



Billet Program Guidebook

Welcome billet parents and those of you who might be considering housing a player for the hockey season. There are responsibilities to being a billet family, but the reward of housing a player is special. The bond that is formed between billet families and players will last well beyond the hockey season. The Colorado Rampage organization has developed this guidebook to help let billeting families know what is expected of them and what you can expect from the players.

The Colorado Rampage thanks all billeting parents and families for their support and commitment to Midget hockey. Without them, we could not provide a quality program that is considered to be one of the best in the western United States.

Players will be housed with billet families. The coaching staff will work hard at identifying kids with not only hockey talent, but also kids with strong moral and ethical values. For the most part, these players should be good all-around young men and you should expect player(s) to be respectful and helpful in your presence and in your home.

When a player arrives in your home, it is important that he knows your house rules. Clearly define your expectations and ask the player his expectations of you and your home. The team has prepared 'team rules' that will be given to every player. They are attached at the end of this document for you as well. It is important that both you and the player sit down to review and discuss the team rules as well as any household rules you expect them to abide by. It may seem silly, but being clear about all the small things can help make everyone feel more comfortable. Small annoyances can grow and we want to help you avoid feeling "put-out" by adding a new person or two to your household. Some things that should be discussed with your player are:



Billet Program Guidebook

1. **Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug use** – Drinking of alcohol by underage youngsters is not condoned by the team and it is illegal. Drugs should not be brought into billet homes at any time or under any circumstances. Billet parents are asked not to supply the players with any illegal substances including alcohol. The use of any tobacco related product is not allowed. This includes cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, chewing tobacco and “vaporizers”. The Billet Coordinator should be notified immediately if ever a problem is suspected. If billets suspect there are illegal substances in a player’s room, they are to contact the Billet Coordinator about having the Coach search the player’s room.
2. **Billet fees** - Billet fees of \$400.00 per month are to be paid on the 1st day of each month. Billet families provide essential needs such as food, shelter, laundry facilities, utilities and a bed. Players are responsible for their own personal items including school supplies and toiletries such as shaving supplies, tooth paste, deodorant etc. Billet families are not responsible for giving players money for lunch unless they choose to do so. Players are responsible for their own school / work lunch. If the player goes out to eat he is also responsible for his own expense.
3. **Communication** - Billets must be willing to communicate honestly with the billet coordinator and coach regarding whether team rules are being followed. This is essential. You are not doing your player any favor by pandering to his behavior, especially behavior that is not in line with the team rules. Players may be removed from homes where billet families do not communicate with the coach or billet coordinator honestly about the player’s behavior or activities. As much as you may grow to like the player that comes to live in your home, he is a young man committed to a rigorous athletic program. “Protecting” him from the team rules is not the way to help him meet future goals and is detrimental to the team as a whole. This can be one of the hardest aspects of billeting.



Billet Program Guidebook

4. **Cleanliness** – Right from the first day, tell the player what you expect of him regarding cleanliness of each of the rooms in your house including the bathroom. If you expect him to put all his dishes and glasses in the dishwasher, let him know. If you want him to wipe the kitchen counters after making a sandwich, tell him. Do you want him to vacuum his room once a week? Let him know what you expect as you are showing him around your home. Like with all kids, reminders are part of the norm.

5. **Common courtesy** - You do not have to wait up, give rides or do anything you feel is above the call of billeting duty. Saying “No” can be done with a smile. Being courteous around the house to each other is usually appreciated by everyone.

6. **Community service** – When players commit to playing for the Colorado Rampage, they commit to performing any and all community service asked of them.

7. **Computer** – Most players arrive with their own computers or laptops. In today’s educational environment, with kids being expected to do research for school papers and some players attending on-line schools, it is necessary for them to have access to the Internet. Allowing players access to your network/wi-fi would be helpful. The same with access to a printer. If needed, players should contribute toward printer supplies (paper, ink, etc.).

8. **Down-time** – Down-time is the time the kids do not have a formal team commitment. Following their arrival in Colorado Springs, the players will be on the ice for 1-2 hours per day. They will also have 1 to 2 hours of dry land workouts, and will be required to be either working or enrolled in school. By requiring players to work or be in school along with their hockey schedule, we are trying to minimize the amount of down-time that exists.



Billet Program Guidebook

9. **Duties and chores** – Prior to a player moving into your home, think of the duties and chores you expect the player to perform as a member of your household. If your family share chores it is fair to expect the player to participate as well.

10. **Food** - Your fridge and food rules should be clearly defined. Ask players if they have any food preferences or allergies. Taking a player to grocery shop during his first week in your home is a good “bonding” experience. The kids will often express their food preference while you are reaching for things on the grocery shelves. Billets are expected to provide breakfast, dinner and some snacks for the players. Also, ask players to call you if they have made other arrangements for dinner. Likewise, if you are unable to cook dinner some night, please let the player know ahead of time.

