



Elgin Community College International Student Homestay Program

Program Information, Policies, and Agreement for International Students



Elgin
Community
College

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Community College District 509, commonly known as Elgin Community College, (“ECC”) is a two-year, public institution of higher education located in Elgin, Illinois, a city which lies along the banks of the Fox River only 40 miles (64 kilometers) northwest of downtown Chicago. Elgin has a diverse multicultural and multilingual population and is one of the fastest growing communities in the Fox Valley, offering convenient access to public transportation, highways and airports. Many students enjoy visiting Chicago, the third largest city in the United States, for its world-class cultural offerings and unique architecture.

As with many community colleges, ECC does not have residence halls on campus. However, the college provides housing support services for international students. International students can choose from a variety of housing options: homestay, apartment living, or in an extended-stay hotel.

The International Student Homestay Program at ECC provides a unique opportunity for international students to reside in an American home as a member of the family. The Homestay Program promotes values of international friendship and cultural exchange and provides students with a clean, safe and caring atmosphere in which to live while attending ECC. A homestay provides you (reference to “you or your” refers to the student participating in the program) with the opportunity to improve your English, meet new people, participate in homestay program events and outings, and have a positive academic and cultural experience while completing your studies at ECC. The International Student Homestay Program maintains strict standards and guidelines to ensure the wellbeing and quality of the homestay experience for all participants.

Student Homestay Agreement

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the policies, terms, and procedures for participants in the ECC International Student Homestay Program. Please read this document completely, sign it indicating your consent to the terms, and return it to ECC with the rest of your homestay application materials. This form must accompany your *Program Application for International Students* for the ECC International Student Homestay Program in order for your application to be processed.

It is very important that you submit your homestay application by the application deadline. Applications are due no later than 60 days prior to your arrival in the U.S. Late applications will be filled based on availability. Applying does not guarantee you a homestay placement. Students on a reduced course load will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Is Homestay Right for You?

Participating in the homestay program can enrich your educational and cultural experience in the U.S. However, living in a homestay is not for everyone. Students who live in a homestay are members of the host family and not merely ‘guests.’ Students are expected to respect family rules, engage in family activities, and appreciate cultural differences. It is considered a privilege to be a part of an American host family!

You may enjoy the homestay environment if you:

- Appreciate and respect different types of family structures.

- Are interested in sharing their culture and traditions with others.
- View living with a host family as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.
- Are open to new experiences.
- Are mature, responsible, open-minded and not afraid to ask questions.
- Are willing to compromise, communicate and cooperate.

Placement Standards & Participation in the Homestay Program

Every care is taken to assure a safe, quality homestay program. Homestay families are carefully screened through an extensive background check and interview process. ECC retains the right to place students with host families participating in the International Student Homestay Program; placements are made at the discretion of the college. Host families, students, and students' families must understand that placements are made by ECC and not by the student, host family, or any external party. Students are placed with host families based on the information provided during the application process by both the student and host family. ECC is not responsible for the quality of the relationship between the student and the host family.

Students who are not issued a homestay placement by the ECC International Student Homestay Program or choose to arrange their own housing accommodations are not considered participants in the program and are not covered under the program's policies and agreements. Students assume all risks and liabilities associated with locating their own housing accommodations.

The Host Family

The United States is a multicultural country with people from many different ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds. This diversity is reflected in the host families who participate in the International Student Homestay Program. As a public institution, ECC embraces and promotes this diversity and multiculturalism. Host families live in many different types of homes, such as condominiums, single family homes, apartments/flats, and townhouses. Host families are made up of people from a variety of family structures.

Host families include:

- Families with young children/teenagers
- Couples with no children or children no longer living at home
- Widowed, divorced, or single individuals
- Retired couples
- Blended families with children from previous marriages
- Non-traditional family units, including same-sex couples, multi-racial families, etc.

All host families share an interest in welcoming international students to ECC and the local community. Many hosts have traveled extensively, lived abroad, or welcomed exchange students in the past. Host families understand the challenges associated with living in a foreign culture and learning a second language and are committed to supporting you as you adjust to life in the U.S.

Screening of Host Families and Background Check

ECC screens all potential host families. The screening process includes but is not limited to a background check, personal interview with all members of the household, and a site visit to the host's home. The Homestay Coordinator inspects all potential host's homes to ensure that the minimum amenities required are provided

and that the home and family are a good fit for the International Student Homestay Program. FBI background checks are required for every host and any adult age 18 or older living in the host's home, including adult children away at college who return home for vacations, holidays, etc., or who may visit on a regular basis. The screening and background check process is taken very seriously by ECC, and the college reserves the right to decline a host family application for any reason.

