



Homestay Family Handbook

Enriching The Canadian Experience



Medicine Hat Public School Division

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Welcome

Medicine Hat Public School Division would like to extend a warm welcome and thank you for choosing to be a homestay family in our International Student Program. Staying with a local family is, for international students, one of the most important aspects of their Canadian experience. Your involvement and care are extremely valuable to us. We try to match students and families as best as we can in order to ensure a great experience for all. We hope it will benefit both you and your student in terms of cultural exchange, understanding and friendship. Hosting an international student is an opportunity to gain a lifetime of memories and we truly hope your student's stay will allow you to do just that.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOMESTAY PROVIDERS

General Expectations

Homestay families should care for and nurture their international student to help them feel accepted as a member of the family. Your student needs the same care you would give to your own child, they need to feel that you genuinely care about them, making the bonding process easier. We trust the homestay parents will make decisions in their student's best interest. Homestay parents are encouraged to contact the homestay coordinator when seeking advice about decision making.

Homestay families are expected to provide the same as they would for their own family, such as:

- Private bedroom
- Three meals a day and snacks as required. We understand that it isn't always possible to cook for your student, please ensure that they have access to food and cooking supplies to fend for themselves.

- Quiet, well-lit and heated study space
- Access to the common living area of the house
- Hot water and facilities for bathing
- Laundry
- Emotional & academic support
- English language support
- Interaction with family members
- Participation in family activities
- Transportation, when possible, to extracurricular activities.

PREPARATION FOR STUDENT ARRIVAL

The homestay coordinator will give you information about your new family member.

- Information about their family life
- Likes/Dislikes
- Hobbies
- Information about their country of origin
- Some pictures of the student, family and hometown
- Correspond with your student before they arrive in Canada. This is highly encouraged.

Research

The homestay family should be generally familiar with the student's country: its population, climate, lifestyle, food, major cities, etc. Your knowledge of this information will make your student feel more at home and it will encourage acceptance of your way of life. Learning a few simple words in their language or a popular dish can also help to make your student feel more at home. [Bedroom](#)

Make sure the student's room is ready. The room should be fully furnished with a bed,



dresser, lamp, desk (only if possible) and space for hanging clothes. If you cannot provide your student with a desk in their room, ensure that they have a well-lit, quiet and heated space to do homework. Your student may be cold at night, prepare some extra blankets or even a portable heater, if necessary.

Storage

Many international students come with extra clothing and luggage. Make sure there is enough room in your student's bedroom or elsewhere for storage so that their bedroom does not become overly cluttered.

Key

Ensure that you have an extra key for your student to keep with them. If you have a keypad entry, provide your student with the door code.

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION

It is the responsibility of the homestay coordinator to meet the student at the airport upon their arrival as well as making arrangements to return to the airport for their final departure. Once they have arrived in Canada your student should contact home to confirm their safe arrival.

STUDENT ARRIVAL IN YOUR HOME

Unpack

Show your student where they can store extra luggage and off-season clothing. Also, make sure they have a safe place to store passport, travel tickets, insurance documents, and money.

Orientation of your Home & Routines

After the student has unpacked, give a **tour of your house**, show where to find things and explain how to operate appliances. Don't assume your student knows how to operate everyday items, anything from light switches to shower taps can be unfamiliar. Be as clear as you can when giving the tour and let your student know some specifics like:

- Tap water is safe to drink

- Not everything can be flushed down the toilet, show them how much toilet paper to use
- Take shoes off when entering the house
- Recycling practices
- Basements are normal in Canadian homes but may be strange and unfamiliar to your student.
- Show your student how to use appliances. Is there any appliance that you prefer your student doesn't use? (eg. BBQ, thermostat...)

Phone

If you have a landline show your student how to use the phone, write all important family phone numbers so the student can store them in their phone or keep a contact card in their wallet. Help your student access a new SIM card and a Canadian calling/data plan so they can use their cell phone locally. If you need help accessing a SIM card please contact your homestay coordinator.

