

# Go Canada

Calle Musgo 5, Bajo C

Madrid, 28023

Phone: +34 910 24 92 37

Email: [homestay@gocanada.es](mailto:homestay@gocanada.es)

Web: [www.gocanada.es](http://www.gocanada.es)

2023-2024 Ottawa Edition

# HOST GUIDE

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## 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Thank you for choosing to be part of GoCanada's homestay program! The opportunity to host an international student is a wonderful, eye-opening experience and we would like to thank you in advance for choosing to embark on this rewarding journey to host a student from Spain.

This booklet has been prepared for the use of homestay families in order to make the most positive experience, answer questions, and act as a valuable reference throughout the hosting experience. As we work exclusively with students from Spain, here, you will also find specific insights into the Spanish culture, which will help you better understand the student and aid them during the time of adjustment.

We invite both new and returning hosts to read this booklet thoroughly as it has been assembled to prepare you in the best possible manner for the exciting hosting experience that is to come! **For returning hosts, please make sure to read through this version of the guide carefully, as some information has greatly changed from previous years.**

## 2. LIST OF CONTACTS

Name	Position	Role/Correspondence Type	Contact Information E-mail
Anna Choutova	GoCanada Homestay Coordinator	⇒ General Communication ⇒ Initial Homestay Placements ⇒ Progress Reports	homestay@gocanada.es +34 608 566 584
Estefanía García/ Ingrid Martín-Caro	GoCanada Program Coordinators	⇒ Conflict Resolution ⇒ Progress Reports	coordinador@gocanada.es +34 675 812 142
Janelle Smith	GoCanada Custodian	⇒ Homestay Interviews ⇒ Home visits ⇒ Emergency contact	nelliemjd@yahoo.ca (613) 316 7727
Anne-Marie Bereza	OCDSB Coordinator (full year students)	⇒ General inquiries (full year)	annemarie.bereza@ocdsb.ca (613) 239 0438
Constantine Ioannou	OCDSB Coordinator (Short-term students)	⇒ General inquiries (short-term)	constantine@ocdsb.ca (613) 239 0187
Jill Doherty	OCDSB Academic Advisor	⇒ Academic-related matters	Jill.doherty@ocdsb.ca (613) 239 0134 (ext. 2106)
Vicente Conte	OCDSB Student Activities Coordinator	⇒ Activities-related matters	vicente.conte@ocdsb.ca (613) 239 0277

In addition to the afore listed contacts, it is possible to access the Ottawa- Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) 2023/24 Student's Handbook by clicking [here](#). It contains additional contact information such as a specific contact person at each school.

## 3. HOMESTAY PLACEMENTS

### 3.1 ELIGIBILITY TO HOST

**Note:** A summary of steps to hosting and the required documents are available on [www.gocanada.es/homestay-application-and-resources](http://www.gocanada.es/homestay-application-and-resources). You may fill out and submit the required forms via the provided links. Any supporting documents, such as police record checks, may be submitted via the following email address: [homestay@gocanada.es](mailto:homestay@gocanada.es).

To be eligible to host a student, you must:

1. Fill out the Homestay Information form.
  - Online version of the form can be filled out and submitted [here](#).
2. Provide a photo of:
  - all the members of the family posing together;
  - the house from the outside front;
  - a common area such as the kitchen or the living room;
  - the bedroom where the student will be staying.
3. Provide bank account information for direct deposit.
  - Online version of the form can be filled out and submitted [here](#);
  - Alternatively, you may provide a void cheque via email ([homestay@gocanada.es](mailto:homestay@gocanada.es)) or in person.
4. Provide Police Record Checks for all persons living at the household over the age of 19 years.
5. Complete a home visit with one of our Homestay Coordinators.
  - Following review of your application, you will be contacted by our Homestay Coordinator who will schedule an interview at your home. Please note that the Homestay Coordinator will ask to have a tour of the house during the visit.
6. Provide Information Update form regarding any changes in the homestay (to be completed before the start of a new homestay placement period -usually in November of each year-).
  - Online version of the form can be filled out and submitted [here](#).

