



Arizona Lutheran Academy

Housing Handbook

Revised July 2025

Latest revisions are underlined.

Introduction

It is a wonderful privilege for Arizona Lutheran Academy to be able to provide Christian education for students outside the Phoenix metro area. We are extremely grateful for our host parents who make serving these students a reality. They are individuals who have the heart to share Christ's gospel — and the other benefits of ALA — with teenagers across Arizona and beyond. Likewise, we thank God for dedicated parents who give up daily contact with their children in order to give them a Christian education at ALA. This handbook serves as a guide to start discussions and set expectations to make hosting/housing an edifying experience for all involved. Please note that in this document, "parent/housing family" is used for the parent/family of the out-of-town student. "Host" is used for the Phoenix parent/family receiving the out-of-town student.

The Housing Privilege

ALA Housing is a community of volunteers. While monetary compensation is exchanged to help reimburse meals, utility, and fuel expenses, the housing program is not a budgeted department, and being a host is not a paid position. It is Christian servant-leadership at its best. ALA Housing exists to encourage and facilitate attendance at ALA by students living outside the Phoenix area. The school and hosts alike do not provide this service out of obligation but out of joy in sharing our ministry. Housing is a privilege, and as such, hosts are deserving of the student's cooperation and respect. *Please note that if the housing privilege is abused, it may be withdrawn, and a replacement housing arrangement will be the responsibility of the student's family.*

Host Family Responsibility

A host family is expected to lovingly treat a housing student as a member of the family. You will provide meals, transportation, accommodations for sleeping, and some basic household items. A list of expected provisions is found at the end of this handbook on the Financial Information page. Ordinarily, this responsibility is from Monday after school through Friday morning.

Host parents are responsible for setting household expectations and communicating them to students and their parents. Presenting and revisiting (perhaps even printing/posting) your household expectations is helpful for everyone. Please realize your household may operate differently from the one your housing student is coming from. That doesn't make it a poor match; you may just need to explain things you didn't expect you would need to explain. The better you communicate your expectations, the more comfortable everyone will feel. A sample "household guidelines" can be supplied by a Housing Coordinator.

Loving authority and discipline when needed is also expected of host parents. In day-to-day matters pertaining to housing, the host parents shall have ultimate authority unless a compromise position has been agreed upon by the host and the parents. Hosts may also request the assistance of ALA's Housing Coordinator or Discipline Coordinator. If misbehavior is of a serious or repetitive nature, it is essential that the student's parents be involved so that school, home, and host can function as a unit in identifying areas of change for the student.

Hosts should be aware of their housing students' academic status and provide encouragement in studies. Housing student(s) will be added to your PowerSchool account for this purpose.

Unforeseen responsibilities may arise in the case of injury or illness. You will have a *Special Power of Attorney* form from the parents to be used for emergency medical situations. Do not administer medicine without parental permission or a doctor's instructions.

Hosts (all persons 18 years and older living in the house) will submit a background check online.

If a host family will not be able to supervise a student for an extended period of time (for example, a family vacation or event), you should make arrangements, in consultation with the student and parents, for alternate supervision.

Hosts are NOT responsible for student laundry, providing weekend housing, bus pass costs, supplying school supplies, personal items, or spending money. Exceptions may be made as described under "Collaboration."

Parent Responsibilities

Parents of housing students are expected to communicate with the host parents on a regular basis. Please establish your preferred mode of communication before the school year begins. Be transparent about your child's academic and health history/needs as applicable. You will submit a signed and notarized *Special Power of Attorney* form to your host, supply a copy of medical insurance card for emergencies, and discuss dietary or educational needs before school begins.

All transportation plans to and from your home for the week/end need to be arranged by you and relayed to the host. Any changes of schedule or requests for extra stays ought to be made one week in advance, and no later than Wednesday evening of the week in question. If your host family uses the ALA bus, you will pay for your own child's bus pass.

Parents are expected to connect directly with their child often. You can maintain your parenting role by asking about daily activities, overseeing academic status through PowerSchool, and being involved with sports, fine arts, and parent volunteer opportunities.

You are responsible for providing your child with spending money (cash or electronic access) as you see fit. Please educate them to be responsible with these funds. Incidentals that come up at various times of the year are team contributions, on-campus fundraisers, and dance tickets. Your child should not ask their host parents for money.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to show Christian love and respect to their host's household members. Interacting with the family as much as possible will help you feel comfortable in your new home away from home quickly. Building trust with one another is important in this relationship. Each host family will have their set of "house rules," but in general, students are expected to show respect by following these basic guidelines:

- Respect all individuals, pets, and personal property in the home
- Keep rooms clean, neat, and orderly; make the bed and pick up before leaving for school
- Assist in keeping other areas in the host home in good order; follow chore schedules
- Follow the daily meal-time schedule set by the housing parents; participate as asked
- Participate in family devotions (and worship services when applicable)
- Complete your homework, but ask for help if needed. Follow no-phone rules or host parent suggestions for making homework time/space more efficient.
- Adhere to bedtimes given. You are expected to get up in the morning and take care of your own needs in a timely fashion before departure for school.
- Follow all household rules, even if they differ from yours at home
- Respect your host family's and carpool's time: be on time for pick up, drop off, sports, etc.
- Ask questions/permission regarding anything you are uncertain about in the home.
- Notify hosts of travel schedules and weekend plans one week ahead, or by Wednesday evening if changes are made.
- Always communicate where you will be, when, and with whom to host parents in case an emergency arises. It is of the utmost importance that you reply to texts from your host parents!

