Frequently Asked Questions

If you have a question that is not on the list below, please feel free to contact the HomeShare program directly.

How long will it take?

Plan on anywhere from several weeks to a month or more. You can expedite the process by making sure your references are available and will respond to our inquiries. Also, be sure to give us your current phone numbers (both business and home) so that we can easily reach you. If we have someone currently on our list who meets your needs, the process will be faster than if we have to wait for the right person to come along.

What if you don’t have someone for me?

If no one on our current list is right for you, you might want to run a classified ad in the local publication using our phone number. We will take calls and screen respondents for you, introducing to you only those individuals who meet your criteria.

How much is rent?

It varies. In some situations where there are many services needed, (including regular meal preparation) the rent may be negotiable. In situations where there are few, if any, services required the rent may be $500. Each HomeShare provider sets her or his own rent, which includes utilities. *Most fall in the range of $300 to $450.* We do not encourage deposits, and ask providers to remember that a HomeShare is not the same as renting an apartment in terms of the amount of rent.

What if I don’t know what to charge?

The Housing Bureau for Seniors cannot make that decision for you, but we can tell you what some other people in similar situations have charged. We suggest you talk it over with family or friends. You can look in the newspaper for market value rents. Take time to carefully think through just what services you would like to have provided. Most of the people seeking HomeShare situations are doing so to save money and to cultivate family-like relationships with older people.
What if I don’t like the person after we are living together?

This is the reason for the trial period option. It gives you some real experience together before a definite decision is made. Even after the agreement is signed, you can terminate the arrangement by giving 30-days’ notice to the other person. But don’t give up too easily. Sometimes all that is needed is some honest communication and clear statement of your needs. Your counselor is always available to come to the house and meet with both parties to help smooth out the rough spots in your relationship.

How long do HomeShare matches last?

Again, it varies. Some last for years, others for months. Sometimes a person moves away, or an older homeowner may become disabled and need to live in a more supportive environment. Family situations change and with that living arrangements are altered.

What are the usual ages of HomeShare applicants?

Approximately one third of our seekers are graduate students looking for housing while they are in school. These are mature students who are looking for a family environment. The balance of seekers are young adults just getting started, women working at minimum wage jobs, displaced homemakers, or young professionals new to town. Also some seekers are able-bodied seniors who want to live in a shared home. Most, but not all, of the providers are senior citizens who want to stay in their own homes, but desire some company or need help with home maintenance. Some senior homeowners do not need services, but do need the additional income provided by rent.