



HOME SHARE TOOLKIT

2019

Home Share is about people helping people! An innovative housing program that matches seniors and students dedicated to helping each other through a transitional life stage.

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The City of Sarnia and Age-Friendly Sarnia are not responsible for the implementation of the Home Share Program. This Toolkit is an informative guide on the decision making process for possible participation.

An Innovative Housing Solution

Due to the ever growing need for housing options in Sarnia-Lambton, it is important to give careful consideration and thought to innovative solutions, so that the housing needs of many can be met.

The idea of the program is for a Home Provider to rent a room and share accommodations with a student, the Home Seeker, who in exchange would provide certain supports around the home. This exchange of housing for services would result in a reduced rent for the student and completed chores around the home for the senior.

The Home Share housing solution would match seniors and students based on a variety of factors to ensure a happy living situation for all. There are mutual benefits to both the senior and the student – increased sense of community, decreased feelings of isolation, and encouragement of intergenerational programming.

Through a Home Share program, seniors can feel empowered to remain independent and active, while developing meaningful relationships.

The Home Share program can also benefit students. As our local college expands domestically and internationally, there is a surge of newcomers to our community. These students are faced with the difficult challenge of finding safe, affordable housing. In addition, students often look to develop connections with the community as they navigate living in a new city or country.

The decision to Home Share should be carefully considered. This Toolkit will assist the senior and the student to navigate this new solution to our community's housing situation. **For enrolment in the program, please contact:**

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The Decision to Home Share

The Home Share model can:

- Offer companionship, reduce isolation and provide security.
- Be cost effective and affordable for the Home Provider and Home Seeker.
- Encourage a sense of value and self-esteem; people looking out for each other.
- Present extra help with household responsibilities that may enable seniors to remain in their own homes with dignity and greater independence.
- Keep people in the communities they know and care for, rather than having to move out due to lack of affordable housing. This in turn keeps people actively engaged in their communities.
- Improve overall health and well-being for the Home Provider and Home Seeker.
- Foster shared interests, the learning of new skills, and socialization.
- Provide the choice and autonomy on where and how individuals choose and want to live.

Making a Decision and Finding Support

Be prepared to think about challenges of this program and how to remain flexible, positive, and solution-focused for a successful outcome! To assist in this process, Age-Friendly Sarnia and Sarnia HomeShare have partnered to ensure successful matches of students and seniors! How will we help?

1. Host information sessions with Q&A and program facilitators.
2. Find and match home sharers – seniors and students.
3. Conduct the interview process which includes application processing, reference and police checks, home visits, check-in calls or visits, and other supports as needed.
4. Resource Guides – Home Share Toolkit, Sarnia HomeShare Information Guide, Home Share Agreement, and Home Share Self-Assessment.

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For the Home Provider

As a Home Provider you will want to give some thought as to what you might expect in terms of services from a Home Seeker in exchange for reduced accommodation expenses. The suggested range is anywhere from 1 hour to 7 hours a week.

The list of household responsibilities for the student could include but not limited to:

- Vacuuming (determine which rooms /areas)
- Dusting (determine which rooms /areas)
- Seasonal yard work- Shoveling snow, Raking leaves, etc.
- Taking out the garbage and/or recycling
- Sweeping the outside area
- Laundry
- Washing floors
- Cooking and/or meal preparation
- Washing dishes
- Cleaning the fridge/oven
- Grocery shopping
- Walking the dog
- Conversation Time

The Home Provider will need to determine if the utilities (for example; cable, telephone, internet) are to be included in the accommodation expenses. The recommended price of renting a room through this Home Share program is \$400 per month.

Tax and Home Insurance

Contact your insurance provider to answer any questions you have regarding your coverage in a Home Share arrangement. Rent received is considered taxable income.

Police Check

A completed reference check will need to be required at time of application and can be done through the Sarnia Police or OPP. It takes 2-4 weeks for processing.

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For the Home Seeker

The international housing coordinator from Sarnia Home Share carefully selects each family to match your needs, ensuring you will have a comfortable and enjoyable stay.

Flexibility, patience, and understanding are key factors for a great relationship between Home Providers and Home Seekers. Many things that are taken for granted will pose a conflict when two different cultures, generations, or both come together to live under the same roof.

We are all human beings, and in that sense, the Home Share experience will be simultaneously extremely rewarding and stressful. There will be conflict, and it is a normal and unavoidable part of life, but the key to minimize and eliminate it is, COMMUNICATION.

Home Providers and Home Seekers have the responsibility and the right to communicate with each other, but if it does not solve the problem, or need help to talk to the other part, talk to the housing coordinator in person, by e-mail, or by phone.

