



# 2020 Homestay Handbook for Students



## Welcome to New Zealand!

You have chosen to stay with an NZLC Homestay especially chosen for you. This handbook will help you understand what you can expect and what is expected of you during your homestay experience. If you have any doubts or questions, please talk to the NZLC Accommodation Department.

## Staying with an NZLC Homestay Family

### Communication

During your stay, there will probably be times when living in a foreign country and using a different language will be challenging. Your host family might have difficulty understanding you, just as you might have difficulty understanding them. Try to be patient and find other ways to communicate. For example, writing things down or using hand gestures.

Your host family will help you to learn English – please talk to them as much as you can!

### Respecting each other

It is important that you think of your homestay house as your home – but remember that there are other people in the house, so if you are on the phone or using the bathroom, make it short.

### Helping around the house

New Zealanders say “please” and “thank you” a lot and your host family will like it if you do too. They will also like it if you talk to them as much as you can and if you offer to help around the house.

### Weekday Lunches

Please remember that weekday lunches might not be included in your homestay fee. Please check with the Accommodation Department whether you have requested half board or full board. You are welcome to purchase your own lunch, which you can heat in the microwaves at school. Host families may allow the student to use their kitchen to make simple lunches such as sandwiches. Unfortunately, most of our host families will not let the student use the stovetop. If students need to use their kitchen, students must seek prior approval of the family and clean up afterwards.

## Shortening your Homestay

If you plan to leave your host family early, you must give **two weeks’ notice**. You will need to tell both your host family and the Accommodation Department. **If you do not give two weeks’ notice, then you may still need to pay for up to two weeks homestay from the day you give notice.** The remaining amount will be refunded once you have left your host family. You must also let the receptionist or Student Services staff know your **new address** and **mobile number**.

## Taking a Holiday

If you want to take a holiday from your homestay for 7 nights or longer and still keep your room, you will need to pay **half the usual homestay rate**. You need to complete an application form from the Homestay Department and apply **two weeks** in advance.

## Changing your Homestay

You may request to change your homestay under certain circumstances. If you wish to change your homestay, please follow this procedure:

1. Talk to the Accommodation Department and state the reason why you would like to change your homestay.
2. The Accommodation Department and Student Services team will help you resolve any issues you are experiencing and help you feel more comfortable.
3. If it is agreed to change your homestay, the current family will be advised and a new family will be arranged after payment of the second placement fee. The usual two weeks’ notice may or may not be required, depending on the case.
4. Approved refunds for homestay are usually paid by direct deposit two weeks after the change is requested.

## Homestay Rules

Your family will probably have 'house rules' which are usually polite things that you should do during your stay. Here are some hints and common 'house rules' to help make your stay more enjoyable.

- If you are going to be home late for dinner, **please always text or phone your host family** as early as possible to let them know (at least **2 hours before** the meal/dinner).
- Please keep your **bedroom clean and tidy**, make your bed and open your curtains each morning. Turn off the lights and heater before you leave for school.
- Please **offer to help** around the house. For example: Take your plate away after eating, help in the kitchen (preparing a meal or washing up) or stack the dishwasher.
- In New Zealand, we try to save water and electricity, so please **keep your shower to 5-10 minutes** once a day. Ask your host family where to hang your towel after showering.
- **Give your phone number to your host family** when you arrive so that they can call you in an emergency. If you **don't have a mobile phone, you can buy a cheap one** while you are in New Zealand.
- If you are a smoker, you will have to **smoke outside the house**. Please **do NOT smoke inside the house**.
- If you would like a friend to visit or you would like to stay over at a friend's house, you must ask your family in advance. **Students under 18 years old MUST have written consent from NZLC to stay out late.**
- Ask your host family about **laundry** and how to use the washing machine. During wintertime in New Zealand, clothes take a long time to dry. Only undergarments and t- shirts should be washed frequently. **Please ask your host family where to hang your wet clothes.** Don't hang your wet laundry in your bedroom or wardrobe.
- Tell your family if you find **New Zealand food** difficult to eat. They can help you to buy some additional food items to add to your meals.
- Please, **tell your host family if you find anything broken** in your room or if you damage anything yourself. Don't keep quiet or try to hide it, or your host family may be unhappy when they find out.
- **Bring your own toiletries** (shampoo, conditioner, etc.) The host family is not expected to provide these items.
- Always **ask permission before using the home phone** to make overseas calls and calls to mobile phones. Calls to mobile phones cost a lot more than landline calls. Make your phone calls short.
- Some host families have limited internet usage so please ask your family before using the internet. **It is illegal to download movies, songs, and other copyrighted material.** Use the internet at school for your other internet requirements.
- If you have a heater, dehumidifier or electric blanket in your bedroom, remember to turn it OFF before you go to sleep or leave for the day. Otherwise, it can cause a fire!

Remember to be polite, respectful and say "**please**" and "**thank you**"!

If you have any questions or concerns, or feel uncomfortable talking to your host family about something, please talk to NZLC Accommodation Department at any time.

## NZLC Contact Phone Numbers

NZLC Auckland phone: 303 1962

NZLC Wellington phone: +64 4 802 4620

If you need to contact the school during school hours or speak to the Accommodation Department, please call reception. School hours are Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5pm.

**NZLC After-hours contact for urgent matters:**

- NZLC Auckland-arranged homestay & airport transfers 24/7 mobile number: **+64 21 780 509**.
- NZLC Wellington-arranged homestays and airport transfers 24/7 mobile number: **+64 (0)21 030 9815**
- NZLC 24/7 Student Line free from any New Zealand phone: **0508 156 156**.