



Meridian School Homestay Program

The role of the Meridian Homestay Program (MHP) is to provide International families assistance in securing homes for their students to live while attending Meridian School in Orem, Utah. The role of Meridian School is to assist in connecting international student families with US families for the purpose of homestays. Meridian School will also assist in providing recommendations based on best practice experience to the International student family and the homestay family which are designed to make the transition successful for BOTH parties. It is the primary goal of the Meridian School Homestay Program to assist in that the student and homestay family are in mutually agreeable situations. Meridian School; however, will not mediate contracts or payments.

Recommendations and Expectations for the Homestay Family

It is recommended and expected that the US Homestay Family will provide the following for their student:

Living Arrangements:

- A place to study away from noise and distractions
- Their own bed with linens
- Temperature regulation: adequate heat or cool with assistive devices as needed (e.g., fan, extra blankets)
- A closet or dresser to keep their belongings
- Sufficient lighting
- A window
- Computer and internet access as necessary for schoolwork
- Telephone access
- Three meals a day
- Bath towel and toilet paper
- No more than two students to a bedroom
- Laundry facilities in the home
- All facilities that are clean and in good repair

All Meals:

- The price of homestay includes all meals; breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- *Breakfast:* Breakfast food needs to be available to the student. It is recommended that the homestay family makes sure the students can help themselves if necessary.



- *Lunch:* It is the responsibility of the homestay family to make sure that the student has a sufficient lunch. The student can be expected to make their own lunch with items provided by the host family.
- *Dinner:* It is recommended that the student eat meals with and prepared by the host family. When families go out and are not home to prepare dinner, there should be food available for the student.
- *Restaurants:* If the homestay family is out of the house for any meal, it is recommended that the homestay family make sure that the student has a proper meal to eat for that meal.

Safe, Secure Living Environment:

- Speak English with the student in the family home.
- Provide *timely* transportation to and from school.
- Assist with transportation to other places the student wants to go (e.g., provide access to public transportation or a carpool).
- Attend all parent-teacher conferences. Respond to teacher feedback regarding tracking, student progress, and student behavior. Act as surrogate parents; support and encourage the student in their academic activities.
- Give students the option of whether or not they want to attend religious services with you. Any student meetings with religious representatives other than those of the student's own faith must be cleared in writing with the student's parents. Respect the religious upbringing of the students and their families.
- Treat your student as a member of your family. Involve them in family activities, help them with their homework, and expect them to live family rules and help with chores. These are great opportunities for them to practice their English and learn about American culture.
- Monitor your students' spending. Make sure nobody tries to take advantage of them or do target selling to them. Report aggressive target marketing to Meridian School.
- Make sure young children respect your students' space.
- Talk with students as much as possible if you have a problem or need information. If you are having a difficult time communicating or have concerns about your student's welfare or behavior; contact Meridian School.
- If homestay parent/s are going to away for an extended period of time and the student is to remain behind, it is recommended that the host family contact Meridian School to determine whether the student should be placed in another home for the duration of the host parent/s absence.
- Find out the natural family's policy about sleepovers and enforce it. Also make your student aware of your family's policy about sleepovers.



- If the student will be spending the night somewhere other than your home, whether for a sleepover or an extended absence, contact the natural family to get their approval and let them know where their child will be.

Comfortable Transition to your home:

- Review your family rules and routines with your student (e.g., television, telephone, and computer usage, dinner time, clean-up rules, curfew times).
- Show the student around your house.
 - Bathroom: Make sure students are familiar with how American bathrooms work; bathrooms may be quite different in their home countries. Make sure students know the appropriate length of time for showers or baths.
 - Bedroom: Show students where to store their belongings.
 - Kitchen: Make sure students know how they should help themselves and when it is appropriate (e.g. where the breakfast cereal is kept).
 - Safety issues
 - Laundry: Who does the laundry and when. If students may do their own laundry, provide laundry detergent.
- Talk about guidelines for having guests. Students should be able to invite friends over with advanced notice and with host family approval.

It is recommended that the US Homestay Families NOT do the following:

- Do not allow students to drive any homestay family car, even if they have a drivers' license
- Do not use the student for babysitting purposes. This is recommended ONLY if it is approved in writing by the natural parents. Overuse of the student as a babysitter is unfair to the student, potentially dangerous in the event of an emergency, and culturally taboo in many of the students' home countries.
- Do not borrow money from the student.
- Do not lend money to the student.
- Do not encourage or pressure students to purchase large items or invest their money in anything other than a bank account.

Recommendations and Expectations for the Student/Natural Family

It is recommended and expected that the student will do the following for the Homestay family:

- Behave with respect, kindness, and consideration to all Homestay family members.



- ***Discuss, understand***, respect, and be willing to abide by the specific rules of the Homestay family household.
- ***Discuss, understand***, respect, and be willing to be part of the Homestay family daily activities.
- Understand, respect, and abide by these additional basic rules;
 - No smoking
 - No drinking alcoholic beverages
 - No premarital sexual relations
 - No violent behavior
 - No inappropriate language (such as swearing), or inappropriate jokes.

It is recommended and expected that the student's family provide the homestay family the following:

Payment for homestay directly to the homestay family

- Payment is entirely between the natural family and the host family. They should come to an agreement that satisfies both parties.
- ***The recommended amount for the 2011/12 school year is \$750.00US per student.***

Additional money for extra expenses as needed:

- Spending money
- Long-distance telephone calls. Meridian School recommends that the student have a calling card or a cell phone provided by the natural family.
- Bus fares and other public transportation
- Personal hygiene items (toiletries)
- All clothing items including school uniforms.
- Extra curricular activities such as dances, movies, and school sports.

Important Note:

- If either party wishes to dissolve the living arrangement for any reason, a two week notice should be given to the opposite party.
- It is recommended and expected that the student, student family, and /or host family will notify a Meridian representative before the student leaves the homestay family residence.