### 3.2 WHO ARE THE STUDENTS?

GoCanada works exclusively in Spain, so all our students that come to study in Ottawa are Spanish. Students are typically between the ages of 14 and 19 years and come for either a short-term program (1 - 5 months) or the full academic year (10 months). During their time in Ottawa, they study at one of the Ottawa Carleton District School Board's high schools. Students typically arrive during the last week of August or We provide the exact arrival and departure information a couple of months before the student's arrival.

### 3.3 HOW DO HOMESTAY PLACEMENTS WORK?

Once you have submitted all the paperwork and completed a home visit with a Homestay Coordinator, you will be entered into our homestay database and will be eligible to host a student. Program coordinators begin to make homestay placements upon receipt of student registration, which typically happens between November and April. While not typical, some placements may be made before or after these dates. Placements are usually based on availability, school preferences, and personal information provided by the student. Some students may specifically request families with children; others may request a particular area; while still others may have dietary restrictions that will determine their placement. As much as possible, we try to accommodate all the requests of the student as well as the homestay family.

Please note that submitting the Homestay Information form along with all the required documents does not guarantee that a student will be placed in your home. The demand for homestay accommodation varies from year to year and largely depends on the following factors:

- ✎ Fluctuations in short- vs. long-term student registrations.
  - Demand for short and long-term registrations varies from year to year. Therefore, if you have a particular preference for one term length over the other, it may be more difficult for us to find you a suitable match.
- ✎ Student gender preferences.
  - For example, if you prefer a male student, while the majority of our students for one year happen to be females, it will be hard for us to match you with a student.
- ✎ Available spots at schools.
  - Some high schools reach international student capacity faster than others. If no spots are available at the schools near your home, we might not be able to offer you a student that year.
- ✎ Specific requests such as homestays with small kids, teenagers, other international students, or couples without kids.

Sometimes we will provide you with a prospective student profile, but even if you confirm that you would like to host him/her, the match will not be completed until GoCanada confirms so in writing and specifically mentions that first contact may be made with the student. We will typically ask you to sign a Commitment to Host form as a final step to completing the match.

Before the student's arrival, we will also ask you, the student, and the student's parents/legal guardians to sign the Homestay and Student Expectations Agreement.

## 4. HOMESTAY FEES

The standard homestay fee for hosting a student during the 2023/2024 academic year is **\$1,000 per month** (unless otherwise agreed with the student and his/her family).

The homestay fee will be paid directly to you by the student's parents/legal guardians or by GoCanada. It is up to the student's parents/legal guardians to choose if they would like to pay directly or if they would like for GoCanada to manage the payment of fees. In any circumstance, the monthly stipend will be transferred to your bank account via direct deposit. The stipend is to cover room and board, airport transfers, and all the particulars listed in the Homestay and Student Expectations Agreement.

We seek out homestay families that host students for the cultural experience and not financial gains. Therefore, the monthly stipend the student pays should only be considered as a means to bear the expense associated with providing this cultural experience. Students can easily tell which families are participating for financial gains and which are doing so sincerely for the cultural exchange, and the placement will simply not work if the student feels that the family's main objective for hosting is money.

The first month's homestay fee will be paid several days prior to the student's arrival. The second month and thereafter will be paid on the anniversary date of the student's arrival to your home, or several days in advance. For example, if the student arrives on September 2nd, your anniversary date will be the 2nd of each month.

If there are several unaccounted days at the end of the hosting period, the daily rate will be CAD\$33. Should there be a homestay switch as per [Section. 8.6.2](#), the prorated amount already received corresponding with the nights that the student has not effectively stayed with the homestay family must be refunded via e-transfer to a Canadian bank account to be provided by GoCanada, unless an agreement has been reached with the student's family to retain all or part of the exceeding fee received, due to the occurrence of special circumstances (the student's family will need to confirm this).

