



GPAC Billeting Resource Package 2025

INTRODUCTION:

Billet: This small, two-syllable word is immensely important to hockey players and their families.

As a verb, the term can be defined as providing lodging for someone in a particular place. But the true meaning goes far beyond the simplicity of this description.

Billeting is a unique experience for both the player as well as the billet family. Being a part of a new family or hosting a new “family member” can be a truly special experience in which a life-long bond is often created. “But in the end, we didn’t end up with a billet. We ended up with lifelong friends, and people we consider family” says former Billet family.

There is no typical host family. The situations range from individuals, single parents, young families, to empty nesters. The common denominator is the desire of a host family to provide a safe and happy home for a young player.

The billet family provides housing and support to young players aged 13-17 who have moved away from home to pursue their dreams of playing the game they love. Billets are an integral part of The Grande Peace Athletic Club.

BILLET INFORMATION:

Each season, the Grande Peace Athletic Club located in the City of Grande Prairie Alberta recruits talented young hockey players to play on our U15 AAA, U16 AA, U17 AAA, and U18 AAA teams. For some of these players to take advantage of the opportunity to play with one of our Elite teams, the players require a billet family to open their home.

HOW LONG IS BILLET COMMITMENT?

This will vary depending on the player. Most players will stay with the billet family for the duration of the season, usually from September to April. Most players will go home on the holiday breaks or as their schedule permits.

BILLET FEES:

To cover the expenses incurred, billet families are paid monthly for each player in their home. The family of the player will pay the billet family \$650.00/month, on the first of each month for the duration of the player’s stay. The funds are to assist with the cost of groceries and any reasonable cosmetics that the player requires (shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste). If the player requires specific items that are outside the ordinary, this would be at their own cost and exclusive of the \$650.00 monthly fee.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A BILLET FAMILY?

Being a billet family is a significant commitment. However, there are also many benefits. Many of the hockey players become part of the family. They are encouraged to help around the house and often become involved in the activities of other children in the house.

BILLET FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES:

As a host family, your role is....

- To be a mentor, friend, counselor, and good role model.
- To provide a clean, family-oriented environment.
- To provide nutritious meals and snacks.



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- To provide a private bedroom.
- To listen and give encouragement.
- To support and build up their self-esteem.
- To treat the player as “one of the family”.
- To provide transportation if and when needed (this would include any school or hockey related functions).

Host Families Should:

- **Providing a Supportive Home Environment:**
 - Offer a private bedroom or a shared bedroom with a teammate, including a closet and desk if possible.
 - Maintain a clean, family-oriented environment.
 - Ensure well-functioning Wi-Fi is available for the player to use for homework and other needs.
- **Meals and Nutrition:**
 - Provide three balanced meals a day.
 - Allow the player to bear some responsibility for their own snacks.
 - Be mindful of the player’s dietary needs and restrictions.
- **Transportation and Schedule Coordination:**
 - Assist with transportation to and from practices, games, school, and team events, if necessary.
 - Be familiar with and coordinate the player’s game, practice, and event schedules to ensure timely attendance.
- **Academic and Personal Support:**
 - Provide a quiet space for the player to complete homework and study.
 - Ensure the player attends all classes and provide support for balancing academic and athletic commitments.
 - Ask the player for a timetable of their classes to stay informed.
 - Ensure the player has access to essential toiletries and personal care items.
 - Encourage good personal hygiene and self-care practices.
- **Guidance and Emotional Support:**
 - Offer encouragement, listen, and give support during the ups and downs of the hockey season.
 - Be a mentor, friend, counselor, and good role model.
 - Support and build up the player’s self-esteem.
 - Maintain open lines of communication with the player’s parents and team officials.
- **Household Rules and Responsibilities:**
 - Clearly communicate household rules and expectations to the player.
 - Enforce strict curfews established by the team or league and report any violations.
 - Encourage the player to contribute to household chores and responsibilities as appropriate.



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- **Health and Safety:**
 - Ensure the player has access to medical care if needed and know how to contact emergency services.
 - Be aware of the player's health needs and any specific medical conditions.
- **Social Integration:**
 - Include the player in family activities and social events to help them feel integrated.
 - Respect the player's need for downtime and rest.
 - As a host family, your role is to treat the player as one of the family, providing a supportive and nurturing environment that helps them thrive both on and off the ice.

PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Players must keep in mind that it is not right to live at a billet's home, but a privilege. Always project a positive image of yourself and your team.
- Players must show gratitude and be always helpful.
- Players should keep their areas clean and clean up after themselves.
- Players should have their own spending money for day-to-day expenses.
- Players are responsible for their schooling.
- Players must notify the billet family regarding their whereabouts.
- All players are to respect the mealtimes established by the billet family and be present and on time. Players should inform their billet families if they will not be home or on time for dinner. Players are expected to help the billet families in the kitchen by assisting with meal preparation or meal clean up.
- Players are expected to follow all curfews and to advise their billet family if they will be out late.
- Underage players will not consume alcohol.
- All players are not to be involved with any type of illegal activity.
- Billeted players will report any issues of concern with their billet family to the coach or billet coordinator as well as to their parents.
- Players will advise their billet families of their team practice and game schedule.

Billet Player Should:

- **Respect and Courtesy:**
 - Show respect and courtesy to all members of the billet family.
 - Follow household rules and guidelines established by the billet family.
 - Communicate openly and honestly with the billet family about any concerns or needs.
- **Personal Responsibility:**
 - Maintain personal hygiene and cleanliness.
 - Keep your bedroom and shared spaces clean and tidy.
 - Be responsible for your own laundry and personal belongings.
- **Participation and Integration:**
 - Participate in family activities and social events when possible.
 - Make an effort to integrate into the family's daily routine.
 - Show appreciation for the hospitality and support provided by the billet family.



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- **Academic Commitment:**
 - Attend all scheduled classes and complete homework and assignments on time.
 - Provide the billet family with a timetable of your classes and any changes to your academic schedule.
- **Hockey and Team Commitment:**
 - Be punctual and prepared for all practices, games, and team events.
 - Maintain open communication with the billet family about your hockey schedule.
 - Follow team guidelines and expectations regarding conduct, curfews, and performance.
- **Financial Responsibility:**
 - Manage any specific personal expenses, including any unique dietary needs or personal care items not covered by the billet fee.
- **Communication:**
 - Maintain regular contact with your parents or guardians to keep them informed about your well-being and progress.
 - Inform the billet family and team officials of any issues or concerns that arise.
- **Health and Well-being:**
 - Take care of your physical and mental health.
 - Underage players are not to consume alcohol or drugs, nor be involved in any other illegal activities.
 - Inform the billet family of any medical conditions or special requirements.
 - Seek medical attention if necessary and communicate any health concerns to the billet family.

By fulfilling these responsibilities, billeting players can contribute to a positive and supportive living arrangement, fostering a harmonious relationship with their billet family and making the most of their hockey and personal development experience.

APPLYING FOR A BILLET:

Incoming players who need a billet are required to complete a billet questionnaire to help us match them with a suitable host family. Once the questionnaire is submitted, our Billet Coordinator will review the information and work with their Director and Coaches to find the best fit for the player. This process ensures that each player is placed in a supportive and compatible home environment for the duration of the season.

PROCESS:

APRIL/MAY Complete Host Family Application Form: This provides us with information about your family that will help match players to host families. The Billet Coordinator will arrange a home visit with host families. If you are accepted as a host family, you will complete your criminal record checks and send them to the Connection & Engagement Coordinator. Players requiring a billet home will complete their application as they are accepted into our program.

MAY/JUNE/JULY Billet Coordinator will begin the process to match players with families.

AUGUST Families (player and billet). Shall connect through a zoom interview where questions can be asked. If the host family feels the player is a good fit for their family, the host family gets the final decision to host.



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The Billet Coordinators along with the coaching staff try to make the best fit with a family as possible (i.e. kids, pets, allergies, etc.). It's a good idea to touch base with the player's parents and establish a relationship with them to gain an understanding of what should be expected of their son.

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER Players will move into the host family homes in late August prior to the start of the school year and hockey season, depending on tryout schedule and team selection processes.

An Important Word about Hazing

Hockey Canada defines hazing as "an initiation practice that may humiliate, demean, degrade, or disgrace a person regardless of location or consent of the participant(s)". Hockey Canada has no tolerance for hazing rituals and very strong regulations against these types of behaviors. As a host family we look to you to work with your team to assist us in eliminating hazing from the hockey environment. The role of a billet parent is essential when it comes to maintaining the safety of the player living with you.

Remember, what might seem harmless to one player, may be devastating to another.

