

# Homestay Manual for Host Families Auckland and Wellington

Thank you for applying to become an NZLC Host Family.

NZLC is one of the oldest, largest and most well-known language schools in New Zealand. We pride ourselves on offering our students not only an unforgettable study experience but also an incredible and unique New Zealand experience. Homestay families play an integral role in this student experience and the following guidelines are designed to make your student’s stay with you a more pleasurable and fulfilling time. We want students to feel as comfortable and welcome in your family as possible, and of course they are here to learn English so we expect you to talk with them as much as you can during their stay.

Don’t hesitate to contact our friendly team with your questions at any time!

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## Meet Our Team

### NZLC Auckland

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School Phone Number:  
**+64 9 303 1962** (Mon – Fri: 8.30am – 5.00pm – except public holidays)

After-hours contact for urgent matters:  
NZLC Auckland's 24/7 Mobile: **+64 (0)21 180 6300**  
NZLC Auckland-arranged homestays and airport transfers: **+64 (0)21 780 509**

### NZLC Wellington

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After-hours contact for urgent matters:  
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NZLC Wellington-arranged homestays and airport transfers: **+64 (0)21 030 9815**

## Homestay Family Requirements and Student Expectations

NZLC requires homestay families to provide the following:

- A private and comfortable bedroom with natural light
- Bed, bedding, towels, wardrobe and drawers.
- A quiet space for studying with adequate lighting and access to a desk, chair, and lamp.
- Heating of student's room in cold weather, and a hot water bottle or electric blanket.
- Regular washing and drying of student's laundry, linen, and towels (around once per week).
- Breakfast and dinner, Monday – Friday, three meals a day on weekends and public holidays (if the student has paid for full board you must provide lunch on weekdays).
- A home located close to the NZLC campus and conveniently close to public transport.
- Their own house key.
- Working fire alarms and a first-aid kit in the house.
- Most importantly, a friendly and supportive English speaking family environment where each person is concerned with each other's welfare and development, yet also respectful of each person's privacy.



### Student Expectations

Most students arrive with very high expectations of their stay in New Zealand. For a large percentage of our new students, this is the first time they have travelled abroad and are usually brimming with excitement and enthusiasm when they arrive. Please encourage your student to participate in family life and speak with you. Often students can become withdrawn and disappointed if their expectations are not met or were too high.

### Your Student's First Day

- Show the student around the house, give them a key and instructions on how to lock-up the house.
- Show the student how to use the washing machine (if you prefer them to do their own washing) and other household appliances.
- Inform the student of any house rules (e.g. where they can smoke, places in the home that are off limits). A **Welcome Letter** is a nice gesture and an easy way of introducing the student to your family.
- Inform the student about the use of the telephone and internet; if they wish to speak to their parents or friends from home often, please ask them to buy international minutes or use Skype/WhatsApp etc. Please give any Wi-Fi passwords and recommend that they contact their family on arrival, and for younger students, please insist.
- It is a good idea to give the student a tour of the area where you live, including amenities and public facilities, e.g. bank, shop, restaurant, sports ground, park, beach, library etc., and the location of the campus before their first day. Please show the student where to catch the bus and give them a bus timetable or help them to download AT/Metlink app on their phone.
- We would be greatly obliged if a family member would accompany the student to school and meet them after school on their first day, so that they understand about the bus route, or where to get on and off the train. Please ensure that students have your contact phone number and address with them.
- Take them to buy AT HOP/Snapper card and NZ sim card.
- Make sure your student know the address, your mobile number – ask them to register your number on their mobile or give them a business card with your address and phone number so that students can keep it with him/her.