Collaboration

You are entering into a parenting partnership that can be an extreme blessing to all involved when done well! As with all great relationships, show Christian love and respect, and remember that communication is key. Discuss these topics before the school year begins:

- health/academic issues
- household schedule
- travel schedule/carpool/bus
- discipline
- homework protocol
- dating/out with friends/curfews
- phone/screen use
- spending money
- bedtimes
- personal items needed
- jobs/chores
- rules specific to your family

Being open about concerns and respectful of each other's viewpoints can head off many problems.

Refrain from speaking disparagingly of each other or in a way that would undermine one another's authority, especially in front of your student. If issues arise, discuss these problems lovingly, patiently, and openly. Housing Coordinators can assist in the communication process if necessary. Host parents and/or the school will inform parents of any major disciplinary actions that need to be taken with a student. Likewise, parents should inform the school and host parents of any special discipline they have taken so that a consistent and uniform policy may be established for the student. *If a housing arrangement dissolves due to student or parent behavior, the family of the student will be responsible for finding a new host family.*

Activities/Transportation - Give extra care to discuss sports/fine arts schedules and transportation. Especially in the case of host families who live a distance from school, use carpool as much as possible, not to create undo driving back and forth. (ALA may be able to assist in finding carpools - please inquire with a coach, a team parent, or Housing Coordinator.) Transportation with another parent/student ought to be known/approved by both the host and the parent whenever possible. When parents attend games and make plans with their child, please remember to give the host a heads-up. If the cost of transportation is deemed excessive solely due to a housing student, families may discuss additional payment of a reasonable, agreed-upon amount directly from the parent to the host.

Sporting events often impact dinner arrangements. On days the host is responsible for the evening meal (Monday-Thursday), it is suggested they provide the students with money OR pack them food for away games. For ALA home games, meals are often provided by teams. If not, hosts, be clear with your students whether 1. you expect them to pack dinner from your home or pay for their own concessions, or 2. you will pay for concessions/fast food on home game nights.

Weekends - In most cases, housing students arrive at ALA Monday morning, are with host families Monday after school through Friday morning, and are picked up by parents/carpool from campus or sports Friday afternoon. Extracurriculars often call for students to stay in Phoenix part or all of a weekend. *Arranging to stay with a friend/teammate is optimal to allow host families their expected days free.* In this instance, the host has no responsibility for the student or their transportation over the weekend. Alternatively, students can ask to stay with their host for part/all of a weekend, or hosts may offer. *Granting these extra days is at the sole discretion of the hosts and should never be presumed to be automatic.* The discussion for upcoming weekends will optimally be one week in advance and never last-minute. Since these days/meals/laundry are not included in the housing rate cycled through ALA, families should agree upon an additional cost to be paid directly to the host family (suggested \$40/weekend). When a student stays over the weekend, they are expected to participate with the hosts in Sunday worship activities.

Special Circumstances - ALA's flat rate for housing does not encompass all situations. Similar to weekend and activity/transportation circumstances, intentional collaboration and extra funds (paid directly from the parent to the host) may be needed when a student:

- has a doctor/dentist need
- has an incident where personal items or school supplies need to be purchased by the hosts
- cannot travel home weekly due to distance, or requires an extra night/day consistently

If families have difficulty coming to a mutual agreement to cover special circumstances, a Housing

Coordinator may be consulted.

On-campus Housing

Due to the greater number of students within one household, on-campus housing has some special rules and conditions. The houseparents will meet at New Student Orientation or by appointment before the school year to discuss the arrangement, which involves a contract.

Conclusion

We welcome you to Arizona Lutheran Academy and pray that your housing experience will be not only happy but also a blessing to you and your child(children). Once again, it is our privilege to be your child’s school, and we look forward to the opportunity to serve you in the upcoming year.

Financial Information for Housing

Non-Phoenix Metro Area Tuition for 2025-2026 School Year:

\$16,520 – Federation discount | \$17,520 – Non-Federation rate

For students living with a host family, ALA will be responsible for compensating the host each month, August through May, with funds from your tuition package.

ALA Host Families will receive a flat rate of \$300 for 10 months (annual: \$3000). This compensation is intended to cover expenses associated with items listed below under the Host Provides column.

HOST PROVIDES	PARENT PROVIDES
<p>Overnight stays Monday-Thursday; sporadic other nights, dependent on school year activities</p> <p>Accommodations and supplies to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedroom (shared or individual), including a bed and appropriate linens • Work/study space (in bedroom or common living area) • Bathroom/shower and appropriate linens • Basic toiletries (hand soap, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, toothpaste, Q-tips, etc.) 	<p>Transportation arrangements to/from home for weekends/breaks</p> <p>Notarized <i>Special Power of Attorney</i>, insurance information for medical emergencies</p> <p>IEP/504 information, if applicable</p> <p>Pertinent health history; info on current medical needs; medication/instructions</p> <p>In cases of extreme dietary needs, specialized food/ingredients</p> <p>Spending money (may be placed under the care of the host if deemed necessary)</p> <p>ALA Bus pass (if needed)</p> <p>Laundry is done at home on weekends.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic meds/first aid (Tylenol/Ibuprofen, Tums, Band-Aids, Kleenex, etc.)• Meals to include• Breakfast available Tuesday-Friday• Lunch available Tuesday-Friday• Dinner Monday-Thursday (in the home or outside the home; i.e., restaurant/fast food, etc.)• Snacks as needed <p>Transportation to and from school and related activities</p>	
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