## 5. COMMON EXPECTATIONS

A homestay family is an integral part of the life of an international student. The homestay family provides more than just room and board, but a home away from home. Caring supervision and parenting on the part of the homestay family are essential for the international student's growth and development.

Likewise, a large part of the equilibrium in the homestay environment depends on the student's collaboration, communication and open-mindedness.







In order to ensure a positive experience for both parties, students and homestay families must have

common expectations regarding everyday living arrangements. The following expectations have been laid out for both students and homestays to create a positive experience. These expectations are further outlined in the Homestay and Student Expectations Agreement. This Agreement must be signed by the student, the host, and the student's parents/legal guardians prior to the hosting period.

**Please refer to the Agreement, which has been sent along with this document, to review each party's expectations.**

## 6. PREPARING FOR YOUR STUDENT'S ARRIVAL

The following is a checklist to be completed prior to the student's arrival:

-  Submit Police Record Checks, banking information, and Homestay and Student Expectations Agreement and, if required, Commitment to Host form (templates of these documents can be found [here](#)).
-  Write the student an introduction email and keep in constant communication with the student. This will allow both parties to get to know each other and make the transition as smooth as possible. This is also a good opportunity for homestay families to meet the student's parents and discuss things such as curfews and mutual expectations regarding the experience. Students will have already written a letter addressed to the homestay families, which will have been submitted by GoCanada in the students' profiles upon homestay placement. **Therefore, it makes sense for the homestay families to send an email to students first once the placement is confirmed on both ends and GoCanada informs the homestay families that they may contact their respective student.**
-  Ensure you have an extra house key to give to the student for the duration of their stay.
-  Familiarize yourself with this Guide for Homestay Families.
-  Contact GoCanada about any changes in the homestay composition, such as hosting another student, obtaining a pet, or having a family member move in or out. If you do have changes to report, you may do so [here](#).
-  Prepare the student's bedroom and bathroom for arrival, including bedding, towels, and toiletries.

## 7. ARRIVAL AND FIRST WEEKS

Please refer to our Pre-Arrival Manual, which has been sent along with this document, to review the arrival protocols.

## 8. WHILE YOU HOST

## 8.1 MEALS

The host family is expected to provide 3 nourishing meals per day and snacks. During the first few days after arrival, it is advised to take the student grocery shopping and encourage them to pick out things they like to eat. This will open up a conversation about food and ensure that the student feels comfortable with the food served at the house. While students should be encouraged to adjust to the Canadian culture, including mealtime practices, please also be aware of the following potential cultural food differences:

- ✎ Olive oil is abundantly used in the Spanish cuisine;
- ✎ Biggest meal is eaten at lunch;
- ✎ Lunch is typically eaten between 2-3 pm, while dinner is eaten around 9-10 pm;
- ✎ Spicy food is not typical and not easily tolerated;
- ✎ Mealtime is a cherished activity to socialize and spend quality time with family;
- ✎ Meals are not eaten on-the-go.

### 8.1.1 BREAKFAST

At breakfast, the student can prepare their own meal, or the host can prepare the meal for the student. In either case, be sure the student knows where the food is kept and what options are available. Breakfast should include a combination of the following:

- ✎ Protein such as yogurt, cheese, eggs, peanut butter or cereal with milk;
- ✎ Fruit;
- ✎ Bread, muffin, waffles or pancakes; and
- ✎ A beverage such as milk, juice, tea, or coffee.

Common feedback we receive from our past students is that they love to prepare a “typical” Canadian breakfast together with the homestay family on the weekends, which can include pancakes, bacon/sausages/ham, eggs, etc. This could be a fantastic activity to try on the weekends that the student would greatly appreciate!

