



# Host Home FAQs

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## Program background

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### 🌸 How did the Host Home program start?

- \* The Host Home program started at the Sacramento LGBT Community Center as a part of the community response to the housing crisis in California.
- \* There has been documented research into the high need of homelessness resources in Sacramento, especially due to the need of LGBTQ youth, who experience homelessness at a dramatically higher rate compared to the general population [https://www.bcsb.ca.gov/hcfc/documents/heap\\_overview.pdf](https://www.bcsb.ca.gov/hcfc/documents/heap_overview.pdf)
- \* It was agreed upon as a location that would receive organizational assistance from the Point Source Youth non-profit organization, and the Center submitted a grant proposal that was approved for government funding.

### 🌸 What does Point Source Youth do?

- \* Point Source Youth is a nationwide organization that aims to dramatically reduce youth homelessness nationwide within 10 years. They seek to accomplish their goal by developing programs in 50 cities with demonstrated need.
- \* Their focus is on supporting locally specific program development.

- \* They emphasize the use of three specific homelessness interventions:
  - \* Family reconnection
  - \* Short-term host homes
  - \* Rapid rehousing for youth
- \* PSY produces research to demonstrate the effectiveness of these interventions.
- \* They advocate for policymakers to devote more resources to addressing this urgent problem.
- \* Point Source Youth provide organizations in each city with a platform to access:
  - \* A plan and on-going support to implement homelessness interventions.
  - \* Evaluation of their local implementation by top researchers, which are used to demonstrate effectiveness over time.
  - \* Assistance with accessing additional funding in their cities and states.

## 🌸 What kind of approach does the Host Home program use to serve its clients?

- \* **We believe in a client-centered, narrative approach.**  
This means we believe that clients are the author of their own story and the experts on what they need. We want to operate in a way that centers their inner and outer well-being as the primary goal.
- \* **We believe in using a lens of social justice and youth empowerment.**
- \* **We believe in harm reduction strategies that are trauma informed.**
- \* **We recognize and challenge systems of power, like racism and classism.**  
The same actions may not result in the same outcomes for everyone.
- \* **We believe in youth autonomy.**  
It is the Youth's right to make choices for themselves, whether or not we agree with them.
- \* **We believe in caring adult allies.**  
In the Host Home Program, adults should understand that there is an inherent power dynamic of hosting youth in their home, while seeking to minimize the impact of it. Instead, focusing on creating an environment of equity and autonomy with Transition Age Youth (TAY).

## ❁ Why is the Sacramento LGBT Community Center introducing Host Homes to its Housing Program?

### ✦ The Level of LGBTQ Youth Need

According to the biannual Department of Housing and Urban Development: Point in Time count that was performed on a single day in the winter of 2019, a significant portion of youth experiencing homelessness in Sacramento identify somewhere within the LGBTQ rainbow of genders and sexualities. We saw that LGBTQ are experiencing homelessness at a higher rate than the general population.

<https://sacramentostepsforward.org/glossary/point-in-time-count/>

### ✦ Using the LGBTQ community and allies

- ✦ By relying on existing members of the local community, we can give TAY a safer option of housing versus living on the streets, camping, or staying in emergency shelters.
- ✦ It is cost effective and local resource we can create organized programming for in a short amount of time. The community doesn't need to construct any additional facilities.
- ✦ There is a large potential for creating supportive relationships between Hosts and Youth.
- ✦ We are relying on the community's knowledge of LGBTQ identities and past experiences with navigate financial and housing stability. The Host Home Program will also provide education and training on current LGBTQ culture and adult living skills, along with emotional support and housing case management.

## ❁ How is the program funded?

- ✦ The State of California Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) and California Emergency Solutions and Housing Program (CESH) funding is provided through the County and City of Sacramento.
  - ✦ <http://www.saccounty.net/news/latest-news/Pages/County-Participates-in-New-State-Homeless-Funding.aspx>
  - ✦ [https://www.bcsd.ca.gov/hcfc/documents/heap\\_overview.pdf](https://www.bcsd.ca.gov/hcfc/documents/heap_overview.pdf)

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# Hosts

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## ✿ What is the application process for hosts?

