

S-475 ASSESSING POTENTIAL HOME SHARING RESOURCES



Version 2 effective November 19, 2009

(previously RF-10)

Policy

Valoris must not place adults in a home sharing resource unless that family has been approved following a complete assessment in accordance with Valoris' requirements.

Procedure

1. Community and medical references

- Valoris shall require three (3) references for candidates who are single and five (5) references for couples;
- The following references are required:
 - One member of the immediate family of each candidate (father, mother, brother or sister);
 - A long-time friend of each candidate;
 - A current friend or couple who was in close relationship with the candidate(s) during the last year. When there are two (2) candidates, the friend or couple must know the candidates as a couple.
- The worker having completed the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) training shall contact the identified persons by letter, phone or interview, if necessary, and shall consider their comments regarding the candidates' ability to provide care to adults in need;
- Those persons' comments shall be kept on file and shall be kept confidential. The Referent persons' privacy must be respected at all times, particularly when discussing negative information regarding candidates;
- The medical reference provided by the family doctor must be based on a complete examination of the candidate. If the candidate has not had a complete medical examination within the last two years, he must have one done. Candidates shall be responsible for any medical reference costs.

2. Criminal record

Each adult residing in the home must authorize Valoris in writing to check if he has a criminal record.

If an adult in the home has a criminal record, Valoris must consider the type and date of the offence, the sentence imposed and subsequent behaviour in assessing whether this situation might pose a risk or danger to an adult being lodged there.

Valoris shall reject applications from all persons found guilty of an act of neglect or abuse of a child or an adult.

Valoris shall reject applications from all persons suspected of abuse or neglect of a child or an adult and whose assessment by Valoris, a Children's Aid Society or the police has determined that there is sufficient doubt to endanger adults who might be lodged there.

3. Premises' check

The resources worker documents this SAFE requirement using the form "Home Safety Checklist" and he must visit the home and the neighbourhood of the potential home sharing resource to ensure that the premises are safe, free from all danger to the health and safety of a vulnerable adult, and also clean and comfortable. The worker shall document the verification of the conformity of premises requirements on the appropriate form. The home sharer shall then receive a copy of it.

3.1. Firearms/safety/fire

The home sharer must have access to a telephone and a list of emergency numbers easily accessible.

The worker must ensure that the candidates are aware of conditions governing firearms. Moreover, Valoris requires that firearms and ammunition be stored under lock and key, in a different place.

Each adult must have his own room. And home sharing resources must have smoke detectors in good working order on each house storey. Also, there must be a written evacuation plan, carbon monoxide extinguishers and any other measure applicable, such as flashlights, fireplace protective screen on the premises.

3.2. Pets

Valoris requires that the home sharers' pets be vaccinated against rabies and other diseases that might be transmitted to humans each year. The home sharers must provide a vaccination certificate to Valoris each year.

3.3. Pool

Home sharing resources that wish to accommodate adults with special needs (physical, mental, etc.) must have a 4-foot high fence with a locked door around any pool, even if municipal regulations do not require one. The home sharers must be advised that Valoris requires that people using the pool must be supervised constantly by a responsible adult, regardless of the needs of the lodged adult.

If the home sharer lives beside a waterway, the resources worker must ensure that the place is safe.

4. Personal qualities of home sharers

This is no doubt the most difficult and the most important step in the assessment process. It consists of assessing the ability of the candidates to become a home sharer,

their motivation, their understanding of the role of a home sharer, their personal skills. Valoris must also identify the strengths and weaknesses of each home sharer to ensure a good match with the adults who will be lodged there.

The worker responsible for the assessment must meet all persons over seven (7) years old individually and in a group to ensure that the members of the family:

- are able to provide an appropriate environment for adults with special needs;
- are willing to cooperate with the adult and his own family (if applicable) and to demonstrate understanding in their regard to facilitate contact between the adult and his family and/or his network;
- show an ability to take on the essential tasks of a home sharer;
- are sensitive to and aware of the particularities of adults with special needs;
- have appropriate language and communication skills to maintain effective relationships with the adult and to communicate with Valoris;
- are willing to cooperate with Valoris and other professionals in providing support to the adult;
- are willing to learn new skills;
- are willing to commit to providing a living environment to the adult for the expected time of his placement in the home sharing resource.