### 8.1.2 LUNCH

A packed lunch should be provided to the student during the school week. Many students have never prepared lunch by themselves, so please be patient in showing them how. In Spain, it is not typical to eat sandwiches every day for lunch, so the student will appreciate variety. A good lunch option is to pack leftovers from dinner the night before. A packed lunch should consist of:

- ✎ Protein;
- ✎ Bread;



- ✎ Vegetables and/or fruit;
- ✎ Snack; and
- ✎ Beverage.

### 8.1.3 DINNER

Dinner is to be prepared by the host. Make sure the student is aware of dinnertime and please encourage them to join you for the meal as often as possible. Sitting together at dinner is a great opportunity for students and hosts to share conversation, bond, and for the student to practice English. If the student is to be away for dinnertime, a meal should be available for them when they return, unless agreed beforehand that the student will not be eating at the house. Dinner should consist of:

- ✎ Protein source (meat, chicken, fish, legumes, etc.);
- ✎ Vegetables or salad;
- ✎ A carbohydrate such as rice, potatoes, pasta or bread; and
- ✎ A beverage.

Fast food/take-out dinners should be limited to no more than once a week.

### 8.1.4 GENERAL NOTE ABOUT FOOD

In respect to meals in general, please serve your usual fare, but note what the student is eating. They may be too embarrassed or shy to let you know that they don't like something, or that the portion is not enough. Please note that students are usually teenagers who are still developing, so it is not uncommon that they require to eat a lot of food. Always have extras just in case and offer seconds, while also not being too persistent. To get a better idea of the student's satisfaction with food, observe the following:

- ✎ Does the student finish his or her plate very quickly?
- ✎ Does the student feel like he or she is unenthusiastic about the food being served?
- ✎ Does the student make plans to eat out with friends often? Although it may simply mean that the student is social, it often indicates that the student is not too pleased with the food being served at home.

Comfort foods are a great way to help the student feel more at ease living away from home, so if you see something at the supermarket from Spain, or if you would like to visit a nearby Spanish restaurant, the student would surely appreciate the gesture! Another great activity is to prepare a typical Spanish meal at home and encourage the student to participate (or to take charge of the operation!). As with most cases, Spanish people are proud of their culture and would love to share parts of it with you.

## 8.2 HEALTH INSURANCE

Each student will have all the proper medical insurance coverage for the duration of their stay. The medical insurance provider is StudyInsured. Students will have full medical coverage from the day they arrive in Canada, including coverage of illnesses and expenses related to COVID-19. General information regarding the health insurance may be found [here](#), while a summary of the coverage can be found [here](#).

Students will be informed regarding medical insurance functioning at the online orientation session held during the last week of August, and receive their policy information and eCard via email prior to arrival or within the first few days. Please ensure that the student shares the policy information with you, prints out the foldable eCard sent by the insurance provider and carries it at all times. Please have the information available for any doctor's visits and provide the medical insurance information to the clinic right away.

In case of an emergency, the homestay family should call the phone number shown on the student's insurance eCard (866-883-9787) and coordinate the best way to proceed. It is always preferred that the student does not need to pay anything when they go to a clinic, and the best way to secure this is by calling the insurance company. Alternatively, it is possible to find direct-pay medical facilities, which entail no cost for the student, using [this link](#).

If a clinic requires the student to pay the fee for the visit and any completed procedures, it is of utmost importance that the student is provided with official receipts and any medical report that may have been issued to use for reimbursement. The same applies if the student is prescribed medication and needs to purchase it at a pharmacy. The student must keep such documents to complete the medical insurance claim, with the assistance of the host family. It is possible to find detailed instructions on how to submit a claim (including the medical insurance claim form) [here](#).

If you have any questions regarding the functioning of the insurance policy or how to submit a claim, please contact GoCanada. We will be happy to assist you.

