

Handbook for Individuals and Families



Staffed Homes



Our Vision

Communities where every person lives with dignity and enjoys a full life.

Contents

ABOUT STAFFED HOMES.....	3
DECIDING IF A STAFFED HOME IS THE RIGHT FIT.....	4
PLANNING THE TRANSITION TO YOUR NEW HOME	7
SUPPORTING YOU IN YOUR NEW HOME – OUR ROLE	10
INVOLVING YOUR FAMILY/PERSONAL NETWORK	11
LIVING A GOOD LIFE IN YOUR HOME	12
Enjoying Privacy in Your Home.....	12
Visitors/Guests in Your Home	13
Enjoying Your Neighbourhood and Community.....	14
Looking After Your Home.....	14
Pets in Your Home.....	15
Smoking and Vaping	16
Covering Your Household and Personal Costs	17
Keeping Track of Your Belongings	18
MAKING SURE WE SUPPORT YOU WELL.....	18
Community Care Facilities Licensing	18
Unlicensed Staffed Home Standards	18
CARF Accreditation	19
Understanding Your Needs and Supporting Your Care	19
Annual Medications and Health Care Reviews	20
Emergency Planning and Drills	20
Employee Skills/Competencies.....	21
CHANGING OR ENDING SERVICES.....	22

Important

This Handbook was printed on December 9, 2024.

Please note that contents may have changed and the most recent copy of this Handbook should be referenced on our Resource Portal on the CLS website.

<https://www.communitylivingsociety.ca/portfolio-items/important-information-about-cls/>

Thank you

Welcome to Your Home

About Staffed Homes

As one of our “home” options, staffed homes provide you with a home setting where employees are available to support you throughout the day and night (24 hours/day 7 days/week) based on your needs and preferences. More than one individual usually lives in the same home so you will likely have roommates. Our homes are in neighbourhoods in many different communities. Each home is set up to match the lifestyle preferences and needs of you and your roommate(s) so you each can enjoy good quality of life.



It is important that the place you call home be set up for you. We make sure you have your own private room or living space that you can decorate the way you like. It also means we take care to make sure that shared spaces such as the living room, kitchen, bathrooms, laundry or other rooms, and outdoor spaces are places that feel comfortable for you and that you can access easily. We want you to enjoy a home



life where you can participate in household activities with others living in the home, entertain your guests, enjoy opportunities to engage in community, make decisions, and contribute to keeping your home well maintained, healthy, and safe. We also want to make sure that family and friends are able to be part of your life and that they are invited to help you to make decisions, if you want their help.



Our staffed homes are funded through Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) and/or other funders. They manage the spaces in the home and refer eligible people to us when there is a vacancy. Our funders generally refer people who need quite a bit of support with many areas of daily living. We make sure, before we welcome you into a home, that we have the capacity and level of expertise to support you well in that home.

Deciding if a Staffed Home is the Right Fit

Not everyone who is referred to a Staffed Home decides it is the right fit for them. Choosing with whom, where, and in what type of a home you want to live are important life decisions. When you have been referred to a specific home, our team (Director of Programs and the Manager of Homes) will take time to get to know you and your family/personal network to learn about your hopes and dreams for your home life, as well as the support needs you might have. Part of our job is to help you think through what will work and if this home environment is a good fit for you. We also need to think about the fit for other people living in the home, and the skills and capacity of the employees who will be supporting you.



If, together, we decide it is not a good fit, our Director of Programs will help you to explore other options that may be better suited to your needs.

To get started, the Manager will meet with you, and anyone in your family/personal network that you choose, to:

- a) Help you learn about the potential home;
- b) Gather information about you to better understand if we have the capacity to support you in this home and/or other potential homes (dependent on availability).

Ways We Help You and/or Your Family, Personal Network to Learn About the Home and our Staffed Homes Service

- Provide you with this Handbook;
- Show you pictures of the home, the private room/living space that is available and the shared spaces;
- Share examples of the types of activities that people in the household enjoy at home and in community and any considerations about the level of care offered in the home.