## Health and Safety

It's important that you also go over some basic health and safety rules with your student during their first day in the house:

- Please show the student where they can find the first-aid kit
- Show them the fire alarm and explain what it does
- Explain to students that in the event of the fire, they must leave the house immediately and show them an alternative exit, (in case the main exit is blocked)
- Tell students to call 111 in the event of an intruder in the house
- Show student where to find mops/old towels to wipe up any spills in the bathroom and kitchen to avoid accidents
- Show the student around your house and explain how to use/not to use appliances. For example, no cutlery in microwaves, do not place tea towels over heat, keep electrical cords away from water, turn off heaters when not in use and anything else that may be specific to your home



## Necessary Topics to be discussed

- How will the student address you, your parents, and your friends?
- Does the student have a preferred nickname?
- What chores do you expect from the student?
- Where do they put their clothes to be washed? (or instruct them on use of the washing machine).
- Can they use the washing machine at any time?
- When is the best time to use the bathroom?
- What are the procedures for house keys, alarms and security requirements?
- What time are meals served?
- What time is lunch and what can they have during weekends and public holidays?
- Can the student help themselves to food and drink at any time?
- What time must a student call you if they are not coming home for dinner?
- Are there any "private" areas in the house?
- Can the student decorate their room with pictures, posters, etc?
- Can the student move furniture in their room?
- Can the student invite friends to the house? If so, when and how much notice is required?
- Can the student use the telephone?
- Can the student smoke and if so, where?
- Can the student use things like the television, microwave, stereo, computer etc and if so, how?

## Communication with Your Student

**If in doubt, write it down!** Initially, you'll probably notice that your student can read and write English better than speaking it. Please write down any information for your student's reference.

This includes:

1. Supplying your student with a handy, wallet-sized card with your name, address and phone number on it. If your student gets lost, they can use this card to take a taxi home or ask for help on the street.
2. Writing down all transport information and a road map from the family's home to the nearest bus stop/train station. A lost student causes stress to everyone, please help us avoid this.

We also recommend using **slow and clear** speech as it will be easier for your student to understand. Please avoid using slang and double negatives, as this can confuse the student, especially during their first few weeks. If possible, explain any simple colloquialisms that you may use to your student.

### Hidden Meanings

**“Yes” means “No”!** Often, students will say “yes”, when they really mean “no”. They may do this for many reasons, but make sure you understand their answer by confirming it by using a complete sentence.

### “Maybe” and “So-So’s”

Students have a tendency to camouflage a “no” or negative answer with a “maybe” or a “so-so”. “Maybe” usually means no and “so-so” usually means not good or bad. “Maybe” is often a student’s polite way of saying no, so please don’t push them for a definite answer if they have already said “maybe”.

### Asking for Extra Things

A lot of students will feel really uncomfortable asking you for things that they need and may be suffering in silence. In winter, please make sure your student is warm enough. Please make sure they have enough blankets and even put a spare blanket in their wardrobe. You may also want to give them a heater or hot water bottle. In summer, please make sure the student has access to a small portable fan for their room.

### Help Yourself

The term “help yourself” is very confusing for new students, as it is not customary for guests to help themselves to food and drink in many countries. Please expect to have to invite your new student to use the bathroom, laundry, and kitchen until they fully understand the concept. You may need to reinforce this idea numerous times. You might also want to dedicate a pantry shelf solely for your student. This way it is clear what food they are allowed or not allowed to eat.

### Personal Space

In some cultures it’s not common to have a lot of physical contact. Please communicate with your student what is a normal greeting for your family, to make sure they are comfortable.

## Around the House

### Bedroom

**Cleaning:** Please make it clear that the room you provide for your student is his/her responsibility to keep clean and tidy. Please make sure they have access to enough cleaning supplies and a vacuum.

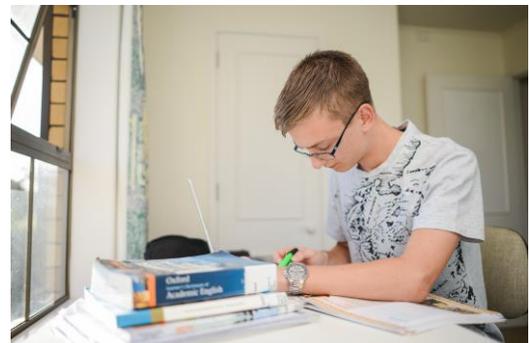
**Bedding:** Host families may need to show their students how our bedding works. An explanation (or even better, a demonstration) of sleeping between the sheets is very helpful.