### 8.3 WINTER CLOTHES

Temperatures in Ottawa during the winter differ significantly from those students are used to in Spain. Many of them have never experienced the low temperatures that Ottawa residents have to face each year, and it is not uncommon for them to not bring appropriate clothes for the season. Students will appreciate any advice coming from their homestay family concerning winter clothes, including going shopping with them, if needed. Please bear in mind that in most cases the student will only be in Canada for one winter, so do not advise them to purchase very expensive clothes, as they will have no practical use for them back in Spain, and many times they will not even have space in their luggage to bring them back home. If a member of your family has a winter coat or any other item that they do not plan to use or that they don't mind sharing, offering it to the student will be seen as a kind gesture and will probably save them hundreds of dollars.

Some students may be too shy or will try to avoid trouble asking for help regarding this matter, so a good

way to face the issue is to approach the student when temperatures begin to drop and discuss with them if what they brought is enough. Then, agree on an action plan, if needed.

## 8.4 MONEY







Students will have money available for personal expenses such as field trips, movie outings, dinners out with friends, shopping, etc. If you plan to go out for a meal as a family, you are expected to bear the cost of the student's food, as you have agreed to provide three meals per day. You are not to lend money to the student and the student should not ask to borrow money. If the latter occurs, please notify GoCanada. In the same manner, the student should never be asked to lend money to the homestay family, even if it is just because they don't have cash at the time and need to make a payment. Typically, students will bring some cash with them upon arrival and will have access to their debit/credit card for use during their stay. Their bank card will be linked to their parents' account, which the parents will be able to monitor as they deem fit. If, due to extraordinary circumstances, the homestay family has to make a payment on behalf of the student, the relevant receipts must be immediately sent to the student's family or GoCanada for a prompt reimbursement by the former.

In the event of the student joining the homestay family's vacation, partial or full payment of transportation, accommodation and board may be requested. This will need to be agreed in writing beforehand by the student's parents/legal guardians and the homestay family.

## 8.5 CONVERSATION

One of the main objectives of the student's experience is to improve English. While some students already have a strong English base, others may have only basic knowledge of the language. The ability and willingness to communicate freely in English may also depend largely on the individual. Some students are quiet and shy, so they may feel overly apprehensive and insecure to speak English. Other students are outgoing and chatty, and may have an easier time to "go with the flow" to make themselves understood.

Whatever the case is, there are certain points you can keep in mind to help the student grow and become a more proficient English speaker:

-  Be patient;
-  Talk slowly and separate your words;
-  Avoid using excessive slang;
-  When you do use idioms and slang, explain what you mean. This will help the student learn the way Canadians "really" speak.
-  Avoid asking, "Do you understand?" Students will typically say "Yes" for the sake of harmony.
-  Instead, ask the student to tell you what they think you are saying.

- ✎ If you see that the student is not understanding something, try rephrasing.
- ✎ Ask student open-ended questions, such as "What activities do you enjoy during your free time?"
- ✎ Do not try to correct every mistake the student makes when speaking. This can often make the student feel insecure and can make them lose their train of thought. Instead, wait for the student to finish, and then make the necessary corrections, if necessary.
- ✎ Even if you or some member of the family can speak Spanish, please avoid using it in front of the student.
- ✎ Most importantly, speak English at all times and be genuine in your conversations. If the student feels your warmth, lack of judgement, eagerness to help and bond, and your sincere interest in their well-being, they will gain confidence and be more eager to communicate!

### 8.5.1 TYPICAL MISTAKES MADE BY SPANISH STUDENTS IN ENGLISH

- ✎ Using "to have" instead of "to be" for phrases such as:
  - I have cold (I am cold);
  - I have 15 years (I am 15 years old);
  - I have hungry (I am hungry);
  - I have sleep (I am sleepy).
- ✎ Interchanging "he" and "she" when speaking:
  - In Spanish, pronouns are typically left out of the conversation because Spanish verb endings often render them redundant. This leads to a lot of individuals interchanging "he" and "she" or "his" and "hers" when speaking in English.
- ✎ Saying "I am boring" when they actually mean "I am bored".
- ✎ Using "funny" when they actually mean "fun", or vice versa:
  - Watching horror films is funny (Watching horror films is fun);
  - The soccer game was funny (The soccer game was fun).