Ensure your student knows how to dial 9-1-1 in case of **emergency**. If there is an emergency involving your student, always call 9-1-1 first then contact the international coordinator with the details of the emergency.



Household Security

Teach your student how to lock and unlock the doors. Discuss your preferences on locking doors in your home. If you have a household security system show your student how it operates and have them practice. Also, have the student practice when an error occurs so they know how to remedy the situation. Remember to inform your security company that you have a student in the house that is authorized to be there. If you have an emergency household key hidden outside, let the student know where it is.

Thermostats

Do you like your thermostats turned down at night and when no one is in the house? Show the student how you want it to be set up. Many of them also find our houses cold and like to turn the heat up quite high. Will you permit the student to change the temperature in the home? If yes, do you have a maximum temperature that you like the household thermostat set? Show the student your household furnace and explain how it works. You might also like to explain energy costs.

Showers, Bathtub and Water heater

Show the student the hot water heater and explain how your water system works. Again, you might want to explain energy costs. Also, contrary to some other countries, there is no drain in the middle of the floor in your bathroom so if you have a shower curtain it needs to be placed inside the bathtub. Show your students how to turn on and off the faucets and how to regulate the temperature and drain system. Teach students with long hair that they should not let large clumps of hair go down the drain otherwise it may clog.

Fire Extinguisher and Smoke Alarm

Show the student where the fire extinguisher is and how it works. Also if you have a smoke alarm that often goes off when cooking, explain this to the student. Do not allow the burning of candles or incense. Also explain how your carbon monoxide alarm works, if you have one.

Technology

Show the student how your TV, stereo, DVD player and other technology operates. Be sure that the student knows which equipment they are allowed to use and how to operate it.

Microwave

As students may sometimes be reheating food for late meals, explain how the microwave works. Be sure they understand that metal cannot be put in the microwave. Remember, what may be common sense for us is often very different for our visiting students.

Jet Lag

When your student arrives, they have had a long trip and may have crossed several time zones. Avoid scheduling too many activities. The ill effects of jet lag will be much less if your student sets their watch immediately to local time. Also, suggest they drink plenty of water, get lots of fresh air and avoid sleeping during the day, if possible.

Things you can do in the first few days

Keep your student busy but also allow some time alone. Remember they will be jet-lagged and possibly in culture shock. Make sure the student is familiar with your neighborhood. Students may want to go for a walk and could get lost because they are unfamiliar with the pattern of our streets. Take the time to learn the correct pronunciation of your student's name. Introduce your student to family, friends and neighbors and write down names to help them remember.

Make sure your student has an ID card with your name, address and telephone number on it, and tell them to carry it at all times. Show girls where to buy personal items. Show your student the route to and from school, or where to get on and off the bus. Relax and make the student feel welcome.



Social Emotional Supports



Imagine you are a young visitor entering a country for the first time. As you step off the plane, a voice over the loudspeaker is speaking a language you may not understand. You see people dressed in clothing different from your own. There are posters that advertise products you have never heard of, and soon you will be meeting people you only know by name. Excited, but somewhat apprehensive, you wonder what it will be like living with these people under the same roof.

With this picture in mind, you will see why it is important for you to provide your student with not only food and shelter but also love empathy and encouragement. The student will need your support to gain accurate comprehension of our culture. With your guidance, the student's visit can become a valuable learning experience.

FAMILY RULES & GUIDELINES

Homestay families will establish their own rules and curfews using guidance from this document. Respect and courtesy for these guidelines is mandatory, so it is important to discuss your household guidelines as soon as possible with your student as it will avoid confusion and misunderstanding. You might want to write or type out your guidelines to ensure that your student understands. Establish reasonable consequences for breaking the guidelines but remember that they must be age-appropriate and take into consideration that the student is coming from a very different household environment. **Adaptability** will be important and necessary.

