

## ACCOMMODATION GUIDELINES

For New Students

The international Department has put this booklet together as a guideline to your possible accommodation needs.

If you need assistance of any kind please contact the International Department – phone +64 3 684 0835.

**After Hours Emergency Number – 0800 426 725**

Please let operator know you are an international student



## Living with a homestay family

*The Student's responsibility is...*

- To keep the host family informed of their whereabouts.
- To maintain the house rules; e.g. no smoking in the house, no food in bedrooms, telephone times, or other rules for the rest of the family.
- To give 2 weeks' notice to the homestay family and the international department if they are to move accommodation. A form is available at International Department office.
- To share the cost of holiday expenses & meals additional to normal Homestay costs
- To respect your host family's privacy.
- To be sensitive and co-operative in the family environment.

*The Host Family will:*

- Provide a separate bedroom with suitable heating
- Provide a table for study with adequate lighting
- Provide suitable storage facilities (chest of drawers, wardrobe)
- Provide two meals a day with lunch requirements
- Provide other food being available to eat at any time
- Provide a key for the student to be able to get into the house if the family is not there or have gone to bed
- Be prepared to assist with your washing and ironing
- Respect the student's privacy
- Be culturally sensitive and flexible and to be prepared to learn, in advance, some of the student's customs

## Homestay notes for students

*Keeping these simple rules of respect will help make your homestay experience a happy one.*

1. Be part of the family – Respect them and be friendly. They will treat you the same way.
2. Respect the house as a home – it is not a hotel. Respect personal and private property of your family. Always ask before borrowing or using any items.
3. Supply your own tissues, hair shampoo, soap and toothpaste.
4. Always let your family where you are going and when you are coming home.
5. Tell your family if you are not coming home for dinner before 5pm.
6. Ask for permission to invite your friends to your house.
7. Keep your key to your homestay in a safe place.
8. Before any international student leaves Timaru for extended or overnight trips or visits, they must have let their homestay family know in advance.
9. If any damage occurs to the host house e.g. carpet is damaged, you, the student is responsible for the replacement or cleaning costs.

## The bedroom

Please feel free to study in your bedroom, or the allotted place that your family shows you. Please do not spend all of your time in your bedroom however.

Members of your host family will generally knock on your door before entering but some (small children) may walk into your room without knocking. This is because they are treating you as a family member. Try not to worry about this.

There are no locks on bedroom doors in our country. If a door is shut please knock.

The bed may be different from your country. We sleep between the sheets which we wash each week. Ask your family to show you how to make your bed.

New Zealand families like to let sunlight and fresh air into bedrooms. We pull back the curtains and open the windows during the day. Please ask advice before opening the windows. Please keep your room tidy.

You must NOT smoke in the house, unless your host families say it is OK.

## Bed Time

Most New Zealand families go to bed around 10pm. If you stay up later, make sure you are quiet and turn all the lights and heaters off when you go to bed.

## Using the shower and bathroom

In most New Zealand homes the bathroom is very busy in the morning.

Try to be as quick as you can be, at this time, when you use it.

### Bathing and Showering

Ask your family what time is best to have your own shower or bath - at night or in the morning

- You should supply your own personal toiletries (shampoo, toothpaste, soap)
- When taking a shower; pull the curtain across or shut the shower door and put a bath mat on the floor. Do not throw water on the floor as our floors do not have drains.
- Only take 5-10 minutes in the shower. We usually shower once per day. A second shower may be taken with your host's permission.
- Try not to use too much water. Hot water in New Zealand is expensive as it is heated by electricity.

### Laundry

Ask where to put your dirty clothes. If you wish to do hand washing, it is done in the laundry, not the bathroom.

Do not place wet clothes on or near heaters to dry. This can cause a fire.

## Meal times and eating

- You will receive two meals a day Monday to Friday plus snacks; you will be shown how to prepare your own breakfast and how to clean up afterwards.
- Your homestay will prepare dinner; if they will not be home for dinner, they will prepare a meal for you to heat up.
- On the weekends you will also receive lunch; you may prepare this yourself and please clean up afterwards.
- Host families may appreciate help to lay the table, serve the meal, clear the table, do the dishes etc.

**Remember: you must always tell your family, in advance, when you will not be home for a meal.**

## Family outings

It is fun to join with the family outings and visits. This is a chance to see the country, make new friends and practice your English. If your family goes somewhere that involves expense, for example, a movie, offer to pay your share. They may not accept it, but will feel pleased that you offered to pay. This may be different from your own country where a host may pay for everything. Please be friendly when meeting new people. If you can't speak the language a smile is a good start.

