



HOMESTAY ORIENTATION

Your relationship with your Host Family

In a Homestay, your relationship with your host family can be complicated. In some ways, you are 1) like member of the **family**, but you are also 2) a **guest**, and you are also 3) a **renter**.

Because of these different parts of your relationship with your host family, there will be times when you aren't sure if you can or should ask them to help you with something.

During your first month of homestay, don't be afraid to **ask your host family** (or the PELA Homestay Coordinator) about what your obligations are as a homestay student and what their obligations are as your host family.

The First Week of Homestay

1. Give your host family a copy of your **medical insurance information**.
2. Give your host family the **phone number** and **email address** of a family member in your home country.
3. Ask your host family if there are any areas of the house that are **private** (examples: home office, closet).
4. Ask your host family if there are any **house rules** or **policies** for their home.

Transportation

1. Ask your host family to show you how the **public transportation system** works in Portland.
2. Your host family is not obligated to help you travel around Portland.

Meals

1. The host family is responsible for providing all food for **breakfasts**.

The host family is responsible for providing all **dinners**. The host family should be having sit-down dinner with you at least 4 nights a week.

The host family is not responsible for providing **lunch**.

2. If you want **specific breakfast food**, please tell your host family.
3. If you have **specific food needs** or **allergies**, please tell the family. If you ask for food that is very expensive, the host family may ask you to purchase that food yourself.
4. If you don't like some **food** that your family prepares, politely tell them.
5. Tell your family the **approximate time** you will be home for dinner each day. Always call your host family if you will be home later than expected.

Customs & Family Life

1. Remember that you are both a **part of the family** as well as a **guest**.
2. There will be times when your host family may want to **do things on their own**. Please be respectful of this.
3. Your American host family will be different from your own family back home. Keep an **open mind** to **different behaviors**, habits and ways of living.

4. Be **polite** to your host family. Always give **honest** answers and opinions when you speak with your host family.

Chores & Cleaning

1. Ask your host family about what **housecleaning** chores you will need to do. Clean up after yourself when preparing your own meals or snacks.
2. Ask your host family about where **cleaning supplies** are located.
3. Ask your host family to show you how to **wash dishes and clothes**.
4. Ask your host family how to use the shower, oven, microwave and other **appliances**.
5. Keep your **bedroom** clean and tidy. Avoid leaving **food leftovers** or open **food containers** in your bedroom.
6. Ask your host family about what to do with **garbage** and **recycling**. Ask your host family before you throw anything away that isn't yours.

House Rules

1. Ask your host family if there is a "**quiet time**" in the evening. Quiet time is usually when the family goes to bed.
2. If you are under 21, it is illegal to drink **alcohol**. If you are 21 or older, please ask your host family about their rules on alcohol.
3. Ask your host family about their policy regarding **bringing guests** to their house or **having parties** at their house.
4. If you want to (and if the family agrees), you can **babysit** the host family's children. However, you are

not obligated to babysit if you don't want to.

Paying Homestay Rent

1. Read the **Homestay Agreement**. Please contact the PELA office or ask your host family if you have any questions about the Agreement.
2. Your "**homestay month**" begins on the **same day of the month** you started your homestay. This day is when you need to pay rent to your host family each month.

Example: *If you arrived in Portland on 3/25, then you need to pay your homestay rent on the 25th of each month.*

3. You are responsible for **paying the full homestay rent amount** at the beginning of each new homestay month, even if you do not have breakfast or dinner at your homestay.

Pre-paid Housing Fees

*If you paid the **\$300 Housing Deposit** before you arrived, then you will need to pay your host family **any remaining Homestay Rent** for your first month of homestay. You need to pay this by the end of your second week of homestay.*

NOTE: *PELA will send your pre-paid Homestay Rent and \$25 Airport Fee to your host family about two weeks after your arrival.*

4. If you know the **exact date you will be leaving** your homestay, please let your host family know as soon as possible. This allows the host family to plan for future homestay students.

Keep your Family Informed

1. **10 days before the end of each homestay month**, tell your family if you plan to stay or leave the homestay next month.
2. If you tell your host family **less than 10 days** before you move out, they may charge you an extra fee from your time of notification up to 10 nights.

Ask your host family about their "Move-Out Notification" policy!

3. If you know the **exact date you will be moving out of your homestay**, please tell the host family.

Safety & Comfort

1. Your Host Family wants you to be **happy, comfortable, and safe**.
2. Talk to your host family about their **recommendations** on being safe in Portland.
3. **If you have any problems**, please talk to your host family. The PELA Housing Coordinator can give you advice on how to talk with them.
4. **If the problem is not fixed**, please talk to Chris Quinn, the PELA Housing Coordinator.
5. Always carry your **Host Family's name, address and phone number** with you.

Emergency Contact Information

PELA Housing Coordinator: Chris Quinn
Email: chrisq@portlandenglish.edu
Phone: 503-984-8052

You can view this PELA Homestay Orientation information online at

