Dear Students:

Welcome to the Homestay Program of the University of California Riverside, International Education Programs. We are happy that you have chosen to stay with an American family while you are studying at UC Riverside. You are about to embark on an exciting adventure. You will have the chance to learn about American culture, see your own country in a new light, and make new friends. This handbook contains information designed to prepare you to stay with a family in a culture different from your own. This guide has been prepared from comments and insights from current host families, IEP students, teachers, and advisors. Please keep this handbook and refer to it whenever you have questions.
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THE HOMESTAY PROGRAM

How do you choose families to be in the homestay program?

Families that are interested in becoming homestay families are required to attend the Homestay Program Orientation. Interested families should carefully complete the application and forms. The Homestay Coordinator then reviews them afterwards. After the application is approved and a family member has attended the university's Homestay Program Orientation, the university schedules a visit to the home. When we visit the home, we ask to see the house and meet the members of the family, and discuss about the homestay program. We want to be sure that the environment will be comfortable for the students. We are also ensuring that the family meets all of our requirements. Our requirements include providing a bed, a desk, a place to put your clothing (a closet and a dresser), and generally a good environment in which students can live. If a family meets all of our requirements, the Homestay Coordinator will request family’s background check from the State Attorney General’s Office. When final approval is received, the family is eligible to host students.

Why was I placed with this host family in particular?

The Housing Office tries to match students and families as much as possible so that the experience will be enjoyable for both parties. As a student, you filled out an application, which states your needs and preferences in a homestay. For example, you were asked if you smoke, have any allergies or physical disabilities, and if you prefer to stay with a family that has children and/or pets.

Host families indicate their preferences as well. For example, they indicate a preference for a student for a particular period such as fall, winter, spring, or summer and tell us whether they would like short-term or long-term students. When the Housing Office matches students with families, the student profiles and family profiles are compared. Students are then matched with the family that most closely suits them. Perfect matches, however, are not always possible. The more limitations that you place upon your family, the more difficult it is to find a family for you. For instance, if you do not want pets in your homestay, it may be difficult to match all of your preferences since most homestay families have pets.
What is a homestay contract?

Upon arrival, you must sign a homestay contract, which is usually written both in English and in your native language. The contract explains what your host family will provide and outlines the rules of their household.

Keep one copy of the contract for yourself and give the second copy to your host family. The Housing Office will keep the third copy. Please review the contract with your host parents in order to ensure that the information is correct.

What is a long-term and short-term student?

A long-term student is a student who plans to stay with a homestay family for at least 10 weeks (one quarter). A short-term student is a student who plans to stay with a homestay family for fewer than 10 weeks.
FOOD

Who provides my food?
Your host family will provide your food for every meal.

Who prepares my meals?
Your contract indicates whether you or your host parents will prepare your breakfast and lunch. If you will be preparing these meals yourself, your host parents will show you where they keep all of the items you will need. Your host family will prepare dinner for you every evening.

What if I go to a restaurant?
If you go to a restaurant with your host family, they will pay for your meal. However, if you go without your host family, you must pay for your own meal.

What if I am hungry?
When you arrive at your homestay, your host parents will show you where they keep their snacks. Many families will allow you to prepare your own snacks. You may feel uncomfortable at first, but remember that this is your home. If you ever feel that you are not getting enough food to eat, tell your host parents first. If you still have the same problem after you tell the host family, contact the Housing Office.

What if I have dinner plans with my friends?
If you make plans to have dinner with friends instead of eating with your family, tell your host parents in advance. This will help them plan their meals.

Will my family prepare dinner for me every night?
Your family will prepare dinner for you every evening. Occasionally, your family may find that they must be away from home at dinner time. They will leave a prepared meal for you. Also, on some occasions, your family may take you to a restaurant for dinner. They will pay for your meal when you are eating with them.

Will I like the food that my host family prepares?
Eating American food is an important part of your cultural experience. If you are served food that you do not like or you cannot eat for religious or health reasons, tell your host parents immediately. They will appreciate your honesty. Otherwise, try to keep an open mind and try new things.
What should I do if I get sick?

If you feel sick during school hours, come to the Housing Office. We can provide a ride to the UCR Campus Health Center.

If you feel sick while you are at home, your host family will take you to their family physician, an urgent care center, the hospital, or a doctor recommended by our office.

In a non-emergency illness, we suggest you to visit the UCR Health Center. A $75.00 deductible will apply if you seek an outside physician without visiting the Campus Health Center.

If you are seeking any medical treatment, remember to take your health insurance card and UC Riverside Student ID card with you.

