

# Life Sharing Frequently Asked Questions

## What is a Life Sharing home?

Bethesda's Life Sharing program engages people who are willing to open their homes and hearts to help others, and carefully matches individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities with the best home for their needs. Through Life Sharing, Bethesda helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities find a supportive, family-like setting where they can gain independence and form strong, lasting friendships.

## Why should I consider becoming an Life Sharing Provider?

Life Sharing arrangements are intended to provide a private home experience for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Home providers not only offer a residence, but give support, companionship, and opportunities for individual growth. In return, home providers enjoy the satisfaction of making a positive difference in another person's life, as well as a generous tax-free monthly stipend.

## What supports are needed for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities?

As a Life Sharing home provider, you will:

- Provide daily support for up to 2 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, which many include assisting with medications, personal care, meals, medical appointments, shopping, transportation and more depending on the needs of the person, just like you would any other member of your immediate family.
- Provide companionship.
- Facilitate participation in social, community and faith activities.
- Support routine medical care. Complex health needs are managed with nursing support.

## What kind of Life Sharing providers is Bethesda looking for?

It all depends on what the person with a disability needs and is looking for, as well as the needs of the home provider. People's ideal living situations vary, ranging from traditional families with children to single housemate arrangements. We work closely with you to find the best match for your home setting.

## Will I be an employee of Bethesda?

No. Life Sharing providers are independent contractors for Bethesda. The arrangement will be established through a legal contract between you and Bethesda.

## Will I be eligible for benefits with Bethesda?

No. Independent contractors are not eligible to participate in Bethesda's employee benefits plans.

## How long is the commitment to have someone living in my home?

Bethesda highly encourages long-term placements to provide stability for everyone involved.

## Do I need to own my home to be a home provider?

No. As long as your home meets environmental requirements, determined through a home assessment, and is deemed a safe place for the person to live, you can either rent or own your home (house, townhouse, condo, apartment, mobile home).

## Can I be employed outside of the home and still be an Life Sharing Provider?

Yes. This will be evaluated during the placement process and circumstances will depend on the person being supported. The person in your home may be participating in outside employment and/or day programs, allowing you to work outside of the home during those hours.

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To learn more, call 920-206-4505 or go to [BethesdaLC.org/LifeSharing](https://BethesdaLC.org/LifeSharing)

**Can I have children in my home? How about pets?**

Yes. During the matching process, the presence of children or pets in your home will be considered carefully with the needs of individuals needing a home. Some people will live well with children and/or pets, while others may not.

**Do I need to own a computer?**

Yes. A computer is needed to provide the required reporting and paperwork on a monthly basis.

**Do I need to provide furnishings in the bedroom for the individual I will support?**

It depends on the individual. Some people have their own furnishings to bring into the home, while others may not.

**What are the insurance requirements to be a home provider?**

Home, auto and General & Professional Liability insurance are required for all Life Sharing providers. If the home is not owned, rental insurance is required. For more information about insurance coverage, please talk to Bethesda staff or refer to the Bethesda Independent Contractor Provider Agreement.

**What is involved in the licensing process to become a Life Sharing Provider?**

Once you've made the decision to explore becoming a provider, we work carefully you to assess the opportunity. Following are the main steps in the process:

- Complete and submit an application.
- Meet with local Bethesda employees for an interview discussion and to get answers to your questions.
- Pass background check and complete foster care licensing process.
- Complete required training.
- Participate in the matching process to find the best individual fit for your home.

**What is involved in the background check?**

To ensure the individuals we support have the safest and best homes available, potential home providers go through a rigorous screening process. We will work with you to complete a criminal background check, as well as review your professional and personal references and work history. The local county licensing entity will guide you through the background check process as part of your foster care licensing.

**Who in my home needs to have a background check?**

For the safety of the people we support, we require background checks on all adults over the age of 18 in your home.

**What training will I receive to prepare for being a Life Sharing Provider? What certifications are required?**

To ensure you have the knowledge and training you need, Bethesda will provide access to the training courses that are required by regulation and/or Bethesda. The types of training may include a Bethesda orientation session, first aid and CPR, medication administration and modules on specific topics such as safe driving and emergency preparedness. For a full list of training required in your area, please speak with a local Bethesda team member.

**How does the matching process work?**

Bethesda will work closely with you to pair you with an individual that will thrive in your home. Your home situation will be compared to the needs of people looking for placement. Once a specific candidate is identified for your home, there will be an initial meet-and-greet, then several visits and an overnight stay to assess the fit. A match is made when you, the individual, and Bethesda agree after this process that the fit feels right.

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### **How much are Life Sharing providers paid for supporting residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities?**

Life Sharing Providers and the Life Sharing Agency (Bethesda) negotiate a split in the daily Medicaid rate. In addition providers receive monthly Housing Support to cover room and board costs. We can give you a relatively close estimate of the reimbursement rate once the needs of the person you will be supporting are determined. Generally speaking the higher the support needs the higher the reimbursement rate. All of your income is tax free.

### **What documentation and paperwork will I be responsible for?**

Supporting the administrative and recordkeeping needs for the individual in your home is an important responsibility, and includes requirements set by both your state and Bethesda.

Examples of documentation that will need to be gathered and reported periodically include but are not limited to: Individual Support Service Plans, Behavior Support Plans, Medication Administration Record and census information.

### **Who manages the individual's finances and personal property?**

As a Life Sharing Provider, you will monitor the personal funds for the person in your home. This includes keeping and submitting receipts for his/her personal expenditures. In addition, you will maintain an inventory of personal belongings.

### **Why would people with intellectual and developmental disabilities choose to live in a Bethesda Life Sharing home?**

- Their current home no longer meets their needs or preferences.
- Homes they share with parents or other family members are no longer feasible.
- They are moving from another Life Sharing or group home because change is needed or desired.

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