



GENERAL MANUAL POLICY

APPROVED BY:


Executive Director

CATEGORY: Family Home/Host Family Providers

TOPIC: Requirements to Screening Process for Family Home Providers/Host Families

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy directive is to outline the criteria that Community Living Thunder Bay requires in their screening process of potential Family Home/Host Families Providers applying to participate in the program and when reassessing existing Family Home/Host Family Providers.

POLICY

The Family Home Program is one option within a range of Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) funded residential service models for adults with developmental disabilities. The setting of a Host Family placement is located in a private family home. Care, support, and supervision are provided to the individual by identified caregivers from the Family.

The key goals of the Family Home Program are:

- To provide a safe and secure place to live in a family home setting;
- To promote a high quality of life; and
- To support community involvement, social inclusion, individual choice, independence and rights.

This program provides the opportunity for an individual to live and grow in a nurturing family environment. The Family Home Program is embedded in the belief in a community that respects the dignity and inherent value of each of its members and supports its members to participate, contribute, and lead enriched and meaningful lives.

Community Living Thunder Bay (CLTB) will provide support to and monitoring of all host family providers with the goal of ensuring a successful family home placement for the individual supported.

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Considerations for Screening of Potential Host Families

Key considerations that CLTB must take into account when screening for potential host families include, but are not limited to:

1. The family's willingness and motivation to accept the individual as part of their family as well as willingness to foster and respect the individual's independence, dignity, self-determination, social inclusion and community participation.
 - Is the family home and property appropriate for an individual with a developmental disability and are there any apparent risks
 - What is the family's motivation for supporting an individual with a developmental disability?
 - Conduct an interview(s) based on a family's written application and a physical study of the home
 - Does the family understand the CLTB Mission Statement and Guiding Principles
2. Physical, mental, social and emotional capabilities to meet the needs of the individual.
 - Consider the family in its entirety, both the primary caregivers and the suitability of all members of the household, permanent and temporary, to provide support to the individual with a developmental disability
3. Secure financial status with adequate income to provide for the needs of the household.
 - The family must demonstrate sufficient financial means to meet the financial pressures that may be created by adding an individual with a developmental disability to their household
 - The family's motivation for becoming a host family should not be based solely or primarily on the remuneration from CLTB
 - The family should have additional sources of income and not be solely dependent on the remuneration from CLTB.
 - CLTB will require documentation of adequate home and vehicle insurance coverage.

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4. Suitability of the host family setting for the individual based on factors such as, but not limited to, the individual's goals/preferences, interests, social connections, health and safety needs, and cultural/linguistic, religion/spirituality, physical attributes of the home and its surroundings; proximity to natural family members.
 - Conduct a home study and prepare a written report for a potential host family and when a current host family is looking to host a second individual
 - Conduct interviews with host family members and all members of the household

5. Availability and willingness of the host family to participate in orientation, training and ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities, according to CLTB policies and procedures and the service agreement.
 - Evaluate host family ability and willingness to participate in screening process, orientation, training and monitoring program
 - Explain expectations of the family home program, the service agreement and the ongoing oversight and monitoring involved

Home Study

A home study is an assessment process including a series of required interviews and checks conducted to determine whether the potential Family Home Applicant(s) and their home are suitable for the Family Home Program.

The home study is based on the following:

- Interviews with Applicant(s) in the home conducted by two staff from the service agency
- Review of character references and police records checks, including current vulnerable sector checks (within the last six months) of all adults living on a full-time or part-time basis in the Family Home.
- Review Applicant(s) Driver's Licence.
- Physical verification that the home and property meet the requirements of a safe living environment, as well as any applicable legislation and by-laws, including but not limited to: fire safety, health hazards, and water quality testing, if applicable.

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CLTB will prepare a written report on the findings of the home study to substantiate approval or lack of approval of a potential Host Family.

