

2019 Novel Coronavirus Update

Julie Manche – Chief Executive Officer

BRISBANE, Australia – 3 February 2020: As an organisation with a community of local hosts and education partners who care for international students from across the globe, the Australian Homestay Network (AHN) is closely monitoring the situation regarding the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak. AHN continues to prioritise and assist those directly affected. We have also been providing information to our wider community of homestay participants.

This includes:

- Keeping up-to-date with information released by the [Australian Government Department of Health](#), [state and territory health departments](#), the [World Health Organisation](#) and [Smartraveller.gov.au](#) about the novel coronavirus. Resources about the virus, precautionary measures, symptoms and what to do if someone falls ill have been included in our communications with hosts and students.
- Working at a local level with AHN's education partners to manage the accommodation requirements of students in line with the school's precautionary health and safety measures, contacting hosts and helping find temporary accommodation as needed.
- Assisting students if they need to change their homestay placement to suit new travel arrangements or school/homestay start dates. All funds previously paid will be held in credit and used towards their placement when they are able to commence their homestay. No additional fees will be charged for these changes.
- Recommending hosts do what is most comfortable for their family to ensure they feel 100% comfortable and enjoy the homestay hosting experience.
- Providing ongoing monitoring and support for students and hosts if a homestay placement must include precautionary health and safety measures.
- Encouraging hosts to provide additional emotional support to their guest and be aware of culturally insensitive behaviour in their community.
- Coordinating homestays for onshore guests who need alternative accommodation or whose travel plans have been disrupted.
- Providing around-the-clock support through our [local teams during business hours](#) and 24/7 professionally staffed emergency line after hours.

AHN will continue to monitor developments, provide assistance and update our homestay community and partners with new information as needed.