For full details on the screening of host families and background check procedures, please refer to the *Screening of Host Families and Background Checks* section in the *International Student Homestay Program Information, Policies, and Agreement for Host Families*.

Move in Dates

Please note that homestays cannot begin nor is airport pickup available on the following state of Illinois recognized holidays:

New Year's Day:	January 1
Memorial Day:	Last Monday in May
Independence Day:	July 4
Labor Day:	First Monday in September
Thanksgiving Day:	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day:	December 25

Move in dates are the Saturday prior to orientation or IEP testing. No exceptions are able to be made.

Homestay Orientation

As a new F-1 or J-1 student or exchange visitor participating in the International Student Homestay Program, you are required to attend an orientation to become acquainted with the program, meet other homestay participants, ask any questions of the Homestay Coordinator, and learn about expectations for students and host families. Homestay orientations are offered at the beginning of each semester and at various times throughout the term to meet the needs of incoming Intensive English Program students.

Guidelines for a Successful Homestay Experience

The homestay experience is a very unique opportunity for you, as an international student, to fully participate in American culture. You will gain the most from your time in the U.S. if you understand and respect the following guidelines:

Respect the host family's rules. Although you are paying for room and board, you should remember that your host family's home is not a hotel or dormitory. It is very important that you and your host family discuss expectations for your stay in their home. Communicate your needs and ask for advice. Do not worry about your level of English-speaking ability. Your host family understands that you are here to learn.

Ask for help. There are many times when you may need the assistance of your host family, such as shopping for necessities. Your host family will help you settle in when you first arrive. You will need to communicate with your host family if you need additional assistance.

Help out and clean up after yourself. Every homestay is unique. You will want to discuss the house rules with your host family after you move in. In most homes, it is expected that all family members will help with housework, cooking, and cleaning. You should keep your bedroom and the bathroom you use tidy and clean. You will need to wash your own laundry, including your bed linens and towels. Remember to say “please” and “thank you.”

Participate in host family activities and events. Your host family was chosen because of their interest in learning about you and your culture. You will be included in many host family activities or holiday gatherings. You should try to participate in as many activities with your host family as possible. It is common in the U.S. for individuals to pay their own expenses. You can ask your host family how much the outing will cost and how much spending money you may need. If you are unable to participate in an activity with your host family, you should let them know a few days prior to the event and thank them for the invitation. It is not considered impolite to occasionally decline an invitation for which you cannot or do not want to attend.

Respect the roles within the host family. It is common in the U.S. for men and women to both work outside the home. Most homestays do not have a ‘homestay mom’ who is at home full-time. Your homestay dad may take on roles that are traditionally occupied by women in your culture, such as washing dishes, cooking meals, or cleaning. Children in your host family may seem informal with their parents or more outspoken than children from your country. It will take time for you to adjust to life with your host family. Just as you will respect the roles within the host family, so will the host family respect your privacy and personal space.

Keep your host family informed of your schedule. Your host family needs to know when you will be home. This does not mean you cannot be independent. You are being responsible and proactive when you tell your host family about your plans.

Be mindful of hygiene. As in many countries, Americans are very mindful of hygiene and body odor. Americans typically bathe every day, apply deodorant after bathing, brush their teeth twice a day, and wear clean clothes daily. You should discuss with your host family any irritations or allergies they may have to perfume and scented hygiene products.

Pay your homestay fee on time. Pay your homestay and airport pick-up fees to your host family in full by 5:00 PM the day after your initial move-in and the first of the month thereafter. Ask for a written receipt from your host family for the payment. Failure to pay your stipend will result in termination from the homestay program.

Student Code of Conduct

All students attending ECC must abide by the college’s Student Code of Conduct as outlined in Administrative Procedure 4.402¹. You should review the Student Code of Conduct and become familiar with the rights, regulations and responsibilities you will undertake as an ECC student. The Student Code of Conduct is available on the college’s website by visiting www.elgin.edu/codeofconduct.

¹ <http://www.elgin.edu/aboutus.aspx?id=13758&terms=Administrative%20Procedure>

Homestay Amenities

Your homestay will provide you with the following amenities:

- A safe, caring, and comfortable home.
- An English-speaking environment.
- Shared or private bedroom which includes a bed, study desk, chair, adequate lighting, and clothes storage (dresser and a closet/wardrobe).
- Shared or private bathroom.
- Towels, linens, and pillow.
- Use of laundry and kitchen facilities.
- Use of common areas.
- Two meals (breakfast and dinner) each day.
- Internet access.
- Gas, electric, and water bills are paid by the host family.
- Storage of reasonable items (such as suitcase, etc.).
- Orientation to the local community and services.
- Assistance settling in and adjusting to life in America.

