

Home Share Scheme – Cope Foundation

Training, Assessment & Approval Process:

Once an individual or family apply to become a Host Family, set processes take place in order to ensure that everyone is well prepared.

The training course covers a wide range of topics to prepare potential Home Sharing Families for hosting. It is designed to give people a wider perspective about disability in addition to preparing families for hosting. After the training, the assessment commences. The assessment process consists of 3-5 home visits lasting approximately 2 hours each.

The Social Work, Home Sharing Assessment covers the following areas:

- Personal profile of the applicant
- Personal history and experience of the applicant(s)
- Current circumstances
- Motivation & attitude toward Home sharing & disability
- Applicants expectation of Home Sharing
- What the prospective Host Families family have to offer, to include experience, lifestyle, skills, strengths, availability and accommodation
- Awareness of Safe Care
- Support needs

In the case of an application by a couple the assessment meetings are planned to include:

- At least one session with both applicants together
- At least one session with each applicant alone
- If applicable, at least one session with the applicant's children

As part of the assessment the following are completed:

- Garda vetting on all adults over 18 residing in the house
- Three references for each applicant/couple. Referees must have known the applicant/couple for over two years and not be related to them.

- Medical form completed by the GP.
- A child protection check is carried out with the local Tusla offices of where the applicant/couple have lived.
- Checks are usually completed at the start of the assessment process but this may vary depending on resources/circumstance

On completion of the assessment & training the recommendation will go before an Approvals Panel.

The Approval Panel for a service provider should aim to consist of:

- A HSE Fostering Social Worker
- Head of Social Work / Principal Social Worker
- Assessing Social Worker
- Respite Manager / Co-ordinator
- Psychologist
- HSE Representative

Applicants are informed in writing of the Approvals Panel's decisions. Decisions can be appealed to an Independent Appeals Committee. Applicants will be made aware of the appeals procedure by their Social Worker or the Approvals Panel Chairperson. The process is outlined in the Home Sharing, Good Practice Guidelines. Confidentiality is assured at all times.

Matching

When the Host Family have been approved they are carefully matched with a child or adult. This can happen over a period of time in a variety of ways. Matching placements are decided by the matching panel in consultation (when necessary) with other relevant stakeholders such as the natural family, host family, key workers etc.

The Home Sharing scheme takes into consideration a variety of factors when matching a person with an individual/family such as:

- The age of the person
- The level of disability and support needs.
- The experience and completed training of the host family.
- The host family accommodation i.e. wheelchair accessibility
- Distance between Host family and Natural family home.

- The availability of the host and the breaks required for the guest.
- The host family composition and environment i.e rural/urban, local amenities etc.

The timeframe for introduction will be person-centred. Before the short breaks commence an agreement is signed by both families and the service provider.

Placement review procedures

Once a year a formal review should take place where by:

- The natural family complete an evaluation.
- The person we support & their family complete an evaluation.
- Separately, the Host family completes a Host review form (this is to review their circumstances)
- A meeting is conducted with the host family and natural family to outline the support plan for the following year.

Information on Home Share 11/04/2022 - Social Worker/Homeshare Coordinator
Information adapted from nhsn.ie (2016), Best Practice Guidelines (2015) and Cope Foundation
Guidelines