

# HOST FAMILY GUIDELINES

Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science ♦ University of North Texas

Thank you for your interest in the Host Family Program for the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science. The Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science is a residential program that brings a little under 400 high school juniors and seniors to the UNT Campus to complete both high school and college courses. Through the Host Family Program, students from the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science will have contact with families in the Denton area. Because this is a residential program, students may need support from adults who live nearby whom are not on the staff. The Host Family Program is designed to address this need.

The following guidelines should assist potential families in deciding whether or not they wish to participate in this program:

1) **One Year Commitment**

Host families will be asked to commit to the program for the Academic year (ten months). If, at any time, they feel they cannot continue to participate in the program, they need to contact the TAMS Student Life Office.

2) **Two Students Per Family**

Host families will be given typically one Academy student to host. If a Host Family can host a 2<sup>nd</sup> student or more, please note that on the Host Family Application.

3) **Convocation**

Students will have the opportunity to review the Host Family applications at Fall Move-In. Families that they are interested in potentially staying with will be invited to the Convocation ceremony in September. All families are welcome, but only these families that are selected by a student will be specifically requested to be in attendance.

4) **Religious Participation**

If Host Families and Academy students share the same religious beliefs, host families may invite students they are hosting to attend church with them as often (or as infrequently) as they wish.

5) **Sunday Evening Meals/Activities**

Because some students at the University of North Texas are not served Sunday evening meals, host families may offer a Sunday evening meal and/or a family activity approximately once a month.

6) **Special Needs**

On some occasions, host families may provide transportation for Academy students to the airport, a doctor's appointment, etc. with prior parental approval. The details of this will be worked out between the students and their host families, and host families will be free to say they are unable to do this.

7) **Overnight Stay**

On closed weekends students are required to check out of the dorm until the following Sunday afternoon. On these occasions, students may request weekend accommodations of their host family.

8) **Personal Concerns and Support**

If Host Families have personal concerns about students (i.e. depression, adjustment problems), they may discuss these concerns with the student or the staff.

10) **On call Host Family**

For each Closed Weekend we seek two families, one for guys and one for girls, that can open their home for the weekend and will allow us to place a student at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour. About once a year, a student will not plan and/or their travel plans erode and do not discover this until 5pm on the Friday of closed weekend. If you can serve in this capacity please note this on your application and which weekend works best for your family.

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## **ALCOHOL POLICY AND HOST FAMILIES**

The Host Family Program is a failsafe program to aid our younger than average college students as they make the transition from living with their families to life on a university campus. Your assistance is appreciated, not only by the students involved in this program, but also by their families.

In the TAMS Student Handbook, our policy regarding alcohol and other drugs is zero tolerance. Our policy is strict because experience has taught us that teenagers need policies that are extremely clear. TAMS students who are caught in possession of alcohol are dismissed from TAMS on their first offense. TAMS students are not even permitted to attend parties off campus where alcohol is served. They may eat in restaurants that serve alcohol in the Denton area where the primary business is food, as opposed to alcohol.

While we are aware that healthy approaches to the use of alcohol vary widely within family units, we request that host families not serve alcohol to TAMS students. The purpose of this request is to avoid inconsistency with the established policy for TAMS students. The approach of the TAMS staff has been to err on the side of caution so that we may provide the safest possible environment for our students. While we prefer that host families refrain from partaking in alcohol in the presence of students, if a situation develops where adults are consuming modest amounts of alcohol, we ask that you: 1) make sure the TAMS student does not drink, 2) make sure the focus of the gathering is not on alcohol, such as a meal, a football game, or family gathering, and 3) talk this over with the TAMS student to make sure they are comfortable with the use of alcohol by adults. Some of our students come from conservative families where alcohol is not consumed at all. If you have questions about our policies, please do not hesitate to contact the Student Life Office.

Again, thank you for your support of our students.

TAMS Student Life Office  
(940) 565-3603

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