Your homestay does not provide:

- Non-essential groceries such as snacks and specialty items
- Personal hygiene products, soap, shampoo, and toothpaste
- Mobile phone. Your host can help you with acquiring a mobile phone.
- Computer/laptop and printer. You may wish to purchase a laptop or computer.
- Maid or turn-down service. You should not expect to be waited on. Americans have busy schedules and will expect you to be self-reliant. Please plan to share in reasonable household duties.
- Use of the host family motor vehicle
- Medical, renter's, or travel insurance for the student. The student is responsible for purchasing their own insurance coverage.

Homestay Fees

The International Student Homestay Program provides various options for homestay. Homestay fees are the same regardless if you choose a shared or private room. Homestay placements begin the weekend prior to the start of International New Student Orientation or IEP testing; the Homestay Coordinator will assign you a move-in date in your placement letter. It is very important that you arrive on this date as your host family will be expecting you. If you arrive earlier than your homestay move-in date, you will be responsible for arranging your own housing accommodations (e.g. local extended stay) and the cost of transportation and lodging associated with such an arrangement.

ECC charges a one-time, non-refundable placement fee of \$100.00. This fee is due within two business days of a placement being made. If the placement fee is not received, you will forfeit your placement in the Homestay Program.

If you arrive for studies mid-semester (such as for the Intensive English Program), you will be placed in the homestay for the number of weeks remaining in the semester.

Homestay Option	Monthly Fee (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in and the first day of the month thereafter)	Security Deposit (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in)	Prorated Fee (per night)	Airport Pickup Fee (due by 5 PM the day after initial move-in)
Homestay <i>without</i> transportation	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$25.00	From Chicago O'Hare International Airport: \$50.00 From Chicago Midway International Airport: \$75.00
Homestay <i>with</i> transportation	\$950.00	\$950.00	\$32.00	
Special Program <i>with</i> transportation	Varies	Equal to homestay fee	\$32.00	

Airport Pickup

Airport pickup from Chicago O'Hare International Airport or Chicago Midway International Airport is provided by your host family if requested well in advance and based on availability. The fee for airport pickup from Chicago O'Hare is \$50.00; the fee for airport pickup from Chicago Midway is \$75.00. This fee is payable directly to the host family along with the full homestay fee. If airport pickup is requested, your host family will meet you at your flight's baggage claim area with a sign with your name on it. Flight information must be received at least 21 days prior to your arrival date. Please communicate with the Homestay Coordinator and your host family regarding your flight information.

Important: If you miss your connecting flight or will not arrive as scheduled, you are responsible for reporting unexpected changes to the Homestay Coordinator and your host family immediately.

Please do not email the Homestay Coordinator with last minute changes. Please call the Homestay Coordinator at 847-214-7722 or 563-271-3294.

Transportation Option

The transportation option includes the following:

- Daily transportation to and from ECC, including the main campus and satellite locations, by private vehicle when classes are in session. Transportation to ECC is to occur not more than 90 minutes prior to the start of your first class and/or 90 minutes after the end of your final class of the day or other mutually agreed time between you and the host family. The only exception to this rule is that you should not be dropped off prior to 7:00 AM or picked up after 10:00 PM unless previously agreed upon by both you and the host family. On days when you do not have class but wish to be transported to campus, the above guidelines shall apply. This also includes providing transportation to and from campus for practices if you are a student athlete.

Host families agreeing to provide transportation will transport you in their own insured private vehicle. In emergency circumstances where the host family cannot drive you to ECC, the host family shall arrange for alternative transportation. Acceptable alternative forms of transportation include taxi, Uber, or similar service at the host family's expense; other host families in the homestay program; or a

person who has a background check, insurance, and driver's license on file with the Homestay Program. Hosts are prohibited from supplying transportation outside of the guidelines listed above. Supplying other forms of transportation can lead to removal of the host from the Homestay Program. In case of an emergency when you are sick and need to leave campus earlier than the prior agreed upon time by you and the host, you are responsible for your own transportation expense.

- A weekly shopping trip to an appropriate supermarket (such as Jewel, Super Target, Super Wal-Mart, etc.). Host families are responsible for providing transportation to and from the supermarket, so you may purchase food (for lunches and snacks), toiletries, and other personal items. During the first shopping trip, the host family should help you become familiar with the store and check-out procedures. You are allowed a minimum of 60 minutes during your weekly shopping trip. You and the host should discuss transportation needs for the weekly shopping trip to occur at a mutually beneficial time for both parties. Students paying their host family for transportation to and from the supermarket are not expected to use public transportation for this purpose. In emergency circumstances where the host family cannot drive you to the supermarket, the host family shall arrange for alternative transportation. Acceptable alternative forms of transportation include taxi, Uber, or similar service at the host family's expense; other host families in the homestay program; or a person who has a background check, insurance, and driver's license on file with the Homestay Program. Hosts are prohibited from supplying transportation outside of the guidelines listed above. Supplying other forms of transportation can lead to removal of the host from the Homestay Program.
- Transportation for reasonable errands and 'settling-in' activities during the first few days in the homestay will be provided by the host. Such activities include but are not limited to: purchasing a mobile phone and plan and buying basic necessities.