## 8.6 DEALING WITH ISSUES OR CONCERNS

### 8.6.1 CONFLICT RESOLUTION - WHO DO I CONTACT?

If you have a problem you would like to discuss with us, we are always here to help and support you. We will assist you in any way we can and will act as a mediator between you, the student, the student's parents/legal guardians, and the student's school, as necessary.

Below, we have outlined who should be contacted in each situation:

**GENERAL INQUIRIES (NON-URGENT MATTERS):** Please contact Anna Choutova at [homestay@gocanada.es](mailto:homestay@gocanada.es).

**ISSUES THAT REQUIRE URGENT ATTENTION:** Please contact Estefanía García at [coordinador@gocanada.es](mailto:coordinador@gocanada.es) and cc: [homestay@gocanada.es](mailto:homestay@gocanada.es). You may also reach Estefanía via phone call or WhatsApp using +34 675 812 142. If Estefanía cannot be reached or if it's nighttime in Spain, please contact the student's custodian Janelle Smith via email ([nelliemjd@yahoo.ca](mailto:nelliemjd@yahoo.ca)) or phone ((613) 316 7727) (if contacting by email, please cc: [homestay@gocanada.es](mailto:homestay@gocanada.es) and [coordinador@gocanada.es](mailto:coordinador@gocanada.es)). **The custodian should only be contacted in emergency situations.**

For other contact information, please refer to [Section 2](#).

### 8.6.2 CHANGE OF HOMESTAY

Homestay placements are not a science, so although precautions are taken to ensure the best matches possible, sometimes things just don't work out and the student may need to be moved. This is not to be viewed as criticism on the part of the homestay family nor the student.

If, for whatever reason, the match isn't working out, a homestay switch can be requested by both the student and the homestay family. Some reasons are more likely than others to result in a homestay switch, for example, if either the homestay family or the student do not meet the expectations outlined in the Homestay and Student Expectations Agreement.

In any event, prior to initiating the switch, we will always do our best to mediate and remedy the issue. Often, the issue can be resolved through communication and mutual understanding. If a solution cannot be found to make both parties happy, we will:

- ✎ Ensure the homestay switch is dealt with delicately as to minimize any uncomfortable moments between the students and their current homestay;
- ✎ Ensure the switch is made as quickly as possible; however, please be patient as it may take some time for us to find another suitable homestay family for the student;
- ✎ Coordinate the pick-up arrangements with the new homestay family;
- ✎ Coordinate any refunds that may apply.

Please note that the students we send to study in Ottawa are teenagers, which is a very delicate age. They are still very dependent on their parents and will seek their attention first, should a problem arise.

Sometimes, the student's version of events will differ from yours, but it is likely that the parents will tend to put greater importance on what their child is saying. In this circumstance, we will ensure to get both sides of the story and mediate accordingly. Please understand that sometimes, although you may feel that the student's points are unwarranted, the parents will still demand a homestay change even after adequate mediation. In this situation, we will be obliged to honour the parents' wishes to make the switch.

## 8.7 CUSTODIANSHIP

Each student will be assigned a Custodian to act as their legal guardian in front of the Government of Canada during their stay in Canada. Students will be given their assigned Custodian's contact information. This person can be contacted in case of emergency, but will not deal with day-to-day matters the way Homestay and Program Coordinators do. Unless otherwise specified, your student's custodian will be **Janelle Smith**, as outline in [Section 2](#).

## 8.8 HOMESTAY VISITS

To join GoCanada's Homestay Program, all host families will be required to have an in-person interview at their home with GoCanada's Custodian.

