



Guide for Individuals/Families looking for a New Home

What's Important To/For you or your loved one	Items to Look For	Some Questions to Ask
Home Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Access to Telephone or Computer • Lock on Bedroom Door (individual should have a key) • Locked space for personal items • Mold Free Walls/ Bathrooms, etc... • Urine free toilet and surrounding areas • The Home is free of foul odors • Private Information is not posted in open areas for others to see 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can we decorate the room how we like? - If I share a room, do I select who the roommate is? - How will my items be protected from a roommate tampering with or taking them? - Are visitors allowed at any time? - How do you verify visitors and those who are taking the individual out of the home? - Are there specific times or places that the phone and computer can be used? - When can someone enter the bedroom? Who has a key? - How often are the common areas cleaned? - If more than one person shares a bathroom how do you ensure that there are no bodily fluids left around before the next person comes in? - How often does the home receive pest control?
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The items in the refrigerator are organized and labeled. (No less than 3 days of food in refrigerator and cabinets) • Posted Menu (Individualized choices and diet appropriate items) • Fresh foods (Not a refrigerator/freezer full of processed foods) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How often are groceries purchased? - How does the individual give input on meals/groceries? - Are the menus rotational? - If I have groceries that are just for me, where are they kept and how do you ensure that no one else eats them? - How often will we go out to eat at a dine-in restaurant (not fast food)? - How are calories measured for meals?

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Calendar that shows dining out options (not just fast food) • Recipes for the menu 	
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gym/ Exercise Activities • Locked area for medications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How often will I be able to go to the gym? - If I play on a sports team, how will I get to practice? - How do you encourage wellness and exercise activities? - Where will my medications be kept? - How are staff made aware of my allergies and/or any medical protocols that I have? - What is the process for scheduling and completing medical appointments? - Who is notified about the results of my medical appointments? - Do you utilize a specific pharmacy for everyone? - Who makes sure that the scripts match my medications every month and the MAR reflects any changes? - If I have to be taken to urgent care or the emergency room but there is only one staff on shift, what happens? - Are all staff CPR/First Aid/AED certified? - What is the staffing ratio/schedule?
Community Activities/Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calendar for Community Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are individuals' activities incorporated into the calendar? - How many days a week do you plan on being out in the community? - Are there opportunities for individual community activities or is everything as a group?

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the community activities with a wide variety of people in the community and not just housemates/others in programs like this one? - Is there a company vehicle or do staff use their personal vehicles? - If staff use their personal vehicles, do you obtain a copy of their driving record and verify their auto insurance? - Are all of their vehicles required to have a current inspection? - If everyone in the house does not want to go on a scheduled activity, does that mean my loved one will not be able to go? What happens if this becomes a pattern? - Do we pay for transportation to activities, work and medical appointments?
<p>Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuation Plans • Fire Extinguishers • Emergency Numbers posted near the telephone • Emergency Food (Enough for individuals and staff for 3 days) • Emergency Water (Enough for individuals and staff for 3 days, 1 gallon per person per day) • Lights outside when it is dark • Walkways and doors free of hazards • First Aid Kit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How often are fire and emergency drills completed? - What is the emergency shelter location for this home? - How often are fire extinguishers checked? - Are staff trained on PASS for use of Fire extinguishers? - How often is the emergency food checked and/or replaced? - If I have a special diet, how will my special diet items included in the emergency food? - How many first aid kits are in the home? How often are the items replaced? - Are first aid kits in the vehicles?

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If an emergency happens in the community does staff have emergency numbers for the individuals in their possession?
Individual Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petty Cash • Invoices and Receipts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How is room and board calculated? What does this include? - When is room and board due? - If I have spending money may I keep it in my own wallet? - If I receive pay from work, how is this tracked and recorded? - If I cannot handle my own funds, how are they kept and tracked? - How is my spending reported to my rep payee?
In-Home Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV in common area • Games • Books/Magazines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there a limit on when I can watch TV? - Can I have a TV in my room? - If I don't have a personal TV, how will I be able to watch some of my favorite shows on the TV in the living room/common area? - What games/activities do you have here in the house for leisure?
Communication with the Support Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How often is the team updated on the individual's progress/lack of progress/concerns etc...? - What type of incidents will we be notified about and when? - Do we receive any paperwork or documentation from your program on a regular basis? - If I work or attend a day program, how often do you communicate with them?

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Easing the thoughts of placing your loved one with a New Provider

Every year numerous business owners complete an extensive process (on average the total process takes 1-1.5 years) to open a group home for individuals with DD. After obtaining a license they have to continue making a name for themselves and hopefully turn referrals to individuals who are admitted. Some new providers may have just opened their doors and others may have two or three years under their belt. Here are some questions to ask that can help ease your mind and make you feel more comfortable having your loved one move to a new provider.

Operation	Staffing	Experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How long have you been operating? • Do you plan to expand or open other homes? • What is your owner and program director’s experience in this field? • Is the company required to have reserve funds in case Medicaid postpones payments? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What trainings do all your staff receive? • Are there additional trainings required for your staff above the mandates given by the state? • How many administrators do you have? Do you have a PRN pool of staff? • What’s your staffing plan when a staff calls out or takes off? • How is your staff turnover? What’s your average staff tenure? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you handled any tough situations with any individuals you’ve supported? • Have you helped individuals age in place? • What is your personal definition of person-centered? • What does it mean to have community inclusion?

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Check out these articles regarding smaller/new companies

- <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-small-companies-over-large-companies-23667.html>
- <https://www.powerhomebiz.com/starting-a-business/entrepreneurship/8-advantages-of-a-small-business.htm>
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