

South Australian Government Schools

Student Orientation Handbook



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Student Orientation Handbook – Part 1

Living and Studying in Australia

Introduction

The information contained in this handbook will help you to settle into life in Australia. Your happiness and wellbeing will contribute to the success of your study and enjoyment of your stay. It is the aim of International Education Services (IES) and the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) to ensure that you receive high quality accommodation, education and support services while you are studying in a government school in South Australia.

At every South Australian government school, there is an International Student Program (ISP) Manager especially appointed to help you adjust to living and studying in Australia and resolve any problems that you may have.

Get to know your ISP Manager and speak to him/her first if you need any help.

Homestay Accommodation

Homestay accommodation provides an opportunity for you to enjoy the support of an Australian family so that you can settle in quickly and concentrate on your studies. Living with a homestay family can be personally rewarding and culturally enriching for both you and your homestay family including forging life-long friendships.

Living in homestay accommodation in the community can help you become independent and learn valuable life skills, as well as offering a stable environment for study and to enable you to achieve good academic results.

This may be the first time you are living away from your own family or living in a different country. Adjusting to a different culture, language, climate and even food takes time. It may take a few weeks to settle in and feel comfortable in your new environment and routine. If you are not sure about expectations at any time please check with your homestay.

Settling In

Give yourself time to settle in. In the early days you may experience some homesickness. You may feel tired, confused, frustrated, lonely or sad, or a combination of these. Your homestay family will support you and help you to adjust to your new environment.

Your homestay will show you around the home and introduce you to family members and pets. They will explain family routines and any rules which you are asked to please respect and abide by.

Please remember that you are a “guest” of your homestay family and an ambassador for your country. You are expected to follow the common rules of polite behaviour.

The following tips will help you to settle into your new family:

- Join in family conversations and activities.
- Respect your family’s routines.
- Offer to help out with household chores.
- Always treat property with care.
- Ask permission to invite friends home and to go out with friends.
- Pay for your personal expenses including phone calls, internet connection and personal hygiene products.

Communication

So that your homestay can support you while you live and study in South Australia it is very important for you to speak with your homestay. You can talk about your family, friends, your school day, school subjects, your interests and hobbies. Say hello and interact with other family members and their friends.

In this way your homestay family will get to know you better and learn about your country and culture. You may have the opportunity to become involved in family outings and activities. You can accept the invitation or decline politely if you don’t want to participate.

You will need to ask your homestay parent to sign your school diary and any permission forms for school activities. You are expected to show your homestay parent your school report, newsletter and any other information you are given during the school day.

Understanding English

If you do not understand what someone is saying, do not be embarrassed about asking people what they said or what they mean.

Ask your homestay family to correct you when you say something incorrectly. This will help you learn to speak English much quicker.

Common Routines and Rules

- Bedtime – most families go to bed around 10pm and get up around 7am.
- Noise and even phone calls after 9pm or before 7am are generally not acceptable.
- Parents in Australia become concerned if children stay up later than 11pm.
- It is usually acceptable to stay up later and ‘sleep in’ on weekends if the family has no other commitments.
- Borrowing or using belongings of other homestay members without their permission is not acceptable.
- Ask permission before using the home telephone or family computer.
- You are expected to go straight home after school unless you have negotiated alternative arrangements with your homestay.

- Water is a valuable resource in Australia. Please be careful with your use of water, particularly when using the bathroom or shower facilities. Try not to stay under the shower for longer than 3-5 minutes.
- Electricity is expensive. Please switch off electric lights, heaters, fans and computers when not in use.

Tips on safety in the home

- There may be some electrical appliances in your new home that you are not familiar with. Please ask your homestay parent how they work. This may minimize both the risk of injury to you and damage to the appliance from incorrect use.
- Some electrical appliances brought from overseas countries may not be compatible with electrical circuits in Australia. Please check with your homestay parent before you use appliances you have brought from overseas.
- Many families have power points and use electrical appliances such as hair dryers in the bathroom. This can be dangerous if there is a lot of water about. Ask your homestay parent to explain the basic rules to use these safely in the bathroom.
- If you are leaving your room for more than a few minutes, switch off the electric blanket, heater, fan or air-conditioner.
- Never dry clothes by placing them on or near heaters.
- Keep your valuables (camera, laptop) out of sight when not in use.
- Don't keep large amounts of money in the home.
- If you are provided with a key to the house, please do not give it to anyone.
- Do not let strangers into the home if you are home alone, even if they say they are friends of the family or repair/trades people. Phone your homestay parent to check.

