



## **GREAT FALLS AMERICANS**

### ***2026-27 BILLET PROGRAM GUIDEBOOK AND AGREEMENT***

A sound and stable billet family is a key to success for the Great Falls Americans program. Part of our commitment to our players and their parents is to help provide them with a good home. Our players range in age from 16 - 20 and will be training daily on and off the ice as they pursue their goal of playing a higher level of hockey or collegiate hockey. While the family will receive some financial compensation, the ultimate reward is developing relationships that often carry on for many years well after the player has left the team.

When a family agrees to host a member of the team, they are required to provide a private room and board for the player. He will need a bed and closet space or dressers. If the billet family has two billeted players, a player can share his private room with another Americans Hockey teammate.

The coaching staff work hard at identifying young men with not only hockey talent but also strong moral and ethical values. For the most part, these players are all-around good young men, and you should expect player(s) to be respectful and helpful in your presence and in your home. The Great Falls Americans Hockey Team's expectation is for players to ALWAYS project a positive image of themselves and their team.

How long is a billet family's commitment? This varies depending on the player; some are with the family during the hockey season only while others will need to complete the school year. Some players will visit home as often as the game schedule permits. All players go home over the holiday break unless discussed prior with the coaching staff and billet families that they are not able to return home.

When a player arrives in your home, he will be experiencing all kinds of emotions while getting adjusted to life in Great Falls. It is important that your house rules and expectations are clearly defined. If it is requested that the billet coordinator is present for this first meeting, please set that up in advance. Billet families should clearly define expectations and ask the player his expectations of you and your home. During this initial meeting with your player, please go over the team rules as well as any of your own house rules. Condoning or participating in illegal activities in the home will not be tolerated by the team ownership/management and can have negative impacts or consequences for the Great Falls Americans and its players. The following paragraphs outline responsibilities expected of both the billet family and player as applicable.

Billet fees of \$300.00 per month will be paid by the player or the player's family on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month. The player's family will be asked to provide post-dated checks for monthly billet fees or coordinate with the billet family for a form of electronic deposit. If this becomes an issue, please contact the billet coordinators. Billet families are to supply utilities, bed, food, and laundry facilities. While players are expected to provide personal care items, mobile phones and some media equipment, they also need to take care of their own transportation needs (many have their own car, but it is possible the player periodically may ask for a ride to practice). Billet families are not responsible for giving players money for food unless they choose to do so. If a player goes out to eat, he is responsible for his own expense.

It is expected that the billet family makes food available throughout the day while the player is in your home. This includes a basic breakfast, deli meats/leftovers at lunch and an evening meal. While on the road, however, players are responsible for any above and beyond purchases outside of what the team provides. A billet family taking a player to the grocery store during his first week in your home is a great bonding experience. Billets will provide at least one cooked meal per day.

Meal preparation is not mandatory by billets. The players can prepare for themselves provided there are groceries to do so. Players should be asked to call you if they have made other arrangements for meals. Likewise, if you are not available for dinner, please let your player know.

***Billet Families:***

Communication: It is essential that billets communicate honestly with the billet coordinator and coach regarding team rules and if they are being followed. If the player is not following team rules, then the organization must be notified immediately. The billet coordinator should be notified immediately if a drug or alcohol problem is suspected, or the billet family suspects there are illegal substances in a player's room. Allowing the behavior to continue is not helping the player. As much as you may grow to like the player living in your home, he is a young man committed to a rigorous athletic program. Protecting him from team rules is not the way to help him meet future goals and is detrimental to the team. This can be one of the hardest aspects of billeting.

Housekeeping and Chores: From the first day, tell the player what you expect of him regarding cleanliness of each room in your house. Let him know what you expect as you are showing him around your home. Players are responsible for REASONABLE household duties when asked. If you expect him to put all his dishes in the dishwasher, let him know. If you want him to wipe the kitchen counters after using the kitchen, tell him. Do you want him to vacuum his room once a week? General instructions should be given to the new player on use of household appliances. If you do not want an appliance used, please tell him so. Consider a place in your home for the player to store his hockey equipment. There is a lot of equipment, and it comes with a "unique" odor. As with all young adults, reminders are a normal part of developing responsibility.