Hazing in most cases occurs at team gatherings and initiation and humiliation of the rookies is at the forefront. The team gathering may be talked up to be a night of "team bonding" or a "welcome party" however in many cases, the exact opposite ensues, and hazing becomes the focus.

If a player approaches you about hosting or attending a team function or you become aware of an unsupervised team party it is important to note that:

- Many of these players may be underage and are legally not allowed to drink
- If the party is being held in your home or at a location you are responsible for you are responsible for any consequences of these types of events.
- It is your responsibility to ensure proper supervision and guidelines are put in place regarding the activities. ***Hazing type activities will not be tolerated in any form.***

Hazing may also occur during other team activities such as road trips but once again team staff and administrators must realize that hazing of any form will result in consequences to those involved and/or with knowledge of these types of behaviors.

As much as it is our responsibility to ensure a players safety on the ice it is also our job ***to maintain a safe environment off the ice as well. Hockey Canada makes its stance on hazing very clear within its regulations.***

Communication Tips

- Create an atmosphere that invites communication with your player(s)
- Watch for signs that your player may be uncomfortable with a situation
- Respond responsibly to any concerns you may have regarding your players Safety

IMPORTANT: The key to a successful billeting experience is **GOOD COMMUNICATION**. This means with all parties involved, Billets, Players, Parents, Billet Coordinator and Coaches. If problems arise, they should be addressed immediately. Your first contact should be the Billet Coordinator(s). The Billet Coordinator will try to resolve the issue quickly and may get the coaches involved if need be. Please respect this 'Chain Of Command' as our coaching staff is usually very busy throughout the year.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT BILLETING A HOCKEY PLAYER

What is a billet family? A billet host family is where a player lives during the season. A player's home-away-from-home.

Are billet families paid? A pre-established fee per player per month is paid directly to the billet family. This assists with additional household expenses such as food and drink.

Do I have to be involved with hockey to be a billet family? Although we would love to have you as a fan, you do not have to be involved in hockey to be billet family. What you need is the desire to support someone else's goals and dreams.

How many meals do I have to provide? Billet families are asked to provide at least 2 prepared meals per day, with availability to groceries for players to make snacks and other food on their own.

Is there a "typical" Host family? There is no typical family. Host families may be two-parent families, single-parent families and occasionally an "empty nester". The common denominator is a desire by the host family to make a difference in a player's life.

How many players can a family host? A family can host 2 players. Some billet families have hosted up to 3. By hosting more than one player it provides company and support to the player. It also assists with transportation and carpooling when matched with a player with a vehicle. The only requirement is that each player has adequate space/living arrangements. Players may share a room but must have own bed, access to a closet or dresser and acceptable access to a restroom.

How long does a player stay? Players arrive during the tryout process and once committed to a GPAC Roster will be placed with a host family. The host family commitment is through the end of the hockey season.

Will the same player stay with us? Players are meant to stay with the same billet family throughout the duration of the hockey season. There sometimes becomes a need for a player to leave the team or be moved to another billet home and the need for the host family to take in a new player.

Who is responsible for players' medical expenses? Players must have their own medical insurance and are responsible for their own medical expenses. Players are covered through Hockey Canada for any hockey related injuries. Billet families are never responsible for medical payments.

Do players join our family for personal events? You are welcome to invite players to join you for family celebrations or activities: however, it is not mandatory for you to do so. All players will have time off at the Christmas holidays.

Will I have to pass a background check? Yes, GPAC does require background screening to be completed.



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What does the Billet Family Provide?

- A. Room – Billet host families provide a private bedroom for the player. Players should not be housed in a room with anyone in the household family. The billet home should be clean and organized.
- B. Meals – Basic meals – 3 times a day
- C. Monitoring of Behavior – Billet host families assist the GPAC management by ensuring that each player complies with the GPAC rules and regulations. In addition, billet host families may impose reasonable additional rules to fit their lifestyle.
- D. Internet Access – Billet host families are responsible for providing internet access to players. Not only is this a necessity for players personally but it is required to stay connected to team apps and communication and to their families.
- E. Transportation – Players are responsible for providing or find their own transportation. However, if a billet host family chooses to assist and provide transportation, it is highly recommended that the player is not allowed to drive a billet host family vehicle. If a player is allowed to drive a billet host family vehicle, the family assumes responsibility and must ensure the player has proper vehicle and their insurance policy is valid.