Valuables

Your homestay parent needs to know about any valuables you may have. You should ask your homestay parent to find out if your valuables are covered by their home and contents insurance. If not, you should arrange your own personal insurance so that you are covered for theft or damage of your belongings.

Mobile Phone and Phone Card

Your homestay will help you to purchase a SIM card for your mobile phone.

Remember to store your important numbers into your mobile phone.

It is a good idea to get a phone card so that you can make long distance calls more cheaply.

Internet and Telephone Use

- Telephone and internet use are **not** included in your homestay fees.
- Please talk with your homestay parent about internet costs and usage. Please be aware that excessive internet usage may mean that internet availability is limited.
- Please ask your homestay parent before you use the telephone so that you can arrange to pay for your telephone calls.

- Late night calls may disturb other members of the family. Ask your homestay parent what times they consider are appropriate to make or receive calls.

Going Out

For your safety, it is important that your homestay parent knows your whereabouts and can contact you **at all times**.

It is important that you:

- ask your homestay parent for permission before going out
- let your homestay parent know where you are going, how you are getting there and home, when you will return and who you are going with
- return by the agreed time
- always ring if you think you will be late home
- leave your mobile phone turned on.

You are usually expected to be home by 6pm on Sunday to Thursday and by 11pm on Friday and Saturday nights. The expected time to be home on weekends will depend on your age, the type of the activity that you wish to attend, the level of supervision and methods of transport home.

For your own safety you should:

- travel in the company of others
- find out about areas (particularly at night) to be avoided
- avoid short cuts across parks, near trees and bushes, ovals and dimly lit areas either on your own or with friends
- avoid catching public transport too late at night – take a taxi instead
- check the bus or train timetable carefully to avoid waiting too long for transport
- never accept a ride with a stranger
- have the telephone numbers of your homestay parent and emergency contact with you if you do not have a mobile phone.

Overnight Stays

You are required to have your homestay parent's written permission to stay away from home overnight.

For extended stays, you are also required to have written permission from your parent.

Homestay Payments

Homestay payments for Study Abroad students are managed by IES.

If you are a High School Graduate Program student, your first homestay payment of 2 weeks rental is due upon arrival. After this, you will make homestay payments every 2 weeks (fortnightly). Please ensure that you pay on time without having to be reminded and ask your homestay to provide a receipt. It is a good idea to write the due dates in your diary.

If you have urgent financial issues and are unable to make a homestay payment, please speak with your ISP Manager.

If you cause any damage or loss in your homestay you are responsible for covering the cost of repairs and/or replacement. You are required to pay your homestay promptly.

Your school or IES should be notified if you and your homestay disagree about any damage or the cost of repair or replacement. IES may be involved to help in settling the dispute or will fund a mediator to resolve the situation.

Change of Homestay

Changing homestay is not simple and will usually only occur if there is a very difficult situation between a student and the homestay that cannot be resolved.

Any change in homestay must be negotiated with your ISP Manager and approved by IES, who will then advise the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) on your behalf. A change of homestay fee of \$200 may be charged.

You may wish to inform your homestay of your intention to move. IES will confirm your move with the homestay and in most cases IES will arrange the move date to be when the next homestay payment is due.

Before you leave your homestay, you are strongly encouraged to check your room with your homestay for any damage. You will need to pay your homestay for any damage you may have caused and any outstanding accounts (homestay fees, phone, internet).

Unresolved Concerns

Should there be any disagreement, dispute, discomfort, danger or worry about staying in the homestay, please speak with your ISP Manager.

If the matter is urgent please call the Student Emergency Phone on 0401 123 205. An IES representative will help you resolve the situation.

Independent Living

IES does not encourage independent living due to the difficulties many students experience and the disruption it can cause to your studies. To be eligible for independent living you must:

- be over 18
- have parent permission
- have school permission

Your school will also require you to have:

- completed at least one term of Year 12
- passed all subjects in the most recent assessment
- a good attendance and punctuality record

Change of Address

You must always inform IES and your school office if you change address and telephone number in South Australia or in your home country. Students living independently who change address must notify the school, IES and DIBP. This is the student's responsibility. Students who fail to do this are in breach of their visa and IES is required to report this to DIBP.

