules including curfew and inform the Homestay Coordinator if this is not happening
- Establish house rules and expectations that are reasonable and appropriate in conjunction with the Program rules
- Upon arrival or departure, provide transportation to and from the airport or ferry
- Assist students if medical support is needed, including transportation
- Refrain from discussing money with the student
- There should be no exchange of money between student and host family and host families may not collect extra fees from the student or the family of the student
- Speak English in the home when the student is present
- Contact the school to excuse his/her/their absence if your student will not be attending
- Inform Homestay Coordinator of any changes in your home or contact information (i.e. family member moves out, new pet, new tenant, student from other program, guest visiting for longer than 2 weeks, etc.)
- Agree not to host more than three International Students (including students from other programs,) without prior approval from the VIE Program.
- Agree not to host two students that speak the same language without Program approval.
- Agree not to leave the student in the house alone overnight
- Reach out to the homestay office with concerns or if you would like support

4.0 PREPARING TO HOST

4.1 POLICE INFORMATION CHECKS

All members of the household, 19 years of age and older, regardless of occupation, will need to acquire Police Information Checks (PICs) that include the vulnerable sector check. The PICs required need to be issued from the local police department. There is a different procedure for each municipality. Please see the information below, or ask your homestay coordinator for more information:

- City of Victoria and Township of Esquimalt residents:
 - In Person: Victoria Police Station (850 Caledonia Ave.)
 - Online: <https://vicpd.ca/services/police-information-checks/>.
- Saanich residents:
 - In Person: Saanich Police Station (760 Vernon Ave.)
 - Online: <https://saanichpolice.ca/services-and-reporting/police-information-checks/>
- Oak Bay residents: must go into the Oak Bay Police Station (1703 Monterey Ave.)
- Westshore residents should phone 250-474-2264 to make an appointment.

There is a fee for the checks, typically a \$70 application fee, plus an extra \$25 if finger-printing is required.

PICs Must be renewed every 3 years

4.2 PRE-HOSTING HOUSEKEEPING

- Ensure that smoke alarms are working on each floor of the house
- Ensure that all family members are on board to host a student
- Contact your home or rental insurance company to let them know that you will have International Students living in your home
- Be mindful of your social media presence to avoid misunderstandings and preconceptions