- Once you decide, it might be a fit and depending on what might be reasonable for both you and the others living in the home, we might arrange opportunities to visit the home during different times of the day so you can see this home for yourself.
 - ▶ The first visit will likely include you and your family/network along with the Manager and Director of Programs;
 - ▶ The next visits may then be made to meet the individuals presently living at the home and their family/network members. This provides an opportunity for interaction and discussion among everyone;
 - ▶ One or more overnight visits at the home may also be scheduled.
- If visiting the home is not recommended for any reason, we will arrange for you to talk to other people (with their consent) who are living in the home and/or their family/personal network members as well as some of the employees working there.
- Provide information about the **User Fee** you will pay to contribute to rent and food.



The Types of Information We Gather About You

As part of getting to know you, we will work with you and/or your family/personal network to gather personal information about you. The Manager will use our “Getting to Know You” form to guide discussions with you so they understand more about your preferences – what you like to eat, how you spend your days, the places you like to go, the activities you like to do, areas where you need support and your preferences about how support is provided to be comfortable and helpful to you.



We will ask you and your family or network lots of questions and you can ask us questions too.

When gathering all this personal information about you, we encourage you to involve your family/network members who can help you think through some of the things they know about you that can help us get to know you better.



Making a Decision About Whether to Proceed with the Staffed Home



After visiting and seeing our home or thinking through your needs and wants, you and/or your family/personal network may decide, this home is not what you want. Similarly, at CLS, we may reconsider if the home can be a good fit based on our capacity to set it up to meet your needs. In either case, we will work with you to make sure you connect with other resources that may better meet your needs.



If all looks good and we all feel confident this home can be your new home then let's get started by reviewing this Handbook together. Be sure to ask lots of questions. Don't leave your questions unanswered!

Planning the Transition to Your New Home

It can be exciting, and also sometimes a little scary, moving into a new home with new people you are just getting to know. The Manager will spend time with you helping you make a plan to transition to your new home. We use **HOME** as our checklist to help you plan.

H	• Hanging out and getting comfortable in the home
O	• Organizing your new space
M	• Moving In
E	• Establishing yourself in your new home

H- Hanging Out Together

Although you may already have spent time at the home, it is always good, if possible, to take your time to get to

know everyone in the home, beyond just ‘visiting’. You will be moving in as a member of the household and it will be important for you to feel comfortable with everyone living there, as well as the household routines.



Suggestions: You might spend time working on your new space with one of your new roommates or an employee, stay for dinner, or maybe spend the night in your new space. These types of activities can help you get to know things about others in the home, as you spend time alongside each other and also help you to learn about the way the household works like how you might help with dinner or clean up as a member of the household or what it is like in the morning when everyone is getting up and getting ready for their day.

You and the Manager can come up with your own ideas about how to start building your relationships with everyone in the household and spending time together.

O- Organizing

Both you and the employees at your home will have things you need to do to get ready for your move into the household. For instance, employees may need to make some arrangements to accommodate any needs you might have and you will likely have items you want to make sure to bring with you. It is good to make your plans together so you know what will be important for you to bring and what the home will have ready for you. You can start an **INVENTORY** or list of the belongings you will be bringing including any special things such as electronics or games or pieces of furniture. These will be entered on an inventory form we use that helps us track everyone's personal possessions in the home.



Organizing may also involve planning for your change of address so people in your life know how to contact you such as friends, health care professionals, your employers etc.

M- Moving Day Planning Together

Moving may happen gradually over time if you are not having to rush. It may have to happen on a specific date if you have a deadline that you have to move out of the place where you have been living. Either way, it is important to plan with your new CLS team to make sure things go smoothly. For instance, you may need help transporting or carrying in all your belongings and they can support you by making sure there are people there to help you. Or, if you are planning to have others help with your move, employees at the home know to expect them and can clear the driveway or make other arrangements to support your efforts.

E- Establishing Yourself in Your New Home

You will want time to set up your new living space and may prefer to do this alone or you may want help either from your family/personal network or your new team. Again, it will be helpful to talk this through with the Manager so they know what you prefer and can give you space if you want or be there to help you.