**Drying of clothes inside the wardrobe:** (female undergarments especially) is not uncommon. Please show your student a private part in your house to hang clothes. Students are accustomed to drying their clothes indoors, please explain that in New Zealand we dry our clothes outdoors (when we can).

**Food in the bedroom:** Please give your student time to adjust to the New Zealand diet. If you find food/crumbs in your student’s room, it may be because they are not too keen on the New Zealand diet, are too shy to help themselves to your food, simply enjoy junk food/snacks or are big eaters and don’t want to “insult” you by eating extra food in front of you. If you don’t allow food inside the student’s bedroom, please let them know on their first day.

### Privacy:

Please try to respect the student’s privacy as much as possible and knock before entering their bedroom. Your children should not enter the student’s room, unless they are invited by the student. If you notice your student being particularly withdrawn and they are consistently in their bedroom with the door shut, please let us know. They may be homesick or having some other issues.



### Heating:

Some students are from tropical countries and may feel it is cold in their bedroom. Please suggest that they wear warm clothes, provide extra blankets, a heater or hot water bottle, and also advise them about safety issues.

### Laundry

You are expected to do the students' laundry. If you prefer to have the students do their own laundry, please give them the laundry detergent, provide specific instructions for using the washer and dryer and tell them where they can hang their wet clothes.

### Bathroom

Students may wait to be invited to use the bathroom, for fear of inconveniencing others. If you think this is the case, please invite your student to use the bathroom and tell them the best times to use it. A demonstration of the shower may be required, as in some cultures they stand outside the shower cubicle and sponge themselves down. Also give your student a reasonable time limit in the shower/bathroom. We advise students that around 10 minutes in the shower is normal for most families.

### Toilets

Western style toilets may be a mystery to your student. Please explain how the toilet works (i.e. Sit on the seat). **Female students will need to know how to dispose of sanitary products.** Students are expected to provide all of their own personal toiletries. However, the host family should provide sufficient supplies of basic household items such as toilet paper and hand soap.

### Housework

Students don't usually mind helping you do small chores, like setting the table, clearing the table, drying the dishes etc, but please be careful not to treat the student like a housekeeper or babysitter. Be aware that in some countries, children are not expected to do laundry or the washing up. Don't expect your student to offer help in the house, but appreciate the ones who do. Students should be encouraged to keep their own bedrooms clean.

### Meals

Our diet may be very different to many other cultures and many students suffer from stomach upsets. With Asian students especially, please try to prepare extra rice & noodle dishes. But please provide the same meal your family eats. Please discuss food preferences with your student directly. It is also a good idea to take your student with you to the supermarket. That way they can easily identify what foods they like and dislike.



We expect families to eat dinner together every night, so the student has the opportunity to socialize and practice their English. If you are unable to prepare a meal for your student, please discuss this with your student directly and if they are happy to prepare something by themselves, please ensure that they know what food they can eat and how to cook it. If your student has any food allergies you will be informed during the placement process, you are expected to take the allergy into consideration when preparing meals.

To avoid embarrassment at the dinner table, it is advisable to place serving dishes in the middle of the table and allow your student to select the appropriate amount of food for themselves. Students often feel pressured at dinnertime and find it hard to ask for another serving. The table manners practiced in other cultures can differ somewhat to your own. If necessary, please feel free to gently explain the differences in our culture to your student.

## Telephones

Homestay payments do not cover telephone calls. Please make sure you explain to your student how the New Zealand telephone system works, i.e. which calls are free and who pays for phone calls. To help alleviate potential problems associated with phone calls, students are encouraged to buy a New Zealand sim card with international and local minutes and data.

## Internet

In some Asian countries e.g. South Korea, Internet is fast and inexpensive. Some students may bring their own laptops with them or may ask to use your computer to check emails. You may want to explain your rules if you allow students to use your computer. Please explain any data limits to your student and also ask them not to download any copyrighted music or movies.

## General Information

### English Levels

Our students' English levels will vary greatly. We accept beginners to advanced speakers.

### Length of Stay

Students may enroll in courses ranging from 1 week to 50 weeks in length. Homestay bookings for the more lengthy courses are usually for 4 weeks initially, with the option to extend if both parties are happy.

