

COQUITLAM COLLEGE HOMESTAY MANUAL



COQUITLAM COLLEGE
Established 1982



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Welcome to the Coquitlam College Homestay Program!

We are so excited to have you as part of our homestay community. Whether you are a student beginning your journey in Canada or a family opening your home, this program is built on a spirit of connection, learning, and care.

Homestay is about more than accommodation—it's about building relationships. Students gain a safe and welcoming home where they can grow academically and personally, while families experience the joy of sharing their culture and making lasting connections across the world. Together, these experiences create friendships and memories that often last a lifetime.

We celebrate the diversity of our community and believe every homestay placement is a unique opportunity to learn from one another. By approaching each day with kindness, openness, and curiosity, you'll find that homestay is not only rewarding but also deeply enriching.

Our team is here to support you at every step. If questions or challenges arise, we will work with you to find solutions—but we know that, most of all, your time in this program will be filled with learning, laughter, and new possibilities.

Thank you for being part of the Coquitlam College Homestay Program. We are committed to ensuring your experience is safe, positive, and meaningful.

Warm regards,

Penelope Cruz
Homestay Coordinator
Coquitlam College



HOMESTAY EXPECTATIONS

As a homestay family, you are taking part in a unique and rewarding experience.

Hosting is more than providing a room and meals, it is an opportunity to be a role model, to influence young people positively, and to provide love, care, and judgment-free guidance.

Your presence and attention will help students feel that they belong.

Remember: your understanding of what is healthy or unhealthy, rude or polite, right or wrong, comes from your own experiences, shaped by your family background, gender, socio-economic status, race, religion, and culture. These are not universal. Hosting requires humility, curiosity, and openness to learning from your student's perspective.



PREPARING FOR YOUR STUDENT

Provide a private, warm, adequately furnished bedroom with:

- An area with a bed, desk, chair, and adequate lighting for homework.
- A closet or storage furniture for clothes.
- Access to a bathroom.
- Linens and the use of laundry facilities, or if you are doing their laundry for them, let them know the schedule or routine.
- Entry into the home (e.g., housekey and alarm code - if applicable).
- If the bedroom is in the basement the student might need a space heater.

Post a welcome letter in their room with the following information:

- General house schedule and recommendations.
- General meal times.
- Laundry arrangements.
- Let them know that our tap water is safe to drink.
- Place a picture of your family with their names in their room.
- Share the internet password.
- The bus schedule and information on how to take the bus.

If you do not live within walking distance to Coquitlam College, please help the student buy a bus pass and show them how to take public transit. Please note: Once students have enrolled, they will be provided with College ID which will make them eligible for a student pass.



WHEN YOUR STUDENT ARRIVES

Your care and interest will be the student's first support system in Canada. Students who feel welcomed and supported will better handle culture shock and homesickness.

- Your student may have jet lag, feel a bit homesick and could even be regretful to come. Don't feel bad if they want to spend time in their room and are not very talkative the first few days.
- Ask them if they want to call home and help them with the process.
- Offer snacks and drinks as they may feel shy about helping themselves.
- Speak slowly and clearly, especially if their English level is limited.
- Communication is key—ask questions instead of assuming feelings based on expressions or gestures.
- If you have question or need help with an issue, please call the Homestay Coordinator as soon as possible.