The transportation option does not include:

- Transportation to shopping malls, movie theatres, friends' homes, bank, etc.
- Transportation between buildings at ECC. Students are expected to walk to classes on campus.
- Transportation to games or any other college activities not held on campus.
- Transportation for visiting family or friends.

Any transportation needs that arise outside of the regular homestay agreement should be discussed between you and the host family. If you choose a homestay that does not provide transportation, you will be responsible for making your own arrangements for local transportation. Few homestays are within walking distance of campus, and public transportation is limited. For information on the public bus system that services ECC, visit www.pacebus.com. Elgin is also connected to downtown Chicago by a train system known as Metra; visit www.metrarail.com for further information.

Security Deposit and Damage Claims

A security deposit equal to one month's homestay fee is payable by the student to ECC and held by the college. All homestays, regardless of duration, require a security deposit equal to the homestay fee. The security deposit is due by you to the college by 5:00 PM the business day following your arrival. The security deposit is payable in U.S. dollars only. Payment can be made in person at ECC Student Accounts, online at elgin.edu/AccessECC, or via international bank wire through Flywire at flywire.com (if you are outside the U.S.). The security deposit is managed by ECC, and is not to be used as payment for the monthly homestay fee.

The security deposit 'lives' with you and the process to return the security deposit to you will occur no later than 30 days after your departure from the homestay program if no alleged damage has been formally reported by the host family. The security deposit will be returned only if the host is not owed for any unpaid bills or property damage. Normal wear and tear of appliances and furniture should be expected and not charged to you. Damage beyond normal wear and tear may be compensated from the security deposit.

In the event of any alleged damage caused by you to the host's property, the host must contact the Homestay Coordinator in writing within three business days of the damage allegedly caused by you. If damage is allegedly caused by you, the college and host family will follow the damage claim process as outlined in the *Damage Claim Policy and Procedure* detailed at orientation, contained in the International Student Homestay Program Student Handbook, and is available by request from the Homestay Coordinator.

Payment of any verified damages caused by you will be remitted to the host from your security deposit per college financial policy and procedures. If you are a continuing participant in the homestay program, you must remit the difference between the required homestay security deposit and your current security deposit balance on file with the college (balance reflecting damage claim payment to your host family) within five business days. Failure to follow this policy may result in your removal from the program.

If you are no longer a participant in the homestay program, ECC will issue you a refund of any security deposit balance minus funds paid to the host family for an approved damage claim in line with college financial policy. Such payment may take up to several weeks to process. You are required to provide the college with a forwarding address for any refund due of your security deposit. All refunds are issued in US dollars.

ECC is committed to an equitable, fair, and timely resolution of any damage claims that honors due process and input from all parties.

Payment of Homestay Fees

The initial homestay payment is due by 5:00 PM the day following your arrival. Payment should only be made after the Homestay Contract has been signed by you and your host family. If you arrive in the middle of the month, the first month will be prorated at the prorated fee per night associated with your homestay choice. Thereafter, your homestay fee is due on the first day of each month. All homestay fees, security deposit, and airport pickup must be paid by cash, cashier's check, or money order drawn on a U.S. bank and paid directly to the host family. Your host family will provide you with a written receipt for each payment. Homestays end the day after graduation for the spring and fall semesters and the day after the end of the semester as noted in the annual academic calendar in the summer session. If the homestay ends before the end of the month, the last month's homestay fee will be prorated.

It is important that you pay your host family on time each month. Homestay fees paid five days late will accrue a \$25.00 late fee. If you have not paid your homestay fee by the 15th day of the month, you will be considered in violation of the homestay agreement and will be asked to leave the homestay immediately. In such instances, you will be directed to a local extended stay and will be responsible for the costs associated with lodging. Your host family will contact the Homestay Coordinator regarding any late payments or difficulty collecting payment.

Example:

You arrive on August 10 at 1:00 PM for classes that begin on August 17. You have chosen to live in a homestay with transportation and selected to be picked up at Chicago O'Hare International Airport by your host family. Your homestay fees will be calculated as follows:

Fees payable directly to your host family:

1. Cost of first month's homestay fee for a student living in a homestay with transportation:
\$32.00 (per night) x 21 nights = \$672.00
2. Airport pickup fee:
\$50.00

Total fees due by 5:00 PM on August 11 (the day following your arrival): \$722.00

Fees payable directly to ECC:

1. Security deposit for a student living in a homestay with transportation:
\$950.00

Total fees due by 5:00 PM on August 11 (the day following your arrival): \$950.00

Your monthly fee of \$950.00 would then be due to your host family on September 1, October 1, etc. until the end of your Homestay Contract.