Interviews

Interviews will be conducted with prospective family members. The purpose of the interview(s) are to gain insight into and assess the following:

- the family's motivation to become a host family provider, assess the nature and quality of family's relationships
- the family's plan for part-time residents living in the home, is there a regular schedule, will they also be alone with the individual and will the living space for the individual be affected
- the family's ability for patience, understanding, acceptance, stability, integrity, maturity, warmth, cooperativeness and flexibility
- the family's history, attitudes, lifestyles, outside interests, hobbies and philosophy on supporting an individual with a developmental disability
- the family's experience and/or education regarding adults with a developmental disability
- the family's expectations regarding lifestyle choices including smoking, alcohol use, religious affiliations, sexuality and visits from the individual's family and friends

Health & Safety of the Home

CLTB staff will verify the physical safety of the potential family home and property whether owned, leased or rented. CLTB staff will coordinate a Fire & Safety Inspection of the home. A Home Study includes a Physical dwelling assessment of the home. CLTB will require documentation of adequate home and vehicle insurance coverage.

CLTB staff will consider the following during the inspection of the home and property.

- Clear entrances and exits, accessibility, appropriate handrails, condition and incline of stairs, walkways and driveway, outdoor area and yard is clear from hazards and accessible
- Free from chemical, biological and environmental hazards, sanitary conditions, clutter free, plumbing in good working order, ventilation systems, signs of rodents, insects or mould, water source is safe and potable and indoor and outdoor areas

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for household pets are clean and maintained, household pets have an agreeable temperament and received appropriate shots

- Free from fall hazards, nothing to trip or slip on, secure flooring, stairs clear, in good condition and have appropriate handrails
- Free from fire hazards, no exposed wiring, cover plates on receptacles and switches, flammable agents are stored safely, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are in good working order and appropriately placed, functional fire extinguisher, heating and cooling systems are in good working order and properly maintained, wood stoves, chimneys and fireplaces are in good working order and properly maintained
- Building permits have been obtained and inspections completed for renovations, additions or improvements to the property
- Any firearms on the premises are kept unloaded and stored in a locked cabinet separate from ammunition
- Where a property includes a pool or pond, ensure compliance with any local bylaws such as appropriate fencing, if the property is on a lake or river, an assessment of a plan for waterfront safety is required
- Basic health and comfort features for the individual, appropriate temperature, bedroom is appropriate and spacious, allows room for personal possessions, has a window that opens and closes with window coverings, sleeping accommodations have a comfortable, suitable sized mattress, bathroom is clean and functional, hot and cold running water is available, fresh meals and available food in the fridge and cupboard

Cap for New Host Family Placements

Effective April 1, 2016, there can be no more than two placements (i.e. persons placed - children and/or adults) in a Host Family's home. This includes children or adults who have been placed in the Host Family's home by an agency funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services or the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

In order to preserve existing family arrangements, families who foster children through a Children's Aid Society are exempt from the above-noted cap, in the following situation:

- Where the foster family has more than two foster children placed by a Children's Aid Society and
- Where one of those foster children has a developmental disability, and would continue to stay with the foster family as a Host Family Program placement after he/she turns 18 years of age.

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Where this exemption applies, no additional placements for adults or children beyond those allowed by the above exemption are permitted.

Procedure:

1. Once a harmonious connection is established between the Home sharer and Home Provider, the Community Living Staff will coordinate visits. This may initially consist of day visits that transition into overnights and weekend visits.
2. Once a level of comfort is established and both the Home sharer and Home Provider are interested in pursuing a supportive arrangement, a contract will be signed and a 'move in' date will be set.
3. Simultaneous to the visits, the Home sharer, Home Provider and CLTB Staff will begin transitional planning. To ensure a quality of life for people, the planning process will follow the guidelines outlined within the agency Personal Planning Manual. The Team Leader and the Supportive Living Staff will ensure there is active planning to assist individuals with achieving their outcomes.
4. At least one Family member of the Host Family must have current CPR/First Aid Training certification. A copy must be given to Community Living Thunder Bay to have on file.
5. Family Home Providers are expected to participate in orientation and ongoing training as recommended by the agency.
6. Family Home/Host Families Providers cannot be a family member (of the Home sharer) as defined by the Ministry.
7. A Community Living staff member will re-assess in any of the following circumstances:
 - Any significant changes involving the Host Family, the individual, and/or their living situation (e.g. physical/mental illness, death of a family member, accident)
 - When a new person is living in the home on a full-time or part-time basis
 - When the primary caregiver in the Host Family is unable to continue providing care to the individual
 - Where the service agency, person, or natural family has any significant concerns about the placement.

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This is required so that the impact on the person supported can be assessed and appropriate actions taken as necessary.

8. If an agency staff would like to become a Home Provider they'll have to complete the "Licensing Procedure for CLTB Staff".