CUSTODIANSHIP

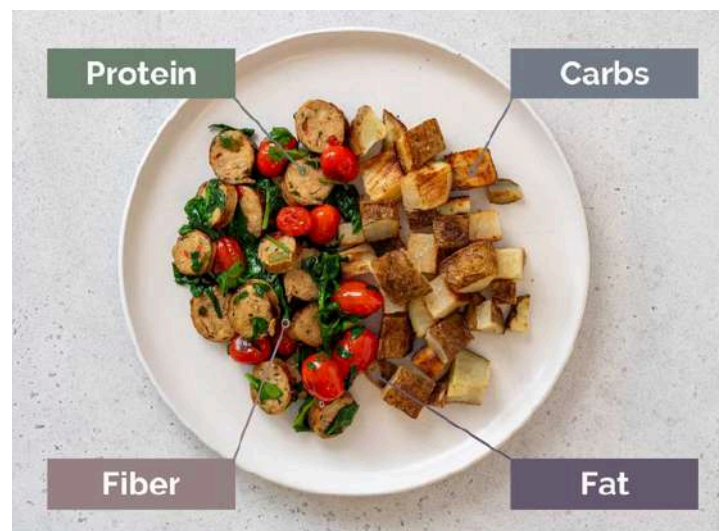
- All international students under 19 years of age that are studying in British Columbia without a parent or legal guardian will require a custodian.
- As a homestay family you may be asked to sign as the student's custodian. The homestay coordinator will send you the documents to sign.
- As a custodian, you are responsible to advise your student of any safety issues that may arise from living in Canada and if you have any concerns to contact Coquitlam College as soon as possible. For emergency situations it is imperative you respond right away with the Hospital or Police then the Coquitlam College emergency number (604) 818-6631.
- For more information about custodianship and minor students in Canada, please visit the Government of Canada website: [Studying in Canada as a Minor – Custodianship Requirements](#)

FOOD

Food is about more than nutrition—it is tied to memory, love, rituals, and home. Sharing food is also sharing culture.



- Students may be hesitant to express dislikes out of politeness. Be compassionate and attentive to subtle cues.
- It is normal for students to crave familiar foods. Explore local cultural grocery stores (H-Mart, Hannam, T&T, Dong Thanh, Mi Tierra Latina, etc.).
- Serve home-cooked meals most nights, but it's okay to occasionally order take-out or serve frozen meals.
- Hosts and students should both be open to trying new foods. Your coordinator can help resolve conflicts about food quantity or preferences.



Canada's food guide **Eat well. Live well.**

Eat a variety of healthy foods each day

- Have plenty of vegetables and fruits
- Eat protein foods
- Make water your drink of choice
- Choose whole grain foods

Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat

- Be mindful of your eating habits
- Cook more often
- Enjoy your food
- Eat meals with others
- Use food labels
- Limit foods high in sodium, sugars or saturated fat
- Be aware of food marketing

Discover your food guide at Canada.ca/FoodGuide

Canada Health Canada Santé Canada

Please aim to provide balanced and healthy meals, with some variety so students don't receive the same lunch every day. Leftovers are absolutely fine and often appreciated, but try to mix things up when possible. If a student has allergies or a special diet, this will be communicated to you in advance so you can plan meals accordingly.

A balanced lunch might include:

- A protein (chicken, fish, tofu, eggs, beans, etc.)
- A grain or starch (rice, pasta, bread, etc.)
- A fruit or vegetable
- A snack (yogurt, granola bar, nuts, etc.)
- A drink (water, juice, or milk)



This helps ensure students have enough energy for their busy school day and feel cared for while away from home.



🔗 CLEANING & HOUSEHOLD TASKS

- Students are expected to clean up after themselves in shared spaces and in their own rooms.
- Please indicate your household laundry days and show your student how to use the washer and dryer. Students may not be familiar with Canadian machines, so clear instructions will help them feel confident.
- In addition, please show your student how to safely use other household appliances such as the stove, microwave, or dishwasher. If there are schedules or rules for appliance use, explain these clearly.
- Delegating cleaning duties helps teach life skills and manage a busy household.
- Students may not know Canadian expectations (for example, bathrooms are not designed to get soaked). Explain, demonstrate, and remind with patience.
- Encourage participation in light chores such as setting the table, walking the dog, or helping with dinner.

❖ COMMUNICATION & CULTURAL AWARENESS

Language barriers are normal. Start with cultural awareness rather than assuming personality problems.

- Avoid acting on negative feelings before clarifying context.
- When miscommunication occurs: pause, ask questions, and listen with curiosity.
- Remember: emotions are always present. Be curious, not judgmental.
- Avoid stereotypes—even positive ones. Treat each student as an individual.