Vacation Policy

If you decide to go out of town or take a holiday while you are in the International Student Homestay Program, the following procedures will apply:

- Discuss with your host family your vacation plans at least two weeks prior to your departure. Plans must be agreeable to both parties.
- If you are away for 14 nights or less during the official contract period, there is no discount for vacation.
- If you are away for 15-30 nights during the official contract period (e.g. emergency in home country), the rate during your absence is 50 percent of the daily pro-rated homestay fee (example: \$16.00 per night for a student living in a homestay with transportation).
- During official contract periods, you should not be away from the homestay for longer than 30 nights.
- If you will be away for longer than 30 nights, you must receive permission from your host family and the Homestay Coordinator to continue in your homestay.
- ECC understands that you may want to return to your home country over holiday breaks or during the summer vacation. However, it is unfair to your host family to hold a spot for you without compensation. If your host family and the Homestay Coordinator agree to hold your belongings during such breaks, you will be responsible for a \$5.00 daily fee payable directly to your host family for the storage of personal belongings and to retain the homestay placement upon your return. "Belongings" refers to tangible items such as clothing, shoes, and personal effects that you intend to use or retrieve upon return to the homestay. Hosts will not be compensated for storing items that you may have inadvertently left behind or after your participation in the program has ended.

- Your belongings will not be held for longer than 120 nights. Student belongings in the homestay for longer than 120 nights will be donated to charity. Host families are not responsible for mailing your belongings to you. You are responsible for the timely transportation and cost associated with moving any belongings.
- For assistance in calculating vacation rates, please contact the Homestay Coordinator.

Number of Nights Away from the Homestay	Homestay Rate
14 nights or less	No discount
15-30 nights	50% of the daily pro-rated homestay fee
31 nights or more	\$5 per night

Many host families may take vacations or weekend trips. You may be invited to join your host family if it does not conflict with your school schedule. If you participate, you will be responsible for any expenses. It is very important that these expenses be discussed beforehand with your host family. Participation by you in such activities is voluntary, and you assume all risks and responsibilities.

If your host family will be away from home at all during your stay (outside of their normal working schedule), this must be discussed with the Homestay Coordinator before you arrive or as soon as your host family's vacation plans are known. The Homestay Coordinator, in consultation with you and your host family, will determine whether or not you should be moved to another home temporarily during your host family's absence. This policy is in place to ensure that your needs are met while participating in the International Student Homestay Program.

Placement and Cancellation Policy

After you have been accepted into the International Student Homestay Program, you will receive a homestay confirmation email from the Homestay Coordinator prior to your arrival in the U.S. You must confirm your acceptance of the homestay placement via email within two business days of your homestay confirmation and pay the \$100.00 Placement Fee. Failure to respond in the set time frame and pay the placement fee will result in the forfeiture of your homestay placement.

ECC will make every attempt to place you in a homestay. However, please note that placements are not guaranteed.

Termination Policy

The student may terminate their stay in the homestay by giving 30 days' written notice (letter or email) to the host and the Homestay Coordinator. The host must provide the student with a refund of any homestay fees paid in advance beyond the date they are expected to exit the homestay (30 days after written notice of termination is received). A cancellation penalty and early termination fee will apply if the student elects to terminate their homestay prior to the contract end date and they exit the International Student Homestay Program. These fees are as follows:

- Cancellation penalty when providing 30 days' written notice: \$250.00
- Early termination fee when providing 30 days' written notice: equal to one month's homestay fee

Failure by the student to provide 30 days' written notice will result in the forfeiture of the balance of the homestay fee paid for that month as well as a cancellation penalty and early termination fee if they elect to

terminate the homestay prior to the contract end date and they exit the International Student Homestay Program. These fees are as follows:

- Cancellation penalty without providing 30 days' written notice: equal to one month's homestay fee
- Early termination fee without providing 30 days' written notice: equal to one month's homestay fee

Early termination and cancellation penalty fees are paid to the host by ECC after the student vacates the homestay.

Example:

You are living in a homestay that provides transportation. You pay your host \$950.00 on the first day of each month. After two months in your homestay, you decide you would rather live with your friend who has a local apartment. You provide your host and the Homestay Coordinator with a 30 days' written notice. A cancellation penalty of \$250 and early termination fee of \$950 are due and payable to ECC prior to you leaving the homestay.