Additionally, our local Custodian in Ottawa will schedule one visit per school year with each student to check in and ensure that there are no issues or concerns. Unless otherwise agreed, this visit will take place at the homestay. After meeting with the student, the Custodian may also ask to briefly speak with the host to make sure that the host is happy with the hosting experience and to discuss any potential concerns.

You will be contacted via email by one of GoCanada's Homestay Coordinators to set up any and all homestay visits with the Custodian.

## 8.9 STUDENT REPORTS

As much as it is hard for a student to embark on the adventure to study abroad, it is also hard for the student's family to let their child go. To give the student's family back home a peace of mind, **progress reports will be prepared and sent to the student's family 2 weeks after the student's arrival and every 3 months after the student's arrival, starting from their first day with you.** For returning homestays, please note that the reports are now a lot shorter and easier to fill out.

The initial Progress Report must be filled out 2 weeks after the student's arrival. Following the Initial Report, please submit a completed Progress Report every third month the student is with you. You may fill out and submit the online form [here](#).

For example, if the student arrives on September 2nd, the following Progress Report schedule would apply:

Progress Report	Date to be submitted
Initial report	September 15
Progress report 1	November 30
Progress report 2	February 29
Progress report 3	May 31

If you are hosting a short-term student, only the Progress Reports corresponding to their time with you will apply. For example, if you are hosting a student for 3 months, you will need to submit the Initial Report and

Progress Report 1.

The Program Coordinator will get in touch with you periodically to remind you when the report is due. This is also a great chance to reflect on any issues that may have come up and raise any concerns to the Program Coordinator.

It goes without saying that information regarding the student's stay with the homestay family is not limited to the scheduled progress reports. If there is a matter that you would like to discuss with us, feel free to do so regardless of the time.

### 8.10 REPORT CARD AND PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEW

Schools may contact homestay families during the school year; the same way homestay families may contact the school. You may address whatever may be communicated to you or requested from you directly with the student and the school. However, if you have a question about it, please do not hesitate to ask us and we will be happy to help out.

High school students will receive two reports each semester: a progress report card approximately half way through the semester and a final report card at the end of the semester.

Host families are invited to participate in Parent-Teacher interviews if they want to. While not mandatory, this could help you understand the student's needs in order to be able to provide the appropriate assistance.

### 8.11 CURFEW

International students are expected to be home at a reasonable time every night to ensure that they stay safe and healthy. On school nights, international students are expected to be home by 9:00 pm, as suggested by the Ottawa Carleton District School Board's International Student Program (OISP). The OISP weekend curfew guidelines are as follows:

Grade	Weekend Curfew
Grade 9	10:00pm
Grade 10	11:00pm
Grade 11	12:00am
Grade 12	1:00am

Although these are the general guidelines, each homestay may have different expectations, so curfew should be discussed and agreed upon prior to hosting or upon the student's arrival.

### 8.12 TRAVEL

### 8.12.1 OUTSIDE OF THE CITY OF OTTAWA

Students are not allowed to travel outside of the city, with the homestay family or on their own, unless they have written permission from their parents/legal guardians. If you wish to take a trip outside of Ottawa as a family, your international student may join you, but please notify us of the trip beforehand. Likewise, if the student is interested in taking a trip outside of the city of Ottawa without the host present, GoCanada must be notified beforehand and written permission from the parents must be obtained.

To notify GoCanada of the trip/activity, please fill out and submit this [Trip Authorization form](#) at least 7 days prior to the event taking place, or as soon as scheduled, if this happens within such 7 days. We will use the information you provide in the form to contact the student's family to ask for written confirmation regarding the trip. Once authorization has been received, GoCanada will confirm you via email, at which point, the trip and/or activity will be deemed authorized.

If the student is to travel without the host parents, and the parents' permission has been received, the student must provide the homestay family with a detailed itinerary of such travel, including the names and addresses of those the student will be travelling with and staying with during such travel.