What should I do if I have an emergency?

• If you are involved in an accident, or some other serious incident, and you need to get assistance after hours, please use the following contact:

Weekday (non-holiday):
5PM – 2AM UCR Extension Parking & Safety (951-827-1612)
2AM - 8AM UCR Police Department non-emergency (951-827-5222)

Weekend and holidays:
8AM – 2AM UCR Extension Parking & Safety (951-827-1612)
2AM - 8AM UCR Police Department non-emergency (951-827-5222)

An emergency can be death, serious bodily injury or missing minor. All other issues should be reported to the Housing Office the next business day between 8AM – 5PM. (951) 827-4423.

You must always carry your emergency card. Make certain that it is completely filled out with your host family's name, address, and telephone number. The card will be provided by the Homestay Office upon your arrival.
**What if I need to go to the bank?**

If you need to go to the bank, you can ask your homestay family several days in advance if they can drive you there. However, remember that they are not obligated to drive you. Additionally, there are SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union and Chase at the University Village Center. Bank of America and Citi Bank are located two blocks away from the UCR Extension Center for your convenience. Also there are 4 ATMs available on campus: Aberdeen-Inverness Residence Hall, HUB breezeway, Latitude 55, and Lothian Residence Hall.

**When do I pay my homestay fees?**

You must pay your homestay fee directly to your family on the day you arrive to your homestay. Your pay day is your arrival date. For example, if you move into your homestay on September 26, pay $900 on the day you arrive. On October 26, pay $900 again, and so on for the length of your stay. Never pay more than one month’s homestay fee at a time.

**Will my homestay family accept credit card or traveler’s check?**

You may pay your homestay fee by cash or Traveler’s checks, but not with a credit card. Your family is not able to access your credit card. If you have to use your credit card to pay homestay fee, ask your homestay family if they can take you to the bank, so you can withdraw cash from your card.

**How do I calculate my homestay fees?**

**Long term students: (students staying in the homestay 10 weeks or more)**

Long term students pay $900 per month and $30 for each additional day. You pay $900 on the day of your arrival and $900 exactly one month later, and so on.

**Short term students: (students staying in homestay less than 10 weeks)**

Short term students pay $225.00 per week and $33 for each additional day. The homestay fee may be paid in full on the day you move in or every week.

**Homestay fees are calculated by nights, not days.**

If you provide your own transportation, the monthly homestay fee is $750.00.
If you are a long-term student and plan to go on a vacation between terms and plan to return, you will be charged $15.00 for each day you are away (half of the fee). This applies only if you leave your belongings in your room. This does not apply if you take a vacation during the academic term.

**YOUR BEDROOM**

**Will I have a housemate/roommate?**

A housemate is someone who lives in the same homestay as you, but not necessarily in the same bedroom. A roommate is someone who shares your bedroom with you. It is possible that you will have a housemate or a roommate. The homestay program is based on double occupancy and you are paying for a double occupancy room. In peak seasons, such as summer and winter, you are most likely to have a housemate or roommate. All students should EXPECT to have a roommate, even though you may not have a roommate if you come in the fall.

**Who will be my roommate?**

We try to match roommates or housemates who are different nationalities so that you will speak more English, but this is not always possible.

**Will it be quiet enough for me to study?**

Your family will provide you with adequate space to study. If you are a long term student (10 weeks), you will have your own desk in your bedroom. In time, you will find the best hours to study in your new home. If you feel that the home is too noisy to study properly, please contact the Housing Office.
What are my responsibilities to my host family?

- **Respect house rules.** One of the best ways to show respect for your host family is to abide by the family house rules and guidelines. These guidelines apply regardless of your age. For instance, if you are 25 years old and your family asks you to be home by 10:00 p.m., you must be home by 10:00 pm.

- **Respect your family's schedule.** Your family must take you to school and school-sponsored events. Your host family will have their own lives, including work, family, school, and hobbies. **If you want to go somewhere, you should ask your family at least three days in advance.**

- **Respect your family's property.** The University recommends you that if you do not know how to use any household items such as the microwave oven in your homestay’s house, please ask for permission or for directions before you use it. **REMEMBER that you are responsible for what you damage.**

- **Always tell them where you are.** You must notify your homestay family of the contact number where you will be staying. This is for your safety. They also need to know in case there is an emergency in your country and you need to be contacted.

What are my host family's responsibilities to me?

- **Transportation.** Transportation is an important part of the host family's responsibility. They are required to provide transportation to all school events that are listed on the school calendar.

