

FAMILYHOME PROGRAM

Policies and Procedures

Section A

A-1 GOALS OF THE FAMILY HOME PROGRAM

POLICY

The Familyhome Program goals are to provide a safe and secure place to live in a Familyhome setting, to promote a high quality of life and to support and promote community inclusion. The program provides a family setting for those individuals who may require supervision, prefer living with a family and who need the additional support that a family environment can provide. Children and adults with a range of functional abilities including those who have physical, behavioural and /or medical complications may be served in the Familyhome program.

The objectives of this policy manual are to provide clear direction, consistency, an accountability framework and ensure quality support for both the Homesharer and Familyhome Provider.

Section B

B-1 SELECTION CRITERIA FOR FAMILYHOME PROVIDERS

B-1 POLICY

Familyhome Providers are persons over the age of 18 who are willing to welcome an adult with a disability as part of their family and who are capable both physically and emotionally, of providing the support an individual requires. Desirable characteristics are patience, adaptability, warmth, understanding, open mindedness, acceptance, maturity, commitment, integrity, cooperativeness and flexibility.

B-1 PROCEDURE

In screening prospective Familyhome Providers, the following criteria is important:

1. Satisfaction with their present lives:
 - content with current life
 - optimistic about family, work, social/community involvement
 - stability within their family situation and confidence in the ability to share their family and lives with another person.

2. Motivation For Involvement:
 - people with realistic reasons for being a Familyhome Provider in order to encourage success when met with difficult or discouraging times
 - interest in helping the Homesharer become a part of the community and to participate in the community

- the opportunity to share their lifestyle and family life with another person
 - to earn extra income by supporting a person in their own home.
3. Availability:
The daily schedule of the Familyhome Provider should be sufficiently flexible so that they are able to attend to the needs of the Homesharer, participate in the Life Planning meetings and other aspects of the Homesharer's life. The Familyhome Provider must live in the home in which services are to be provided.
 4. Past Relevant Experience:
Previous experience is not necessarily required as people have acquired skills in being a part of a family, raising a family, in their job, and other life experiences which would be considered an asset as a Familyhome Provider.
 5. Positive Family Dynamics:
The family should function within a stable and comfortable atmosphere with evidence of good interpersonal relationships, respect, openness, understanding and acceptance.
 6. Accommodation:
Whether the Familyhome Provider rents or owns their home is not a priority. The home must include a private bedroom for the Homesharer, with the expectation that the Homesharer will have free access to use all common family areas of the home as would any other family member.
 7. Accessibility to Community:
Familyhome Providers should ensure that the Homesharer is able to access recreational facilities and other local community services of interest.
 8. Selection vs. Matching:
The following characteristics should not be considered relevant in the selection of a Familyhome Provider although they may be relevant in matching a Homesharer with a Familyhome Provider:
 - religious affiliation
 - age
 - cultural background
 - occupation
 - race
 - family composition
 - type of housing

B-2: MATCHING FAMILYHOME PROVIDERS WITH A HOMESHARER

B-2 POLICY

The agency will follow a matching process which takes into account the Homesharer's needs, preferences, personality and situational factors along with those of a prospective Familyhome Provider.

B-2 PROCEDURE

1. Advertising on behalf of an interested person may be provided by the agency.
2. Prospective Familyhome Providers make an initial inquiry.
3. An application form is provided to the prospective Familyhome Provider.
4. Application forms are completed.
5. Application forms are reviewed by the agency, person and/or their family/advocate.
6. Initial interviews with the prospective Familyhome Provider are conducted by the agency.
7. The prospective Familyhome Providers home is inspected by the agency by way of a Home Study to ensure Health & Safety requirements are/can be met.
8. A Fire Inspection is completed by a representative of the local Fire Department.
9. Anyone living in the prospective Familyhome Provider's home over the age of 18 must consent to a Criminal Reference Check and provide the agency with a completed Criminal Reference Check.
10. Three references are required on behalf of the prospective Familyhome Provider.
11. An interview is conducted by the agency with all members of the prospective Familyhome.
12. The Homesharer will spend time in the home before they make their decision to live with the prospective Familyhome Provider.
13. Upon acceptance as a Familyhome Provider a six month trial agreement between the Homesharer, the Familyhome Provider and the agency will be developed and signed by all parties. At the end of the six month period, if all parties are in agreement, the Familyhome Provider will be officially approved by the agency and all parties will sign the letter of agreement.

