

International Homestay Program

Information for Homestay families

International students will:

- Experience family living in the U.S.
- Establish relationships with Americans
- Increase their proficiency in English

Americans will:

- Share their home, life and experiences with a student from a foreign country.
- Understand their own country and culture better as they see it through the eyes of an International student.

Social and Family Interaction

Accommodations

Students need a comfortable home-like atmosphere during their stay with a homestay family. The essentials include private sleeping accommodations, bathing facilities and a quiet place to study. Homestay families also must provide necessary household items such as linens, towels and toilet paper. The bedroom should be warm and furnished, including bed/bedding, desk or table, lamp, dresser and closet. There should be an outside emergency exit (window or door) in the bedroom and preferably a bus stop within a half mile of the home. The family must respect the student's right to privacy including mail and bedroom space. Students have been instructed to practice the same courtesy.

Internet

Although campus internet access is available to all CCS international students, students want high-speed wireless internet access in their homestay also. This is especially helpful in communicating with family and friends in their home country and is crucial in easing homesickness. Please understand that providing free high-speed internet for homestay students is required to participate in this program.

Food

Full Homestays: The family is responsible to provide a variety of nutritional, well-balanced meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks) every day, including weekends. Students may prepare their own breakfast and lunch, but a family dinner is expected on most evenings. The student must have access to adult portions of nutritious foods and snacks. We expect students to fit into the meal schedule of the family as much as possible. On days when a sit-down meal is not planned, food must be made available for the student to prepare themselves. Students are responsible for providing their own diet or allergy-sensitive products. Shared Homestays: The student buys and, prepares their own food and cleans up afterwards. Show your student the kitchen, explaining use of equipment and where to store food supplies. Help them locate the nearest grocery store and offer to take them when you shop.

Placement of Students

Homestay family and student homestay application information assist us to place students with a minimum risk of incompatibility. Placements are not made on a first-come, first-served basis. Students are placed with the most appropriate homestay family for their needs. Please be advised: Placement is not guaranteed, nor the time frame of a student's stay in the home. (*See Changing Homestays*).

Airport Pickup Homestay family provides airport pick-up free of charge.

Baby Sitting and Work

Homestay families must not ask students to maintain the family's house and yard or babysit children. In a full homestay, students should not be asked to do any work outside of maintaining the cleanliness of the rooms they occupy and keeping their things picked up in other areas of the home. In a shared homestay, the student is expected to clean up after their food preparation. If a student has a private bathroom for their exclusive use, they are expected to clean it weekly and the family provides the preferred cleaning products.

Language Restrictions

Students choose homestay primarily to learn English. All household members must be proficient in English and be prepared to speak only English when the student is present. To minimize the opportunity for conversation in languages other than English, the best situation is to place only one student from a specific country in each home. Two students from the same country may be placed in a home when there are exceptional circumstances or a shortage of suitable host families. Two students from the same country per family is not the optimal, nor the normal procedure.

Entertainment

While we encourage homestay families to involve the student in their activities as much as possible, students are responsible for the costs of their own entertainment. If you invite a student to join you in an activity offer to pay their way or clearly communicate that everyone is paying their own way. They must be free to decline.

Transportation

The homestay family must be located in an area that provides safe and reasonable access to a bus route that offers service most days of the week including evenings. The homestay family is responsible for guiding the students to and from school before or on the first day of classes to prevent the student from getting lost. The homestay family is under no obligation to provide daily transportation but offering rides occasionally is encouraged.

Homestay Family – Student Relationships

CCS homestay families agree to behavior consistent with that of a supportive American friend and mentor. Intimate emotional and/or sexual relations between family members and students are strictly forbidden and cause for dismissal from program and other ramifications.

Rules/Curfews for Students

Students are obliged to follow the rules of the homestay family, however, students are generally over the age of 18 and require some flexibility. Curfews must not be issued for students over the age of 18 but students should let families know their daily schedule and when they expect to return home each day, especially during evening hours. Students under 18 must obtain parental written approval before taking a trip somewhere. Keeping the homestay family informed of their schedule and whereabouts is a safety factor for the protection of the student and quickly alerts the homestay family to situations where their student may need their assistance.

Changing Homestays

There will be times when a student will change their homestay. This is usually not a reflection of the host family, but a student's own personal choice or change of mind. We recommend that student's give the host family at least 2–4 weeks notice before they leave. If a student leaves their homestay without any notice, then they will not be refunded the monthly homestay fees already paid.

Medical Care

All students are required to have medical insurance through LewerMark Plus Injury and Sickness Plan or their Government Scholarship Medical Plan. If your student has LewerMark, please help them choose appropriate medical care from the PPO list at www.lewermark.com/ccspokane.com. Medical choices are confusing to international students. They need your assistance making appropriate health care decisions.

Homestay Evaluations

Homestay families are evaluated by the homestay manager through in-home visits, criminal background checks (Washington State Patrol) and student evaluations. Evaluations and information are handled confidentially.

Reimbursement and Procedures

Full homestay, including food:

\$850 per month (*Students ages 16-17*) ; \$700 per month (*Students ages 18+*)

Shared homestay, not including food: \$400 per month.

Homestay day rates:

\$28.50 per day for Full homestay - *Minor* ; \$23.50 per day for Full homestay - *Adult*

\$13.50 per day for Shared homestay ; \$10.00 per day for Vacation rate – when student vacations longer than 3 weeks.

Homestay Agreement

Within one week of student placement, the host family completes a Homestay Agreement with their student and submits a copy to the homestay manager.

Become a Homestay Family

Please ask yourself the following questions:

- Can I provide a student with private sleeping quarters, bathing and laundry facilities, and a clean and comfortable living environment?
- Can I provide a furnished bedroom including a desk or table, lamp, dresser and closet with an outside emergency exit (*window or door*)?
- Will I agree to a Washington State Patrol background check for anyone 18 years of age or above who resides at my home?
- Are all members of my household willing to host an international student?
- Are all members of my household fluent in English and willing to speak only English in the student's presence?
- Am I located within four blocks of bus transportation to Spokane Community College or Spokane Falls Community College?
- Do I have a sincere interest in people from other cultures and am I willing to treat a student as a member of the family, engaging them often in conversation and activities?
- Do I have an attitude of acceptance, helpfulness and respect toward students of any race, culture or religion. Am I willing to communicate and work out differences that may occur?
- High-speed wireless internet access is in place and available to students without an additional fee.

If you can answer "yes" to the above questions, you are a good candidate for being a successful home.

Common Reasons that a Homestay is Not Successful

- The family wishes to host students primarily as a source of income.
- The family currently has major personal problems and is experiencing unusual stress due to divorce, violence, alcoholism, drug abuse or other serious issues.
- The family has strong cultural stereotypes or racial prejudices toward other cultures.
- The family wants a student as a babysitter or housekeeper.
- The family wants the student to tutor them in the student's native language.
- The standard of cleanliness in the home is unacceptable.
- The family's schedule would severely limit the time available to interact with a student.
- The home has no high-speed wireless internet service in place for a student to access easily and without extra charges.

If you are experiencing any of the above circumstances this is not an optimal time for a successful homestay experience. Please consider applying at a later date when your situation is more suitable.

Community Colleges of Spokane experiences a healthy interest from people willing to act as homestay families. However, we cannot guarantee every applicant will receive a student or the duration of a student homestay placement.

If you have carefully read this information with special attention to sections titled, How to Become a Homestay Family and Common Reasons That a Homestay is Not Successful and consider yourself a good candidate for homestay, please contact Ashley Ding, Manager of Immigration and Student Success.

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