- **Food.** Your host family will provide you with three meals per day, seven days per week.

- **Housing.** You will be provided with a bed, a desk, and many other items to help you feel comfortable in your new home.

- The homestay family is also responsible for providing a safe place to live.

If you feel, at any time, that any of your host family's obligations are not being met, please contact the Housing Office.
What rules will my family have?
As a member of your new family, you will be expected to abide by the same rules as any other member of the family.

The following rules apply to all students in homestay:

• You will be expected to call your host parents when you will be arriving late or if you plan to spend the night away from home. They will worry if you do not return home on time, and they could call the police.

• You will be expected to ask in advance if you want to bring a guest home, so your family can plan for it.

• You are expected to clean up after yourself (includes bathroom and kitchen) and clean your OWN room.

• Follow your family's policies on telephone usage. You are required to use an International Telephone Card when you make long distance calls.

• Follow your family's rules on internet usage.

• It is very important to respect your family’s rules regarding water usage. Most families have rules regarding how long family members should be in the bathroom. If your family has such rules, they will discuss them with you.

• One rule all families agree on is that students should feel free to talk with their host parents about any problems or concerns they have. While this may be uncomfortable at first, you will find that the family appreciates such honesty, and it helps to encourage better family relationships. Open communication is critical to a successful homestay experience.

Will I have a curfew?
Curfews depend on your host family's preference as well as your age. If you are under 18 years of age, your family may give you an earlier curfew than if you were over 18. This is because people under 18 are considered to be minors, or children, in the United States. Regardless of your age, curfews must be respected.
Can my friend spend the night at my homestay with me?
You must ask your host family if your friend can spend the night. If your host family and your friend's host family both say yes, then your friend may spend the night. Your friend must be of the same sex as you.

Will my family allow me to smoke?
Some families allow smoking OUTSIDE the home only, and some allow no smoking at all. Your contract indicates your family's preference. You should also be aware that indoor smoking is not allowed in most buildings in California.

May I buy a bicycle?
If you plan to use a bicycle, you should be aware of traffic rules and safety. You must observe all traffic rules, and you must wear a bicycle helmet.

What if I want to do things that are not sponsored by UCR?
If you want to do things that are not sponsored by UCR, please remember several things:

• You must tell your host family where you will be.

• You must tell your host family when you will return home.

• If you need your host family to drive you, ask them several days in advance. Remember, they are not obligated to drive you to events that are not sponsored by UCR. You must arrange your own transportation ahead of time.
FAMILY LIFE

Will I get along with my family?
Here are a few guidelines to help you communicate with your family:

• **Be specific.** Whenever your host parents ask you a question, be truthful and say what you really feel or what you want. Americans expect you to do this.

• **Tell them when you do not understand.** Your host family wants you to understand. If you do not understand, ask someone in your host family. At first, you may have to communicate by writing, gestures, or by using a dictionary. Soon, you will be able to communicate more fluently.

• **Talk about problems.** If you have a problem, it is very important to discuss it. If, after talking with your host parents, you feel you still have a problem, or if you are uncomfortable speaking to your family about the problem, contact the Housing Office for additional assistance.

• **Speak up.** Talk about yourself and your home country. Americans are curious and want to know more about who you are. Do not be afraid of making mistakes with your English.

What if I have a disagreement with my host family?
If you have a disagreement with your family, first try to talk with them yourself. If you are uncomfortable, talk to someone in the Homestay Office. The Homestay Office will help you to resolve the issue.

What if my family speaks a language other than English at home?
The Housing Office prefers to place students with families who speak English in their homes. If your host family consistently speaks a foreign language in their home and it makes you uncomfortable, please contact the Housing Office. However, please know that it is common for households to be bilingual in California.
Will my homestay family pick me up from the airport?

No, they will not. Your host family is not responsible to pick you up from the airport. You have to arrange your transportation to the Extension Center on your own. Airport Pick-Up service is available through IEP. If you need airport pickup service, you must go to: <https://www.iep.ucr.edu/enroll/web_forms/airport_pick-up_request.php> to complete the form.

Who will drive me to school?

Host family will drive you to school and home every day for all school-sponsored events. They must provide transportation to all activities listed on the school calendar. Remember, your homestay family is not responsible for non school-sponsored events.

What is a carpool?

A carpool is when two or more parents who live close to each other take turns driving their students to school functions. Carpooling is one way which families reduce the amount of driving they must do.

What if I decide to stay at school later than usual?