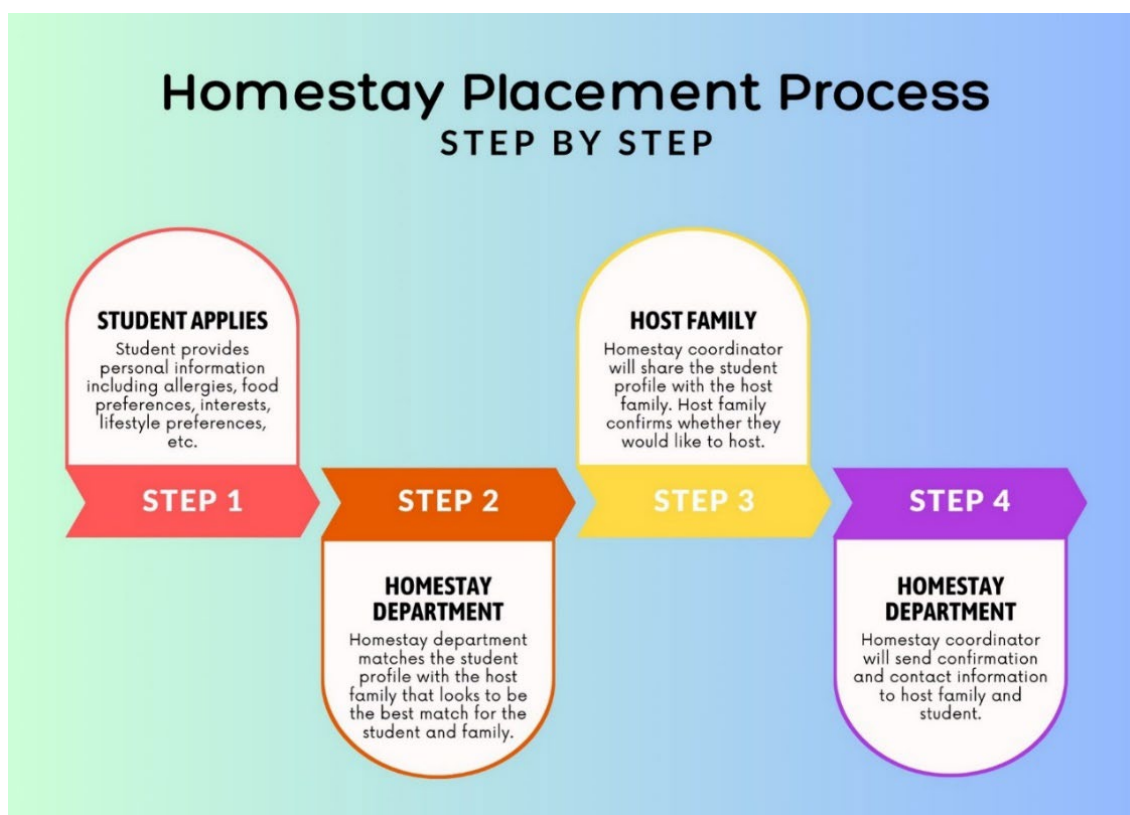
4.3 HOST FAMILY ORIENTATION

- Host family orientation nights take place 3-4 times a year and are important opportunities to discuss hosting. This is a chance to orient yourself with the program as well as learn tips from experienced hosts
- Host families are required to attend host family orientation every 3 years

4.4 HOME VISIT

- After receiving your application, a Homestay Coordinator will arrange a home visit to see student rooms and any shared space, as well as share information and answer questions
*re-visits will occur every 1-2 years

4.5 STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCESS



5.0 PREPARING FOR ARRIVAL

Creating a positive first impression starts before the student arrives in Victoria. Help your student feel welcome before they arrive.

5.1 RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

- Connect with your student before they depart their home country. Host families connect with students in many different ways. Find what works best for you and the student (i.e. Zoom, FaceTime, phone, email, Skype, WhatsApp, etc.)
- Describe your family, pets, lifestyle and your neighbourhood
- Confirm whether your student has any allergies and talk about foods they enjoy or dislike
- An email to your student's parents helps reassure them that their child will be taken care of and opens the lines of friendly communication



5.2 GETTING THE BEDROOM READY

- Student bedroom must include a bed* (made with clean bedding), dresser, closet (or clothes rack,) lamp, desk and chair
- *Mattress covers are advised to protect your mattress
- Student bedroom must be a private space with a door that closes
 - Student bedroom must have a window that opens
 - Student bedroom must be clean (i.e. dusted, vacuumed, etc.)
 - A welcome basket or a few items in the student's room provides them with the basics when they first arrive and are exhausted and unsure of their new environment. You may want to include:
 - Wifi password
 - Bottled water
 - A light snack
 - Anything else you think would be comforting



5.3 COMMUNICATION TOOLS

- If you are comfortable, install WhatsApp in your phone. This is the most commonly used communication tool by students. Other communication apps that your student may be comfortable communicating on include WeChat or Line
- You may find it helpful to download Google Translate or another translation app to help with communication

Learn a little about the history and culture of the country your student is coming from. Cultural norms vary across the world and having an idea of some of the norms your student is used to will help with reciprocal understanding.

5.4 ARRIVAL

- Maintain contact with your student throughout the day of travel
- Bring a sign to the airport so your student can easily find you
- Be on time
- Host families are responsible for airport pick up and drop off. If unable, please arrange for someone else to pick up/drop off

6.0 THE FIRST WEEK

6.1 HELPING YOUR STUDENT FEEL WELCOME IN THE HOME

- Do a full tour inside and outside, discussing common and personal spaces
- Introduce student to all family members and pets
- If you have home security systems, in particular camera and video recording, be sure to explain this to the student during home orientation. Any camera or recording devices must comply with privacy requirements and not invade the student's reasonable expectation of privacy.