## Pets

If you stated on your application form that you liked animals, then chances are you will have either a cat or a dog in your house. These animals often live inside as well as out and sleep on chairs and beds. If you are not happy about this, please talk to your host family about it.

## Keeping warm

New Zealand houses are usually bigger and much colder than those in your country. The living area is usually heated but not the bedrooms.

Most New Zealanders prefer to wear a warm jersey than turn on a heater. It is essential to have warm clothes.

When you are cold, try to do it the New Zealand way first – put on a warm jersey, warm trousers and socks.

Timaru weather is very changeable. It is important to take a warm jersey every day with you.

### Electric Blankets

Some families will provide you with an electric blanket on your bed to warm it. **DO NOT sleep with it turned on.** Make sure it is turned off during the day otherwise it may cause a fire.

### Heaters

Do not leave your heater on for long periods of time. Turn the heater off when you leave the room, as electricity is expensive in New Zealand.

## Valuables/money

Be careful with money. Carry only what you think you will need. Just like any city in the world, not everyone is honest. Do not lend large amounts of money to other students.

## Hostel accommodation

Hostel accommodation provides the opportunity for students to have more 'freedom' than in a homestay but less responsibility than if flatting. Cleaning of the kitchen and the general living areas is carried-out once per week by management. Individual rooms and bathroom areas are the entire responsibility of the students. Materials and equipment required for the cleaning and tidying of these areas, is provided.

### **Sample of General Hostel Rules:**

1. No smoking, alcohol or drugs on the premises.
2. Quiet between 11.00pm and 8.00am.
3. Payment of rent to be made in advance by dates specified.
4. No posters/pictures etc on walls - please use the pin boards provided. Damage is expected to be paid for.
5. Guests are to be entertained in lounges - not bedrooms. No "overnight" visitors, unless by prior arrangement.
6. Two weeks' notice of intention to leave must be given, or two weeks rental forfeited (or part thereof).
7. Noise levels - i.e. loud music, yelling, banging doors or heavy tramping of feet on hard floors etc is prohibited, especially between 11.00pm and 8.00am.
8. Heaters, lights, TV, radios, stereos etc are not to be left on unattended.
9. Bikes are to be left in bike shed (not in the hostel).
10. Fire doors are to be left closed at all times.

**FOR FIRE SAFETY REASONS, HEATERS MUST NOT BE LEFT ON OVERNIGHT OR WHEN ROOM IS UNATTENDED.**

## Bathroom

1. Showers - 10 minutes maximum time allowed.
2. Windows to be left open in bathroom after use.
3. Always leave basins, baths and showers clean and dry for the next person.
4. Do not leave personal gear on benches.
5. Flush and clean toilet after use. Use materials provided.

## Kitchens

1. Clean and dry all pots / utensils and put away after use.
2. Wipe ranges and benches after use.
3. Fridges have limited space. Do not leave unnecessary food in them. Clean up spills and leaks.

## Lounges

1. Be courteous and considerate.
2. Keep tidy - no clothing / belongings or used cups / packets etc to be left in lounge.
3. Last person out is responsible for turning off all lights / heaters etc.

### Laundry

1. Do not leave any clothing (wet or dry) in laundry facilities.
2. Use cold water and cold rinse in washing machines.
3. Take in clothes from line as soon as dry.
4. Do not drape wet clothing on furniture for drying.

### Bedrooms

1. To be kept clean, tidy and vacuumed each week. Keep window sills clean.
2. Use heaters sparingly. Do not leave on overnight or left unattended. **(Most important for fire safety).**
3. No “guests” to be entertained in bedrooms - (please use lounges).

## Flatting

Flatting may be a good option for older students, and those who are familiar with living in New Zealand.

If you decide to live in a flat, it is likely that you will have to provide your own furniture and pay for your share of the expenses (electricity, water, phone/internet, Sky TV). In some flats you will share groceries and cooking, while in others you will buy groceries and cook meals individually.

Rental prices will vary greatly according to location, type of accommodation, and number of others living there.

Choose a flat carefully and do not rush into any flatting agreement.

The best way to find a flat is to look in the Saturday local newspaper or use Real Estate Agents that are also mentioned in the newspaper.

For tenancy advice and information call 0800 TENANCY (0800 83 62 62), visit our website [www.dbh.govt.nz](http://www.dbh.govt.nz) or email us at [info@dbh.govt.nz](mailto:info@dbh.govt.nz)