Call your parents as soon as you know how late you will be staying. If they are not able to pick you up at the time you want to leave, you must find another way to get home. Parents cannot always accommodate last-minute schedule changes. They are only obligated to pick you up at your normally scheduled time.

What if I want to go on a UCR trip that returns late at night?

Again, your host parents provide transportation to and from all school events listed on your school calendar. Some trips and activities end late at night. Your parents are aware of this and will be there to take you home when the event ends.

How will I get to the airport?

If you need a ride to the airport, Airport Drop-Off service is available through IEP. However, you must fill out an Airport Drop-Off Information form at least 10 days before your flight, or you will be charged a late fee of $20 for LAX and $20 for Ontario. The regular price is $100 to LAX and $50 to Ontario Airport. The late fee to LAX is $120 and $70 to Ontario Airport.
What should I do if I'm going on vacation?
If you go on a vacation during the regular school year, you must continue to pay your homestay fees normally. However, if you go on vacation during a school break (for example, during Winter break) and you leave your belongings at your homestay family's house, you can pay half of the daily rate ($13.50 per day for long term students) for the amount of days you are on vacation.

When can I take a shower or bath?
You should ask your host family what time they prefer you to take a shower or bath. Riverside is a desert region, and can commonly experiences droughts. Please be considerate of the water shortage and keep your showers brief whenever possible.

How will I wash my clothes?
Your contract indicates if you will wash your clothes or if your host family will wash them for you. If you will wash them yourself, your host parents will show you how to use the washer and dryer. Also, they will provide laundry soap and any other items you need.

Where should I keep my valuables?
Even though you should feel comfortable in your new home, it is wise to keep your valuables in a safe place. You may wish to keep your travelers' checks, extra cash, and jewelry locked in your suitcase. The university and homestay family is not responsible for money or valuables lost.

What if I have a problem that I cannot resolve?
If you have any questions or problems regarding homestay, please contact the Housing Office. Your problem will be kept confidential, and you can speak to someone in your native language. We are here to help you.

Who provides my toiletries?
Toiletries are personal hygiene items, such as shampoo, toothpaste, soap, and any other items that you regularly use. You are responsible for purchasing your own toiletries. Your family will provide towels, blankets, sheets, and many other non-toiletry items.
What should I do if I want to change my housing option in the middle of contract term?

You must contact the Housing Office. The Housing Office staff will help you to change your housing. You must give at least 1 week's notice to your homestay family before you move out. Otherwise the CANCELLATION FEE will be charged. (short term: $30.00, long term: $50.00)

What if I decide to stay longer at the same family?

You must discuss with your homestay family first. If your family agrees to extend your stay, contact the Housing Office to renew your homestay contract. It is your responsibility to sign a new homestay contract.

What are homestay evaluations?

Homestay evaluations are completed near the end of your program. The evaluations ask you questions regarding your homestay experience. We appreciate your honesty in the evaluations. If you are happy with your family, we need to know so that we can place more students there. Also, if you are unhappy with your family, we need to know so that we can investigate any problems with the family. Do not be worried that your host family will find out the information you disclose in your evaluation. The evaluations are confidential, and we do not tell your host family what you said, even after you leave. We will, however, give them their average score at the end of every year. The average is based on several students' ratings of the family averaged together.
# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## Directory of Relevant Offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Office</strong></td>
<td>237</td>
<td>(951) 827-4346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FAX</td>
<td>(951) 827-1074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing/Homestay Office</strong></td>
<td>234</td>
<td>(951) 827-4423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrollment Office</strong></td>
<td>236, 238</td>
<td>(951) 827-4346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trips and Activities Office</strong></td>
<td>233</td>
<td>(951) 827-1714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation Office</strong></td>
<td>232</td>
<td>(951) 827-1730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IEP College Counseling/TOEFL Test</strong></td>
<td>245</td>
<td>(951) 827-6996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UCR Health Clinic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>(951) 827-3031</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Emergency Contacts

### Weekday (non-holiday):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>(951-827-1612)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2AM - 8AM</td>
<td>UCR Police Department non-emergency</td>
<td>(951-827-5222)</td>
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</table>

### Weekend and holidays:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8AM – 2AM</td>
<td>UCR Extension Parking &amp; Safety</td>
<td>(951-827-1612)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2AM - 8AM</td>
<td>UCR Police Department non-emergency</td>
<td>(951-827-5222)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Living in a Homestay is a wonderful opportunity for students to learn about the United States. It is a cultural experience for students as well as host families. We hope that this sharing produces friendships and memories that will never be forgotten.