You can view the complete BC K-12 International Student Homestay Guidelines document using the following link: [BC K-12 International Student Homestay Guidelines](#)

- Directly teach household expectations. Student may not be familiar with things such as:
 - Tap water is safe to drink in Canada
 - Shoes off when entering the home
 - What is recycled and what is garbage
 - How to use appliances and any specific instructions if needed (i.e. microwave, dishwasher, toaster, washer and dryer)
 - Thermostat or temperature adjustments

6.2 GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START

- Communicate and make available your host family rules and expectations
- Be clear and kind when explaining homestay rules
- Refrain from sharing negative stories about past students
- Prepare a simple emergency number list (i.e. 9-1-1, family member phone numbers and addresses, etc.) and post it somewhere the student can easily refer to it. Make sure your student knows what to do in case of emergency including how to evacuate the home
- Review emergency preparedness plans for communication and reunification in the case of an emergency (i.e. natural disaster.) You may find the following website helpful:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/preparedbc/guides-and-resources>
- Taking your student for a little drive around the city provides a good opportunity to share time and information about landmarks
- Learn how to properly pronounce your student's name
- Treat the student like a family member
- Some host families do allow students to use family items (i.e. bikes, locks, etc.) Please be aware that loaning these items to the student is at the homestay's own risk.

6.3 BUS FAMILIARITY

- Please help your student purchase a UMO bus pass and get acquainted with the bus route(s) they will need to get to school
- For more information on purchasing and using a reloadable UMO card:
<https://www.bctransit.com/umo/>
- For a list of UMO card vendors: <https://www.bctransit.com/victoria/fares/where-to-buy/>
- There is an UMO app, but many students have had difficulty accessing this on their international phones



6.4 FOOD

- Students are expected to have dinner with their host families a minimum of four nights per week
- Host families provide three meals a day, plus healthy snacks. At least one meal per day should be a hot meal
- Students can prepare their own breakfast and lunch with food provided by the host family. If your student will be preparing his/her/their own breakfast and lunch, it may help at the beginning to do this with the student for the first time to make sure they know what to do.
- At the beginning, students may feel uncomfortable helping themselves to food. Please show them what food is available to them and clearly mark any food that should not be used (i.e. ingredients you are saving for dinner the next night, etc.)
- Some host families keep a grocery list on the refrigerator door so the student can add desired food.
- Some students prefer a warm meal for lunch. Offering leftovers for lunch is a good option
- Bringing your student to the grocery store is good for relationship building and gives the student an opportunity to point out foods that they think they would enjoy
- Show students how to use the microwave and other smaller appliances
- Students are not allowed to cook unless the host family is home
- Table etiquette can vary greatly in other countries. If you are surprised by your student's actions at the table, have an open discussion and gently explain and demonstrate the behaviour you would like to see. Do not be offended if your student does not say please or thank you, as it is not part of every culture. Feel free to let them know how important it is in our culture



6.5 BEDROOM ETIQUETTE

- Students are responsible for keeping their bedrooms tidy. Simple instructions may be required
- Students should not take food or drink into the bedroom without permission from the homestay
- Students should have privacy in their bedrooms. The student's room should be considered, "off limits," to family members and visitors to the home. This is true even if the student is away for a few days. Parents of young children will need to help the children understand this rule
- Host families should give the student notice if they will be entering the student's room
- Students should not have students of opposite gender or intimate relationship partners in their bedrooms

6.6 BATHROOM ETIQUETTE

- Bathroom facilities and their use is often very different in other cultures. You will want to explain that:
 - toilet paper should be placed in the toilet and flushed (not in the garbage can)
 - nothing other than toilet paper and waste goes into the toilet
 - the shower curtain goes on the inside of the tub
- Explain to female students how you expect them to dispose of feminine hygiene products
- Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves in the bathroom
- Host families are responsible for providing toilet paper and towels. Any generic brand of soap should be provided by the homestay parent. Shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush and special soaps, hair products and cosmetics are the student's responsibility.
- Discuss the schedule for using the bathroom so the student knows when and for how long they can use the bathroom.