### 8.12.2 OUTSIDE OF CANADA

While students may travel outside of Canada during their stay, it will be necessary to obtain their parents' written permission and assess if any paperwork is required. As such, if you are planning on travelling outside of Canada and wish to invite the student to come along, please notify us as soon as possible using [this form](#).

Students are not to travel outside of Canada on their own, except if they plan on visiting their family during the holidays (please see [Section 8.13](#) for further information). It is the responsibility of the student and the student's parents to research and obtain the necessary documents required for travel.

## 8.13 PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS AND MARCH BREAK

If you are hosting a student for the full academic year, we will relay to you their plans for Christmas holidays and March Break as soon as possible. Some students will choose to go back to Spain during this time, while others will choose to stay and live these experiences in Canada. In some cases, the student may change their mind about staying in Canada or going back home, so please be flexible in accommodating them, if needed. If applicable, we will inform you of any changes right away. If the student does decide to go back to Spain for the holidays, airport transfers should be provided and are included in the monthly fee. Likewise, the student should be able to leave any personal belongings they wish and their room should be kept unoccupied during this time, unless explicitly agreed upon differently beforehand. The monthly fee will not be reduced due to the student going home during the holidays.

If your student does stay in Canada, whatever you plan, make sure to include the student. Normally if you travel, the student may join you and pay for their partial or full travel expenses (e.g., hotel, flights, etc.).



Please refer to [Section 8.12](#) for further information.

Please note that some exceptions can be made to the above-stated information on a case-by-case basis.

### 8.14 SCHOOL ABSENCES

If the student is ill on a school day, they must have permission from a host parent to be absent from school. Homestay family should notify the school when the student is ill. If the procedure is not followed, the student's absence will be considered as a "skip".




## 9. DEPARTURE

Students staying 1 month will be leaving at the end of September; students staying 2 months will be leaving at the end of October; students staying 3 months will be leaving at the end of November; students staying 4 months will be leaving at the end of December; students staying 5 months will be leaving at the end of January and; students staying 10 months will be leaving at the end of June of the following year. Exact dates and details will be provided to you in a separate document in due time.

As time comes to say "goodbye", we hope that you will have gained a lot from the experience and will have developed a lasting bond with your student. We encourage all our homestay families to keep in touch with their students, and who knows, maybe one day you will have the chance to visit them in Spain or see them again in Ottawa!

Most students will go back to Spain directly and will require airport drop-off. We will send you all the details regarding departure a few weeks before. Other students will take the opportunity to travel and see more of Canada with the company of their families. These students may organize flights to meet their family at a different city than Ottawa, or may have the family come to Ottawa to pick them up. This will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and we will let you know beforehand what your student decides.

If the student will not have their family come pick them up in Ottawa, please note the following:

-  You are requested to drive the student to the airport and accompany them until they meet the rest of the group they will be traveling with (if applicable) or are ready to go through luggage control. Remember that transportation to the airport is included in the homestay fee, as per the Homestay and Student Expectations Agreement;
-  Please make sure the student's checked in luggage adheres to weight restrictions, which is usually 23 kg;
-  Please make sure the student's carry-on luggage respects the rules of air travel (i.e., No sharp objects, liquids must be stored in one clear Ziplock bag and each bottle cannot exceed 100 mL, etc.).

In all cases, prior to the student's departure, please ensure the following:

- ✎ Have the student return the house key to you;
- ✎ Have the student return any borrowed items such as books, calculators, etc.;
- ✎ We will contact you with detailed information and instructions before departure day.

## 10.FINAL THOUGHTS

We hope you have read this Guide for Homestay Families thoroughly and it has proven to be beneficial. It was prepared with the sole purpose to help you with the hosting experience and provide you with valuable suggestions. Please familiarize yourself with this Guide and refer back to it from time to time as you may deem necessary.

If there is something we did not address, or if you have lingering questions or concerns, please call or email us whenever you need to. We're here to help!

Thank you very much and we look forward to a lasting relationship with you and your family!

Sincerely, The GoCanada Team