Help around the Home for Reduced Rent

As a Home Seeker you will want to give some thought as to what you might expect in terms of services you are willing to provide exchange for reduced accommodation expenses. The suggested range is anywhere from 1 hour to 7 hours a week.

The list of household responsibilities could include but not limited to:

- Vacuuming (determine which rooms /areas)
- Dusting (determine which rooms /areas)
- Seasonal yard work- Shoveling snow, Raking leaves, etc.
- Taking out the garbage and/or recycling
- Sweeping the outside area
- Laundry
- Washing floors
- Cooking and/or meal preparation
- Washing dishes
- Cleaning the fridge/oven
- Grocery shopping

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- Walking the dog
- Conversation Time

The Home Provider will need to determine if the utilities (for example; cable, telephone, internet) are to be included in the accommodation expenses. The recommended price of renting a room through this Home Share program is \$400 per month.

Self-Assessment

Take the self-assessment on page 7 of this Toolkit to assess if you are ready to participate in the Home Share program.

Safety and Security

All applicants of this program are vetted by the Home Share facilitator. The benefits to the students are:

- Safe housing
- Home Providers that have a clear criminal record.
- Reduced rent in exchange for some light chores around the home.
- Conflict resolution and open communication supports.
- Both parties must complete an application and are matched on their similarities.

Police Check

A reference check will need to be required at time of application and can be done through the Sarnia Police or OPP. It takes 2-4 weeks for processing.

Self-Assessment: Are you ready to Home Share?

1. What is important to me in a Home Share arrangement?
2. How do I feel about living with someone?
3. What am I worried about?
4. How will I handle disagreements?
5. Am I comfortable expressing my needs and speaking up when something is bothering me?
6. What kinds of activities do I enjoy?
7. What interests and activities would I like to share with my housemate?
8. How important is companionship to me?
9. How comfortable am I with sharing common areas such as the kitchen and living room?
What if there is only one bathroom?
10. How important is it for me to know that my family, friends, and loved ones support me in my decision of living in a Home Share arrangement?

Home Provider: Self-Questionnaire

1. What accommodation expenses will I charge?
2. What might be included in the expenses; utilities (phone, electricity, internet, etc.)? What else?
3. Would I prefer to live with a woman or man?
4. What if the Home Seeker has a pet he or she would like to bring? Am I comfortable with that?
5. Is my home accessible? If the Home Seeker has mobility concerns, will my home be able to accommodate him or her?
6. Am I willing to share my driveway or garage if the Home Seeker has a vehicle?
7. What areas of the house will be shared and which ones are off limits?
8. How often do I have overnight guests?
9. Do I entertain or have guests in my home? How often?
10. Am I comfortable with the Home Seeker having family and friends over, either for a visit or overnight stays?
11. How will I handle the use of the telephone and television?
12. Do I enjoy listening to music? What kind and how often?

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13. How will I arrange private time for myself?
14. What about meals? Who does what?
15. Who will do the grocery shopping and how will it be done?
16. What about my daily routine and schedule?
17. Do I need to furnish the bedroom?
18. How willing am I to share my home with someone who has health challenges?
19. What do I like to cook?
20. Am I willing to share with someone who smokes cigarettes or cannabis?
21. How will/do I handle disagreements and conflict?

Home Seeker: Self-Questionnaire

1. How will/do I handle disagreements and conflict?
2. Do I prefer to live with a woman or man?
3. Are the characteristics of the neighbourhood and stores suitable to my needs?
4. If I have a car, can I park in the driveway or garage?
5. If I don't have a car, is there public transit nearby?
6. Does the Home Provider smoke?
7. What might be expected of me to help with around the house? How many hours a week would be likely?
8. Can my family and/or friends come and visit and stay overnight?
9. Does the Home Provider have a health concern that I might need to know about?
10. What areas of the house will I be sharing and which areas would be off limits?
11. Does the Home Provider have a pet?
12. Is the home in good condition and safe?
13. What will be expected of me in terms of companionship?

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14. Do I have mobility issues that would need to be taken into consideration for accessibility needs? If so, what are they?