7.0 CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock can occur when students are suddenly immersed in a culture different from their own. Students may experience a range of emotions with symptoms including:

- Boredom or withdrawal (i.e. spending excessive amounts of time reading or isolated in bedroom)
- Sleeping a lot
- Irritation
- Physical aches and pains

Stages of Culture Shock

- 1) **The Honeymoon Stage** – Students are very positive, curious and excited
- 2) **Irritability and Hostility** – Students start to feel that what is different is inferior to what they are used to. The host culture is confusing or the systems are frustrating
- 3) **Gradual Adjustment** – Students feel more relaxed and develop a more balanced view of their experience
- 4) **Adaptation of Biculturalism** – Students feel a new sense of belonging

Student Support Suggestions

- Have an open discussion with your student about what culture shock is, acknowledging that the feelings are normal and temporary
- Allow the student time to be alone
- Invite the student to join you in small activities (i.e. game of cards)
- Encourage the student to find spaces and things that make them happy in Victoria
- Offer the student opportunities to leave the house with you to get fresh air or share moments building connection
- Take the student out to a restaurant or store that specializes in their ethnic food as familiar food can be comforting

If you have concerns about your student's wellness,
please let your Homestay Coordinator know.
There are counselling and other support services available for students.

8.0 HOST FAMILY PROCEDURES

Adjusting to life in a “new” family may take a while and you can expect both you and your student will need some time to get used to each other and to establish a relationship. Keep in mind when an issue comes up that each of us belongs to multiple cultures that give us messages about what is normal, appropriate and expected. Common sense is cultural. What is common to one group, may seem strange or wrong to another.

8.1 MISCOMMUNICATIONS & PROBLEM SOLVING

If the adjustment is challenging or serious issues arise, please consider the following:

1. Talk to your student: Many times, a student will not even be aware of problematic behaviour until it is pointed out. Approaching conversations with honesty, compassion and curiosity is a good starting point. When talking to your student, make sure to create a safe environment:

- Wait until you're calm
- Choose appropriate timing to avoid embarrassing the student in front of other members of the family
- Start with curious language (i.e. I'm wondering about... or, I'm noticing that...)
- Communicate in person. Talk slowly
- As language levels can contribute to misunderstanding it may help to write down key points in a non-judgemental way

2. Contact your Homestay Coordinator: inform your Homestay Coordinator of the issue. Your Homestay Coordinator may be able to suggest strategies or may attempt to discuss with each party separately to help each party understand the other's perspective. The Homestay Coordinator may even organize a meeting with all parties to help work toward positive resolution.

3. Potential Change of Host Families: In the event that issues or problems are the result of incompatibility between the student and the homestay family, a new homestay will be located.

The goal is always to come to a resolution that is acceptable to everyone and keeps the student in the home. However, on the occasion that the Homestay Coordinator assesses that the expectations of the Host Family and the expectations of the student cannot be aligned, then a student move may be arranged with minimal discussion.

8.2 HOST FAMILY CONDUCT

- Host families must provide a home free from discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, nationality, language, religion, and culture or cultural heritage
- Host families should refrain from making jokes or comments about their student's cultural background, customs and/or traditions. Be aware that even if you don't mean for a joke to be hurtful, your joke may be perceived as very hurtful by your student
- Adults should not talk in a negative way about other students currently in the home or about previous hosting experiences. This can make students uncomfortable and fearful that you may talk about them when they leave
- Under no circumstances should you serve alcoholic beverages to your students
- Host families must not exhibit abusive, aggressive, sexualized or otherwise inappropriate behaviour toward the student and will not permit any family members or guests to exhibit such behaviour. The host family must immediately notify VIE of any incident or allegation of inappropriate conduct. Please note that if we receive information about "inappropriate conduct," we must investigate immediately. This is a legal requirement

8.3 HOMESTAY MOVES

If a homestay placement is determined to be no longer viable, a move will be arranged. Homestay fees travel with the student.

