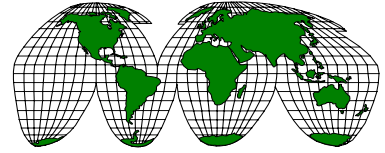


# Douglas College

Centre for International Education



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## DOUGLAS COLLEGE HOMESTAY PROGRAM GENERAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Thank you for your interest in Douglas College. Our institution does not have the facilities for on-campus housing for our students. However, we have a "Homestay Program" which offers international students the opportunity to live with a Canadian family while a student is studying at Douglas College. Many great friendships have developed between international students and Canadian families as a result of homestay. Students, who have an open mind, a keen interest in learning about and sharing in different cultures, and a willingness to accept the responsibilities as well as the benefits of being a homestay student, will find homestay a rewarding experience.

### **Homestay with a Canadian Family**

Living with a Canadian homestay family provides international students not only with the opportunity to improve their English skills by using English on a daily basis, but also to learn about Canadian culture and lifestyle. Students also have the opportunity to enrich the lives of Canadian families by sharing their own culture with a family. Homestay families can help students adjust to life in Canada, but together with the support and comfort of a homestay family comes the responsibility of being a homestay student. Students should read the enclosed information and should think carefully before applying for our Homestay Program.

It is important that homestay students understand that one of the main purposes of homestay, aside from learning English, is to give international students the opportunity to learn about and share in the daily life of a Canadian family. Students should not expect families to change their normal lifestyle while hosting a student. While international students may feel that they are on some sort of vacation and may want to be treated like an honoured guest, they must realize that homestay families are real people with real lives that include obligations such as work, school, lessons, meetings, social events, etc. Families cannot be expected to ignore these obligations while participating in a homestay program. A homestay family's home is not a hotel and family members are not maids, chauffeurs, or tour guides. A homestay family is a real family that is expected to treat a homestay student as a member of the family.

Enclosed is a copy of some basic homestay guidelines for students. It is important that all applicants understand what is expected of a student participating in this program, so we ask that students read these guidelines carefully prior to applying for the Homestay Program.

## Canadian Families

International students are reminded that Canada is a very multi-cultural country and that Canadians come from a wide variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Douglas College homestay families reflect this cultural diversity and we consider this an advantage, as students have the opportunity to learn not only about Canadian culture, but also what makes up this "Canadian" culture.

International students should also note that a Canadian "family unit" may differ from what is commonly considered a "family" in other countries. There are many different types of families found in Canada: young couples with small children; middle-aged couples with older children; young or old couples without children; single parents with children; blended families (couples with children from previous marriages); older people whose adult children have moved away; etcetera. We welcome many different types of families into our Homestay Program, and they are chosen because they have shown interest in meeting people from other cultures and they want to open their homes to International students.

Each family participating in the Douglas College Homestay Program has been interviewed and screened by a Douglas College staff member. 😊

### Applying for the Homestay Program

1. Complete application form
2. Enclose \$150.00 CAD placement fee (non-refundable).
3. Please make bank draft or cheque payable to "DOUGLAS COLLEGE"
4. Mail the application with your payment to:

Douglas College  
Centre for International Education  
P.O. Box 2503 (700 Royal Avenue)  
New Westminster, British Columbia  
Canada V3L 5B2

After we have received your completed application, we will try our best to find you a suitable homestay family. Please understand, however, that there are times when all your preferences may not necessarily be met.

When completing the homestay application form, please bear in mind that the more information that you provide about yourself, the better the chances are that we can make a compatible match with a homestay family, although we can't promise to make a perfect match. If you give short one or two word answers to our questions, or if you write a self-introduction such as: "I am 20 years old. I like to play tennis and I like dogs", you have not given us any idea of your character or personality, which is the information that is most essential in making the match. If you need more space for a self-introduction than is provided on the form, please feel free to write a letter of introduction on a separate piece of paper.