Food & Meals

You need to provide 3 meals a day, but how this is done is up to each individual family. In most families, it is common for individual family members to make their own breakfast and lunch and then share in the preparation and eating of an evening meal. The student is a temporary family member, not a guest, and as such conforms to your family practices. You are not expected to provide prepared

food for each meal. Ensure that your student has access to food and cookies supplies when you are not available to provide a meal for them.

Types of Food

One of the most difficult adjustments for your international student may be dietary. Canadian food can be a problem for international students at first and special considerations may have to be given due to cultural differences. Your student may require certain things in their diet.

Take your student food shopping with you, especially to the ethnic food section, and ask your student what they would like. For example, rice is an important part of the Asian diet, rice and brown beans of the Latin American diet. Have your student select the type of rice. Minute Rice or Uncle Bens is nothing like the rice your student is familiar with.

Many Asian students prefer a hot breakfast and a hot lunch. Latin American students are used to a large meal at lunchtime. Foods favoured by young people in your culture may not be the same ones enjoyed by young people in another. Nevertheless, you do not need to arrange special meals for your student, unless they have special dietary restrictions due to medical or religious reasons. Very likely they, perhaps after some initial hesitation, will learn to enjoy the types of food to which you are accustomed.



Table Manners

Cultural differences may involve not only a variety of food types but also may include differences in eating times, methods of serving and presenting food and the manner in which food is eaten. Since your family's table manners may not correspond to your student's, show them the proper portions to take and how to eat them.

Give your student a tour of your kitchen, naming food items in the cupboards and refrigerator. Encourage them to prepare a favourite dish for your family.

Preparation of Breakfasts and Lunches



Are breakfast and lunches prepared for the student or is the student to prepare their own? Many students from other countries have never prepared their own meals so may not know how to prepare breakfast or lunch. Students will have to be taught this skill. It is also a good idea to take the student grocery shopping with you during the first week so that if there are any foods the student likes, it can be purchased. Students must also be shown where all the various foods in the house are kept. Your student should let you know if they prefer to purchase (at their own cost) their lunch from the school cafeteria.

Meal Time Expectations

What times are the common family mealtimes? If the student is not going to be present, how much notice is expected? If the student will be absent for a meal, do they wish for a meal to be kept for a later time? What are your expectations for the student if you are not home to cook a meal? Can the student use the stove? What food is the student permitted to have?

Food/Drink

Is your student allowed to have food and/or drinks in their bedroom, in front of the TV, around the computer?

Schedule

Think about your family's schedule and routine and decide how the student might fit into it. You can decide on times when you can and cannot be flexible. What time do you get up and what time do you go to bed? Is there a specific study time in your home? What time do you shower or bath? When do you eat meals? When is quiet time? What time is bedtime or lights out? Ensure that your student is aware of this schedule so they can work within it.

Bathroom-Door and Shower/Bathtub

In many other countries, the bathroom door is left closed when not in use. What is the procedure in your house? Also, can showers (or baths) be taken at any time or are there times you do not wish showers to be taken? What is the maximum amount of time that a shower should last? What is the family schedule for taking showers? Again, you might have to explain energy costs.

Home Phone - Landline

How does the answering machine work? Do you want the student to answer incoming calls? Is there a limit on the length of phone calls, particularly during prime calling hours?

LONG DISTANCE PHONE ACCESS

Please keep in mind, that homestay families are not liable for long distance phone calls. Prepaid phone cards, pay as you go cell phones, Whatsapp, Zoom, Skype or FaceTime are recommended for students when contacting family and friends at home.

PHONE SCHEDULE

When are the quiet times in your household? There are significant time changes between Alberta and many other countries, what hours will you allow incoming calls? Most students will have their own cell phone or device to make these calls in their bedroom, is there a limit on the times during the day of phone calls, particularly incoming ones? Many households enforce quiet times and ask that no calls come in after 10:00 pm and no calls on weekends before 9:00 am. Students should be asked to respect these quiet times in your household.