Your School

Expectations

You will be provided with the school rules and policies when you enrol. You are expected to make sure you know and understand school rules. If you are not clear on any of the rules you should ask the ISP Manager at your school or your home class teacher.

If you are absent from school you or your homestay parent will be required to ring the school before 9am. You must also go to the doctor and obtain a Medical Certificate. Your visa requires that you maintain a rate of 80% attendance at all times.

Tips for Successful Study

Education in Australia may be a lot different from that in your home country. Timetables, lesson times and student rules may all be different. Talk to your teachers if you are experiencing problems.

Learning a new language and making new friends can also be very challenging. It is important that you have adequate sleep and regular meals as you settle into your new school and home routines.

Some students experience problems in the classroom and managing independent learning. A good study plan with time allocated for social and recreational activities will help you to succeed. A balance between study, recreation and family life is important.

In the classroom

- If you do not understand teacher directions or part of the lesson speak to the teacher after the lesson and explain your difficulties.
- In Australia students are expected to ask for help when they need it.
- Remember to use "please" when asking for assistance and "Thank you for helping me" after you have been assisted.
- If you cannot read teacher hand written notes on the white board or in tests, ask for an explanation.

Independent learning

- Students are given 'study time' during which they are responsible for organising and managing their own learning. This can be difficult if you have not learned

how to do this effectively. Avoid wasting valuable time and falling behind in your assignments.

- Ask your home group or subject teachers to help you develop daily/weekly study plans for homework assignments and study time at school.
- Do not leave assignments until the last minute. Work on them consistently and show your teachers your draft work. This will help you achieve a satisfactory standard of work.
- Electronic dictionaries are small and easy to carry but may not give an accurate translation and cannot be used in exams. It is a good idea to buy a good bilingual dictionary and keep it in your bag for use in the classroom and Resource Centre.

Resource Centre

Teachers in Australia often set research assignments where information is not in your textbook. To do well in assignments you may need to learn how to access additional information not available in class textbooks from the Resource Centre, internet or interview people in the community. The teacher-librarian will help you to learn how to access information for assignments. It is important that you do not copy directly from a book or the internet, as all work handed in for marking must be in your own words.

Identification Card

All students must have an identification (ID) card. Your school will arrange for a photo to be taken for your card.

Please carry your ID card for personal safety and use:

- at your school library
- on public transport
- shops and movies for student discount
- and generally when you are away from your homestay.

Please report lost cards to your school.

Harassment and Bullying

In South Australia there are laws to protect you from being harassed or bullied. Harassment, bullying and inappropriate behaviour in any form including via social media will not be tolerated.

Each school has rules which protect the rights of all students. Students who harass, bully or behave inappropriately to others will be penalised.

If you feel harassed or discriminated against, you should immediately inform a teacher at your school or the ISP Manager or school student counsellor.

Disputes (Grievances and Complaints)/Appeals

- Grievances or disputes are to be handled promptly and inexpensively.
- If you have a grievance about an issue or need to appeal against a decision, please discuss this with your ISP Manager first.

- If it cannot be resolved, please telephone IES (ph 8226 3402) and make an appointment with the Manager, Student Services.
- You have the right to involve an independent advocate or nominee.

Care and Support

There are a number of people able to assist you if you are unhappy or have a problem at home or school. For example, you may be unhappy about your school time-table, subjects, treatment from a student or staff member or aspects of your homestay accommodation.

People who can help you include:

- your home group teacher
- your ISP Manager
- school counsellors
- your homestay parent
- your year level co-ordinator
- your school Principal

It is very important to deal with problems early, before the problems get more complex and harder to solve.

If you are unable to talk to your homestay parent or anyone at school about a problem, please contact IES on 8226 3402 to make an appointment.

School Holidays

If you intend travelling within South Australia, interstate or overseas during the school holidays you are required to discuss your plans with your ISP Manager before making any arrangements. (Travel can only occur during the school holidays.) If approved you are required to complete an *International Student Travel Form*.