A host may end the homestay agreement with 30 days' written notice to the Homestay Coordinator. They must provide the student with a refund at 100 percent of the daily prorated fee for any nights already paid in the remaining month. Refunds are payable in U.S. dollars only in the form of cash, money order, or cashier's check.

A host who withdraws or is removed from the program must remit any refund of the daily prorated fee for any nights already paid in the remaining month to the student prior to the student leaving the homestay. If any damage is incurred by the host family from the student, the return of the security deposit must follow the policies as outlined in the *Security Deposit and Damage Claims* section of this agreement.

Homestay Program Activities

Special activities and events are organized for host families and students participating in the International Student Homestay Program. These activities may include movie nights, bowling, potlucks, and holiday celebrations. To promote international friendship and multicultural awareness, you are encouraged to attend with your host family as many events as possible. Price and payment will vary according to activity, and participants may be responsible for the cost of their participation.

Insurance and Vehicle Access

You are required to carry medical insurance. Students are automatically enrolled in the college's sponsored insurance plan each semester. You are also encouraged to carry renter's insurance that will cover your belongings in case of accident, theft, or natural disaster. Your host family is required to carry homeowner's/renter's insurance for their belongings. Your host family's insurance does not cover your belongings.

Any individual who provides transportation for you in the homestay program on behalf of your host family, including activities outside of school, is also required to have on file with the college a FBI background check, a copy of the automobile insurance policy, and a copy of a valid driver's license. If you make your own personal transportation arrangements on an ad-hoc basis, your host family is exempt from this policy (e.g. a host family is out of town and you request a friend to provide you with transportation to and from ECC).

You are not permitted to drive the host family's vehicle under any circumstances. If you purchase your own vehicle, you are required to maintain automobile insurance in accordance with state and local law.

Meals and Kitchen Access

Your host family will provide you with two meals each day – breakfast and dinner. The meals should be balanced and include a healthy selection of items. You must provide and prepare your own lunch.

Breakfast: Some host families will cook breakfast for you; other host families will provide a continental breakfast that you can prepare on your own. Either is acceptable. Breakfast is usually eggs, meat, breads, cereal, toast and/or fruit, and juice/coffee. You should discuss with your host family what foods you enjoy eating. If your host family prepares breakfast for you, be on time or you may cause a delay in the host family's morning schedule. If you prepare your own breakfast, clean up the kitchen (wash dishes, turn off electrical appliances) when you are finished.

Lunch: You will need to buy your own food and prepare your own lunches, even on the weekends. You can bring a lunch to or purchase a meal at ECC. You should not use your host family's food to prepare your lunch.

Dinner: Dinner is usually the main meal of the day for Americans. It is the time of day when many families gather together and share their day's experiences. You should discuss with your host family what time dinner takes place. It is important you are on time for dinner. If you prepare your own dinner, make sure you clean up after yourself. Although you are not required to eat dinner with your host family every day, we encourage you to eat as many meals as possible with your host family as your mutual schedules permit. The dinner meal should include a balanced selection of items (e.g. serving pizza or fast food every night is unacceptable).

Snacks: Non-essential groceries such as snacks are not included in the cost of your homestay fee. You should make plans to purchase any snacks or special food you would like during your weekly shopping trip.

You will have full access to the homestay kitchen. Ask your host family how to operate kitchen appliances (such as the stove, oven, dishwasher, toaster, microwave, etc.) before using them. You should also offer to help out with general kitchen duties such as meal preparation and clean-up, and ensure you tidy up after you have used the kitchen for your own meal preparation.

Laundry Facilities

You will have access to the homestay laundry facilities and are responsible for doing your own laundry. This means you will need to launder your own clothes, towels, and linens. You are allowed to do laundry once or twice a week depending on your host family. Your host family will provide laundry detergent and provide you with instructions on how to operate the washer and dryer. Most American homes do not have outside clotheslines to dry clothes; clothes are typically dried in a dryer. If your host family's home uses shared, coin-operated laundry facilities with other units (such as in a condominium or apartment complex), you need to pay for your own laundry costs.

You should not use your homestay laundry facilities to wash other students' clothing. Be considerate when using the laundry facilities and remove clothes quickly when they are finished being laundered. Terms for using the laundry facilities are provided by your host family and are outlined in the Homestay Contract.

Cleaning and Household Chores

You are expected to keep your room and bathroom (whether private or shared) clean and tidy. You should clean your room and bathroom at least once a week. Your host family will provide cleaning supplies. You should wash your linens and towels each week. You are expected to keep common areas of the homestay tidy, but you are not responsible for weekly household chores such as washing floors, vacuuming, cleaning windows, etc.