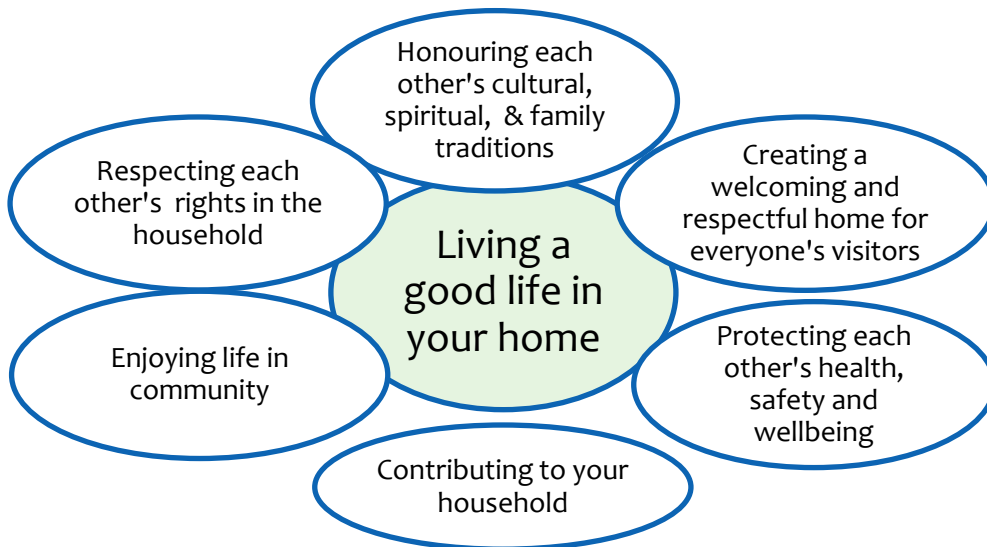
It is also good to sit down with the Manager and other members of the household to talk about any house rules or agreements that are in place so you understand and can add any that might be important to you. Having this discussion can set everyone up on the right track to understand and respect each other's needs and preferences where possible.



Our goal is to help you enjoy a good life together. We know there will be some ups and downs along the way. That's Life! By just talking together and learning more about what works for each of you, you can feel more prepared to work through any 'down times'.

Supporting You in Your New Home – Our Role

Part of our job is to make sure you feel comfortable and enjoy a good quality of life in your home. As you start to settle into your home, we will be paying attention to and supporting you in these important areas:



Personal Times to Talk with Employees

Because you will always have CLS employees at your home, you will have regular opportunities to talk with them if you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns. Informal conversations are great ways to work things out right away if there is something not working for you.

However, we also make sure you have more structured check-ins with your Manager or a specific employee. They will make sure to check in with you to make sure everything is going okay for you, and to answer questions or help you to address any concerns.



These check-ins will likely happen more frequently when you first join the household and then, at least four times a year after that.

These will be private discussions with you. That way you can feel comfortable talking about any concerns you might have that we can help you to address without worrying about others listening in.

We will check in to be sure:

- your rights are respected and you are respecting the rights of your housemates;
- your personal health, safety and wellbeing are being supported;
- your personal goals and lifestyle preferences are being supported alongside others in your household;
- you have opportunities to be in and access your community, including your family/personal network and the people and places you enjoy.

Involving your Family/Personal Network

In supporting you to have a good life in your home, we know it is important for you to stay connected with your family/personal network who you want to have in your life. Whether you are moving away from your family home for the first time, or have been away for awhile, changing your home affects the people close to you. They will want to know you are making a good choice and that everything is going well for you. They will also want to know how they can stay connected with you while also respecting your preferences for independence and privacy in your new home.

To make sure that your family/personal network can continue to play a vital role in your life in a way that works for you, employees will work with everyone to facilitate your ongoing connections. Ideally, those close to you will participate actively in planning with you, and in major decisions such as moving to your new home or starting a new program or job.



You may also want to plan opportunities for them to visit you in your new home, to continue to spend time with you in family or other activities outside your home, and to get to know your new housemate(s) and employees.