There is an "acculturation period" of one calendar month (from the date of each student's initial arrival and program start.) During this acculturation period, a student may change Homestays without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

In the case of a move after the one-month acculturation period, host families will be provided with one week's notice, or Homestay fees in lieu of notice, if the student is relocated to another homestay. The exception to this is in the case:

- of emergencies which require the student to be removed from the home
- that the Homestay environment is determined to no longer be suitable

8.4 HOST FAMILY AWAY (RESPIRE CARE/TEMPORARY STAYS)

Students may not be left alone overnight under any circumstance. If you would like to bring your student with you out of town, please follow the guidelines outlined in the travel section of this manual. If you will be away and need a plan for your student, please note the following options:



1. **Sleepover**: Students often enjoy staying with a friend. Please remember to contact the family directly to confirm details. You may want to arrange payment details directly with the other family or plan for a reciprocal arrangement at another time.
2. **Arrange Respite in your home**: You may have a family member or friend over the age of 25 stay in the home with the student. Please confirm the student is comfortable with the arrangement and send a quick email to the Homestay office with the duration of the stay and the contact information for the person responsible. If this will be a lengthy period, Police Information Checks will be requested.
3. **Program Organized Respite**: Contact your Homestay Coordinator to help arrange a temporary stay. The host family requesting the temporary stay is responsible for getting the student and his/her/their belongings to the temporary homestay and picking up upon return. As always, funds travel with the student.

8.5 NATURAL PARENT VISITS

Students sometimes arrive with natural parents. In these circumstances, the Homestay office will help arrange a pick-up location (i.e., café, hotel, etc.) Drop off at the homestay is discouraged as it is important the student has an authentic chance to get acquainted with the host family.

Please note:

- Host families are not responsible for housing the student's visiting family members should they come to visit
- If your student lets you know that he/she/they will be staying with a natural parent visiting Victoria, please inform the Homestay office.

9.0 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

9.1 HOMESTAY FEES

Standard homestay fee payment procedure is by direct deposit on the first business day of the current hosting month. Payment for the month of September and payment for the month of February, may be delayed 5 business days from the 1st of the month to allow the Program to receive all needed information as these are the largest arrival times.

Host Families of Long Term Students (students who are placed with the intention of a continued stay for at least one semester): will be paid a monthly flat rate.

Host Families of Short Term Students (students who are placed with the intention that their stay will be less than 1 semester): will be paid a pro-rated amount.

Host Families must not charge additional fees for incidentals (i.e. driving, extra food, etc.) without the express consent of the Homestay Office.

9.2 WHO PAYS FOR WHAT ?

Homestay fees are intended to cover room, board and parental guidance. If you invite your student to a restaurant, you would be expected to pick up the tab for the student's meal. Examples:

- If you are out for the day, purchasing meals for yourself/family members, please also pay for the student's meal
- If you are planning a trip and inviting your student, it is expected that you would pay for food and accommodation. Other expenses, such as ski passes, etc. should be the responsibility of the student. Please speak to the student prior to the trip to discuss any extra expenses

A good way to approach expensive outings is to ask the student if they wish to join. Give them the details and what the costs to them would be and then let the student decide if they would like to go. If they have no choice in going, they should not be expected to pay.



10.0 RULES & EXPECTATIONS

10.1 CURFEW

Grade	Weekday Curfew	Weekend Curfew
Grades 6-8	8:30pm	9:30pm
Grades 9	9:30pm	10:00pm
Grades 10-12	9:30pm	11:00pm

- Students are expected to have dinner with their host families a minimum of four nights per week. If they would like to go out after dinner, they must ask their host family
- Curfew remains the same in summer, Spring/Winter Break and Pro-D days
- Students may be out past curfew if they are with their homestay family or participating in a school activity
- All electronic equipment, including computers and cell phones should be turned off by 11:00pm

10.2 DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Drinking alcohol or using drugs that were not prescribed by a doctor is not permitted. Students unable to follow this rule put themselves and their status in the program at risk.

