

What is a Host Home?

The Host Home program in Iowa provides a living option for individuals who receive Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). In this program, an individual or a family opens their home to no more than two people with disabilities. This option allows the person to live in a home environment. They help with household expenses by paying for room and board, and receive the necessary services in their community. There is no need for multiple shifts with multiple staff.

In Iowa, a host home cannot be the family home or the same home where the legal guardian lives. The parent or legal guardian cannot be the host home provider unless there is an approved Exception to Policy (ETP). However, siblings and other relatives can be host home providers as long as they do not live in the family home.

What are the eligibility requirements to live in a host home?

People who want to live in a host home must have an Iowa HCBS Waiver. Right now, funding must come from the Intellectual Disability (ID) Waiver, Brain Injury (BI) Waiver, or the State Plan HCBS Habilitation Services Program. They must also qualify for daily supported community living (SCL) or daily home-based habilitation (HBH) support and be at least 18 years old.

How does the Host Home program work?

An agency works with people who are interested in becoming a host family. The agency is responsible for several things, including:

- Completing background checks for potential host home providers.
- Matching host home providers with people with disabilities who need a place to live.
- Providing required training, such as general care, medication management, first aid, CPR, positive behavior support, and consumer rights.
- Checking in with host homes every month to make sure the home is safe and that all needs are being met.

How does the Host Home program work?

Host home providers support people who live in their homes by:

- Teaching daily living skills such as personal hygiene, cooking, cleaning, laundry, budgeting, and coping skills
- Creating a safe, welcoming, family-like home environment
- Keeping daily records of services provided and tracking progress toward goals
- Helping individuals find community resources like medical, dental, and behavioral health care
- Supporting involvement in jobs, school, or day programs and providing transportation when needed
- Providing 24-hour supervision and support

Host Homes are all about finding the right match between the person and the Host Home provider.

What are the next steps to learn more about host homes?

- Contact the Managed Care Organization (MCO) Case Manager, OR
- Contact your Disability Access Point (DAP)
- Connect with an Iowa Host Home Agency

ASK Essential Questions

- Would my child meet the qualifications to live in a host home?
- How would a host home support my child's needs?
- What would make a host home a good match for our child?