Your family/personal network members can also play an important role by checking in with you to make sure things are okay in your new home and acting alongside you as an advocate for you in areas where you want support. Each year, as part of our ISQLP planning, we will bring your family/personal network together to help map out how everyone will engage and contribute to your life.

Living a Good Life in Your Home

Because you are joining a household with other individuals, CLS has developed some policies to help us all think through how to manage ways you can enjoy your interests while not making things hard for others in the house. Some of these include:

Enjoying Privacy in Your Home

This is your home and you have the right to enjoy privacy.

- ▶ In your own space: Unless there is a health or safety consideration we have discussed with you and/or your family/network and agreed to add to your care plan and/or assess the risk and plan around it (risk assessment), you have the right to close your door to your personal space to have privacy at any time. Employees or others in the household must not go into your room when the door is closed without your permission unless there is an emergency. They must knock if you are in the room and wait until you invite them in. Employees may need to make a plan with you to enter the room when you are not there. Reasons might be to help with cleaning, laundry or other household maintenance tasks. Also, if there is a reason that employees have to be able to monitor you for health or safety, they will make sure to build a plan with you that respects your right to privacy from others in the household and that provides you with as much privacy as possible.



- ▶ Bathrooms/spaces for personal care: Bathrooms in the house are private spaces. When the door is closed, others must not enter. When employees are providing personal care to you in a bathroom or your space, they will make sure that your privacy is respected by closing doors and helping to protect your privacy while attending to your needs.
- ▶ Shared spaces: You and all other members of your household are free to be in any of the shared spaces in your home as long as you follow the house rules.

Visitors/Guests in Your Home

- ▶ Your Guests:

If you want to have guests, you can host them in your own space in the home. Just remember, you will need to be sure to plan this so that guests aren't there during times the household has agreed are quiet times. That way you aren't disturbing others.



If you don't want to have a guest in your private room you can talk with CLS employees about using shared space like a porch, living room or kitchen. They can help you work out what might be possible so that you can enjoy some privacy in your visit without making it hard for others in your home.

Sometimes, you might want to include your guests in shared activities with your roommates, like inviting them for a meal with everyone, a special event, or to join with others in the household in shared space to talk, watch a show, etc. These can all be arranged so everyone is involved in the planning.



- ▶ People Visiting Other Members of Your Household:

Your roommates will likely also like to have their friends and family visit them in the home. They can enjoy the same freedoms as you to host them in their private space, arrange with you and others to host them in shared space either privately or with all or some of you together.

- ▶ Other Visitors: Our homes have to meet specific standards and from time to time, we may have people coming such as the Fire Department, Licensing or other inspectors, and CARF Accreditors. They may need to spend time in your home making sure it meets the standards of Licensing, CLBC, or others. They may also ask to speak with you so that you can share what it is like to live in your home. We will make sure to tell you before they come so you can decide if you want to be there and what/how they can access your private space if it is important for them to see it to complete their inspection.

Enjoying Your Neighbourhood and Community

It is important for you have lots of opportunity to spend time in the community enjoying activities you like to do and exploring any new opportunities of interest such as work, social activities, sports or recreation, shopping and other personal activities, etc. We will work with you to help make these opportunities happen.



Your housemates might also like to participate in community activities together. We will support everyone to come up with ideas for these types of activities. Some may be regular activities like Tuesday swimming and Wednesday library. Others might be events happening in the community or neighbourhood on specific dates. It can be fun to plan these outings together.

Looking After Your Home

This is your home and as much as possible we want to help you contribute to and take care of it through regular household activities. Everyone's contributions may be different. Part of our support will be in helping you contribute in the best ways you can to any of the typical activities:

- ▶ Looking after your private space – arranging it the way you like, keeping it clean and tidy, doing your laundry, managing your clothes;
- ▶ Helping keep shared space clean and tidy – putting your belongings away when you are not using them, helping with routine cleaning;



- ▶ Helping in the kitchen – contributing to shared activities. This might include cooking, cleaning, setting the table, and doing the dishes;
- ▶ Helping with general tasks such as:
 - Garbage and recycling,
 - Yard care,
 - Gardening.

