

Homestay Guidelines

Kia Ora! Welcome to New Zealand!

Host Families NZ Limited (HFNZ) welcomes you to New Zealand (Aotearoa).

This guide is designed to provide key information and outline the student's responsibilities to ensure an enjoyable and safe homestay living environment.

What is a homestay?

Homestay is a popular form of accommodation provided to international students. It is a great way to settle in a new country, to learn a new culture, and practice and improve English at home. In New Zealand, each family or household can host up to 4 international students.

The host family will provide you with a private bedroom, a bed, study desk, chair, lamp and somewhere to put your clothes. Beddings will also be available for you to use, however, you are welcome to bring your own linen.

Personal things such as toiletries and shampoo are student's responsibility.

What does a typical New Zealand family look like?

New Zealand is a linguistically and culturally diverse nation. It is a country made of people from diverse nationalities, religion, social and financial status. Therefore, each family is unique and has their own way of doing things. Although it may be different from what you use to, most of the students in the past find New Zealand families friendly and easy to get along with.

In New Zealand, a homestay environment is not limited to a traditional family structure - mother, father and siblings. Family types such as sole parents, couples with and without children, and people living alone are also very common.

New Zealanders are informally known as "Kiwis". So, most Kiwi families are pet lovers and it is very common for them to have dogs or cats.

Respect and manner are very important to Kiwis. Please remember to say "Please" and "Thank you" at all times.

Settling in

Living with a new family is exciting, but at the same time, you might find a lot of things different from what you use to. Don't worry, here are some tips to help you settle in.

- Introduce yourself and try to know your host family. You can share your favourite sports, music or your college life back to your home country. Once the conversation starts, your host is more likely to share their story as well.
- Get to know the family's day-to-day routine. Please discuss the daily routine with your

- homestay parents. Knowing what is going on at home, such as dinner time, shower time or curfew will reduce the misunderstanding and make you feel more comfortable at home.
- Be familiar with surroundings and public transportation. Your host will show you where to catch the bus and how to get to school. Please save your homestay's address and contact details in your phone in case you get lost.
- Greet your host every time you see them, such as "Hi", "Good morning", "How are you"
- Let your host know when you are leaving home and inform them the return time

Meals

What to expect?

- Your host will provide breakfast and dinner every day and lunch at the weekends and public holiday
- A typical Kiwi breakfast is often a help yourself meal with cereal or toast and a cup of a hot drink. Your homestay will show you which food or ingredients are used for breakfast meals. You can simply prepare your own breakfast, eat and then tidy up once you finish
- Lunch on weekends and public holiday is either a help yourself meal or prepared by the host family. Lunch in New Zealand is often a cold meal like a sandwich with bread, cheese, ham and salad.
- Dinner is the main meal of the day in New Zealand households. It is eaten after 6pm and often includes meat or fish, vegetables or salad with rice, bread, potatoes or pasta

What you should know about sharing meals at your homestay?

- Please discuss your dietary preferences and needs with your host family but also be prepared to try new foods. Most importantly, if you are allergy to any food, please let them know
- Please clean up after yourself after meals. You may help load the dishwasher if host family has one
- Please do not eat in your room to prevent ants and mice, or damage the carpet
- Advise your host family if you will be away for meals BEFORE 3pm
- Tap water is drinkable in New Zealand
- You will not be allowed to cook, unless on special occasions and under supervision
- You may think that NZ fresh milk is nutritious and tasty, but please be mindful of how much you drink. Host families may use milk in their cereals, coffee, tea, cooking and baking
- Please buy your own snacks e.g potato crisps, juices or food that you like. You can join your host family when they go grocery shopping, or you can buy it from any supermarket or dairy
- Please be aware that you should pay for yourself if your host family takes you out (movie, zoo etc) or away (e.g overnight or weekend trip). If you feel that the cost and/or frequency of outings are excessive, you can choose not to go. But please remember to say "thank you" for their invitation

Sharing a home with your homestay

Cleanliness and manners

- You are responsible for keeping your room and the bathroom you are using clean and tidy. If you have an en-suite, please make sure you clean the shower box, basin and toilet regularly. You can ask your host parent(s) for cleaning materials and detergents. If you are sharing the bathroom with others, you will need to take turn to clean it
- Please make sure you are using the toilet correctly in your homestay. Do not stand on toilet seat or throw the toilet paper in the bin. The used toilet paper should throw in the toilet and flush it away. Girl's sanitary pad should be wrapped in paper and put in the bin, and remember to empty the bin regularly.
- You are responsible for making your own bed each morning. Please draw the curtains to let the sunshine

into your room and open the window to let in fresh air. The sunlight may warm up your room naturally but please DO NOT keep the windows open if there is no one at home