Household Rules: Billet families are encouraged to initially outline all household rules and curfews expected of the player(s). You can establish a curfew that is stricter than the team curfew if required. Your refrigerator and food rules should be clearly defined. Ask players if they have any food preferences or allergies. We expect the host family to uphold and enforce the team rules and your billet rules. The player must adhere to all team and house rules and show respect and consideration toward all family members.

Visitor Policy: Billets who have housed players for many years find that setting a visitor policy is important. There are a lot of questions that arise in this area – how many, when, how often, food, etc. Remember, team curfews are not only the time a player has to be home, but it is also the time that all other visitors must leave the house. If a player asks permission for a visitor from his hometown, please let one of the billet coordinators know before granting permission.

Computers/Gaming: While most players have their own computer or media devices, some players may not have these items and ask to use your home computer. If you allow this, discuss the rules of usage and content to be considered out of bounds. As with most young adults, players are extremely interested in video games and internet. If you need to set restrictions, please do so at the beginning of their stay.

Vacations: When billet parents plan to be out of town, they are to notify one of the billet coordinators. Depending on your trust level, the player can be left at home with a nightly visit from a coach or a billet coordinator or a temporary place for them to stay can be provided.

Etiquette: It is not your job to wait up, provide rides, or go above what you feel has been asked of you by the organization. Being courteous around the house is usually valued by everyone. The same kind of care and attention that you would extend to a member of your own family is appreciated.

Games: Billet families will receive two season passes, for each player housed, to all American regular season home games.

### ***Great Falls Americans Players:***

Team and Household Rules: Players will adhere to all team rules outlined in this contract, set by the team Coach, and defined by your billet family. Failure to comply with any of the rules may lead to a disciplinary review and/or disciplinary actions by team ownership/management. Disciplinary actions could be removal from home, missing game(s), or removal from the team. As a reminder, you represent the Great Falls Americans team on and off the ice in this community and across the league.

**Alcohol and Drug Use:** Consuming alcohol, marijuana, or tobacco products by underage players is illegal and is not condoned by the team. Illegal drugs are not to be brought into billet homes under any circumstances. Billet parents are asked not to supply the players with any illegal substances for underage players including alcohol, marijuana, or tobacco products.

**Duties and Chores:** Perform household chores and duties asked of you. If you feel certain duties or chores are unreasonable (not something expected in any home by a family member), contact Coach or your billet coordinator.

**Household Curfew:** The team curfew Monday through Thursday is 10:30 pm and will vary on the weekends based on game schedule. Unless the player has prior approval from the coaching staff that they are working or attending a function they are to follow the team curfew. When a player does go out, they will let the billet parent know what time the player will be home.

**Telephones:** Players are expected to have cell phones and/or use phone cards. Players will not make, or charge calls to billet family home lines without prior permission from the billet family.

**Privacy:** Players will respect all areas of the billet family home that are out of bounds. The player will discuss with the billet family what kind of privacy they can expect from them.

**Player Equipment:** Discuss with your billet family where to keep your hockey equipment when it is not stored at the rink and make certain it is always stored there. You are reminded that your necessary equipment comes with a "unique" odor.

**Visitors:** Coordinate visitors with billet families in accordance with their established visitor policies. Team curfews are also the time that all other visitors must leave the house. You may ask permission from the billet family for a visitor from your hometown to stay with you. This will also require a notification to the billet coordinator by the billet family.

Education: A few players may still be in school. This hockey organization expects its players to make education a priority. This is a developmental hockey program that is aimed at moving many of these young athletes on to play collegiate hockey. If a player is not going to school, they should be working a job to gain some other life skills and lessons.

Community Service: When players commit to playing for this hockey program, they commit to performing all community service asked of them.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact our billet coordinators:

Kris Steichen:

Cell: (406) 781-4350

Email: [ksteichen01@hotmail.com](mailto:ksteichen01@hotmail.com)

Thank you for everything you do and we are looking forward to this upcoming season!



## GREAT FALLS AMERICANS

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By signing below, each party acknowledges they have read this entire document and agree to abide by the conditions and requirements as stated herein.

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Player

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Date

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Billet Parent(s)

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Date

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Player Parent/Guardian (**Under 18 only**)

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Date

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Coach

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Date