Conversation Tips:



Check your purpose and timing

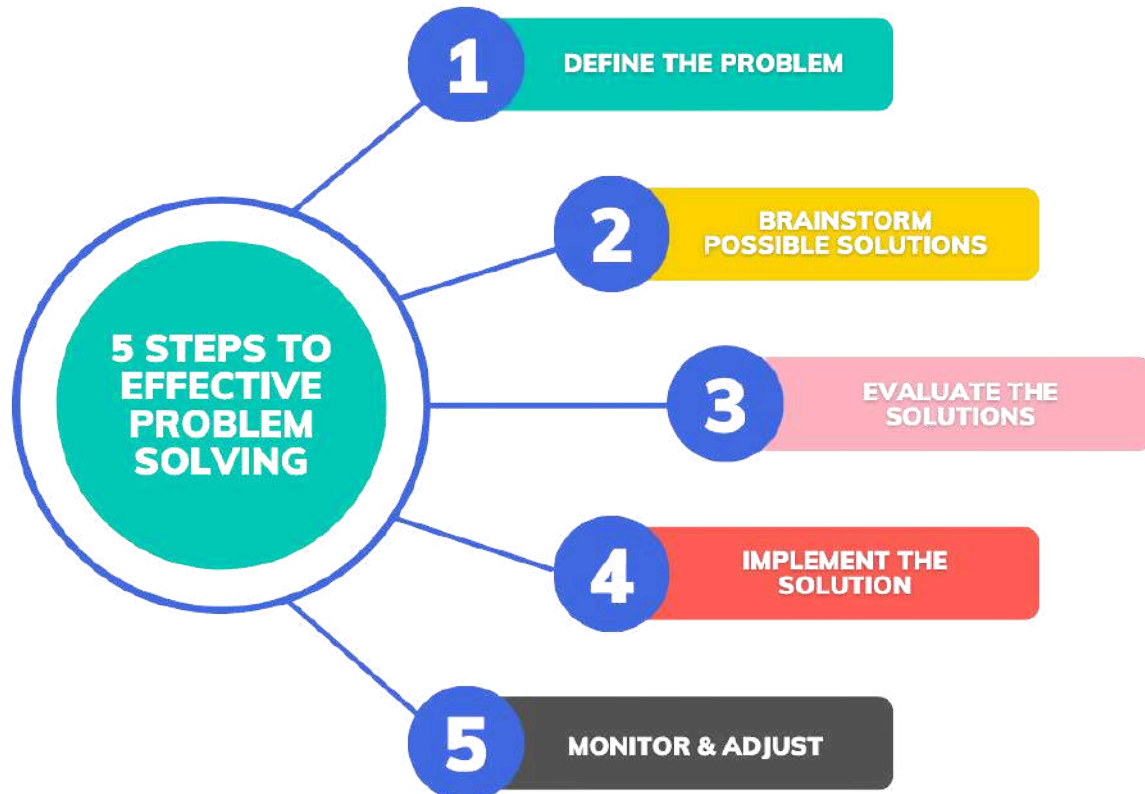


Speak honestly but kindly.



Listen with genuine curiosity

Work together to find solutions.





EMERGENCY

School hours call **911** & then contact the school (604) 939 6633
Evening and Weekend Emergency Number (604) 818 6631.

Medical emergencies: severe illness, injury, allergic reaction, difficulty breathing, or fainting.
Fire or smoke in the home.

Criminal activity: break-in, theft, or if someone feels unsafe.

Missing student: if a student does not return home when expected and cannot be reached.

Accidents: car accidents, falls, or other serious incidents.

Natural disasters: earthquake, flood, or severe weather that puts safety at risk.

Any situation where the student feels unsafe at home, school, or in the community.

SAFETY

Make sure your student has your contact information with them.

- Please write down your student's name and their parents name and contact information in case of an emergency.
- Clearly mark or explain the evacuation routes in your home.
- Make sure they know where the fire extinguisher is and how to use it.
- Please show them how and when to call 911.
- Inform your student of the safety issues. For example, walking at night or meeting new friends on the internet. If they have a medical emergency, please take them to the hospital or call 911.

TAKING BREAKS AS A HOST

It's okay to take breaks. Whether for vacation, business trips, or family emergencies, the Homestay Department will arrange temporary housing for your student. Your role is important, but you do not have to carry it alone.

