



NEIGHBORWORKS® BOISE HOMESHARE HUB™

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is homesharing?

Homesharing is a living arrangement where two or more unrelated people share a home for their mutual benefit. No two homesharing arrangements are alike; each is unique and based upon the individuals' needs, interests, and lifestyles. Homesharing provides a financially and socially rewarding housing option to people of all ages.

While its advantages are many, homesharing may not be a good fit for everyone. The NeighborWorks® Boise HomeShare Hub™ encourages you to think deeply about whether this type of housing situation will work for you. If you think it might, the Hub provides information, counseling, and planning opportunities for all parties to promote a successful homeshare.

2. How does it work?

In a homesharing arrangement, each person has his/her own bedroom and perhaps a private bathroom, but they may share common areas, such as the kitchen and living room. For this program, the home must be owner-occupied and located in Ada or Canyon County. A **Home Provider** wants to share her/his home with another, unrelated individual. A **Home Seeker** is 18 years or older looking to move into the home of another. Owners can be paid or may receive services from the Seeker in exchange for all or part of the rent.

3. How much is the rent?

Since homesharing must benefit *both* parties, the rent amount, deposit (if any), and utility costs (if included) must be affordable to the Seeker while meeting the needs of the Provider. Every situation is different.

4. What is a service exchange?

A homesharing arrangement may include a service exchange. Service examples are helping with meals, shopping, cleaning, pet-sitting, yard work, or running errands. Each service arrangement is different and based on the needs of the Provider and the capabilities of the Seeker. Services must be non-medical and non-personal care.

5. What is the NeighborWorks® Boise HomeShare Hub™?

The HomeShare Hub™ is more than a roommate finder. As well as helping participants identify a housemate who will positively affect their lives, it offers education and home modification support if needed, and provides follow-up. However, the decision to live together rests entirely with the Provider and Seeker, who are expected to put their full agreement in writing.



6. Are there any fees?

The NeighborWorks® Boise HomeShare Hub™ provides access to the Silvernest online platform, where Providers and Seekers create profiles and find matches. Silvernest charges \$25.00 a month for Providers and \$15.00 a month for Seekers, which covers the cost of running background checks and operating the platform. These fees will be waived by NeighborWorks for Providers who participate in landlord training and Seekers who complete rental counseling.

7. What makes a successful candidate?

Successful candidates have a degree of emotional stability that allows them to be interested and involved in developing and maintaining a positive relationship with their housemate. Successful candidates also possess patience, are willing to be flexible, and have a somewhat stable current housing situation, because this HomeShare Hub is **not** an *emergency housing* solution. The matching process is a careful and time-consuming endeavor, taking up to 6 weeks. It is also important that individuals can care for themselves because homesharing is **not** a home *health care* arrangement. Participants must be able to self-advocate and assume full responsibility for every step of the HomeShare Hub™ application process.

8. What are the benefits of homesharing?

- a. Companionship and security for both Provider and Seeker in an atmosphere that feels like home.
- b. Opportunities to help one another.
- c. Income and/or services for Providers that allow them to live independently in their home.
- d. A more affordable and flexible housing option for Seekers.

9. How long does it take to set up a homeshare?

The goal is to promote suitable, mutually beneficial Homeshare arrangements. Hurried matches are not likely to last. We encourage taking time on the front end to discern the right fit. That process may take up to six weeks or longer.

10. What is the process?

This is a general overview of the process. Keep in mind each situation is unique.

- e. Fill out an inquiry form. You'll be asked a few short questions and once submitted, a HomeShare Hub Coordinator will reach out to do an in-take call.
- f. During the intake meeting, our team will give an overview of the program, answer questions, and provide guidance as you start your homesharing journey.
- g. Home Providers: We recommend completing Landlord Training (once completed your Silvernest subscription will be waived for 3 months). Providers may wish to consult with Hub staff about minor adaptations that might facilitate a homeshare and/or invite staff to inspect the home.
- h. Home Seekers: Do Rental Coaching with NeighborWorks® Boise. This will go over tenant rights, budget, and help set you up for success as a renter. Once completed, your Silvernest subscription will be waived for 3 months.



- i. Owners and Seekers post information about themselves and their needs on the Silvernest website and create a profile. See more information on [Silvernest here](#).
- j. Both parties complete a background check through Silvernest.
- k. Parties communicate with each other online. When you decide to meet with a potential housemate, we recommend that you meet in a public space. This is your opportunity to have a conversation, to discuss your ideas and preferences for homesharing. (Option to have a companion present)
- l. If both parties agree to homeshare, they set up a one-week trial period. If it works out, create a Living Agreement using a template provided on Silvernest,
- m. Hub staff contact both parties regularly for a year to answer questions or help solve any problems that arise.

It can take time to arrange to meet and then establish a mutual living agreement. At a minimum, the process takes 4-6 weeks, assuming appropriate potential matches are available. The NeighborWorks® Boise HomeShare Hub™ cannot guarantee a homeshare placement.

11. For Homeowners: How will homesharing affect my taxes?

NWB cannot provide this information, but here are some resources:

- a. Your tax preparer or accountant, or [H&R Block](#).
- b. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA): If you earn \$64K a year or less annually (VITAtaxhelp@boisestate.edu).
- c. [Taxpayer Advocate Service](#): If you have unresolved IRS tax issues (208-363-8900).
- d. Idaho Tax Commission: (208) 334-7660 in the Boise area or toll-free at (800) 972-7660.

12. What is the role of the NeighborWorks® Boise HomeShare Hub?

The HomeShare Hub contracts with Silvernest, which provides an online platform for Seeker and Provider communication. Through Silvernest, potential housemates identify each other. Silvernest also runs background checks on all applicants. HomeShare Hub staff and volunteers help participants navigate the steps to find the right match. We assist parties in developing a Living Agreement (not a lease) and can offer supportive resources and referrals after a match is made. All decisions regarding choosing a housemate are up to the participants; the NeighborWorks® Boise HomeShare Hub is not part of that decision.

13. How do I begin the HomeShare Hub process?

Visit [NeighborWorks Boise](#) and complete the online inquiry. Staff will follow up with an in-take call. If you have additional questions or need assistance, please call us at 208-295-1694 to speak with a HomeShare Coordinator.