This is a requirement for your personal safety and a condition of your student visa. Your school is required to know where you are going to be during the school holidays and to approve your travel dates.

Room Holding Fee

If you are in the Graduate Program and going away for more than a week during the school holidays, you are required to pay your homestay the Room Holding Fee. This ensures that no one else will occupy your room in your absence. Please obtain a schedule of Room Holding Fees from the ISP Manager at your school and discuss this with your homestay parent.

Room holding fees do not apply to Study Abroad Program students.

End of Year Arrangements

Many international students choose to return home at the end of the school year. Before you book your flights home, please note the following:

- All ISEC, Study Abroad and Year 8, 9 and 10 High School Graduate Program students are required to remain at school until the last day of the school year.
- Year 11 and 12 High School Graduate Program students may leave after their final school assessments and exams.

Prior to departure you are required to complete clearance procedures (if your course is completed), return all school equipment, text/library books, and fulfil any other school requirements.

Return to School Arrangements

You are required to return to school in time for the first day of each term. This is important for visa conditions and the success of your study.

Other important points to remember

- Permission to travel during the year must be given by your school.
- You will need to provide your school with a copy of your flight details.
- You are not permitted to stay home by yourself if your homestay parents go on holidays. Another homestay must be found or carer approved by IES to stay with you.
- You do not need special permission to return home during school holidays but you must let your homestay parent know of your plans.
- You may not travel during school term unless it is a school excursion, or approved study tour.

Tuition Fees

If your enrolment is longer than 2 terms (1 semester) IES will send you an invoice for the second portion of your first year of tuition fees once you have started your course.

If you are a Graduate Program student, IES will send you an invoice when your fees are due. You will receive an invoice in April and October.

All payments must be paid in Australian Dollars (AUD) by the due date on the invoice. Payments not made by this date will incur an AUD\$100 late fee.

To pay in person

You can pay in person with:

- cheque or money order (payable to 'DECD') or
- credit card (ensure that your daily limit is sufficient to pay your invoice in full).

Please note: CASH cannot be accepted.

Payments can be made:

Monday to Friday 8.30am and 4.00pm

International Education Services

Ground Floor West, Education Centre

31 Flinders Street, Adelaide

To pay by phone

You can call International Education Services on **(08) 8226 3402** to pay your invoice by credit card.

To pay by post

You can post a cheque or money order (payable to 'DECD') to:

International Education Services

GPO BOX 1152 Adelaide SA 5001

Please write invoice number, family and first name of student, school and your phone number on the back of your cheque or money order.

To pay by telegraphic transfer

Please refer to your invoice for bank details and quote invoice number, family and first name of student, school and your phone number.

You must then email your payment receipt to DECDFinance@sa.gov.au or fax (08) 8226 3655 and provide the name of your bank, invoice number, family and first name of student, school and your phone number.

Your Health

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

As an international student on a visa (subclass) 571, you are required to have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of your visa. This is medical insurance which will help you to pay for:

- a doctor to treat you in hospital, at home or at the doctor's surgery
- ambulance, x-rays and blood tests
- full public hospital cover
- benefits towards treatment and private hospital accommodation
- benefits towards pharmaceutical medicines

You can choose any general practitioner (GP) you wish.

When a medical service takes place in any doctor's surgery, OSHC pays 85% of the scheduled fee. Some doctors also charge more than the scheduled fee. It is best to ask whether this happens before making an appointment. You may still be required to make an additional gap payment.

If you want insurance that covers other treatments e.g. dental, optical, Chinese herbalism, you can take out 'Extras Cover', via the website below.

Overseas Student Health Cover arranged by DECD is with BUPA Australia. For further information please go to www.bupa.com.au/health-insurance/cover/oshc or contact BUPA Australia OSHC on 1800 888 942.

As an international student on a Tourist/Visitor visa, DECD strongly recommends that an appropriate insurance policy providing comprehensive medical and travel insurance is organised prior to arrival in Australia.

If you are in a homestay and need to see a doctor, you should inform your homestay parent who will arrange for you to see a doctor.

You can also go to the Accident and Emergency Department of any public hospital and be treated. You will have to wait some time to see a doctor if you are not seriously ill. You will be charged for the consultation.