Pets in Your Home

Deciding if there can be pets in your home

You may be someone who enjoys having pets around. But what if you have allergies to or don't like certain types of pets? Who gets to decide?



At CLS, we believe it is important to honour your choices – we want to encourage you to keep and enjoy a pet, if you want to. However, we also have to think about everyone else living in the home.

This means that each circumstance will be reviewed on an individual basis with input from all the individuals in the household and their family/network members, along with the CLS Manager of Property and Fleet, who manages the home where you live.

What we have to think about to decide if it is possible for you to have a pet in the home:

- ▶ Are there rules about pets your home must follow? This might be rules from Public Health (the people who license the home), the Landlord if the house is rented, or a Strata Council (if the house is in a shared community)?
- ▶ Does anyone in the home have allergies or a health condition?
- ▶ How might having a pet in the home affect other people in the home if they don't like pets, are afraid of pets, or may have behaviours that could put a pet in danger?
- ▶ Are you able and willing to pay for and take care of the pet?

Making a Plan for an Approved Pet

If everything looks good and having a pet seems possible for everyone in the household, you and the Manager will need to write up a plan that must be approved by the CLS Manager of Property and Fleet. The questions below show some of the information that must be in the plan.



- ▶ How you will purchase and pay for all pet supplies?
- ▶ How you will look after your pet?
- ▶ Where the pet will be allowed in the home and where will it sleep?
- ▶ How you will pay for any care costs for the pet (veterinary costs, boarding if you go away, etc.)?
- ▶ How others in the household can enjoy the pet.
- ▶ What action will be taken if you do not meet your responsibilities.



If your request to have a pet is denied

Sometimes, having a pet just won't work and this can be very disappointing.

When this happens, we will help to make sure you still have opportunities to enjoy pets in your life. Our goal will be to help you have regular opportunities to spend time with pets outside of the home. We will brainstorm ideas with you and try out possibilities to find a plan that works for you.



Smoking and Vaping

To protect you and everyone in the home, we make sure there are clear rules about smoking in and outside the house (yard, patio, balconies, etc.).

You have the right to smoke at your own home. But you must only smoke in the designated smoking areas. These areas have been carefully chosen so smoke cannot accidentally blow in and affect others in the home and that the location is considerate of neighbours. It also needs to be a place where employees are able to see you in case something should happen to you.

Only you and other supported individuals may smoke at your home in a designated smoking area that allows for monitoring and is considerate to the community. Visitors, employees or volunteers must be off the property if smoking.

Covering Your Household and Personal Costs

Each staffed home receives funding to cover approved costs to manage the home. This funding does not cover all costs. Our funders expect that each person living in the home will pay a set **User Fee** to help contribute to basic costs such as rent, food and household expenses. This User Fee is typically paid from your Person with Disability (PWD) benefits, unless you have other sources of income.

As a person residing in the staffed home, you are also responsible for paying all other expenses to support your lifestyle including: clothing, personal care items, medications and recreational and community activities, etc.



We will work with you so we know how you want your funds to be managed and if you want CLS to have any role in managing your funds. We ask that you and your family/support network complete and sign an **Accounting of Personal Funds** form that will guide us in knowing our role. This form explains all four options for accounting of personal funds. CLS has strict policies that all employees must follow to be sure that your funds are safeguarded if we have any role in supporting you to manage your money. If CLS is not involved at all in managing your funds, you or your legal representative will be responsible for making sure your funds are safe, your bills are paid, and taxes completed each year.

Whether CLS is involved or not, we encourage you to have a legal representative to support you with your finances as needed.



Keeping Track of Your Belongings

CLS makes sure that you have a list of all the things that belong to you at your home. When you buy anything new or give something away, it is important to let us know so we can add it to your list.

Usually, we track the major things you have such as furniture, electronics, collections, and other belongings that are special to you. You can decide what belongings you want us to track for you. If you ever decide to move out of this home, we can use this list to make sure you remember to take all of your belongings with you.

Making Sure We Support You Well

Your health, safety and well-being are our first considerations. You have the right to a safe home environment that supports your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. We have developed multiple safeguards.

