



Host Family Programs

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the benefits of becoming a host family with Access Services?

As an Access Services host family, you would:

- become a valued member of the team and your ideas and opinions would count
- receive regular guidance and support in your work especially when you run into challenges
- have **24 hour on call support** by telephone and at your home, when needed
- have training opportunities in addition to the required training and orientation

2. What are the basic requirements for becoming a host family?

To become a host family, you will need a valid driver's license and reliable transportation. Household members will need physicals, showing that everyone is free from communicable diseases. Various clearances and references are also required. It is important that your family has sufficient income to meet the financial needs of your household without relying on the reimbursement you will receive for providing care and support to the individual placed in your home.

3. What is the process for becoming a host family?

You can rest assured that Access Services will guide you through the process of becoming a host family without it becoming a long drawn out process. Once we receive your application, we will schedule a time to meet with you for approximately one hour for orientation. This will allow for time to answer questions you may have in addition to discussing what becoming a host family with Access Services entails. More detailed information about Access Services, the host family programs, the approval and placement processes, specific documentation and training requirements will also be provided.

After orientation, if you are comfortable with continuing with the process, a home interview and safety inspection will be scheduled and completed. If you are interested in becoming a host family for the Foster Care or Lifesharing programs a second home interview will be conducted. The second home interview will be performed by someone who works within the program you are interested in, who will be able to provide you with more pertinent information.

Access Services provides you with all needed training **free of cost**. We do not require that you come to the office multiple evenings to obtain the training. Most of the trainings can be done in the comfort of your own home by way of modules or online trainings. Currently, the only "classroom" required pre-service training is First Aid and CPR. Twenty-four hours of pre-service training is required.

Once your file is complete, it will be reviewed. Upon approval, you may begin providing respite care while waiting for a permanent placement.

4. What would be my responsibilities as a host family?

You would be responsible for the day-to-day care, supervision, and development of the individual placed in your care. Often times, the individuals placed also attend school, day program or work outside of the home. Individuals typically need varying levels of support concerning appointments, activities, and transportation. Other responsibilities would include participation in monthly meetings, completion of required documentation, adherence to state regulations (which we will help you with) and helping the person in your care learn new skills and meet their personal goals.

5. How much compensation would I receive when it comes to providing host family care?

Access Services is currently offering a **\$250 sign-on bonus** to new host families once they are approved and complete only two days of respite!

You would be classified as an independent contractor and the monies you receive would be considered reimbursement for room, board, and care to the individual placed in your home.

Reimbursement rates for host family care start at \$1,175.00/month for children and \$2,200.00/month for adults (non-taxable income). Respite rates range from \$80.00 - \$150.00 per day (before tax).

Currently, Access Services awards bonuses (up to a maximum of \$500 per referral) to host families who refer other host families. The first \$200 will be dispersed once the referred family's file is complete and they provide one day of respite or receive a long-term placement. An additional \$300 will be awarded once the referred family has provided thirty days of respite or has provided care to an individual placed through Lifesharing or Therapeutic Foster Care for only three months.

6. Will I be responsible for any 'out of pocket' expenses? Do individuals coming to stay with me have money for clothes, recreational activities, and health related expenses?

You would not be responsible for paying for the clothing needs of individuals staying in your home. The individuals receiving services typically have their own insurance and are responsible for all related co-pays and expenses, to include medication. Money may or may not be available for recreational activities.

7. Will I get to choose who comes to stay in my home? How long will it take before someone comes to live with us?

Access Services desires to make suitable matches between host families and individuals in need of a home. When a possible match has been identified, an Access Services representative will call you to discuss all pertinent information. Pre-placement visits are essential in order to ensure a successful match. As the host family, you would ultimately choose whether or not you are able to take the person into your home.

We would encourage you to provide short term Respite Care before making a decision to enter into a long term placement. This would afford you invaluable experience caring for people with special needs and give you the chance to get started sooner. The process to receive a long term placement is a more extended process.

8. Can the person coming to stay with my family share a bedroom with one of my family members? What items are needed for the bedroom I will be providing for the person staying in my home?

Typically, adults have their own rooms. Children can share bedrooms. Children five years of age and older can only share a bedroom with children of the same gender. Bedrooms need to have appropriate size beds for each person. There should be a mirror, dresser or chest of drawers, and closet or wardrobe space available for each individual.

9. What kind of support would I receive in providing host family care? If there were ever an emergency after office hours, is there someone I could reach?

As a host family, you would be assigned an Access Services coordinator as your primary contact person. The coordinator will partner with you making sure that you have the information you need to care for the individual placed in your home. After hours, you will have access to our on-call system. Support will always be available in an emergency. Our system is such that you will receive a quick response from someone who is familiar with the individual in your care. You will also receive pre-service training outlining what to do in the event of an emergency. Access Services is known for our commitment and support to the individuals we serve and our host families and we will be with you every step of the way!

For More Information, Contact Your County Host Family Representative:

Bucks/Chester/Delaware/Montgomery Counties

Donna Donnelly

215-540-2150, Extension 1304

DDonnelly@accessservices.org

Berks/Carbon/Lehigh/Monroe/Northampton/Pike/Schuylkill Counties

Emily Whitmire

484-269-4247

EWhitmire@accessservices.org