American bathrooms may be different than those in your home country. Do not flush anything other than toilet paper down the toilet. Feminine products, personal hygiene products, and other toiletries should be disposed of in the garbage basket and not in the toilet. The sink/wash basin is for brushing your teeth or washing your face and hands; do not wash your clothes or linens in the bathroom sink. Keep all water in the bathtub or sink. Most American homes have a dedicated shower or bath stall with a drain inside the stall and a shower curtain to keep water off the floor. It is not common to have a shower in the middle of the bathroom with a common drain. If you have questions about how to operate the shower or sink, ask your host family.

Internet and Computer

Your host family will provide Internet access for you in the home. Your host family will not provide a personal computer or printer for you to use. You should make plans to bring or purchase a computer or laptop. Do not download illegal or illicit software, images, or content. If you are using an Internet connection to video chat with family or friends in your home country, please remember to not disturb your host family at a late hour. Please keep the volume on your personal computer or laptop at a reasonable level at all times.

Visitors and Overnight Guests of Students

Family, friends, or agents that accompany you to the U.S. or come to visit you cannot stay with you overnight in your homestay. Please make hotel reservations and separate airport pickup arrangements. You should discuss with your host family rules for family or friends to visit you at the homestay. Overnight guests in any capacity are not allowed. Terms for having guests visit are provided by your host family and are outlined in the Homestay Contract.

Personal Belongings

You are responsible for your own personal belongings whether at your homestay or at school. ECC will not be responsible for your personal belongings. Do not carry a lot of cash with you and always keep your valuable belongings secure and locked. You are encouraged to purchase renter's insurance. Your host family's homeowner's insurance does not cover your property in case of loss or damage.

Please refer to the *Vacation Policy* section in this agreement for details on leaving personal belongings with your host family over an extended break.

Pets

It is very common for American homes to have indoor pets. Your host family may have a dog or cat, and you may request a homestay without indoor pets. You are not expected to care for your host family's pet(s). Discuss with your host family expectations for interacting with any indoor pets. Do not be surprised if your host family's pet is treated like a member of the family and allowed on furniture.

If, during the course of your homestay, a member of your host family acquires a pet, your host family must disclose this to the Homestay Coordinator within five calendar days. If you requested a homestay without pets and your host family subsequently acquires one, you may need to be moved to another homestay. In accordance with the refund and cancellation policy, the host family will forfeit any monies paid to you if you must be relocated to another home due to the introduction of a pet in a previous pet-free household.

You are not allowed to own a pet of any kind (including fish) and bring them into your homestay. Failure to follow this policy will result in your immediate removal from the International Student Homestay Program.

Family House Rules and Interpersonal Relationships

Every homestay experience is different, and different host families have different rules. You are expected to act in a friendly, responsible, and respectful manner at all times in your homestay. Upon your arrival, discuss any house rules with your host family. The host family should also discuss a curfew and appropriate use of common areas. You and your host family must both sign this document and return it to the Homestay Coordinator within two calendar days of your arrival.

Your relationship with your host family members can be a very unique experience as you pursue your education in the U.S. Many host families and students become lifelong friends. However, while living in the homestay, it is strictly prohibited to engage in any sort of romantic or sexual relationship with any member of the host family, regardless of age. Failure to follow this policy will result in your immediate removal from the Homestay Program.

Smoking, Alcohol, and Drug Use

Be responsible about smoking, drinking alcohol, and operating motor vehicles. Do not smoke in your host family's home unless they permit you to do so. Always clean up cigarette remnants and dispose of them properly. The legal drinking age in the U.S. is 21. Do not consume alcohol if you are underage, and discuss with your host family whether you are allowed to drink alcohol in the home even if you are of legal drinking age. Do not drink alcohol and operate a motor vehicle. The U.S. has very strict laws against drinking and driving. Do not use illegal or recreational drugs. If you are arrested by the police for using drugs, you will go to jail. Any use of illegal or recreational drugs in the homestay is prohibited and will result in the immediate expulsion from the homestay program. ECC and your host family are not responsible for any legal action that may be brought against you because of illegal activities.

Removal of a Student from Homestay or the International Student Homestay Program

ECC may exercise the authority to remove you from a homestay. Possible reasons for removal include but are not limited to:

- Incompatible living styles between you and host family.
- Non-payment of homestay fees, security deposit, or chronic lateness in payment.
- Personal misconduct in your homestay.
- Failure to adhere to the terms of the Homestay Program, Information, Policies, and Agreement and Homestay Contract.
- Failure to respect the house rules and property of your host family.

- Change in personal behavior or discovery of an undisclosed illness, health issue, etc. that prohibits the homestay placement from being mutually beneficial to all parties.
- Change in student financial status or inability to afford the homestay.
- Personal ownership of a pet in the homestay.
- Excessive use of foul language or alcohol abuse.
- Illegal drug or alcohol use or other violations of the ECC Student Code of Conduct or local laws.
- Failure to maintain F-1 or J-1 status, continue as a full-time student at ECC (unless on a DSO approved temporary reduced course load) or asked to leave the country by USCIS.
- Violation of college policies and/or procedures.

