

# Australian Government Schools International (AGSI)

## Homestay Standards



Homestay accommodation standards are critical to the wellbeing of international students in schools.

Recognising the importance of ensuring the safety and welfare of under 18 international students and the requirements of the ESOS Act and National Code of Practice and child protection legislation in each state and territory, Australian Government Schools International (AGSI) have compiled the following homestay standards.

### Homestay Residence Standards:

- A safe, secure, private bedroom for the student's sole use with suitable storage space for clothes, personal effects and study materials, and suitable facilities including a desk, a chair and adequate lighting for study purposes.
- A clean home with appropriate furnishings suitable for a family and students.
- Access to a shared or private bathroom, with reasonable time allowed for showers.
- Access to the kitchen, living areas, laundry facilities and shared areas of the home.
- Access to heating in winter and cooling in summer if required.
- Household facilities and appliances comply with government regulations regarding safety standards.
- Provision of keys, alarms or passwords required to have free access to the homestay residence.

### Homestay Provider / Coordinator Responsibilities:

- Ensure that all adults residing at any homestay have current checks and clearances for working with children as required by the appropriate state or territory regulatory body.
- Conduct regular visits and assessments of the homestay with access to all areas of the homestay premises for the purposes of checking compliance with legislation and the homestay standards required by the education provider.
- Ensure host families have appropriate insurance policy cover for students residing in their home.
- Ensure there is regular training of host families, particularly in relation to hosting younger students under 18 years.
- Ensure there is a 24 hour emergency contact number that is known to students, host family and the education provider.
- Maintain regular contact with host families, students and school staff as required.





### Host family Responsibilities:

- Take on the role of a carer for under 18 students.
- Provide a safe and welcoming homestay family environment that is conducive to the students' emotional, social, physical and educational wellbeing.
- Encourage students to experience life as a member of the family and assist students to adapt to the new culture and life. Where suitable, include students in family related activities and events.
- Ensure family members show interest in the student's culture and customs and are respectful of these.
- Provide an orientation within the family home, the use of facilities and security. This should include household protocols, safety around the house including use of appliances, handling pets, and the use of shared areas or facilities such as swimming pools, internet and telephone; rules regarding visitors and appropriate times to return home during the week and on weekends.
- Provide all meals – breakfast and lunch may be self-service and dinner should be a meal with the family. There should be a variety of nutritional food with some choice to accommodate cultural differences. Students should be advised of mealtimes.
- Provide students with an orientation to the local area including public transport and getting to and from school; the location of shops, doctors or medical facilities; and recreation areas.
- Ensure the student is aware of emergency numbers including 000, location of police stations and Australian laws pertaining to under 18 year olds.
- Attend interviews with school staff, at enrolment, parent meetings and as required by the school.
- Ensure that students are appropriately supervised at all times throughout the duration of residing in the homestay including:
  - maintaining suitable supervision of students outside of school hours;
  - monitoring the student's general welfare including the students' social activities;
  - Contact the school regarding any student welfare, academic progress and attendance issues.
- Notify the homestay coordinator two weeks in advance, or as soon as practicable if this is not possible, of any change of circumstances in the household including:
  - if the homestay host proposes to materially change the homestay residence in such a way that will affect their ability to meet the homestay residence standards listed above;
  - if the homestay host is temporarily unable to provide accommodation or suitable supervision for periods of holidays or other periods;
  - if the homestay host intends to change address or contact details.
- Ensure the student resides in their approved address at all times and notify the homestay coordinator and the school immediately if the student fails to do so or intends to move.
- Assist and support the student's attendance at school and support the completion of homework assignments where required.
- Meet with the international student coordinator or homestay coordinator, as required by the school/education provider.
- Assist the student to access any medical, dental, hospital or other health-related services, including making appointments and, where necessary, accompany the student to those appointments and if required advise the school / homestay coordinator of any medical or health issues.