

Lifeshare Frequently Asked Questions

Are there special skills or experience I need to be a home provider?

No professional qualifications are necessary, but anyone wishing to provide support in their home must be responsible, caring, and successfully complete the training and screening process. You must be willing to take CPR/first aid and other training and be open to regular communication, oversight and ongoing support from your developmental services agency. Your home must also meet fire, safety and health standards.

What staff supports will there be - how often and what things will they assist me with?

Once the home sharer has moved in, the developmental services agency will provide you with flexible support that is adapted to your needs to ensure a successful and ongoing relationship. Agency staff will act as a liaison between all parties to ensure that everything runs as smoothly as possible.

What is involved in the screening and matching process?

To give each pairing the greatest chance of success, you and all other potential home providers undergo a screening process, including interviews with all people living in your home, and a thorough background check including a police records check. This also includes a review of personal references, a home and property inspection, and a confirmation of current home and vehicle insurances.

Lastly, you will need to take an oath of confidentiality.

What is "respite" and how does it work?

"Respite" means services and supports that are provided to a person with a developmental disability by a person other than the primary home provider. The purpose of respite is to provide temporary time off for you, including vacation time.

The developmental services agency you are working with for LifeShare may have respite options available to you.

What happens if I want to take vacation or need to be away for a period of time?

If you'd like to bring your home sharer with you on vacation, it's best to advise your developmental services agency to discuss the details of the trip, the location, and any personal documents that may be needed (e.g., a passport).

Alternatively, the agency may provide you with respite if you wish to take vacation without your home sharer. In some situations, the home sharer may spend time with their natural family (if appropriate).

How much do I get paid as a LifeShare home provider? And what is covered through financial assistance (such as home sharer meals, transportation, personal needs)?

The Government of Ontario funds developmental services agencies throughout the province to provide the LifeShare program. As a home provider you will receive a per diem (daily rate) set by the agency. The home sharer may also receive direct financial support through the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) that can be used for living costs such as room and board. Any additional expenses that the agency may reimburse would be outlined in your Service Agreement with the agency. Please speak with your agency for full details on remuneration and costs that may be covered.

How long does a LifeShare match last?

The arrangement varies on an individual basis and can span a few months, a year, or a lifetime.

Will I be required to participate in training? What kind of training do I need?

Developmental services agencies will provide training and orientation to you on various LifeShare topics including:

- CPR and First Aid
- Abuse prevention and reporting
- Confidentiality
- Serious occurrence reporting (as may be applicable in the agency's policies and procedures)
- The agency's complaints process

You may require additional training and orientation to make sure that the unique needs of the home sharer are met.

Is it OK if I have family and/or friends over to visit while the home sharer is present?

Yes, LifeShare is about building relationships and, ideally, the home sharer becomes a part of the home provider's family. Talk to the home sharer to make sure they're comfortable with visitors.

If a visitor is expected to stay in your home for a longer period of time, you must inform your developmental services agency. The agency will assess the impact a visitor will have on the home sharer including the living arrangements, regularity of visits, and length of stay.

Who takes the home sharer to medical appointments, etc.?

If it's agreeable between you and the home sharer, you may take the home sharer to appointments and provide support during the appointment, if needed and/or appropriate. Your developmental services agency may cover the cost of out-of-pocket expenses such as mileage.

Questions about travel to/from appointments and support during appointments will be answered by your agency.

Whom do I contact in the event of an emergency?

Call 911 if personal safety is at risk. Some emergency situations may be discussed in advance so that you are prepared in the event of need, such as fire safety plans, local weather emergencies, etc.

Your developmental services agency will provide you with ongoing support as needed. This could include an agency staff contact person in the event of an emergency.

What modifications will I have to do to my home to make it accessible?

People with developmental disabilities have a range of needs and abilities.

In screening and matching you with a home sharer, the developmental services agency will consider the suitability of a home in meeting the home sharer's mobility and accessibility needs. Depending on the home sharer's needs and abilities, modifications to the home may not be necessary.

To return to more information about LifeShare at Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley, visit:
www.communitylivingupperottawavalley.ca

Source: Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services