B-3 LETTER OF AGREEMENT

B-3 POLICY

A Letter of Agreement between the Provider and the agency specifying the responsibilities of each party is agreed to and signed by those involved.

B-3 PROCEDURE

The agency will develop a Letter of Agreement that identifies the responsibilities and expectations of all of the involved parties. This agreement will be reviewed and signed by all parties prior to the commencement of a Familyhome arrangement.

The agency will then re-approve the Familyhome annually if:

1. The annual written review, as completed by the Agency indicates that all requirements of the Ministry are being met.
2. Local Municipal Fire and Safety regulations are being met.
3. A written recommendation for re-approval indicates that the Familyhome Provider has demonstrated supervision and /or training competency to the satisfaction of the agency.

B-4 TERMINATION OF A FAMILYHOME AGREEMENT

B-4 POLICY

The Familyhome Agreement may be terminated at any time, without cause or reasons, by the Homesharer, Agency or the Familyhome Provider, on 60 days written notice. The Agency may terminate immediately. For example: where a homesharer has been abused or in the case of the Familyhome Provider's non-compliance with policies and procedures.

Section C

C-1 PROVISION OF SUPPORT

C-1 POLICY

The Familyhome Provider will provide support and care and the opportunity for further development of the Homesharer residing in their home

C-1 PROCEDURE

1. Provide room and board on a continuous basis;
2. Ensure regular visits to the Homesharer's physician, dentist, and/or other specialist(s);
3. Administer medications as prescribed;
4. Provide a well furnished room with adequate space;
5. Offer the Homesharer the opportunity for privacy;
6. Provide a home atmosphere which will encourage the Homesharer to participate in day to day activities in the home and to function as an accepted, valued family member in that environment;
7. Maintain and encourage contact with natural family and significant others;
8. Provide training, guidance, and direction which will encourage the Homesharer to become involved in the local community;
9. Encourage the Homesharer to attend school, work, recreation and spiritual activities outside of the home environment;
10. Advise appropriate persons if the Homesharer is unable to participate in a service or activity due to illness or other reason;
11. Transport the Homesharer to appointments and extracurricular activities as required.
12. Arrange appropriate supervision for the Homesharer when the Familyhome Provider is away and notify agency of this activity.

C-2 AGENCY SUPERVISION OF FAMILYHOME PROVIDER

C-2 POLICY

Agency assumes responsibility for the supervision of each Familyhome Provider by a Familyhome Program Coordinator and to assist the Providers and ensure that adequate support is provided to the Homesharer.

C-2 PROCEDURE

1. The Familyhome Provider shall work cooperatively with the Coordinator by: notice of the intention to terminate.
2. If there was just cause for the Familyhome Providers contract to be terminated, The Agency will immediately ensure the Homesharers safety and security and begin to secure an alternative placement.
3. Familyhome approval may be terminated by MCSS after completion of an
4. investigation of any complaint.

