



Host Home Program (HHP)

Homeless Prevention Council

Frequently Asked Questions



What are the values that guide the Host Home Program?

Building community and relationships with young people requires **trust, hope, vulnerability, commitment, clear communication, healthy boundaries, and flexibility**. The following are the values that guide our Host Home Program:

- We approach our work with a lens of social justice and youth empowerment
- We value diversity in all its forms
- We believe in supporting youth regardless of their racial or ethnic identity; religious affiliations, or lack thereof; gender identity or sexual orientation; socioeconomic background; or level of attainment
- We honor the resilient, creative, resourceful nature of the young people we serve and celebrate their right to select and guide their own path
- We believe in trauma-informed and harm reduction strategies that acknowledge past experience and affirm youth strengths
- We seek to recognize and challenge systems and structures that perpetuate barriers in young people's lives (such as racism, classism, sexism, etc). We recognize not all youth get the same results through the same hard work
- We understand that all youth will sometimes make choices we don't agree with, and we acknowledge the youth's right to make their own choices
- We understand that choices youth make might be different from those we might expect for our own children and we avoid taking on a parental role
- We believe that youth benefit from living with caring adult allies who are aware of the inherent power dynamics of the Host Home Program model, and strive to minimize the impact of that power

What is the process for becoming a Host in the Host Homes Program?

Individuals interested in becoming a Host will go through the following steps:

1. Complete a Host Homes Application, which includes:
 - Demonstrating proof of homeowners/renters insurance (*renter's insurance on average costs \$10-\$15 per month*)
 - Providing two personal references for HPC staff to contact
 - Authorizing a background check (CORI)
2. Complete an interview with the Host Homes Coordinator to include the following:
 - Anticipating difficult situations and your response
 - Motivation for hosting a youth
 - Previous experience with youth
3. Complete a home-inspection with HPC staff to ensure that all required amenities for program (ie: safe living environment, private space, kitchen for cooking, easy bathroom access) are available
4. Attend a Host Home Program Orientation Training, which will provide techniques and strategies on how to be an effective Host and cover relevant topics to supporting a youth in the Host Home Program



What support will Hosts receive from HPC while they have a Guest in their home?

- Hosts can expect to receive the following support from HPC:
 - A **taxable** stipend of up to \$1000/month to support cost of a Guest in the home (increased electric/water bill)
 - As-needed check-ins with HPC's Host Home Program Coordinator to discuss the match and get support around any concerns arising in the home
 - Monthly Host Support Meetings to connect with other Hosts, as available, to discuss questions, concerns, challenges, and rewards of working as a Host

What support will Guests receive from HPC once they are matched with a Host?

- Monthly check-ins (either home visits or at HPC) with Guest, Hosts and Host Home Coordinator to discuss any updates and/or any challenges that may arise
- Weekly and ongoing case management with HPC's Housing Case Manager to work on long-term housing plan and search, employment and education goals

How does the Host-Guest matching process work?

HPC will work diligently to ensure that matches between Hosts and Guests are made based on aligned values, interests, and lifestyles. Our aim is to create pairings that are mutually beneficial for both the Host and Guest:

The matching process will include the following steps:

1. As part of the application process, the Host will create a letter for potential guests to view, including photos or footage of the host home and information about the hosts' lives and their neighborhood (ie; hobbies, pets, routines)
2. HPC's Host Home Coordinator will discuss Host applicants with the youth and contact potential Hosts to see if they are interested in exploring the match.
3. HPC's Host Home Program Coordinator will facilitate in-person meetings between the youth and potential Host. After these visits, the youth will decide if they would like to move forward with the match. **Matches are mutual;** either the youth or the Host has the option to not select the match after the meeting.
4. Once a match is made, the Host Home Program Coordinator will facilitate the creation of a contract between the Host and Guest. This contract will outline the guidelines that both parties create and agree to follow while matched with one another.
5. The first two weeks of the Host-Guest pairing will serve as a "welcoming period" in which both parties will have the opportunity to adjust to their new situation and explore the match. At the end of these two weeks, the Host Home Program Coordinator will meet with the Host and Guest to ensure that it still feels like a good fit and there is mutual desire to continue.



What is expected from Hosts while participating as a Host?

- Hosts are expected to provide a welcoming and stable living environment.
- Hosts are expected to respect the rights, privacy, culture and background of Guests, including their religious and political beliefs.
- Hosts are not to engage in any relationships of sexual or romantic nature with their Guests or display behaviors that may be misleading or confusing.
- Hosts should act as a model of the behaviors we ask Guests to display (for example being aware of their own substance use).

What is expected from Guests while in their host home?

- Guests are expected to be respectful of the privacy, rules, routines, expectations and beliefs of their Hosts.
- Guests are not to engage in illegal drug consumption or alcohol consumption inside of the Host Home.
- Guests are not to smoke in Host Home unless otherwise negotiated and agreed upon in the Host-Guest Contract.
- Guests are not to have any overnight visitors and are to identify a "day visitor policy" with their Host in the Host-Guest contract. The Guest is to be respectful of these rules as outlined in the Contract.

What if a Host plans to be away while a Guest is staying in their Host Home?

- HPC understands that the temporary absence of a Host may occur while a Guest is staying in their Host Home. In creating the Host-Guest contract, Hosts and Guests will come to a mutual agreement around a housing plan for Guests when Hosts are out of town.

What happens once the agreed upon length of stay for a Guest with a particular host expires?

HPC and the youth Guest will continually work together on securing long-term housing solutions for when then Host Home Program timeline expires after the 8-month contract. **If there is a mutual interest in continuing the housing relationship past 8 months, the Host Home Coordinator will facilitate a conversation between the host and Guest to explore the opportunity.**

What happens if the Host-Guest match is not a good fit?

HPC is committed to the success of the Host-Guest relationship. HPC staff has designed a program that will enable Host-Guest relationships to be overall positive. When conflict does arise, HPC asks that both Hosts and Guests engage in direct and respectful conversation to come to a resolution. In the case that the match cannot continue, HPC will work to place a Guest in a new Host Home. Given that Hosts and Guests are entering into the Host Home Program on a voluntary basis, any party may end their participation at any time.

Is the stipend taxable?

Yes it is. To receive the stipend, you will need to complete a W-9 form that HPC keeps on file. At the end of the year, HPC will provide you with a 1099 form to file with your taxes. We also recommend consulting with a tax preparer about expenses associated with hosting someone that may be deductible.