If your trip is less than two weeks, students may remain in your home as long as there is a responsible supervisor (such as a family member or trusted friend) who can check in on the student daily and ensure they are receiving their three meals per day. Please inform the Homestay Department of your plans in advance so we can support you and ensure the student is cared for.



HOMESTAY PAYMENT

The student is responsible to pay the homestay fee directly to you.

In our efforts to provide the best possible experience for our students and homestay parents, we have carefully evaluated the cost of living associated with different zones. As a result, we will be implementing new rates into two categories based on proximity to the new campus:

Coquitlam:

- \$1350 CAD including 3 meals per day.
- *Holiday rate* is \$25
- *Daily rate* is \$45 CAD.

Vancouver/Burnaby:

- \$1450 CAD including 3 meals per day.
- *Holiday rate* is \$25 cad
- *Daily rate* is \$48 CAD.

A “holiday” is when a student is away from the homestay for two weeks or more but wishes to keep their room reserved. In this case, the student pays a holiday holding fee of \$25 per day for the days they are absent.

This reduced rate recognizes that while the student is not using all homestay services during their absence, you are still keeping their room available for them. Families should not charge the full monthly rate when students are away on holiday for two weeks or longer.

Homestay families may not charge extra or change the homestay fees from what has been outlined above. Please visit www.coquitlamcollege.com for the most recent changes in homestay rates.

Damage Deposit: Please do not ask for a damage deposit.

Extra Charges: Please do not charge students for items such as soap, toilet paper, laundry detergent or any other common household necessities.

Payment Options:

- E-transfer (recommended for ease and security)
- PayPal
- Cash

We encourage families to discuss and agree on a preferred payment method with their student at the start of the placement.



🔴 WHEN A STUDENT WANTS TO MOVE OUT

- The first month is a trial period- students may move out at the end of this month if homestay is not suitable for them. Please ask your student within the first two weeks if they plan to stay with you.

- After the first month, students must give two weeks' notice and can give notice at any time throughout the month. For example, if a student pays the homestay fee on October 1st and informs you on October 15th that they plan to move, they have provided the correct two weeks' notice.

- Students must provide either **verbal or written** notice to their host family if they plan to move. Notice can be given at any time during the month, but a minimum of two weeks' notice is required to avoid a penalty in homestay fees. If less than two weeks' notice is given, students will be charged a penalty equal to the remaining days. For example, if a student provides only 10 days' notice, they will pay a penalty for the additional 4 days at the daily rate of \$45-48.00 per day.

- In most situations, we encourage students and host families to first talk through challenges together, with the support of the Homestay Coordinator if needed. Relocation is usually considered only after there has been a conversation and an effort to find solutions. This helps everyone learn and grow through the experience. That said, we understand there are times when relocation may be necessary right away, such as in the case of a family emergency or other serious circumstances.



RESOURCES

PLEASE POST THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES FOR YOUR STUDENT.

B.C Helpline for Children (1-800-663-9122)

May be called in cases where the international student feels he/she is being mistreated or feels unsafe in the home or at school.

Kids Help Phone (Tel:800-668-6868)

Provides counselling and mental health support

Kelty Mental Health Resource Center (<http://keltymentalhealth.ca/>)

Provides resources regarding mental health issues, substance use, medications and healthy living.

IF YOU HAVE ANY SAFETY CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR STUDENT PLEASE CONTACT THE HOMESTAY COORDINATOR ASAP at (604) 939 6633 or (604) 818-6631



THANK YOU

Thank you for opening your home and heart to Coquitlam College students. By embracing your role as a host, you are also embracing your role as a leader, growing through every challenge and creating meaningful cross-cultural connections.

CONTACT INFORMATION

School Address & Office Hours

Coquitlam College


2920 Virtual Way #300, Vancouver,
BC V5M 0C4

Office Hours

Monday to Thursday: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Friday: 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
Closed on Weekends and Public Holidays

 **Phone**
(604) 939-6633

Homestay Program Coordinator

 **Business WhatsApp**
(604) 862-7248

 **Personal Number**
(604) 818-6631

 **Personal Email**
pcruz@coquitlamcollege.com

 **Homestay Email**
homestay@coquitlamcollege.com