If you are removed from the Homestay Program by ECC, your situation will be reviewed by the Homestay Coordinator to determine if a refund of any homestay fees is warranted.

Removal of a Host Family from the Homestay Program

A host family may be removed by ECC from the Homestay Program for failure to adhere to the guidelines, values, and spirit of the program. Possible reasons for removal include but are not limited to:

- Incompatible living styles between the host family and student.
- Failure to adhere to the screening process, including up-to-date FBI background checks on file with the college, as outlined in the *International Student Homestay Program Information, Policies, and Agreement for Host Families*.
- Personal misconduct in the homestay.
- Failure to adhere to the terms of the Homestay Program, Information, Policies, and Agreement and Homestay Contract, and related policies and procedures.
- Failure to respect the student's property.
- Change in personal behavior or discovery of an undisclosed illness, health issue, etc. that prohibits the homestay placement from being mutually beneficial to all parties.
- Change in housing circumstances.
- Addition of a pet to a previous pet-free homestay without disclosing such addition to the Homestay Coordinator as outlined in the *International Student Homestay Program Information, Policies, and Agreement for Host Families*.
- Excessive use of foul language or alcohol abuse.
- Illegal drug or alcohol use or other violations of the ECC Host Family Code of Conduct, local laws or federal laws.
- Hosting a student through a private arrangement and not through the International Student Homestay Program.
- Renting or leasing the homestay to a third party while a student resides there (e.g. Airbnb, VRBO, vacation rental sites, etc.).
- Any behavior or actions that are in direct conflict with the values and goals of the International Student Homestay Program.
- Voluntary or involuntary removal/withdrawal of a host family from the International Student Homestay Program.
- Violation of college policies and/or procedures.

Terms and Conditions

The terms, conditions and provisions hereof shall remain in effect for at least the duration of the Homestay, and shall not be modified except by writing signed by the host family, student, and ECC representative. It is expected that this placement shall last at least one semester (16 weeks). Problems can and do arise between host families and students from time to time, and it is expected that the parties will communicate freely with each other in a reasonable attempt to work out such problems respectfully and informally. If the student and host family cannot work out their problems in a manner that is respectfully and informally, the parties should agree to speak with the Homestay Coordinator.

Additionally, the student is responsible for carrying valid medical insurance through the entire homestay period. The student authorizes ECC, its representatives, and the host family to seek medical attention for the student in the event of sickness, accident, or other emergency during the time the student is living with the host family or on ECC's Campus. Permission is also granted to release information regarding the student's health and insurance to outside physicians and facilities. In all cases, the student agrees that ECC and the host family are not to be held liable or responsible for any aspect of medical treatment received. The student agrees that ECC will not be held responsible and that the student will reimburse the host family for the repair or other reasonable costs incurred by the student and/or the student's guests, visitors, family, friends or other invited individuals in case of damage to the host family's home or property. ECC will not be held responsible for negligence on the part of the host family or the student pertaining to home or person when or if damage, injury or death results. Any report of damage must be made within three business days of the damage allegedly caused by the student. The host must send a written, detailed claim of the damages and include pictures by email to the Homestay Coordinator. The student agrees and is subject to all ECC student policies and procedures in addition to what is specified in this document.

Indemnity

By signing below, the student hereby releases, waives, discharges, covenants not to sue, indemnifies, saves and holds harmless ECC, its trustees, officers, servants, agents, employees and the host family (hereinafter referred to as "Releasees") from and against any and all loss, liability, damages, costs (including reasonable attorneys' fees) claims, demands, actions and causes of action whatsoever, arising out of or relating to any loss, damage or injury, including death, that may be sustained by the student, or to any property belonging to the student, or any claim for injury or damages by a third party, while participating in the International Student Homestay Program. The student voluntarily assumes full responsibility for any risks of loss, property damage or personal injury, including death that may be sustained, or any loss or damage to property, as a result of the student's participation in said program. It is the student's expressed intent that this Release shall bind the members of the student's family and spouse, if the student is alive and the student's heirs, assignees and personal representative, if the student is deceased, and shall be deemed as a Release, Waiver, Discharge, and Covenant Not to Sue the above named Releasees.

I, the undersigned student, acknowledge that I have read and I understand this entire ECC International Student Homestay Program Student Application and Homestay Agreement. I agree to abide by and be bound by the terms of this Application and Agreement.

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____
(month/day/year)

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____
(if student is under 18 years of age) (month/day/year)

This form must accompany your *Application for International Students* for the ECC International Student Homestay Program in order for your application to be processed.