C-3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FAMILYHOME PROVIDER

C-3 POLICY

Upon agreement to welcome a Homesharer into the Familyhome, the Coordinator will discuss in detail the responsibilities with the Familyhome Provider. The responsibilities will be reviewed on an annual basis or when necessary. Included are the following:

C-3 PROCEDURE

The following are responsibilities that are typically expected of every Familyhome Provider and will be modified based on individual situations:

1. Keeping scheduled appointments.
2. Advising of any conferences or appointments for the Homesharer which are not routine or regularly scheduled.
3. Informing the agency as soon as possible of any medical emergency, or of any circumstances which would necessitate a major change in support or service, treatment, or care of the Homesharer.
4. Allowing private contact with the Homesharer by the Coordinator at any time.
5. Seeking approval from the Coordinator prior to making any changes in the Homesharer's use of any room in the home or with respect to any change of address.
6. Not entering into any other agreements with any other agency that would involve the placement of any other child or adult into the Familyhome without informing the Coordinator.
7. Having a dependable means of transportation for the Homesharer and ensuring that the amount of vehicle insurance is adequate.

C-4 HOUSEHOLD REQUIREMENTS/HOME STUDY

C-4 POLICY

Prior to the involvement of a Homesharer with a Familyhome Provider, the agency will do an initial home study to ensure the home meets certain criteria relative to the physical structure (of the home) and specific Health and Safety requirements. The Coordinator, through regular visits to the home, will ensure that these standards and criteria are maintained.

C-4 PROCEDURE

1. The Familyhome is constructed, arranged and maintained as to provide adequately for the health and safety and well-being of all occupants.
2. Housekeeping standards are such that a Familyhome presents a comfortable, clean and orderly appearance.
3. Each adult should have his/her own room but in any case, no more that two persons share a bedroom, providing each person has agreed to do so. Each person, however, in all cases will have their own bed.
4. No Homesharer will sleep in an unfinished basement or in a detached building, or on the third floor of the home if there is no exterior fire escape.
5. Floor space for the bedrooms shall be sufficient to accommodate properly at least one single bed, dresser chair and provide sufficient space for personal effects. Each bedroom will have at least one outside window, that may be opened for fresh air.
6. The atmosphere and routine of a Familyhome should be such that a Homesharer may comfortably spend the majority of his non-sleeping hours outside of his bedroom.
7. A Familyhome will provide for the laundering of the Homesharer's clothing.
8. The Homesharer shall have access to a telephone, television, radio and newspaper.
9. Every Familyhome is equipped with functional smoke detection devices and fire extinguishers.
10. The Familyhome provider has a plan for evacuating the home in case of fire and will teach the Homesharer what to do in case of fire and review this process at least twice a year.
11. Medications, poisonous and hazardous substances are to be stored in inaccessible location.
12. Where there are animals in the home, the Familyhome Provider must have them properly protected against rabies and other diseases that may be spread to humans.
13. All weapons, including firearms, air rifles, bows and hunting equipment must be made inoperable and inaccessible to the Homesharer.
14. If there is a swimming pool, rules and regulations are established and the Homesharer is properly supervised when using the pool.
15. All Familyhome Providers will carry liability insurance on their home and proof of such insurance must be made available to the Coordinator at the time of the initial Home Study and annually thereafter.

C-5 RECORDING

C-5 POLICY

Familyhome Providers are expected to maintain records and the Coordinator is responsible for ensuring all documentation is put into the Homesharer's file.

C-5 PROCEDURE

1. Familyhome Providers will be briefed by the Coordinator regarding the expected recording requirements.
2. The responsibility for keeping the Homesharers file current is that of the Coordinator.

C-6 REPORTING EMERGENCIES

C-6 POLICY

The agency must be contacted in the event of any emergency which may arise while the Familyhome Provider is supporting the Homesharer. The Coordinator may be reached at the agency. Outside of office hours there is an Emergency On Call number which may be called to report an incident or accident.