Internet Use

Wi-Fi internet access must be available in the home. Students should be monitored carefully as they use the internet so that they do not spend excessive time on their devices.

Electronic Devices

Most students are arriving with varied electronic devices for communicating with home. In the first few weeks your student may use these devices frequently. Once your student starts to feel more comfortable, generally they will use them less frequently. You may need to outline your expectations about use of devices, particularly if there are other children in the home who abide by usage limits. It may be necessary to explain that excessive use of devices can be considered by some to be antisocial behaviour. You should also be aware that excessive use of phones and devices may be a sign your student is experiencing homesickness and/or having a difficult time adjusting to their new circumstances. If it continues to be an issue, please contact your homestay coordinator for support.



Transportation

Students will have access to MHPSD school bus transportation to get to and from school. Students are expected to ask their homestay family a minimum of 24-48 hours' notice if they would like to have a ride somewhere. Families are not always able to provide rides to their student, in this case, students can access the City of Medicine Hat Transportation system.

Social Activities

Students will want to spend time with friends and should be encouraged to do so. The international program plans activities for students to connect with one another, get immersed in Canadian culture, do fun activities and build relationships. The schedule of activities will be shared with homestay families.

Curfew

Each homestay should establish a curfew that is fair and reasonable so the student can have a safe and enriched Canadian experience. It is your

responsibility to ensure that the student has access to proper transportation home at night. Ensuring the safety of your student is your responsibility.

Household Duties

Your student is not a houseguest, but rather considered as a member of your family unit and will be expected to help work to make your household run efficiently. Taking part in household chores such as sweeping and vacuuming floors, dusting, cleaning the bathtub after use, cleaning bathroom counters, assisting with meal time dishes, clearing their plate after dinner, loading dishes in the dishwasher (show the student how to use it) and helping to put groceries away are just some of the ways your student can help out. Students are expected to keep their room, study area and bathroom space neat and tidy. Many students may not have performed any of these responsibilities before and you will need to help your student get into this routine.



TV Watching

What are the rules and times for TV watching in your house? Students need to know this. Are there limits on the volume and the types of shows watched in your house? Ensure that you communicate your expectations to the student.

Laundry

Is there a laundry schedule? Do you do the student's laundry, or do you wish they do their own? If the student does their own laundry, they may have to be taught how to do it (e.g. separating darks from lights, amount of detergent, etc...). The student will also have to be taught how to use the machines and told if there are any limits as to the times during which laundry can be done. Where can hand laundry be done and left to dry?

Activities

What are the common family activities? To which ones is the student invited to participate? What provisions will be made for the student if the family is away from the house for more than a day? If you plan on being away from home overnight, please contact the homestay coordinator.

Household Areas

Which areas are common and/or which areas are off limits to the student?

Household Traditions and Unique Preferences

Every household has things that work for their circumstances and family dynamic. Ensure that your student understands these (we tend to forget because we deal with them all the time).

Household Discipline

Students need household routines and guidelines, and they are expected to follow them. Similarly, in every household, not everything goes perfectly. Make sure your student understands the guidelines and the reasons for them. You might want to write or type them out, depending on their comprehension level. Establish reasonable consequences for breaking the guidelines but remember



that they must be age-appropriate and take into consideration that the student is coming from a very different household environment. Adaptability will be important and necessary.