- \* Complete:
  - \* An application packet
  - \* A TB test
    - Out of pocket at most Urgent Care or Primary Care medical providers. Also available at the Sac County Division of Public Health.
  - \* A background check and fingerprinting
    - (Note: (1) We recommend completing background checks ASAP because they may take a few weeks days to 2 weeks to process. (2) Background checks will be used specifically for identifying past actions that would exclude someone from becoming a safe Host in a private residence with a Transition Age Youth, age 18 - 24. If other results come back, but don't indicate a safety concern, it may not prevent volunteers from entering a Host position.)*
  - \* An interview with a case manager
  - \* A home inspection
  - \* A 2-day training
  - \* Create a Host profile for Youth to see what you're like

## ✿ What is the matching process for Hosts and Youth?

- \* Youth chooses a profile
- \* Host and Youth meet with a case manager
- \* Host and Youth create a housing contract
- \* Youth moves into Host Home
- \* Case manager post-move in meeting with Host and Youth

## **🌸 What is required of hosts?**

- \* Completes the application and matching process
- \* Lives in the Sacramento Metro Area
- \* Has a private space available in their home
- \* Youth access to kitchen and bathroom
- \* Minimum 3-6 month availability
- \* Monthly home visits
- \* Attends monthly support meetings for Hosts at the Sac LGBT Center.
- \* Provides a safe, affirming environment
- \* Supports the Youth's autonomous goals, long-term wellbeing, and stability

## **🌸 What type of support is available for Hosts?**

- \* Hosts will receive ongoing support from case managers
- \* A monthly stipend is available for Hosts that want to participate in Host Homes, but need assistance to off-set the costs associated with housing the Youth
- \* Hosts will receive peer support and education opportunities in bi-monthly support groups

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# Youth

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## **🌸 How to apply as a Transition Age Youth (TAY) Resident:**

- \* Fill out a housing questionnaire online or in the Q-Spot to notify us of your interest in the Housing Program
- \* Wait for a Housing Program case manager to call you
- \* Complete an interview with a case manager to assess your current living circumstances
- \* Check back every 3 weeks if you have not been given a response
- \* Youth that participate in the Host Home program will choose a Host/Host Family from available profiles
- \* Youth will meet with the Host that they match with and see how the match works in person

## **🌸 How Youth participate in the Host Home program**

- \* After the initial intake process, Host and Youth will communicate and co-create a Housing Contract that clarifies each party's expectations and agreements about sharing living space
- \* Youth will discuss their housing, educational, and financial goals with the Host Home Case Manager
- \* The Youth may move into their Host Home living space after:
  - \* The Host has been approved and trained
  - \* The Host's residence has been visited

- \* And the Youth/Host have gone through the matching process
- \* Youth and Host then continue to abide by program agreements and their Housing Contract with each other, but are able to adjust and negotiate goals and living circumstances in ways that best support safety, stability, and personal growth
- \* Youth will meet with the Host Home Case Manager regularly for check-in, advocacy, and resource assistance
- \* Youth will attend bi-weekly Peer Support Groups
- \* Positions on the Youth Advisory Board are also available for Youth interested in shaping the growth of the Housing Program

### **🌸 What type of support is available for Youth?**

- \* Regular check-in appointments for Youth and the Host Home Case Manager
- \* Monthly Case Manager home visits
- \* Bi-weekly peer support groups with other Youth and the Host Home Case Manager
- \* Host Home Case Manager support as needed
- \* Outside organizations as needed

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# General program

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## ❁ How long do Hosts/Youth participate in the Host Home program?

- \* We intend Hosts and Youth to participate a minimum of 3-6 months.
- \* Host involvement is dependent on the continued ability of the Host to provide private and safe living space
- \* Youth involvement depends on how well they are able to cohabitate with the Host and making progress towards their financial, housing, personal, and educational goals
- \* If both Youth and Host uphold their program agreements, have a good fit, and decide to continue their Housing Contract past the initial 3-6 months, the Host Home Housing Program will continue to provide support with review of the Host Home and Housing Agreement

## ❁ What benefits are there to participating in this program?

- \* **Youth and Hosts**
  - \* Host Homes are safer for Youth, especially in cases of Transition Age Youth (TAY) with trauma in their history
  - \* The potential for long-lasting relationships between Youth and Hosts
  - \* Hosts and Youth connect in a structured program that trains, matches, and supports them
  - \* Hosts receive training and financial assistance. Stipends are provided as needed for one-time set up costs or as a monthly stipend to cover the cost of hosting Youth



- \* Youths have a private, affirming, supportive space to transition toward greater stability
- \* Hosts are able to hand down living skills to Youth directly or indirectly (ie, cooking, cleaning, working, money management, taxes, hobbies, etc)
- \* Greater stability will allow Youth to focus on education and employment goals
- \* Past Youth and Hosts that have participated in hosting TAY, either informally or through Point Source Youth, have found the experience highly rewarding
- \* Host Homes program provides housing with a higher level of autonomy than STEP or TLP housing programs at The Center
- \* Youth and Hosts may learn about new hobbies or interests through each other
- \* Youth and Hosts have staff assistance with plans for exiting their Housing Contract

#### \* Program and Community

- \* The program is cost effective and faster for our community to utilize by relying existing residential infrastructure, rather than funding and building shelter
- \* We are building ties within the local community
- \* Host Homes is a transitional housing program that is operating to address the housing crisis within California, especially for LGBTQ Youth

