
Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in participating in the GLBT Host Home Program of Avenues for Homeless Youth. The program and the people behind it have a deep commitment to our communities, our youth and social change – not just through the sharing of resources, but through a transformative and intimate process of sharing our homes and our lives.

Throughout its 20 years of history, many young folks and older folks have had the chance to build trusting relationships and create stronger communities. You will have the opportunity to meet some of them during this application process.

Being a host is a powerful and unique experience, and far from being easy. The commitment you are willing to make in order to be a host volunteer is an intense one, and no less intense than that of a youth who is moving into a host home. Hopefully it will prove to be gratifying and empowering as well for both.

As the GLBT Host Home Program Manager, I am committed to keeping you informed, being clear about expectations, being up front and honest about decisions made regarding your application, listening to your concerns and feedback, respecting your input, challenging you, finding the best match for you and a youth, and providing on-going support and training.

Please read carefully the information included: application process and training overview, eligibility requirements, questions to ponder before getting started, HHPs values, and the application form which will need to be filled out and then mailed to the GLBT HHP program manager. Once I receive the completed application, I will read the information shared, start the background checks and set up a time for the initial interview. We are committed to doing our best in securing safer and nurturing homes for the GLBT youth who need them.

Again, thank you so much for wanting to be a part of this program. It is only through the generosity, spirit of solidarity and commitment of people like you that we are able to offer stable and affirming homes to youth.

In Community,

Raquel (Rocki) Simões, GLBT Host Home Program Manager

rsimoes@avenuesforyouth.org | 612-968-8771 (cell)

APPLICATION PROCESS & TRAINING OVERVIEW

1. Potential host home applicants attend informational meeting
2. Applicants fill out required forms and mail them to the GLBT HHP Program Manager at Avenues for Homeless Youth, 1708 Oak Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55411
3. GLBT HHP performs background checks and sends reference requests
4. Applicants have first interview with GLBT HHP Program Manager and co-worker or Advisory Council member
5. Applicants have second interview with GLBT HHP Case Manager and youth (in applicants' home)
6. Applicants attend and participate in 16-hour training
7. Applicants are chosen as host volunteers
8. Host files are made available to youth for youth-driven selection
 - *Youth review host files, including the host letter to youth participants.*
 - *Meeting of youth with potential hosts (with case manager and GLBT program manager at first)*
 - *Release of Liability waivers signed, and DOPA for minors*
 - *Youth moves in*
 - *Review goals, expectations, etc.*
9. GLBT HHP program manager provides support to hosts
10. GLBT HHP case manager provides support to youth
11. Hosts attend on – going support training
 - *Monthly support group (hosts and HHP manager, 1-2 hours)*
 - *Trainings as part of the support group 3-4 times a year*
12. Social and community building activities
 - *Planned for youth, hosts, extended family, and friends*

ELIGIBILITY AND EXPECTATIONS FOR VOLUNTEER HOSTS

All applicants must:

1. Have an extra bedroom (providing privacy) for the youth
2. Be at least 25 years old
3. Have lived in the Twin Cities for at least a year
4. Live in the greater Metro area
5. Complete the application form, providing any relevant information
6. Have renter/homeowner's insurance, providing a file copy if requested
7. Provide three references
8. Authorize and pass background checks which include:
 - Public Records (i.e. arrest reports)
 - IntelliCorp Records, Inc.
9. Complete necessary interviews
10. Complete the initial training session (16 hours)

The above criteria need to be successfully completed in order for an applicant to be qualified as a host. Participation of applicants can be terminated at any point in the screening process if the program manager believes they are not qualified/ready to be a host volunteer. Applicants need to demonstrate a strong commitment to work with a youth to build a healthy and trusting relationship, an ability to provide a supportive environment and consistently demonstrate skills necessary to make that happen.