MHPSD'S HOMESTAY GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

- Students must communicate so you always know where they are
- Students are not allowed to smoke or drink alcohol even if they are over 18 and in high school. The use of illegal drugs or involvement in any illegal activities will result in the student being sent home at their own cost.
- Students are expected to perform some light chores and assist with household duties. Please discuss these chores so there is no confusion.
- Students must give their homestay families a reasonable amount of notice if they need rides to special events, have friends visit and/or stay overnight, etc.
- Homestay parents can limit the number of overnight stays, both in their home or if the student goes to other homes.
- Students must not be left alone overnight unless they are comfortable. Adult supervision in the home must be arranged if you are away for an extended amount of time.
- Students must attend school every day unless they are ill. Homestay parents must inform the school if the student is not able to attend school.
- Immigration Canada does not permit students to hold jobs while in Canada. Students are permitted to engage in unpaid work experience while they are in Canada.
- Students can only leave the community overnight or on weekends if the homestay parents are aware of where the student is going, and permission is given by the natural parents.
- Traveling with homestay families is permitted, but students are not allowed to go on trips alone or with other students unless permission has been given by the International Coordinator.

Privacy

Ensure that your student knows you will respect their privacy by knocking on the bedroom door before entering and ask the same in return. Make sure the student understands that you will not pry into their personal belongings, phone conversations, mail, etc.



Travel

1. Students may travel out of town with their homestay families.
2. Students may travel out of town with another homestay family.
3. Under any other circumstances, ALL of the following conditions must be met:
 - a) The student must be under the direct supervision of an adult 25 years or older.
 - b) Student's natural parents must provide written consent.
 - c) The student must provide details of the proposed trip with contact info to the homestay coordinator.

This is an MHPSD policy and applies to all students studying in high school or middle school, even those over the age of 18. If the above conditions are met, students are welcome to travel. Students risk being removed from the program if these guidelines are not followed.

If you notice your student engaging in illegal activity, contact the homestay coordinator immediately.

Legal Guardian

In Medicine Hat Public School Division, the legal guardian or custodial parent is the international coordinator. However, the day-to-day supervision of the student is the responsibility of the homestay parent.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

School

Encourage the timely completion of homework and check on progress. Attend meetings and parent/teacher conferences when needed. Showing an interest in your student's progress contributes positively to their Canadian educational experience. The school may take students on occasional field trips. Information will be sent to all students' homestay families regarding these trips. The homestay family is asked to be aware -of school guidelines on attendance, homework, etc. Please call the school if you have any questions or concerns.

School Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes daily. Homestay parents of middle and secondary students are expected to contact the school if their student will be absent due to illness. In the event that you receive contact from the school to state that your student has missed classes, contact the international coordinator.

Money

It is expected that students cover some of their own costs while staying in your home, as follows:

- Clothes (especially winter clothes)
- School supplies – MHPSD requires that all students have a working laptop or device that connects to the internet for learning.
- Personal toiletries
- Many students have their own computer/laptop. All costs associated with their computer are the responsibility of the student. It is strongly recommended that you do not have your international students use your own computer. Students should not have to pay for a shared line.
- Long distance phone calls
- Medicines of all kinds
- Dental Work
- Haircuts and other personal services
- Personal entertainment and activity expenses
- Costs associated with participation in school-sponsored activities (graduation ceremonies, school dances, extracurricular sports, school trips etc.)
- Costs related to the renewal of student visas, travel home, etc.

Allowance

International students are advised to arrange for an allowance from their natural parents of between \$200 and \$300 per month to cover their personal expenses. You may want to inquire every few months regarding how their funds are holding out and remind them to ask their parents to send more funds when necessary to avoid running out. It is unwise to lend money.

Emphasize the Importance of Diet, Clothing, and Changing Weather

As Albertans, we know how the weather can change quickly and drastically. Many foreign students are not aware of this. They need to be taught that when they go out for the day, they need to be prepared for any change in weather. Layering is the best solution for dressing in Alberta's weather. It is also important that a proper diet is maintained to remain healthy.

YOUR NEW FAMILY MEMBER

Experiencing family life is one of the best ways to learn about a culture and allowing your student to take on their own role is important. This role may be quite different from what the student is accustomed to, but it should be one that is natural for you and your family. You will find that treating your student as a family member will create genuine ties of friendship and foster a better understanding of your way of life. Living as a family member, of course, does not mean having special privileges. It may be easier for your student to learn your way of life if you avoid giving preferential treatment. Give them some small household chores, but don't assign tasks as you would normally hire someone to do, such as childcare.

