



2018 LOONS HOST FAMILY PROGRAM

Thank you for your interest in hosting a Loons Baseball Player! We have put together some information below that will hopefully answer most of your questions. Please let us know if you have others. Our goal is to provide housing in a friendly, comfortable, and stable environment to make life a little easier for these ballplayers while in Midland.

- ① We, as host families, are providing room and board to young men typically between the ages of 18-24 years old. For some of them, this is their first time away from home, even their first time in our country. Some of them have lived on their own for quite some time. During the season, these young men are constantly dealing with a lot of pressure and uncertainty. Players handle things differently. Some take bad days pretty hard, while others can let it go and look to tomorrow. With such varied backgrounds and extended periods of time away from home, many of these players become homesick for loved ones. Communication can also be difficult for our Latin players.
- ① Being a host family does not guarantee player placement in a season. For the most part, the player chooses the family they would like to stay with. Some players choose not to stay with host families. Some want to stay with their friends. Some players return and want to stay with their previous host family. Many new players are referred to families by other players who have stayed with them in previous seasons. Sometimes, players even want to move during the season. **Please do not allow or encourage players to move into your home without consulting with the Host Family Coordination Team. ALL placements and moves are to be done through the Host Family Coordination Team.** Returning host families and those who are available for the entire season are given a preference in placements; however, we do strive first and foremost to assure the best fit for the players. We also strive to have no more than two players housed with a family at the same time. Any exceptions are made with the approval of the Host Family Coordination Team.
- ① Mis-matches can and do occur. If a player decides to move, please don't take it personally, it could be for any number of reasons. And we will find you another player as soon as we can.
- ① Housing a baseball player is similar to hosting an exchange student who works second shift. They play about 140 games from April until the beginning of September. Half of the games are on the road. When they are home, typically players have to be to the field 5-6 hours before game time. They also have workout schedules, language lessons (if applicable), and appearances to juggle. They get home anywhere from 30 minutes to 2 hours after the game. They get one or two days off a month and are usually pretty exhausted. They can be on the road for up to 10 days at a time, and are rarely home for 10 days in a row.
- ① While not mandatory, host families may charge rent, up to \$150/month per player. This can help players learn budgeting and helps eliminate any potential feelings of entitlement. Rent is to cover housing and food, and any potential damages that may be incurred, not to make money— players get very little salary at this level. The players are to pay rent directly to the host family.
- ① As an option, you may also charge for car rental or insurance, if you are providing a vehicle for their use. This would be a separate fee that you would need to collect on your own. Also, players are expected to pay for the gas they use as well.
- ① Most players have cell phones. If not, they are responsible for using calling cards or credit cards for all long distance calls. Do not allow players to run up large long distance bills on your home phone.



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- ① Compensation: Host families **DO NOT** receive any type of compensation from the Loons organization for hosting players. They **DO NOT** receive game tickets. They **DO NOT** receive free parking, and **SHOULD NOT** park in the player lot. *Players* receive 2 pass tickets per person per game, when they are available. These are meant to be used for player's guests, and it is at a player's discretion as to who can use them.
- ① Any player injuries or illnesses on or off the field **MUST** be handled by the Loons Team Trainer. Families are not to provide any medical treatment to players. If it is an emergency, you can take them to the ER, but the Team Trainer should be contacted immediately. You are also not to discuss player injuries with anyone in the media. No medication is to be given without Team Trainer approval, with the exception of Tylenol and Motrin.
- ① Some players have cars, some players help drive other players. In general, most players need some help with reliable transportation, and so preference will be given to families that can commit to providing this. Transportation is **required** if you house Latin players, as they generally do not have U.S. driver's licenses and cannot legally drive in the U.S. without one. Dial-A-Ride, County Connection, and Aero-Taxi are alternatives, but are costly.
- ① Meals – Based on prior host family experience, the players can eat a lot! They are hungry before they head to the stadium, and sometimes starving when they get home after the game. There is some food available at the stadium for them. You are not required to prepare food, but **if you charge rent, food must be provided** as part of this. If the player is expected to prepare their own food, be sure to let them know.
- ① Uniforms are washed and cleaned at the stadium, so players will only need use of your laundry facilities for their personal clothes. Be sure to show them how to use the laundry facilities.
- ① House Access – how do they get in after hours? What happens if you are not home? Are there areas of the house that are off-limits? What can they use or not use in the house (e.g. rooms, TVs, food, gas grills, phone, etc). Are house guests allowed? Be sure to cover these areas and be sure to exchange contact information.
- ① Family Inclusion – how much are you willing to include the player into your family activities? Encourage your player(s) to join in family activities as they like and as they become comfortable. **BUT**, please remember that their “down time” is very limited, and that they may want this time for themselves. Please respect their privacy and need for alone time.
- ① Inappropriate Behavior – If you are ever concerned about the behavior of a player or host family, **immediately notify the Host Family Coordination Team** so your concerns can be appropriately addressed. Please do not discuss any potential issues with others as misunderstandings can and do occur, and unflattering gossip could affect a player's career.
- ① Role – It's hard to remember that you are “just” a host family and not their parent. These are young men, pursuing their career. It is their responsibility to get to where they need to be, by when they are supposed to be there (although the Latin players may need some assistance as previously noted). This is the first time some players will be living away from home and/or the first time living in the U.S. For some, it's their first time being in a home environment other than their own. Therefore, it is important for host families to set their expectations and provide guidance as needed. If there are ever any questions or concerns, please contact the Host Family Coordination Team.



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- ① Along this same line, please be mindful of the expectations you do set. They are players first and their obligation is to the team. They are not here to pick your child up after school or attend his/her school or sporting events. They aren't here to mow your lawn or do chores (other than cleaning up after themselves). Please don't "over-mother" or "over text." Many host families rely on cell phones to communicate with their players; however players are generally NOT supposed to use them at the field, and could be penalized if they do.
- ① Problem Resolution – If an issue arises with a player or host family, please try to discuss the situation and resolve the issue first. If the issue cannot be resolved or either party is uncomfortable, contact the Host Family Coordination Team immediately. The players can also work with the Loons Team Trainer. The Host Family Coordination Team will help resolve the problem as quickly as possible, and is also responsible for proper escalation of issues within the Loons and Dodgers organizations, as needed. Please **DO NOT** work around the Host Family Coordination Team, as issues need to be kept confidential and resolutions consistent.
- ① Player departures can happen anytime, including while a player is on the road. If this occurs, please work directly with the Host Family Coordination Team. **DO NOT** ship a player's belongings as this will be at your own cost. The Host Family Coordination Team will work with the Loons and Dodgers staff to determine how best to gather the items and get them to the player.
- ① Press and public appearances – Please do not make any statements to the press or have the players make any public appearances without approval of the Great Lakes Loons as this could jeopardize corporate sponsorships (this includes any public autograph signings). Contact James (837-6140) or Tiffany (837-6167) at the Loons to discuss the situation for appropriate approvals.
- ① Loons Team Trainer – Players may contact the Loons Team Trainer at any time with issues or concerns. Players should contact the Host Family Coordination Team directly for any host family questions, concerns or placement.
- ① Host Family Coordination Team: Kathy Biskupski (989-708-9655), Penny Robinson (989-859-0605) and Michelle Servinski (989-615-6415). We also share an email account, loonshostfamily@yahoo.com. Please contact any one of us with host family questions or concerns.