What does the Billet Family Not Provide?

- A. Unlimited Food. Billet Families are not responsible for supplying an unlimited amount of food or snacks, nor are they expected to provide meals on an erratic schedule. Players are asked to eat what is a reasonable menu and should conform to the meal schedule of the billet family.
- B. Non –Essential Items: The purchase of non -essential or personal items by the player is not the financial responsibility of the billet families. Protein powders, supplements, personal preference snacks, personal hygiene products medications etc.
- C. Long Distance Telephone: Players should have their own phones with their own data and long-distance plans. Players should not be using Billet Home Families home phone lines for their personal use.
- D. Electronics – Billet Host Families are not required to place televisions, telephones, stereos, computers, or any other electronics in the player's room. If the billet family has extra electronics, they would like to lend to the player for use during their stay is appropriate but not required.

When will the billet player arrive? Each year players will generally arrive in mid-August at a date depending upon the tryout schedule and the practice required to prepare for the season. This also allows sufficient time for high school student enrollment and getting prepared for their school year. Billet compensation begins for the first full month of the player's residency.



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TESTIMONIALS

"Hockey was always a big part of my son's life, but we never imagined we would be sending our 14-year-old to live with someone else. However, he was looking for more opportunities and experiences than our community could offer, and we knew this billet experience would be the best way for him to grow both as a player and as an individual. From day one, the billet family made him feel welcomed and supported. They not only provided him with a comfortable, safe home, but also encouraged him to train, stay active, and supported his adjustment to a new school and community. The transition was smoother than we expected, and it was clear that our son was thriving in an environment that pushed him both on and off the ice. He's made lifelong friends along the way, and now he has a network of people who will always be rooting for him. We are incredibly grateful for the positive impact this experience has had on him."

Having a billet was truly a gift and one of the best experiences ever. Our home was filled with extra laughter and fun as he quickly became part of our family. We shared an amazing hockey season together—cheering him on at games, enjoying meals, and creating memories make us smile. The joy he brought into our lives is something we wouldn't trade for anything. We feel so fortunate we could welcome him into our family

We originally thought we were dropping off our son to a billet. But in the end, we didn't end up with a billet. We ended up with lifelong friends, and people we consider family.

It was one of the toughest decisions we've made as parents: to allow our young son to follow his dream, move 1000 kilometers away and into a stranger's house. However, we soon realized that he didn't move into a house. He moved into a home.

Hosting a billet in our home was one of the easiest decisions we ever made. Our family instantly gained a son, a brother, and a best friend. The laughter, warmth, family game nights and endless meals together are something we will look back on and cherish for years to come.





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HOSTING FAMILY INFORMATION / APPLICATION FORM

First/Last Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Postal Code: _____
Phone # _____ Phone # _____
Email Address: _____

Please Complete the Following Questions:

Have you Billeted in the last 2 years? Yes / No Yes: Which Player? _____

Family Members:

Partner/Spouse: _____
Child Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____
Child Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____
Child Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Pets:

Do you have any Pets? Yes / No What Type of Pet do you have? Cat / Dog / Other: _____

Allergies:

Does anyone in your household have allergies that we should be made aware of? Yes / No

If Yes: Which Family Member _____ Allergy Type: _____

Does anyone in your Family Smoke? Yes / No

Does your home have the required private accommodation? Yes / No

Is there any other information you feel is important to know when placing a Billet in your home?

Full Name (Print) _____ Signature _____

Date _____



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BILLET – PLAYER INFORMATION / APPLICATION FORM

Player First/Last Name: _____

1 - Parent First/Last Name: _____

2 - Parent First/Last Name: _____

Phone # _____ Phone # _____

Email Address _____ Email Address _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Please Complete the Following Questions:

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy) _____ **Health Care #** _____ **Prov** _____

Please list any Allergies or Medical Information regarding the player:

What School is the Player Enrolling in? _____ **Grade:** _____

Do you prefer a home with other Children? Yes / No

Are you okay with a single parent home? Yes / No

Are you okay with Pets in the home? Yes / No

Please describe the players Pregame routine and meal:

Please list some of the players favorite snacks and meals:

What are the players hobbies outside of Hockey?

Does the player have a Drivers License? Yes / No

Does the player have a vehicle? Yes / No

Is there any other information you feel is important to know when placing the player in a home?

Full Name (Print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____