Adapting to a New Culture

Your student will experience many changes during their first few weeks. After the initial excitement of being in a new environment wears off, your student may suffer from culture shock and become homesick. At this point there may be some dissatisfaction on both parts, try to work through this and find a common ground.

If your student feels disorientated and suffers physical side effects you may notice that they become withdrawn, uncommunicative, or moody, and express the desire to return home. This is normal under the circumstances and will likely adjust quickly, remember this is a culture shock and shouldn't be interpreted as a rejection of your family or hospitality. As your student grows accustomed to the new environment they will relax and gradually feel better. It is important not to leave your student alone for long periods of time, isolation may get in the way of them settling in.

Activity is a good cure for homesickness. If the student continues to be withdrawn and show symptoms such as excessive sleeping, marked weight loss or gain, acute depression, or other irregular behaviours, there may be other, more fundamental problems involved, and you should notify the homestay coordinator. We have school based social emotional supports in place to assist your student.

WELLBEING

It can be overwhelming for a student to be far away from home and family, please make an effort to be aware of your student's emotional and physical wellness.

Social Emotional Well Being

Providing opportunities for your new family member to interact with other people will reduce boredom and improve emotional wellbeing. Include your student in your family activities, but as with any teenager, give them adequate time to spend with friends. Whenever possible, include your student in family discussions and decisions. Ask their advice. It might be interesting to learn how another culture might handle certain situations.

Meeting People

You should make an effort to introduce your international student to other young people of the same age group. You might consider planning a reception with

friends and neighbours for this purpose. Although friendships are encouraged for the students, romantic attachments are discouraged.

Communication, Communication, Communication!!!

This will be a learning experience for your family and there may be some ups and downs, awkward moments, confusing situations, and times of disillusionment. Strong communication skills are the key components of every healthy relationship. Sometimes communication is difficult and compromise is needed. Sometimes we need time to think things through. Be open, honest and support your student; we expect that difficult situations will be worked through with calm and respect.

Whether your student is lonely or having trouble with school work, friends etc., your advice and reassurance are always welcome. While you cannot anticipate their every need, transparency will provide a strong foundation for your relationships. Your student is far from home and compassion is necessary to help your student feel accepted, secure, loved and to help overcome culture shock and homesickness.

Culture Shock

- Disorientation and physical discomfort can be expected.
- Compassion and consideration will help overcome culture shock and homesickness.
- In cases where a mutually satisfactory outcome cannot be reached, mediation is available through the Homestay Coordinator.

Physical Well Being

Encourage your student to exercise, get proper sleep, and eat a balanced diet. Most students like to be involved in physical activity, encourage your student to participate. Physical fitness will help them feel well and happy. Provide healthy, nutritious meals and snacks to ensure physical wellbeing.

Spiritual Wellbeing

If your student practices a faith other than your own, you will want to provide a list of places of worship. Very often, they may wish to learn about your family's religion. If so, it would be perfectly appropriate to invite them to attend religious services with you.

Academic Wellbeing

As you would for your own child, you may need to provide academic support for your student. Provide a quiet, well lit and heated space for your student to study.

Adjusting to Climate and Weather

In Alberta we know how the weather can change quickly and drastically. Many foreign students are not aware of this, they need to be taught how to prepare for our Alberta climate. They may be unaware of issues such as frostbite, hypothermia and wind-chill factor, and will need your help in understanding how to be wise about and prepare for a variety of weather conditions.