- Contribute to household duties as other family members do, such as preparing vegetables or taking the rubbish bins out. You can ask your host to show you where the vacuum cleaner is and help you to use it
- Please ask your homestay's permission if you want to invite your friend to come over

Laundry

- Your homestay will make the laundry available for you to use. Please ask your host family when it is a good time to do your washing and show you how to use the washing machine.
- If you like to hand wash your clothes, it is not a problem. But please do not hang the wet cloth in the bathroom or in your bedroom. Ask your homestay if you don't know where to hang the cloth
- Your bed linen must be changed regularly. Some families do it weekly and some families do it fortnightly. Please discuss with your host

Electricity, internet and water use at your homestay

- Be mindful in your new environment and community - respect the use of electricity, water, etc. Please turn off the heater, electric blanket and switch off lights before you leave the house. Please note your host family can monitor your power and water consumption. In the case of excessive usage, you will be shown the readings and may be charged extra
- Shower time in New Zealand household is normally 5 to 7 minutes, maximum 10 minutes.
- Please do not use the shower after 10 pm
- Internet access will be provided for you to do your homework, contact family and friends. Please do not download videos, music and movies. It is an offense under New Zealand law.

Smoking, drinking and drugs

- No smoking is allowed inside the house.
- If you are under 18, you are not allowed to smoke or buy cigarettes at any time
- Drinking age is 18 and over in New Zealand
- Please be mindful drinking alcohol in public places is prohibited
- You cannot gamble if you are under 20 years old
- You are not allowed to use illegal drugs. i.e. Marijuana, Opiates, LSD

Curfew and safety

Curfew

For safety reason, you are required to be home no later than the following times every day:

- Under 15 years - 6:00pm
- 15 years - 7:00pm
- 16 and 17 years - 7:00pm Sunday to Thursday
10:00pm Friday and Saturday

- Please be sure to phone your homestay if you are going to be late and make sure your homestay has your phone number
- If you are under 18, you are not allowed to stay overnight in other accommodation at any time unless you have the permission from the School.
- For all over 18 students, we do not suggest staying overnight as well.

- Please minimize the noise after 10pm

Wi-fi access curfew:

- UNDER 18 Sunday to Thursday between 10:00 to 11:00 pm
- UNDER 18 *FRIDAY & SATURDAY - No time restrictions. But please be self-disciplined
- 18 AND OVER please discuss with your host family, but be quiet after 10 PM

Safety

- Please keep your house key somewhere safe and do not lend it to anyone else. If you lose your key, you are responsible to pay for the replacement cost
- You are not allowed to be a passenger of any driver on a Learner or Restricted License
- Please discuss any special medical conditions that your homestay should know about

Plan a holiday, extending homestays, or moving out

- All students must acquire permission from the school in writing including emails before travelling during weekend, term breaks, and vacation or at any other time
- If you plan to return to your current homestay after your holiday, although you are paying a holding fee, but your homestay is allowed to have another student during your absent. Therefore, you might need to pack your stuff before you leave, and your homestay will guide you where to put your luggage.
- You must leave your homestay on completion of your course study, unless you inform the school that you would like to extend stay. The extension should be noticed at least 2 weeks in advance
- You will need to clean your room and the bathroom before you are moving out from your homestay

Communication

- Try to spend time with your host family
- Adapt to the lifestyle of your homestays and join in home activities
- Speak English whenever possible. You could use Google Translate App to assist
- You should not discuss any homestay issues or problems with other students
- If you do not understand the instruction and information your homestay discussed with you, please don't hesitate to ask them to repeat it and let them know YOU DID NOT UNDERSTAND.
- Please DO NOT SAY "YES" or "OK" if you do not understand
- Please communicate any issues or problems with your school during business hours. Only contact the school after hours in cases of an emergency

Other Important information

- Please always abide New Zealand law and be aware that laws and the penalties may differ from your home country
- Any misbehaviour of a possible criminal nature may result in suspension of your homestay while relevant authorities investigate (e.g. NZ Police)
- Please respect the property and privacy of your host family, and personal belongings
- Please be aware that HFNZ reserves the rights to remove you from homestay without further responsibility to relocate you, if you have not met the requirement and guidelines of homestay
- Please be aware that during your homestay period, your personal belongings are at your own risk.
- You are liable for repairing or replacing property damaged or lost during your stay