

## **CALGARY HOMESHARE – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is Calgary Homeshare?**

Calgary Homeshare matches senior homeowners with adult homeseekers who assist 4 -10 hours / week with simple household tasks and errands in exchange for affordable housing.

Homesharing is not a rental service or emergency housing. Homeowners and Homeseekers are matched based on fit in terms of personality, location, needs, etc. To allow time to arrange good matches, potential participants are asked to apply as soon as they are prepared to commit to the program. As the process of securing a match may take some time, Homesharing may not be well suited for immediate housing or support needs.

### **Who Can Get Involved?**

Calgary Homeshare serves:

- Seniors who
  - Are living in their own homes
  - Reside in Calgary
  - Have a room to offer and are willing to share their home
  
- Homeseekers who
  - Are over the age of 18 years
  - Have the financial ability to contribute to the Homeshare arrangement
  - Have the time ( 4 – 10 hours a week) and a willingness to provide specified services

Persons who may have problems that could create additional or undue stress in a home living environment will be deemed inappropriate participants. This includes individuals with unmanaged substance abuse problems.

### **What are the Benefits of Involvement with Calgary Homeshare?**

**Income Savings:** Homeowners experience reduced housing costs and / or secure affordable supports while Homeseekers access affordable housing often in a previously unavailable area.

**Choice:** Calgary Homeshare actively seeks suitable participants and suggests matches based on compatibility and needs. Participants decide if the match is right for them and what it should look like.

Decreased Risk: Calgary Homeshare offers a formal method of Homesharing. All applicants complete an in-person interview and Homeseekers must provide 3 references and a current Police (Vulnerable Sector) Check.

Companionship: Both parties benefit from the company of the other and the security of having another person around.

Independence: Seniors are able to choose to remain in their home as they are able to access affordable, wanted or needed support from their live-in companion.

Follow-up: Through the provision of follow-up services, agreements can be modified and information can be shared about additional resources available.

### **What May a Senior Want Help With?**

There are a variety of things with which as senior may want help. Examples include:

- Housework
- Moving / lifting / carrying
- Snow removal / yard work
- Gardening
- Minor home maintenance
- Computer skills
- Grocery shopping / meal preparation
- Driving / errands / mail
- Companionship
- Laundry
- Garbage removal
- Plant / pet care

### **How Much Time Does a Homeseeker Need to Commit In Order to Participant in Calgary Homeshare?**

The Homeseeker needs to commit a minimum of 4 hours to a maximum of 10 hours per week.

### **Does it Cost Money to Become Involved with Calgary Homeshare?**

No. Calgary Homeshare is funded by United Way of Calgary and Area, Calgary Homeless Foundation and a United Way Special Gift donor so there is no charge for services.

When Homesharing, Homeseekers do not pay rent but they contribute a pre-determined amount of money to offset some of the monthly household costs of living. They also provide a \$400 security deposit when starting to Homeshare.

## **How Much Should a Homeseeker Expect to Contribute Toward Monthly Costs of Living?**

Each situation is unique, but the costs of living are generally set between \$100 and \$400 each month. This amount is set by the Homeowner and is based on what assistance they are seeking and the space they are providing. The details of these arrangements will be outlined in the Homeshare Agreement.

## **What is a Homeshare Agreement?**

A Homeshare Agreement is a contract which outlines the expectations and responsibilities of the respective parties. Each agreement will be as unique as the parties involved. Services rendered and costs involved will vary depending on the needs of the respective parties.

## **Does Participation in Calgary Homeshare Mean That a Senior Needs to Report Rental Income to Revenue Canada?**

No – Revenue Canada has advised that, because Homeshare is an exchange of services not a rental situation, the senior Homeowner will not have rental income to report. The Senior is not collecting rent; instead, monies provided by the Homeseeker are used for cost of living expenses. As such, this program is very well suited for lower income seniors who will continue to qualify for specific income-based government subsidies and programs.

## **How Do Interested People Become Involved?**

Applicants may complete the appropriate application and submit it to:  
Calgary Homeshare  
Calgary Seniors' Resource Society  
3639 – 26<sup>th</sup> Street NE  
Calgary, AB T1Y 5E1  
FAX 403-269-5183

OR

Persons may contact Calgary Homeshare directly by calling 403-266-6200 x 1003 or by emailing [homeshare@calgaryseniors.org](mailto:homeshare@calgaryseniors.org)

## **How are Applicants Screened and Matched?**

Homeowners and Homeseekers each complete an application to Homeshare and are interviewed by the Program Manager. The information gathered is used to assess the applicant's suitability to the program and to match approved individuals based on needs and compatibility.

In addition, Homeseekers must provide 3 references. Homeseekers should advise their references that they have applied to the program and that it is necessary that they provide the information requested.

Homeseekers must also provide a current Vulnerable Sector police check. If you do not have a current VS Police Check, we can have it processed at no cost after you apply.

After the screening process, potential matches will be introduced and encouraged to ask questions of each other. To assist, the Calgary Homeshare Manager will encourage exploration of specific topics and, if both parties choose to be matched, assist with the formation of a Homeshare Agreement that clearly lists expectations of each party.

### **Does the Calgary Homeshare Staff Remain Involved?**

Yes, the Calgary Homeshare Manager remains involved in order to:

- Alter agreements as needed
- Share information about additional resources should the need arise
- Measure the level of participant satisfaction

### **How Long do Matches Last and How does an Agreement End?**

As each person and situation is unique, Homeshare Agreements are set for various lengths of time. Agreements can be as short as a month or as long as the parties wish to reside together.

It is recognized that unforeseen events may arise which may threaten the Homeshare Agreement. As such, a negotiation policy is outlined in each Homeshare Agreement. Then, if the parties wish or need to change the arrangement, it can be revised or terminated in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

At the completion of the Homeshare Agreement, both parties are free to move on to other arrangements. This includes pursuing another Homeshare experience. If the parties wish to continue Homesharing with each other, a new agreement can be outlined.