LEARNING ENGLISH

Most students require assistance with English, keep your language simple and direct but do not talk down to the student. Here are a few tips to help you around the house:

- Speak in short, basic sentences at first, to help reduce confusion if your student arrives with limited English. Students may indicate that they understand when in reality, they do not and may be embarrassed by their comprehension level.
- You need to paraphrase often and check that they understand clearly. This is especially important when giving instructions, so they don't feel they have let you down if they make a mistake or misunderstand you.
- Put sticky labels on common items in the house to help the student learn these names. Put common English words on the refrigerator.
- Use an online translation tool for quick support and to help your student with homework assignments. Help the student by editing their homework with them but be careful not to change the content, even if you do not agree with it.

The process of learning a new language incorporates reading, writing, listening and speaking. Your student may understand quite a bit of what you're saying but may not yet be comfortable expressing freely in English. There may be a **silent period** where your student is absorbing the new environment and family structure and gaining confidence to engage in conversation and ask questions. You can help ensure your student understands what is being said by asking questions that require more than a yes/no response but be patient with early attempts at speaking and try not to be too discouraged if your student doesn't communicate much at first. Once students get settled in at school, their language skills will improve quickly.



WHAT IF PROBLEMS ARISE?

Skiping School

If your student skips school, they will be treated as any other student. However, if the problem persists your student risks being sent home. Please email the international coordinator if the attendance computer calls you about an unverified absence at school.

Disobeying House Rules

Please contact the homestay coordinator if your student continues to disobey house rules after you have reasonably addressed the issue(s) with them. The situation will be reviewed, and a resolution will be determined.

Damage to Property

If a student causes damage to your property, please take pictures and notify the homestay coordinator of the incident immediately. Please note the student is not responsible for normal wear and tear. Likewise, if a member of your household damages a student's belongings please take pictures and notify the homestay coordinator.

Student Doesn't Fit In With Family

This happens seldomly. The homestay coordinator will be in contact with you within the first few weeks of your student's arrival to see how things are going and to answer any questions or concerns that you may have, let them know as soon as possible if you have concerns. If, after reviewing the situation, it is felt the difficulties cannot be resolved, we will determine whether there is another family with interests more closely aligned to the student and if so, the student will be moved.

Emergencies, Accidents and Medical Visits

If your student requires medical attention, you will be authorized to make necessary arrangements.

In an emergency, the student's Alberta Health Care card will provide medical services at all clinics and hospitals in Canada. Services that are not covered by Alberta Health Care may be covered by Medicine Hat Public School Division International Student Health Insurance. Issues

Insurance Claims

International students are required to have adequate medical, life, personal property, and liability insurance to cover all contingencies during the duration of their stay. If the student visits a hospital, a clinic or a pharmacy the student may have to pay first and then get their money back from the insurance company. For reimbursement they will have to submit a claim. These forms are available from the school.

Any costs not covered by the student's insurance are the responsibility of the student's natural parents.

DEPARTURE

Before departure, you should check that the student has their travel documents (passport, visa, return ticket, etc.) in order. In most cases they will need to confirm before departure or risk losing his reservation. Have your student speak with the international coordinator to ensure that they have everything ready that they need for travel.

Consider making a final wish list of plans to do before the student leaves. Many families keep in touch with their students via Whatsapp, Zoom, or Skype. It's great to keep those connections and can create opportunities for host families and students to visit each other in their home countries.

Feedback

You are encouraged to give the MHPSD International Student Program your evaluation of the program:

- its successes,
- its problems, and,
- your suggestions for other homestay families.

And if your experience has been positive, we hope you will tell other interested families about the program.

THANK YOU!

The Medicine Hat Public School Division International Student Program sincerely, thanks you for your important role in promoting friendly relations among our international students. As a Homestay family you are ambassadors for our community, our province, and our country. You are helping to promote cultural diversity and understanding in our world.

Your student is here to experience life in a different culture, help them to do so at every opportunity. For many, this is a once in a lifetime experience, cherish your time and make a ton of memories in this new adventure. Take every chance you can to offer something new – food, cultural events, and sports activities that your student may never be able to experience in their own country. Most importantly have fun!

Scott Howes

International Coordinator