### **❁ What difficulties have other Host Home programs commonly encountered when Hosts and TAY Residents cohabitate?**

- \* In programs operating with assistance from Point Source Youth and informal hosting in Sacramento, past Hosts found that certain issues stood out more in their memory
- \* Though there will no doubt be challenges, we hope the structure of the Host Home program, Housing contracts, and staff can offset any extreme difficulties having to do with:
  - \* Meals/Youth hunger
  - \* Management of living space
  - \* Guests and visitors

- \* Substance use
- \* Clear communication and expectations
- \* Maintaining appropriate Host/Youth boundaries
- \* Mental health needs/Fear of abandonment or getting kicked out
- \* Understanding which house areas are private or public use areas
- \* Youth storage areas
- \* Regular sleep times and quiet hours
- \* Clear length of stay and exit plans

### **❁ What about Youth transportation?**

- \* Youth receive a \$75 transportation stipend
- \* Hosts can transport Youth according to the mutual agreement in the Housing Contract both create together

### **❁ What about meals?**

- \* Hosts are responsible for all Youth meals
- \* Hosts can use the available stipend to cover meals
- \* Host Home Case Managers can also help Youth apply for Cal Fresh benefits

### **❁ What about chores?**

- \* As if renting out a room, both Youth and Hosts are responsible for keeping living spaces clean and uncluttered
- \* Youth and Hosts will define expectations for chores in their Housing Contract before the Youth's move in
- \* Host Home Case Manager will perform home visits at regular intervals to ensure living areas are in usable condition and safe for habitation

## ✿ What about pets?

- \* Having pets does not exclude Youth from Host Home participation
- \* Youths are responsible for all animal care
- \* Unless otherwise specified by the Host, animals must stay at the Youth's side or properly kenneled (supplies available through the Housing Program and their sponsor Front Street Animal Shelter)
- \* Acceptance of Youth with pets in an individual Host's homes is up to the Host
- \* Host pets should be mentioned in the Host profile for Youth to make their own decision about
- \* Hosts and Youth will solidify any further pet agreements with each other in their Housing Contract

## ✿ What about substance use?

- \* Host Homes is a harm reduction, trauma-informed program that believes in providing housing first
- \* As a program, we do accept TAY residents who may use alcohol and other substances, but we do ask them about their relationship with substances
- \* If Youth do use substances, we ask that they don't possess or use them on-site of the Host's residence or any Center property
- \* Further specifics will be left up to Youth/Host Housing Contracts

## ✿ What about illicit behavior?

- \* The Host Homes program asks that Youth do not keep or use weapons or stolen property on-site at the Host's residence or any Center property
- \* We are interested in cultivating long-term goals with Youth that go beyond survival behavior
- \* Youth Behavior that violates Youth/Host Housing Contracts or Host Home program agreements will go

## 🌸 How can I voice grievances?

- \* Ideally, most grievances would be resolved by two individual people in direct communication with each other
- \* Grievances that two people are unable to resolve themselves will primarily be addressed through restorative justice practices
  - \* Using restorative justice practices, the parties meet with a mediator and have a support person present, if needed
  - \* The goal is to address the needs of both parties satisfactorily and decide what course of action will best address those
  - \* Further action may be taken, as necessary, to maintain
- \* If you have concerns about Hosts or Youth you are residing with, please contact the Host Home Case Manager or Assistant Director of Housing
- \* If you have concerns about peers of yours also participating in the Host Homes Program, please contact the Host Home Case Manager or Assistant Director of Housing
- \* If you have concerns about resources that Housing Program staff referred you to, please inform the Host Home Case Manager or Assistant Director of Housing
- \* If you have concerns about the Host Home Case Manager or Assistant Director of Housing, please contact the Sacramento LGBT Community Center Programs Manager or Executive Director
- \* At any point, you can submit your grievance in writing, and/or ask explicitly for staff to document it. Grievance forms will be made available to Youth and Hosts

## 🌸 Staff contact information

- \* Allis Padilla, Host Home Case Manager  
[allison.padilla@saccenter.org](mailto:allison.padilla@saccenter.org)
- \* Pixie Pearl, Assistant Director of Housing  
[pixie.pearl@saccenter.org](mailto:pixie.pearl@saccenter.org)
- \* Koby Rodriguez, Director of Programs  
[koby.rodriguez@saccenter.org](mailto:koby.rodriguez@saccenter.org)
- \* David Heitstuman, Executive Director of the Sacramento LGBT Community Center  
[david.heitstuman@saccenter.org](mailto:david.heitstuman@saccenter.org)

## 🌸 Where else can I learn more about Host Homes?

- \* Sacramento LGBT Community Center website <https://saccenter.org/homelessness/>
- \* Application packet
- \* One page info sheet
- \* Point Source Youth website <https://www.pointsourceyouth.org/>
- \* Funding  
<http://www.sacounty.net/news/latest-news/Pages/County-Participates-in-New-State-Homeless-Funding.aspx>