C-6 PROCEDURES

C-6a: Call in Procedure

1. During office hours Monday to Friday, call: agency phone
2. After hours or weekends, call: agency on call phone

C-6b: Medical Emergencies

1. The Familyhome Provider should contact a doctor or hospital immediately.
2. The Homesharer medical information should be taken to the hospital as well.
3. During medical treatments, the Familyhome Provider should be available in case additional action or information is required.
4. If possible, the Homesharer should sign any necessary consent forms. If they are not able to do so, the family/substitute decision maker should be contacted and asked to sign.
5. As soon as medical help is arranged, the Familyhome Provider must call an agency representative to advise of the problem and the action taken.
6. The agency or the Familyhome Provider will be responsible for alerting the next-of-kin of the emergency situation. An agency representative will then remain available to the Homesharer and the Familyhome Provider.
7. In the case of death of a Homesharer, an agency representative should be contacted immediately, and will assume full responsibility for handling all procedures and arrangements.

C-6c: Missing Homesharers

If a Homesharer is discovered missing:

1. The Familyhome Provider will make a thorough search of his/her home and property.
2. When it has been verified that the Homesharer is missing from the premises, the Familyhome Provider shall make a search of the neighbourhood and surrounding area as well as contact, if appropriate, person(s) with whom the Homesharer has contact.
3. If the Homesharer is not found, the Familyhome Provider will contact an agency representative to determine the course of action that should be taken.
4. If the Homesharer continues to be missing, the agency representative and/or the Familyhome Provider will contact the local police. Both the Familyhome Provider and the agency representative should be available to give all necessary information to the police.
5. The agency will, if appropriate, notify the natural family that the Homesharer is missing and ask for their cooperation and assistance, if necessary.
6. When the Homesharer is found, the Familyhome Provider shall ensure that his/her initial needs are met and if necessary, arrange for a physical check-up if there is concern around the physical state of the Homesharer.
7. The agency and/or Familyhome Provider will notify all parties who were initially contacted that the Homesharer has been found.
8. The Familyhome Provider will document the incident as soon as possible.
9. The agency will complete a Serious Occurrence Report following agency policy.

C-6d Death of a Homesharer

In the unfortunate case of a death of a Homesharer, the agency will be responsible for handling all procedures.

1. If having reason to believe that a Homesharer has died, the Familyhome Provider will call an ambulance, and not move the person or alter the area where the Homesharer is.
2. The Familyhome Provider will contact the agency immediately.
3. The agency, upon being notified of the death, will go to the Familyhome.
4. The family/substitute decision maker will be notified of the Homesharer's death by the agency in person, where time and distance allow. If the natural family is willing and able to arrange and pay for burial they may take over arrangements at this point.
5. If there are no relatives, or if the natural family is unable to assume responsibility, the agency will make the arrangements for burial, taking into consideration the Familyhome Provider's and natural family's preferences where possible.
6. The agency will notify other persons of the death (eg. other services, friends, advocate, etc.)
7. The agency will arrange for supportive counseling for members of the Familyhome, if needed.
8. The agency will complete an investigation and immediately report the Homesharer's death to the Ministry of Community and Social Services as per policy re: Serious Occurrences.

C-6e Emergency Accommodations

1. If an emergency situation arises where there is a need to immediately seek alternative short term accommodation for the Homesharer, the Familyhome Provider must contact the agency immediately.
2. The agency will ensure that alternative short term accommodation is arranged as soon as possible upon being contacted by the Familyhome Provider.

C-6f Additional Reporting

In addition to the previously detailed possible emergency events, an occurrence of any of the following events must also be reported to the agency as soon as possible after the occurrence.

1. Commission of an offense by the Homesharer or apprehension by Police.
2. Abuse or mistreatment.
3. Alcohol or drug abuse.
4. Major renovations to the Familyhome Providers home.
5. Overnight trip with the Homesharer.
6. Move of an additional person into Familyhome.
7. Major illness in Familyhome Providers Home.
8. Apprehension by Police of any person living in the home.

C-7 QUALITY ASSURANCE

C-7 POLICY

The agency will ensure that the Homesharers receiving support through the Familyhome Service receive the best quality support while they are living with the Familyhome Provider. This section of the Policy and Procedure Manual includes information for the Familyhome Providers to ensure that each Homesharer they are responsible for receives the best possible support.