Hospitals

Overseas Student Health Cover gives you full cover for all charges in a shared ward in any public hospital. However, if your own doctor treats you and charges above the scheduled fee, you will have to pay the difference.

Overseas Student Health Cover will also cover all charges should you receive treatment as an outpatient of a public hospital.

Private Transport

You are discouraged from owning and driving cars and motorbikes. Some agents have specific enrolment terms and conditions regarding driving. You must check with your education agent. If you are considering buying and/or driving you must have permission from your parents and:

- Have a current South Australian driver's licence or a current overseas licence with an official English translation.
- Know and comply with the road rules.

You must also follow the school rules regarding private transport and:

- Have vehicle insurance.
- Drive in a responsible manner.
- Follow the school rules about driving motor vehicles.
- Follow the school rules about being a passenger in a car driven by another student.
- Follow the school rules about taking other students in your car.

Working Part-time

Under the South Australian Government Schools Term and Conditions of enrolment, if you are enrolled in a Study Abroad Program of one year's duration or less, you are not permitted to work.

If you are on the High School Graduate Program and have completed your Intensive Secondary English Course, you may be granted approval from your school to work part-time. You must comply with your visa conditions in relation to part-time work.

Student Orientation Handbook – Part 2

Essential Matters

Introduction

The information contained in this section of the Handbook will help you to understand your Student Visa conditions, Australian Law, money matters and other important information. Please take the time to read through this information and speak with your ISP Manager if you have any questions.

Student Visa Compliance

Student (temporary) visas are granted subject to a number of conditions. It is important that you understand and comply with these conditions. Non compliance could result in your visa being cancelled and you would then be required to leave Australia.

Visa Condition No 8202 – Attendance

- I must maintain full time enrolment
- I must remain enrolled in a registered course
- I must maintain satisfactory attendance in my classes.

Visa Condition No 8202 – Academic Performance

- I must maintain satisfactory course progress
- I am not permitted to repeat a course more than once.

Visa Condition No 8202 – In School Behaviour

- Suspension for inappropriate behaviour will affect my attendance record and course progress.

Visa Condition No 8303 – Out of School Behaviour

- I must not be involved in activities that are disruptive to, or in violence threaten harm to, the Australian community or group within the Australian community
- I must behave in an acceptable manner at all times.

Visa Condition No 8532 – Accommodation Arrangements

- If I am under 18 I must stay either
 - in approved accommodation
 - with my parent/s
 - with suitable relative
- I must not change arrangements without written approval from IES.

Visa Condition No 8533 – Changing Education Provider

- I am not permitted to change education provider (South Australian Government Schools) until I have completed 6 months of my principal course of study.

Visa Condition No 8533 – Residential Address

- I must notify IES of my residential address and any change of address within 7 days if my accommodation has not been arranged by IES.

Visa Condition No 8105 – Work

- I may not work in Australia until I have begun my course
- I am only permitted to work up to 40 hours per fortnight during the school term.

Visa Condition No 8501 – Health Insurance

- I must maintain adequate arrangements for health insurance while in Australia.

If you want to stay longer than your original Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) and visa allow, please ask for a new Letter of Offer and COE in plenty of time for you to lodge your new visa application.

Australian Law

If a student breaks the law of the country they can be charged, imprisoned or sent back to their home country. Following are some laws which students must know.

Alcohol

In South Australia it is illegal for anyone under 18 to purchase or consume alcohol. A student is not allowed to take alcohol to school, accept it from others or consume alcohol at school. It is illegal for a student over 18 to supply alcohol to a person under 18.

There are strict laws in South Australia about under age drinking, drink driving and supplying alcohol to minors. Failure to abide by the Australian laws on the legal age for alcohol consumption would be a breach of your Visa conditions.

Drugs

There are severe penalties for possessing, using or dealing in illegal drugs. Students should avoid being in situations with people in possession of drugs.

Gambling

Students under 18 are not allowed to gamble. They are also not allowed to go into the Casino or other gambling places.

Stealing and Vandalism

There are severe penalties for students involved in stealing, shoplifting, cheating, or damaging public property.

Tobacco

It is against the law for anyone under 18 to purchase cigarettes. Most schools suspend students caught smoking at school or outside of school in school uniform.

