

August 28th, 2020

Homestay COVID-19 Policies

In light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, students are expected to follow specific policies to ensure their own and their host family's safety. These rules should be followed in addition to the standard Homestay policies found on VGC's website (<https://vgc.ca/policies/>).

Before Arrival:

- Anyone arriving from outside of Canada must self-isolate for 14 days and complete a [self-isolation plan](#).
- Depending on availability, this may be in a homestay, VGC's Student Residence, or a hotel.
- When you know the dates you want to arrive in Vancouver:
 1. Inform VGC of your estimated date of arrival.
 2. VGC will tell you if there is space in homestay or residence (Special price will be applied to the residence stay during 14 days).
 3. Once confirmed, please book your flights. If your dates change, it will affect accommodation availability. VGC will try to work with date changes within a week from the original date.
- The availability of homestays that allow 14 days of isolation will be limited.

You should not use public transportation to get to your homestay or during your 2 weeks of isolation. VGC encourages all students arriving in Canada to organize their airport pick-up using VGC's airport transfer service for your own and others' safety. If you have not organized your pick-up with VGC, you will be asked to provide a detailed explanation on how you intend to get from the airport to your homestay.

After Arrival:

Each host family will have specific rules for students during isolation, so make sure you ask your host family about these upon arrival. Be aware that communication may be limited during isolation so keep in touch with your host family by text/WhatsApp or talk to them in common areas of the house with two meters' distance. As per British Columbia's provincial guidelines, here are some regulations that all students need to follow when staying with a host family:

House Rules

- You must stay in your room for the first two weeks. You can only leave the house for medically necessary appointments.
- Do not go to school, other public areas or use public transportation.
- Avoid contact with older adults or those with existing medical conditions.
- If contact cannot be avoided, keep two metres' distance, keep interactions brief and wear a non-medical mask.

Hygiene

- Keep your bedroom and bathroom clean and regularly disinfect high-contact surfaces.
- Ask your host family for cleaning products such as bleach and antibacterial spray.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Wash all cutlery, dishes, and cups with soap after use.
- Cover your mouth when coughing/sneezing.

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- If you feel sick or show any symptoms of the virus, please inform your host family, seek advice from HealthLink BC (dial 811) and call the VGC emergency line immediately. If you are worried about your mental wellbeing, contact VGC or your host family straight away.
- Neither VGC nor your host family will be held responsible if a student contracts the virus while in homestay. Students who do catch the virus are expected to remain in their homestay and quarantine for a further two weeks in accordance with BC's provincial health advice.

Meals

- Your host family will bring your meals to your room or ask you to eat separately from them.
- After two weeks you will be able to eat together with your host family.
- Snacks/extra items are the student's responsibility. Ask your host family for help with grocery deliveries if necessary.

Post-Isolation:

Even after isolation, it is important that you observe certain rules to keep safe. Each family will have their own rules so ask them about these when you arrive. Here are some you can expect while in homestay:

- Observe social distancing by avoiding crowded places and maintaining 2 metres' distance with others.
- You are allowed to attend school after 2 weeks but ask for your host family's permission if you plan on taking part in any other activities.
- Wear a non-medical mask and avoid touching surfaces when taking public transport.
- You must not invite guests to your homestay unless you have your host family's prior permission.
- Wash your hands thoroughly when arriving at your homestay.
- If you are unclear about your host family's rules, contact vgchomestay@vgc.ca or talk to the Homestay Coordinator.
- All deadlines for homestay cancellations and extensions remain the same. You are required to provide two weeks for both cancellations and extensions.

It is very important that you print these policies and your Homestay Profiles and bring them with you when you travel to Canada. Please show them to staff at the border.

Please note - VGC reserves the right to change these policies at any time in line with the BC government's updates regarding COVID-19 safety measures.