C-7 PROCEDURES

C-7a: Confidentiality

All Homesharer information and records must be kept in strictest confidence. No information about a Homesharer, written or verbal, will be given to others unless a signed release (written consent) from the Homesharer or his/her family/substitute decision maker accompanies a request for information. It is permissible and may be required however, to share pertinent and related information about the Homesharer with the following persons: agency staff, relief providers, natural family, advocates, health and other professionals.

The Familyhome Provider may not discuss a Homesharer's personal life (eg. the Homesharer's past and present relationships, sexuality, emotional problems, medical conditions/problems) without a signed release of information.

Familyhome Providers are required to sign a confidentiality statement, when they are engaged in providing services to a Homesharer.

C-7b Homesharer Rights

The following list of rights applies as a minimum standard to all Homesharers: Homesharers have:

- the right to a humane, physical and psychological environment which recognizes their individual human dignity. Homesharers will not be subject to physical, mental or emotional abuse. Harsh communications by words, tone of voice, gestures or other deeds shall not be inflicted upon Homesharers except as part of an approved agency treatment plan and then only within humane and reasonable limits. Homesharers have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- the right to reasonable privacy for personal hygiene and sleeping.
- the right to receive uncensored correspondence and unmonitored telephone calls, unless such censorship has been directed by a court or is provided in their Life plan.
- the right to regular physical exercise and to be outdoors several times a week, if they so wish.
- the right to opportunities for social interaction, relationships and friendships.
- the right to spend time alone with natural family members, agency staff, advocates and friends.
- the right to opportunities for learning and development.
- the right to care for themselves as fully as they can, and to have assistance to develop all aspects of daily living skills as they may wish.
- the right to be free from unnecessary or excessive medication.
- the right to exercise all civil rights, such as the right to vote, to marry, to sue or be sued, to retain licenses established by law, to manage or dispose of property, to execute instruments such as wills, to enter contractual relationships unless specially limited by a certificate or incompetence, or legislation or regulations of the Provincial Government.
- the right to whatever assistance they need from the agency in arranging for suitable conditions for living, employment, recreation, clothing and financial management.
- the right to confidentiality. Their presence in the Familyhome Service and information about them will not be released except to authorized persons or agencies.
- the right to share in the life and activities of the community. The right to practice freely the religion they choose.
- the right to participate in their individual planning process and to include whomever they wish in the planning.
- the right to as much participation in decision-making regarding financial and other aspects of their lives as they are capable of and desire.

C-7c Medical and Dental Care

Agency staff, with input from the Homesharer, will assist the Homesharer to become the patient of a local, community based physician, dentist and specialist(s) as needed.

The Familyhome Provider will receive detailed information and instructions with respect to any specific physical or medical needs of the individual (eg: epilepsy, hepatitis, medications). Should the Familyhome Provider require additional instruction in the care or treatment of the Homesharer's specific medical needs, the agency will arrange for appropriate training.

All Homesharers will have a complete physical examination once a year, and a dental examination at least once a year. The Familyhome Provider will keep a record of all medical occurrences and illnesses and these will be maintained in the Homesharer's file. The agency must be informed of any surgery and/or optional dental work prior to it being initiated.

The Familyhome Provider has primary responsibility for arranging the Homesharer's routine appointments and for accompanying him/her to these appointments. In some instances, the agency may initiate a referral or coordinate the appointment process. The Familyhome Provider will record all appointments on appropriate forms to be contained in the Homesharer's file.

C-7d: Medications

1. Prescription medications must be dispensed in accordance with the directions given by the Homesharer's physician. Under no circumstances can the type, frequency, dosage, or time of dispensing be changed without the consent, in writing, of the Homesharer's physician.
2. All changes in the Homesharer's medication must be reported to the agency and documented.
3. All medication should be administered to the Homesharer in accordance with the agency.