Community Care Facilities Licensing

Unless your home is either just for you or you and one other roommate, all staffed homes are licensed under the Ministry of Health, Community Care Facilities Licensing. This means we have regular visits from a licensing officer who will inspect the home to be sure we are meeting all required standards. We are pleased to have them monitor so we have another set of eyes looking at each home to be sure it supports everyone's health, safety and overall well-being.

Unlicensed Staffed Home Standards

At CLS, we follow the same standards in staffed homes where only 1 or 2 individuals are living even though they are not licensed. Directors of Programs and the Manager of Property and Fleet are responsible for ensuring that homes are routinely assessed to ensure they are well maintained and that support in the home meets all licensing standards.

CARF Accreditation

CLS is proud to host visits from CARF Accreditors in staffed homes. They choose different homes each time there is a survey (usually every 3 years). This extra layer of monitoring by people who also work in staffed homes in other communities, supports us to identify and make improvements. Each time the surveyors visit they share ideas with us – it helps us constantly improve.



Understanding Your Needs and Supporting Your Care

As part of planning with you, we make sure that we regularly update all the specific support plans that we have developed with you as part your **Individual Service and Quality of Life Plan** (ISQLP). In staffed homes, this will include a **Care Plan** that helps to guide our support for you in your home life as well as any additional plans such as a **Health Care Plan** or **Behavioural Support/Safety Plan**. We will consult with and seek guidance from the relevant professionals that support you in these plans and make sure employees at the home stay up to date and are supported in any new strategies or interventions that have been included.

Annual Medications and Health Care Reviews

We will make sure you have an appointment with your doctor and dentist each year to check out your physical health and conduct a review of your medication regimen. This means the doctor will look at your overall health which includes the medications you take, your diet, and your exercise to make sure they are all working well together.



There is an annual review (sometimes more) of medications at each home by a licensed pharmacist. The pharmacist helps us to look at the ways we store and give each person their medications. They also take time to review medications each person is using to make sure their medication plan is working well.

We also make sure you have regular check ups:

- ▶ Dental care;
- ▶ Vision;
- ▶ Hearing;
- ▶ Other medical check ups related to your needs and age.



Emergency Planning and Drills

Like any home, emergencies can happen and we all need to be prepared. Each home has emergency equipment like first aid kits and smoke alarms. They also have an emergency plan that employees will share with you that includes important information to help you know where things are and what to do if the emergency requires everyone to leave the house. We also practice how to do this so that you can learn the steps to follow. These are called emergency drills. As part of being a member of your household you will be asked to practice these drills with everyone so we all feel comfortable knowing what to do.



We will also work with you to make a grab and go kit of things that you will need to have such as a change of clothes and some special items if we have to leave the home in a hurry to be safe.

Employee Skills/Competencies

In addition to all the training we require all employees to complete that we talked about in Section 1, we also have specific training we arrange for them so they can meet your specific needs and those of other household members. These are so they have the skills they need to support you in any specific areas related to your:

- ▶ Health care specific procedures/interventions (employees may need training called 'delegation of task' training from a health professional for certain procedures such as tube feeding or injections);
- ▶ Diet type (minced, pureed), food/fluids consistency;
- ▶ Risk Management, Behaviour Support and Safety Planning;
- ▶ Personal care needs;
- ▶ Use of any adaptive equipment/lifts/transfers, etc.;
- ▶ Augmentative communication.

Changing or Ending Services

There may be circumstances where the staffed home you live in is no longer the right fit:

- ▶ You may have new plans for your life that require a different type of home or level of independence;
- ▶ You may no longer feel the staffed home you are in is a good fit and want to explore other available options at CLS or with another provider;
- ▶ You have new health or other needs that may require another type of living situation or level of care.



Whatever the situation, our Director of Programs will work with you, your network, and your current CLS team to plan next steps so that you have a comfortable transition to your new setting.

In cases where, as part of our planning with you, we have identified the need to look for more suitable housing for you, we will work with your funder to explore options either to help you stay in your current home with the adaptations you need to remain comfortable and satisfied there, or to explore other possible options for you. Your funder will take the lead in making other arrangements for you.



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