Please try to be honest in your answers - do not say that you are talkative and outgoing if you are really quiet and shy; if you are a smoker, do not say that you are a non-smoker because you think that it sounds nicer or because you're worried that your parents will read your homestay application; do not say that you like to eat everything if there are certain kinds of food that you really dislike, etc. This kind of information is important both to us for deciding on a homestay placement and also to the family who accepts to host you.

## Homestay Fees

The homestay fees are as follows:

### *Homestay Placement Fee*

- \$150.00

### *Short-term Request (Under two months stay)*

- \$25.00 per night
- Student is responsible for paying the homestay fee to the family on the first week of his or her arrival to Canada. The payment must be for the number of nights that he/she will reside at their home.

Please note that if you wish to continue living with the family beyond the two months you must notify the homestay coordinator as soon as you have decided to do so. (Fees are not retroactive)

### *Long-term Request (Over two months stay)*

- Full calendar month \$700.00 per month
- Partial month \$23.00 per night  
(eg - Student moves into homestay family's home before the first day of a month; student goes away on vacation for 7 nights or longer)
- Student is responsible for paying the homestay fee to the family on the first day of each month. Student only pays for one month at a time.

Please note that if you apply for long term stay you will be required to commit a minimum of three months.

## What Does the Homestay Fee Cover?

Homestay families are required to provide a furnished single room for long-term students. In most cases, short-term students also have single rooms; however, occasionally a short-term student may be asked to share a room with another homestay student. A homestay family may not ask a student to share a bedroom with a family member.

The homestay payment also covers:

- a. Three meals a day
- b. Laundry facilities (arrangements for laundry will vary from home to home)
- c. Linens (bed linens and towels), and
- d. Miscellaneous items that are used by all members of the household (soap, detergent, tissues, etc.).

Students are responsible for providing their own toiletries: toothpaste, shampoo, shaving cream, razors, and other items of personal nature. Students are not required to pay for telephone use for local calls (unless the student has a private line to his/her room), but they are responsible for paying for all long distance telephone calls (including taxes) that they make. Some students find it convenient to buy a long distance telephone calling card, while others prefer to place collect calls to their families.

Most homestay families will have internet access in their homes, however, it is not required that they provide computer or internet access to students. Some families may decide to charge extra for this service.

## **Household Routines**

Household routines and rules will vary from home to home. Families and students are encouraged to discuss "house rules" and preferences when the student first arrives in order to avoid problems and misunderstandings in the future. If a student ever feels that he/she is being treated unfairly, he/she should try to discuss it with the host family, or if necessary, come see one of the staff members. Students should remember at all times that they are living in someone's home and not in a hotel and consequently, should show the same respect and courtesy to their host family as they would their own family. All students who apply for our Homestay Program should want to be active and participating members of a host family's household; students should not expect to be treated as guests for the duration of their stay.

## **Transportation**

Douglas College is a community college that serves students in the surrounding communities of Burnaby, Coquitlam, Surrey, and Delta, as well as those in New Westminster. Homestay families may also live in any of these communities. We will make an effort to place students with families living 45 minutes or less from the college, although we cannot guarantee that this will always be the case. Students are responsible for covering the cost of public transportation from their homestay family's home to the college or to social activities. (The current cost of a one-zone monthly transit pass is \$69.00 for a post-secondary student.)

Upon arrival in Vancouver, taxis are readily available in front of the airport. The trip from the airport to Douglas College costs approximately \$35.00 to \$40.00. Homestay families usually come to Douglas College where they are introduced to their student by a college staff member. Students should notify the College well in advance of all arrival details (day, date, time, and flight number) so that we may inform the homestay family accordingly.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you should have any further inquiries regarding homestay, please contact:

**Cecilia Lascano**

**Student Life Co-ordinator**

Phone: 604-527-5638

E-mail: [lascanoc@douglas.bc.ca](mailto:lascanoc@douglas.bc.ca)

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**Student Life Assistant**

Phone: 604-527-5650

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