### Health & Insurance

All students will have insurance for travel, illness and loss of personal property. If your student is sick please help them get to a doctor. If the student is involved in an accident, the host family must contact the NZLC emergency number immediately. If the student is sick or going to be late, notification to NZLC is required. This is important, as students require attendance certificates for visa purposes, high school and university entrance. If their attendance rate is below 80% they can be expelled. NZLC needs to know where students are at all times.

NZLC cannot be held liable for damage caused in the homestay by students. Most international student policies will cover this however it is not guaranteed, so we strongly recommend you have adequate insurance for damages and loss.

### Religious Worship

If you and your family attend church, please feel free to invite your student along, however it is unwise to force them to attend with you. Additionally, if you and your family say grace before a meal, please explain to your student what you are doing. You should also make provisions for and respect any religious observances your student may have.

### Pets

A large percentage of Asians are not used to animals, a few of them are allergic to them. If you have pets, it is advisable to try to keep them away from the student, especially on their first day. A student could become quite distressed if your dog starts jumping all over them when they arrive.

### Transport

Students are responsible for their own transport. However, on arrival, please ensure your student knows how to travel to and from the school. Your student will be relying on you to help them get orientated as quickly as possible. Do not allow the student to drive your car. It is illegal for them to drive without a valid driver's licence.

### Changes

If there are any changes to your household or circumstances please advise NZLC in a timely manner. This also applies to any family member turning 18 or extra family members coming to live in the home for more than 5 consecutive days in one month. Police vetting must be submitted for all family members 18yrs or over in the home. NZLC must be informed of any pending criminal charges that occur after the police vetting application.

## Student – Host Family Placement Procedure

NZLC will keep your information on file. When you are not hosting a student, your information will show as available. Unless otherwise notified, NZLC will assume that you are available to host students. If hosting is not convenient at some time, or you are hosting for another institution, please let us know what date you might become available again.

Usually we place one or two students per host family. In some circumstances we may place three students with a family. Please note that homestay families are not allowed to have more than four international students (including those from other schools) at any one time. We also never allow two students of the same nationality or mother tongue to be together unless there is an emergency situation.

Students and host families are matched according to requests made by students, and the information provided on your application form. If your information changes at any stage, please let us know as soon as possible.

When a student's profile complements yours, we will email you and ask if you would like to host this student. If you accept, the student is sent your profile and contact details. When we have received the student's arrival details, you will be sent a letter or email with details of your student including name, age, gender, country, course length, homestay duration, medical conditions and special requirements, arrival information, payment schedule and other information.

Because the requests made by students vary, and because at times we have fewer students than host families, please be aware that you will probably not be asked to host students continually. Reasons for hosting students vary, but we request that hosts do not rely on hosting students as a form of income. On the other hand, we would continue to place more students with families who have very good feedback in their homestay survey forms from previous students.

## Young Learners Under 18 Years Old

The host families we consider for hosting young learners are expected to be very patient and caring, and should have time available for the student in the evenings. Young Learners need to be supervised by at least one adult member of the host family at all times during their stay.

NZLC has a curfew of 6pm for students under 18 years of age. Exceptions to this curfew are explained in the Guidelines for Hosting Young Learners. If you are going to be hosting young learner students, you will receive a copy of these guidelines where all the procedures and policies that must be followed are outlined.

## Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, please dial 111 or take your student to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital and then call the school or the emergency numbers below. If the situation is less urgent, please take the student to a local GP and ring the school or emergency numbers.

You may provide basic first-aid to your student for cuts, scratches etc. However, **you are not permitted to give your student painkillers or other oral medicine.** Students should bring their own medicine from their country or buy it.

If you are not sure as to the appropriate course of action you should take in the event of an accident or student illness, please contact the school's emergency number(s) on page 2.

## Payments

The homestay payments from 2019 onwards are listed below. Internet fee is included the homestay fee.