15. Will the bedroom be furnished? Can I bring my own furniture?

16. What will my living/designated space in the house look like?

17. How will the duties of grocery shopping and preparing meals happen?

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Sample One: Home Share Agreement

Homeshare Agreement

PARTIES

1. THE RENTAL AGREEMENT IS MADE IN DUPLICATE BETWEEN:

_____, THE LANDLORD,

NAME(S)

ADDRESS

POSTAL CODE

TELEPHONE

AND:

NAME(S)

THE TENANT(S),

TELEPHONE

PREMISES

THE PARTIES AGREE THAT

2. THE LANDLORD WILL RENT TO THE TENANT AND THE TENANT WILL RENT FROM THE LANDLORD A ROOM AT THE FOLLOWING RESIDENTIAL PREMISES:

STREET NAME AND NUMBER

UNIT #

CITY OR TOWN

POSTAL CODE

TERM

3. SELECT PARAGRAPH (a) OR (b) - NOT BOTH

(a) (MONTH TO MONTH OR WEEK TO WEEK)

THIS AGREEMENT IS TO BEGIN ON _____ OF _____, 20____

DAY

MONTH

YEAR

AND RUN FROM MONTH TO MONTH **OR** FROM WEEK TO WEEK

(b) FIXED TERM (___ Months)

THIS AGREEMENT IS TO BEGIN ON THE _____ OF _____, 20____

DAY

MONTH

YEAR

AND END ON THE _____ OF _____, 20____

DAY

MONTH

YEAR

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RENT

4. THE TENANT WILL PAY THE FOLLOWING RATE: \$ _____ /WEEK; _____ /MONTH.
THE FIRST PAYMENT OF RENT IS DUE ON THE _____ OF _____, 20____
DAY MONTH YEAR
AND THEREAFTER ON THE _____ DAY OF EACH WEEK MONTH
THE TENANT WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES IN LIEU OF RENT:

SERVICES/FACILITIES

5. THE RENT MENTIONED ABOVE INCLUDES THE PROVISION OF AND PAYMENT FOR THE FOLLOWING SERVICES AND FACILITIES (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

<input type="checkbox"/> Heat	<input type="checkbox"/> Hot Water	<input type="checkbox"/> Electricity
<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> Washer	<input type="checkbox"/> Dryer
<input type="checkbox"/> Cable TV	<input type="checkbox"/> Internet	
<input type="checkbox"/> Parking for _____ cars		
<input type="checkbox"/> Furniture (List items) _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____		

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Sample Two: Home Share Agreement



Homesharing Agreement

This agreement is between:

HOME PROVIDER

HOME SHARER

Name _____	Name _____
Address _____	Address _____
Address _____	Address _____
Phone _____	Phone _____
Other _____	Other _____

We agree to participate in the following arrangement beginning on: _____

HOME PROVIDER I, _____, agree to provide the following:

Yes	No	Item	Specifications
		Private Room	
		Decorate/Paint Room	
		Door Key	
		Parking	
		Linen	
		Laundry Facilities	
		Storage Space	
		Other	

HOME SEEKER I, _____, agree to provide the following:

Yes	No	Item	Specifications
		Rent in the Amount of \$ _____ /mo. due on _____	
		Share of Utilities \$ _____ to include	Heat Electric Internet Cable Phone
		-Other description of utilities	
		Exchange of Services (hrs/wk) _____	
		-Housekeeping	
		-Meal preparation/eating together	
		-Grocery shopping/errands	
		-Transportation	
		-Companionship	
		-Yard work/snow shoveling	
		-Simple household maintenance	
		-Laundry	

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		-Medication reminders	
		-Protective presence	
		Other specifics	

Yes	No	Clarify the Following Items	Specifications	
		Use of Common Area		
		Food Storage		
		Use of dishes/pans, etc.		
		Smoking areas		
		Guns/weapons in the home		
		Pets		
		Schedules/notice required when away		
		Mail		
		Visitors Allowed During	Daytime	Nighttime
		-Notice required if visitors		
		Emergency Contacts		
		-Home Provider		
		-Home Sharer		

We also agree to the following:

Loans or gifts of money or substantial property are not part of this agreement and are strongly discouraged. Participants may amend their homesharing agreement by mutual agreement. HomeShare Vermont is available to assist with agreement changes or with any problem that arises during the course of the match.

Each participant agrees to give a verbal and written notice of ___ days in the event she or he desires to end the match. Each participant also agrees to notify HomeShare Vermont if either gives notice of intent to end this homesharing match.

If a homesharer moves out before the notice period is complete, the homesharer is expected to pay rent and/or provide service for the entirety of that period regardless of which party gave notice, unless both parties agree to another arrangement.

Home provider Signature: _____ Date: _____

Home sharer Signature: _____ Date: _____

HomeShare VT Contact: _____ Date: _____

Phone/direct line: _____ HSVT general line: _____

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References

Burlington Age-Friendly Senior's Council and Community Development Halton (2015). The Halton Homeshare Toolkit, <https://torontoist.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/The-HomeShare-Toolkit-Final.pdf>

Home Share Newfoundland and Labrador, Home Share Agreement, www.homesharenl.ca

HomeShare Vermont (2019), Home Share Agreement , www.HomeShareVermont.org