11. **House Rules** - You have to remember that you are the adults in the household, and you set the household rules for your home. Both billet parents and players are expected to always treat each other with respect. Asking a youngster to follow your house rules is not something to shy away from. When rules are not set, the billet parents can become annoyed, and players get defensive because they did not know what the “unspoken rules” are. It is better to avoid tension in a household by clearly talking with the player during the first few days he is in your home. As you think of other things to address with him, you can let him know about your wishes.

12. **Household curfew** – The team rules will include curfews that may vary somewhat for weeknights, weekends, nights before games, and game nights. (At this time the default curfew is 8 p.m.). The coach will set the team curfews and the billets will be notified about these times. As billet parents you may want to set your own “house curfew”. You have every right to ask your player to abide by a curfew that is more restrictive than the team curfew. When a player does go out ask him to call you and let you know where he is and at what time he will be home. This is one of the player’s responsibilities.



Billet Program Guidebook

13. **Laundry** – If you do not mind doing laundry for your player that is fine. If you want the player to do his own laundry, tell him so when he moves in. Show him your washer and dryer and walk him thru the whole process. Do not presume he knows how to turn the machines on or how much soap to use. A player at my house kept trying to dry his clothes. Even though the dials on the dryer were marked, he always turned the timer on to the “air” setting instead of the “heat”. I would get annoyed hearing the dryer run for so long and the player was irritated that we had a crummy dryer that didn’t dry his clothes! Showing him how to work the dryer right off would have avoided this. In this case he insisted he did his laundry at home and so did not need to be shown anything.

14. **Parties** – Let’s face it, young men in this age-group are known for enjoying parties. Team rules are such that parties are not to be held during the preseason or season without the direct consent of the coach. (A party is defined as more than three players and friends). We expect both the players and their billet parents to respect this rule. There is a time and place for parties, but we are trying to maintain a structured environment for these young athletes. Many of them have set goals of obtaining college scholarships in the future. You are not helping them reach that goal by allowing them to be self indulgent. When a party has been earned, the coach will let billet parents know.

15. **Player’s bedroom** – Players need a place to sleep. This usually means a bedroom with a decent bed. Sometimes two players can fit in one room. To help keep kid’s rooms somewhat in order, I have found that supplying a laundry basket by each player’s bed is well worth the \$6 investment. This prompts them to keep the dirty clothing off the floor, so the room can be vacuumed. Also, if there is a closet in the player’s bedroom, put hangers in it if you like or leave it up to the player to buy his own.



Billet Program Guidebook

16. **Privacy** – Make clear mention of the areas of your home that are out of bounds. For example, players in our home are to consider the master bedroom off limits. Also, let the boys know what kind of privacy they can expect from you. Tell them if you will be going into their bedrooms and for what reasons.

17. **School** - A number of players are still in high school. This hockey organization expects the players to make education an important priority. This is a developmental hockey program that is aimed at moving many of these young athletes on to play at the college level. Coaches here expect players on their rosters to maintain grade point averages of 2.5 or above unless special circumstances are involved.

18. **Telephones** - Players are expected to have cell phones and/or use phone cards. They are not to make or charge incoming calls on the phone line of their billet families. If the billet family's phone is to be used, you can tell them when their use of the phone would not cause an inconvenience.

19. **Use and care of appliances** - General instructions should be given to the new player. If you do not want the player to use an appliance, please tell him so.

20. **Vacations** - When billet parents plan to be out of town for one night, a weekend, or longer, they are to notify the billet coordinator. Players are rarely allowed to remain in a billet home while the adults are not in residence. We have found through experience that this is a sound policy.



Billet Program Guidebook

21. **Video and TV** - The players are to open their own accounts at video rental stores. That way you will not be left with charges on your accounts that are not yours. Also, clearly state your policy about rated materials that may show up in your home. What are the limits? What is acceptable (especially when there are younger kids in the household)? Is TV time restricted (for example, no TV before supper, etc.).
22. **Visitor policy** – Billets that have housed players for many years find that setting a visitor policy is important. There are lots of questions that can come up 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. Let's be clear from day one, sleep-overs are not allowed during the hockey season. You are not housing a bunch of 12 year-olds! Another aspect of visitors involves girls. Some billets allow girls to visit players in their homes, many do not. Remember, if the players visit with girls in the girl's own home, then it is more likely that the girl's parents know what is going on.

With all this talk about rules, limits, boundaries, and avoiding problems we do not mean to scare people away from billeting players. Generally the special people that open their homes to these young men also find that their attachment to the kids grows rapidly. The rewards can be many. Rewards come from knowing you are providing a stable environment for teenagers who, in most cases, are living away from home for the first time. The Colorado Rampage organization would like to thank all of you who have supported this Midget AAA Hockey Program by opening your doors to players. We would further like to thank in advance any interested billeting parents for their willingness to explore the possibility of assisting this Midget AAA Hockey Program. Without all of you, we could not provide a quality program that is considered to be one of the best in the country.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact:

Andrew Sherman – 719-492-5521

E-mail: shermanandrew@hotmail.com

Roxy Simpson – 339-222-0271

Email: roxy.simpson@icloud.com