	Over 18 years old		Under 18 years old	
	Single room	Twin-share room	Single room	Twin-share room
<b>Half board</b>	\$280 per week	\$260 per week	\$310 per week	\$290 per week
	\$40 per night	\$37 per night	\$44 per night	\$42 per night
<b>Full board</b>	\$310 per week	\$290 per week	\$340 per week	\$320 per week
	\$45 per night	\$42 per night	\$49 per night	\$46 per night

**Half Board** includes breakfast and dinner on weekdays; breakfast, lunch and dinner on weekends and Public Holidays.

**Full Board** includes breakfast, lunch (e.g. sandwich, juice box, piece of fruit, etc.) and dinner 7 days per week.

Twin-share rooms are normally required by study group students. Tour group students may require to be picked up by host families on their first day, and dropped off on their last day. We pay an extra \$25 for each pick up and drop off.

For airport pick up and drop off in Wellington, we pay \$40 each way.

Payments for special dietary requirements (such as lactose intolerant, gluten free, halal or vegan students) will be an extra \$30 per week.

If the student is away on holiday for seven nights or more the host family is entitled to half homestay weekly payment fee (instead of the normal payment).

**Two weeks' homestay payment will be credited to your bank account fortnightly on Tuesdays for Auckland and Fridays for Wellington. Please note that from about April/May 2020, this will change to weekly payments on Friday evenings for both Auckland and Wellington. Please note that this payment is intended to cover the cost of having an extra person in the house. Homestay is a chance for genuine cross-cultural exchange – not a business venture. Please don't ask for extra money from your student or make a private arrangement if your student wishes to extend the homestay duration. Please direct any financial matters to the NZLC Accommodation Department.**

## Termination Notice and Holidays

If students wish to shorten homestay duration, two weeks' notice is required except in special or emergency situations. NZLC will provide a letter stating the student's new leaving date and will require the host family's signature. Alternatively, if the student does provide the family with sufficient notice of leaving and homestay fee has been paid in advance, the host family will have to refund the balance of homestay fee.

If you go on holiday during the student's stay, the student's board is still your responsibility. Please also advise NZLC when you are planning to go away, and provide emergency contact numbers.

## Contact with NZLC

Host families should inform, and discuss with NZLC, all matters relating to the student's learning and living requirements. Please contact the school immediately in any of the following circumstances:

- The student is unhappy or homesick
- The student is not eating
- The student is not going to school
- The student under 18 years old is not coming home by 6.00 p.m. without informing you or NZLC in advance
- The student is showing signs of depression or other mental health or physical health issues, (e.g. sleeping all the time, getting upset easily, lack of interest or drastic change in behaviour)
- The student is disrespectful in your home
- You suspect your student is being victimized by forces outside the school
- There are any personal or cultural differences that are causing discomfort to the student or your family
- You are going away on holiday

### **NZLC will contact you at the following times:**

- If your Young Learner student is absent from class
- If staff suspect the student is unhappy in the home environment
- If the student raises any major concerns with the staff during feedback sessions
- If the student decides to leave the homestay prior to the agreed departure date

If your student makes a serious complaint about the home environment and we are not satisfied after discussion with you, NZLC has the right to remove students and revisit your home as may be required to continue hosting NZLC students.

## Police Vetting

If a member of your family turns 18 or a new adult joins your family, please contact NZLC immediately so that a police vetting form can be completed. This needs to be completed and submitted in a timely manner, or it can affect student placement with your family. We will submit a new police vetting application for all active families every 3 years.

## Routine visit

As per the requirements of the NZQA Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International students, we need to do routine visits every 12 months if you are hosting young learners and every 18 months for adult students. If you are due a visit, and we have placed a student with you, we will email you to arrange a revisit before your student arrives. The accommodation department will contact you well in advance to make an appointment to visit your home.

The visit normally takes about half an hour. We can then update your preferences, and update you on any changes to NZLC hosting procedures or documents. We would also like to take photos of the student's room, bathroom, and common areas for our records even if nothing has changed since the last visit. Please notify the school if you move house or make any major changes, i.e. installing a security system, so we can arrange a suitable time to visit you again.

**We hope you find hosting an international student both rewarding and enjoyable! If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to our friendly homestay team.**