4.1. The following points shall be considered during the assessment

- a. *Personal information on family members* – Identification, language spoken at home, religion and religious practice, family composition, education, culture, employment, financial resources, maturity level, interests and hobbies, past and present drug use and alcohol abuse, ability to manage stress, adaptability, community involvement, living environment characteristics.
- b. *Motivation and interest* – Motivation of each member of the family to become a home sharing resource, perception of their roles, expectations as regards the placed adult (age, sex, characteristics), commitment, concerns, cooperation with Valoris and other professionals...
- c. *Family dynamics*
 - Solid family structures and relationships among family members;
 - A good communication system and good problem solving and decision making methods;
 - Good marital relationships, moral values and beliefs, dramatic events in their lives, support network, relationships with neighbours and the role of relatives and other members of the community.
- d. *Abilities sought*
 - Good skills and experience in supporting adults with special needs;
 - Availability to support and encourage adults during daily activities;
 - Non-use of subversive methods and use of preferable alternative means;
 - Ability to provide the guidance required to observe behaviours and report progress;
 - Good communication skills with adults and with the professionals involved;
 - Willingness to take training and develop new skills;

- Understanding of the natural family and willingness to welcome them appropriately;
- Realistic expectations regarding the adult's behaviour;
- An open mind and tolerance of difficult behaviours;
- Ability to be good a social model for adults;
- Ability to commit to an adult with special needs.

5. Decision to approve or reject an application

5.1. Before approving a home sharing resource – The worker assigned to assess the home sharing resource must have considered all the following mandatory documents and included them in the file:

- Criminal background check for all adult members of the family, including boarders;
- Medical references for the home sharers;
- The three (3) or five (5) references;
- Check of the physical premises signed by the resources worker;
- Examples of reasons for rejecting an application may include (but are not limited to):
 - refusal to comply with Valoris' requirements, including requirements concerning the conformity of the physical premises;
 - refusal to comply with the Valoris subversive methods policy;
 - possession of a criminal record related to child or adult abuse and/or neglect, or another situation deemed serious;
 - lack of the experience or skills needed to adequately take care of an adult with special needs;
 - evidence of family problems, mental health problems, excessive drinking or drug use;
 - lack of commitment by all family members to becoming a home sharing resource or negative effect of possible placements on one or more family members.
- The supervisor shall review the documents and the assessment with the assigned worker before approving or rejecting an application to become a home sharing resource. The worker shall record his observations and assessment on the form. He shall summarize the family's strengths and weaknesses, their support and supplementary training needs, his recommendations on pairings (age, sex, special needs) and the number of places available.

5.2. Meetings

When a decision has been made to approve or reject an application, the worker shall meet with the candidates and advise them of the results of their assessment. If the application is rejected, the worker shall clearly explain the reasons for the decision to the candidates. If the application is accepted, the worker shall explain the "Services to Resource Persons Agreement" and have them sign it, and shall give them an identity card.

Following this meeting, a letter shall be sent to the candidates confirming the decision to approve or reject their application. If the application was refused, the letter must specify the reasons. Candidates who object to the decision shall be advised of the procedure for filing a complaint.

5.3. Documentation

The worker responsible for the assessment shall complete the "Disposition E" information to approve the home sharing resource or to reject their application, as applicable.

The worker shall obtain photos of the residence and the home sharers to include in their file.

The assessment must be signed by the applicants, the worker and his supervisor and be placed in the file. The applicants shall receive a copy of the assessments.

When the application has been approved, the names of the new home sharers shall be added to the home sharing resources network.

5.4. Other

Second application by rejected candidates - If already assessed and rejected candidates make a second application, that application shall be assessed only if the candidates can clearly demonstrate that the reasons justifying the original rejection have changed favourably.

Definitions

Home sharers : A family consisting of one or more persons in which a service agency places a person with an intellectual disability who has no relationship with this family, so that this person resides there and receives care, support and supervision for which the home sharers will be paid by the service agency.

Annex(es)

References