Under no circumstance should a host parent or family member provide students with alcohol/drugs. This includes a glass of wine at the table with the family.

10.3 DRIVING A MOTORIZED VEHICLE

Students are not allowed to drive a motorized vehicle during their time in the Program.

10.4 SLEEPOVERS

Sleepovers are permitted and are up to the discretion of the host family. If your student asks to sleepover somewhere, please ensure a responsible adult will be home during the sleepover (phone conversation.) If you do not feel comfortable, please reach out to a Homestay Coordinator.

“Romantic” sleepovers are not allowed. If you suspect a romantic relationship and your student wishes to have his/her/their romantic partner sleepover, we will deny this regardless of gender.

11.0 STUDENT MEDICAL INFORMATION

It is a host parent's responsibility to support a student who needs medical attention. In the case of a medical emergency, please inform the homestay office during office hours or the emergency line if after hours as soon as it is safe to do so.

Homestay Emergency Line: 778-676-3781

11.1 MEDICAL INSURANCE

VIE arranges medical insurance coverage for each student. The type of medical insurance each student has will depend on the length of his/her/their program.

Students Studying for Less Than 6 Months



guard.me Medical Insurance Temporary Coverage

- Shorter term students enrolled for less than 6 months will be covered by guard.me medical insurance
- They will need to pay up front for services (doctor, bloodwork, etc.)
- In order to be reimbursed for medical payment through Guard.Me, students should:
 - Within 30 days of the first medical expense, log on to www.guard.me
 - Scroll down and click on "Submit A Claim."
 - Complete the steps for reimbursement (*if students will be departing the country within a month of receiving medical services, please contact the main office for help with reimbursement.*)

Students Studying for More Than 6 Months



Medical Service Plan (MSP)

- Long term students, enrolled for more than 6 months, will be covered by Guard.me until their MSP coverage starts in the third month after arrival
- Once students have MSP coverage, they can access medical services free of charge
- Long term students on MSP will continue to have extended health type benefits through Guard.me

*For any questions about medical care, please contact your Homestay Coordinator
or Jo-Anne in the main office: jbettauer@sd61.bc.ca*

11.2 ACCESSING HEALTH CARE IN VICTORIA

***In case of emergency phone 9-1-1**

Currently in Victoria, it can be quite challenging to see a doctor. We have put together the following tips to assist you in helping your student access care.

HealthLink BC (Nurse's Line) 8-1-1

This is a great resource if you are not sure what level of medical attention your student needs. Registered nurses are available 24/7 to provide free health information and advice. You can also connect with a dietitian through this same line by asking to speak to a registered dietitian.

Walk in clinics are typically no longer working on a walk-in basis. Please do not send your student to a walk-in clinic without an appointment.

Urgent Care Centres “In Person” Appointments

For in person doctor's visits, Urgent Care Centres offer medical appointments 7 days a week. Appointments are made by phoning in the morning. A nurse will phone back and appointments will or will not be made based on urgency. A central phone number connects with multiple centres: **1-833-688-8722**

Downtown Victoria Urgent & Primary Care

1107 Pandora Ave
Open 7 days a week
Phone lines open at 8:30am

Gorge Urgent & Primary Care Centre

7 days a week
Phone lines open at 8:00am

Students with BC Medical Cards will be able to see a doctor at no cost. Students with GuardMe insurance will need to pay upfront, then can go online to submit a claim to be reimbursed at guard.me.

Tia Health (for students **with** MSP coverage)

<https://tiahealth.com>

It is sometimes possible to make same day or next day appointments online through TIA Health.