Keeping You Safe

Your safety and well being is the highest priority to your homestay, school and IES and parents.

Students in Australia are taught that:

- we all have the right to be safe
- we all have a responsibility to behave appropriately towards and with other people (adults and children)
- we can help ourselves to be safe by talking to people we trust.

Abusive behaviour, bullying and harassment are against the law in Australia.

Tips for Cyber Safety

Your cyber profile should have appropriate images, limited personal information and a secure password. Have all settings set to private. Check your settings and change your password regularly.

Please take the time to read the *Keeping You Safe* sheet compiled by IES. It will help you to recognise different forms of abuse and explain ways in which you can protect yourself.

International Student Emergency Contact

IES offers a 24 hour Emergency telephone service on 0401 123 205.

Please use this number for:

- situations where you feel at risk
- serious injury or health problems
- victim or witness to a crime
- serious situation in your homestay
- serious environment danger e.g. fire, flood
- abuse

Emergency telephone numbers in Adelaide

DIAL 000 or RING 112 on your mobile phone

for Police, Fire or Ambulance Emergency for immediate attention.

DIAL 131 444 for Police Attendance (No Immediate Danger)

In an emergency, remember to stay calm and provide full details of the emergency, including your full name and where you are.

Money Matters

Bank Account

As soon as you arrive, ask your homestay parent to help you with opening a bank account and getting an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) card. To open a Bank Account you will need a form from your school and your passport.

When you have selected a bank, ask to open a Student Account as this does not attract any fees. You must remember to inform the bank each year while you are still a student.

Also ask for an ATM card. You can use your ATM card in shops, restaurants and automatic teller machines (ATMs). It is a good idea to set a daily withdrawal limit on your card, perhaps \$100. Then if your card is lost or stolen no more than that amount of money can be taken out in one day. You can withdraw larger amounts of money for your homestay payments by going into the bank in person to make the withdrawal.

ATM/ Cash Card/ Debit Card

You operate your card using a Personal Identification Number (PIN). This is a secret number which you must remember. **DO NOT** tell it to anyone or write it on or near your card. It is best not to use your birth date or mobile phone number since other people may be able to work this out.

Try to use your ATM card at **your bank** or you may be charged fees at other banks. Notify the bank immediately if your card is lost or stolen. Ask your homestay or school to help if necessary.

Managing your Money

Your parents may have sent you to Australia with a large amount of money, especially if you pay your homestay yourself. You must budget this money carefully so that it lasts for the time your parents expect it to.

You are expected to be financially independent and meet all personal expenses; entertainment, telephone calls, medical and other personal incidental costs.

Your parents can send money directly to you (by telegraphic transfer) from their bank account to your bank account in Australia.

Lending and Borrowing

DO NOT lend money to friends. Tell them you are not allowed to lend money.

If you lend money and it is not repaid there may be very little we can do to help you. If you lend money and then you cannot pay your homestay or your tuition fees you could lose your visa.

If you suddenly find yourself short of money **DO NOT** borrow from friends, talk to your ISP Manager.

If an adult (homestay parent, family friend etc) asks you for money, please tell your ISP Manager. If a person says that if you do not give them money, they will hurt you or say bad things about you it is a matter for the police because this behaviour is against the law.

Tips for keeping your money safe

- Do not carry around large amounts of cash.

- Do not open your wallet in public.
- Do not use ATMs at night or when by yourself.
- Do not borrow from or lend money to homestay parents or friends.
- Do not leave valuables and large amounts of cash at home.
- Keep airline tickets, valuables, money and passports in a safe place.

Glossary

DECD	Department for Education and Child Development
DIBP	Department of Immigration and Border Protection
ESL	English as a Secondary Language
ID	Identification
IES	International Education Services
ISEC	Intensive Secondary English Course
ISP	International Student Program
OSHC	Overseas Student Health Cover

Student Notes

International Education Services
Department for Education and Child Development

GPO BOX 1152
ADELAIDE SA 5000
AUSTRALIA

Tel: +618 8226 3402
Fax: +618 8226 3655
decdisp@sa.gov.au
www.internationalstudents.sa.edu.au

Department for Education and Child Development
T/A South Australian Government Schools
CRICOS Provider No. 00018A

**EMERGENCY CONTACT
FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
0401 123 205**

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