GuardMe Online Doctor (for students without MSP coverage)

1. Register your GuardMe account: <https://myaccount.guard.me/login.php>
2. Register for MobileDoctor: <https://guard.me/en/mobile-doctor.html>
3. Download and login to the Maple App 
4. You will need to provide the pharmacy that you would like medication sent to



For more information, please see the mobileDoctor information page:

<https://guard.me/en/mobile-doctor.html>

Pharmacists

Students with MSP coverage can now make an appointment with a pharmacist to treat many ailments. Please see the following link for more information or to book an appointment:

[Appointments to See a Pharmacist](#)

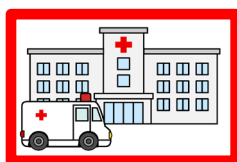
Hospitals

If the case of a suspected broken bone or other urgent/after hours need, Victoria's hospital emergency rooms are open 24/7 (patients are seen based on urgency and there may be an extended wait time). Hospitals will ask for BC Medical card numbers and are also able to direct bill GuardMe. No upfront payment should be necessary.

Dental Appointments

Emergency dental work (only) is covered through GuardMe. Dental offices will charge up front and receipts can be submitted online.

For more information about accessing care, please contact your homestay coordinators. For more information about your student's medical coverage, please contact Jo-Anne Bettauer in the main office: jbettauer@sd61.bc.ca



12.0 TRAVEL

Students who wish to travel outside of the Greater Victoria area without their host families must apply to the Program Office for permission. Travel applications can be found online at the following link:

Travel Application form: <https://www.studyinvictoria.com/current-students/travel-forms>

Completed travel forms should be emailed to isp_student@sd61.bc.ca

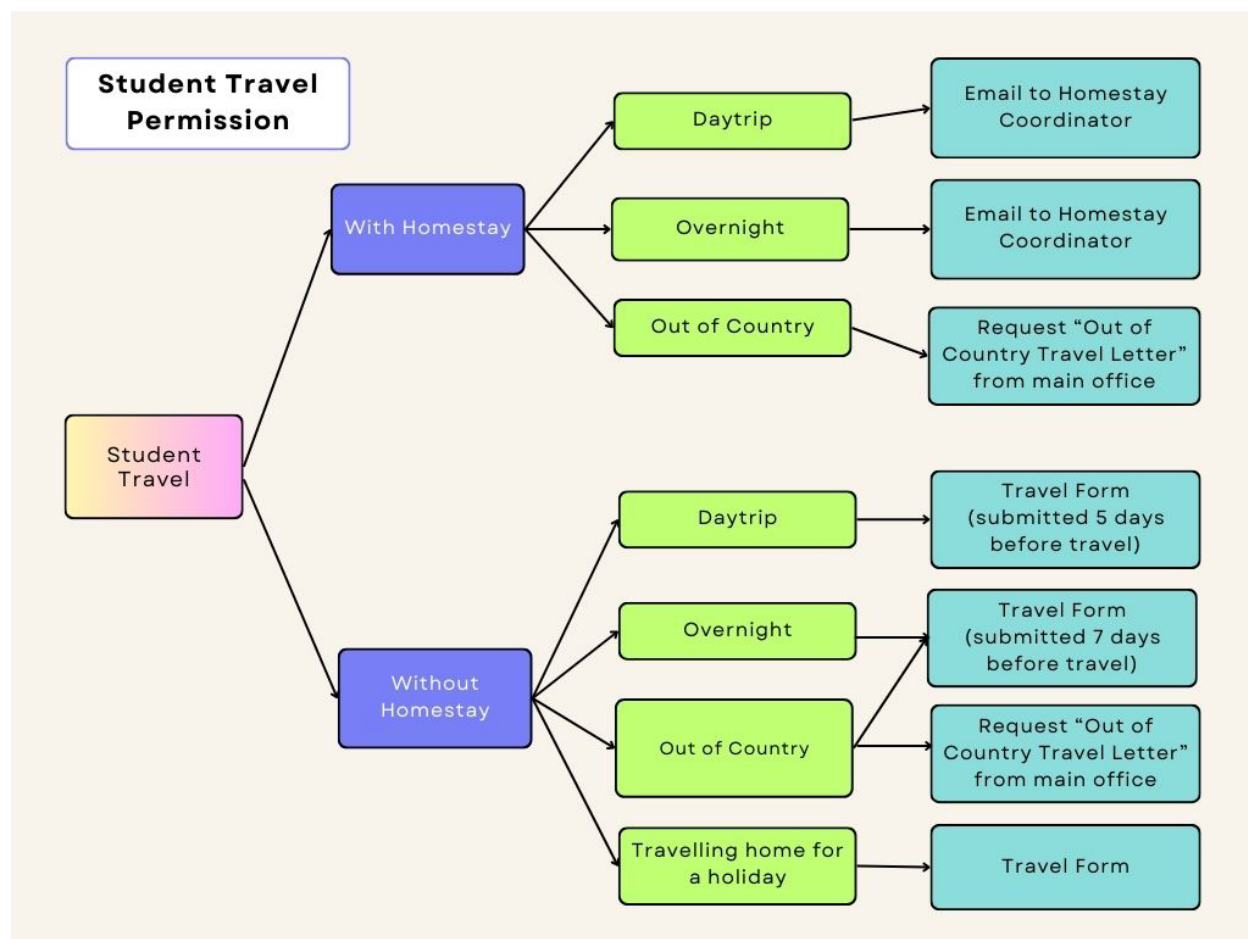
Please note the following travel guidelines:

- Travel forms must be submitted 5 days in advance for day trips and 7 days in advance for overnight trips
- Host families should review the information on the travel form carefully and verify the details provided for overnight stays. All overnight travel must have an adult supervisor, aged 25 years or older. If host families are unable to make contact with the supervising adult, please note that on the travel form
- All efforts should be made to avoid travel during school days. If required, students must talk to their teachers as well as receive VIE approval
- If travelling by ferry, students should be on the 7pm ferry home at the latest.
- Travel is not approved until both the student and the host family receive a travel approval email from the main office

If students are travelling with their host families, the host family should send a quick email to the Homestay Coordinator to provide travel details.



12.1 STUDENT TRAVEL PERMISSION



12.2 DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Bringing students to the airport at the end of the Program is a homestay responsibility. If you are unable to drop your student off, please make alternative arrangements.



13.0 DAMAGE CLAIMS

Hosting students is usually a smooth experience, but on occasion damage to the home may occur. **We ask that all homestay families have adequate home insurance or rental insurance that covers international students living in the home.**

If you observe damage in your home and the damage was not a result of regular wear and tear, contact your Homestay Coordinator with the details. Please provide the following information:

- Date of Damage
- Time of Damage
- Description of Damage

Upon receipt of this information, your Homestay Coordinator will:

- arrange a time to observe and photograph the damage
- meet with the student to get a letter/email citing admission of accidental damage
- request that you obtain two estimates for repairing the damage. Estimates must be on official company letter head, including address, phone number and contact name
- collect the above information and bring the matter to the attention of the homestay manager

If it is determined that damage has occurred, beyond general wear and tear, the homestay manager will compile a Damage Claim Form for you to sign. This will then be submitted to the insurance company for approval. If the insurance company approves the claim, they will pay 50% of the claim amount up to \$1000 upon receipt of repair or replacement. The other 50% will be covered by Victoria International Education. Any damage over \$2000 will need to be claimed through home insurance.

****Please note, host families only have 2 weeks after the departure of the student from their home to report damages. Any claims made after this time will not be considered.**

The insurance company provided the following list of items that will not be covered:

- X normal wear and tear to property
- X intentional damage to property
- X disappearance/loss of property used by student
- X unpleasant odor coming from student's room/bedding
- X property owned by the student (i.e. bike, cell phone, laptop, etc.)

THANK YOU FOR HOSTING