GLBT Host Home Support:

After approval and once hosting, volunteers are provided regular support groups. These meetings will provide the hosts with an opportunity to share their experiences and learn from each other, as well as to learn from outside trainers up to four times a year. Youth involved in the program will receive ongoing support from their case managers. The main support person for the volunteer hosts is the program manager, whereas the main support person for the youth is the youth advocate/case manager. The case manager will work closely with the program manager to ensure that the host home receives the appropriate level of support throughout participation. Participation includes scheduled and unscheduled (if warranted) home visits which will also be a part of the support system provided.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

What are the ‘rules’ of your home?

Think about sharing your living space with a youth you don't know very well. Think about the rules and expectations that will be important for that person to know (i.e. no smoking in the house). The youth moving in will also have rules/expectations of their own (i.e. knock before you enter). Most importantly, *what are your non-negotiables?*

What are your expectations of the youth while they live with you?

The GLBT Host Home Program is an opportunity for the youth to live in a safer and healthy environment while they work on **self-determined** goals, which they develop with the support of their case manager. As your relationship with a youth grows and deepens, so might your involvement re: goals/things they want to do. This is really up to the youth to decide. Note: Hosts tend to *almost never* feel like the youth is working hard enough/fast enough/genuinely enough on said goals, regardless of how open-minded they are. The program will support and challenge you in managing your own expectations and dealing with frustrations that may arise.

What is your financial commitment to this youth?

You will be responsible for providing food for this youth for the duration of their stay. Expect your utility and groceries bills to go up. Aside from food and a supportive home, you will not be responsible for other expenses. The case manager and program manager can work with you on setting appropriate boundaries re: expenses.

Is your living space ready for a young person?

The youth must have their own room or private space. That room/space should be clean when the youth moves in. Make sure that your smoke alarms work and that you have accessible fire extinguishers. If you have alcohol in the house, it should be kept in a safe place where the youth is less likely to have access to it.

Have you ever lived with a queer and/or transgender youth?

You should get acquainted with LGBTQ youth issues and explore your own feelings about sexual orientation and gender identity and learn to be able to talk about those issues. Even many people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual don't necessarily have much awareness about transgender and gender-queer identities.

Have you explored (personally or otherwise) issues such as white privilege and racism?

The majority of hosts in our host home programs are white, whereas many of the homeless youth are of color. If you are white, it is extremely important that you become more aware of race, racism, and white privilege and the implications of living with that privilege. Talking about this will be part of the training and is an on-going expectation of all white hosts.

Are you willing to put in some time to create a nurturing relationship with a youth?

Developing a trusting relationship with a youth may take some time and hard work. This may require you to be an active participant in that young person's life (i.e. driving them places, helping with schoolwork, meeting with case manager). According to some hosts, this often feels like ‘parenting’.

Are you capable of living with a youth who may be working through difficult issues?

You need to be conscious that the young people who participate in the host home program will likely have experienced trauma. These issues will also be discussed during the training. *Your role as a host is not to ‘rescue’ youth, but to be an adult ally.*

Avenues for Homeless Youth manages three separate host home programs: the GLBT Host Home Program, which provides transitional, longer-term housing for youth who identify as LGBTQ, the ConneQT Host Home Program, which provides more emergency -based and shorter-term housing for LGBTQ youth, and the Minneapolis & Suburban Host Home Program, which provides housing for homeless youth from the metro area and suburbs of Hennepin County regardless of their LGBTQ identification. All of these programs have a commitment to being informed by a philosophy of solidarity, not charity; we believe that communities can thrive when we share our resources from the perspective of ‘us and us’ and not ‘us and them’.

There are many unknowns when it comes to hosting and building community with young people. It requires trust, hope, vulnerability, commitment, communication, healthy boundaries, and flexibility.

Values and Understandings of our HHPs:

- We seek to recognize and challenge systems of power that perpetuate barriers and injustice in young people’s lives (such as racism and classism), and we are aware that not all youth get the same results through the same hard work under these systems
- We approach youth work through a lens of social justice and youth empowerment
- We value diversity in all its forms
- We believe in supporting youth regardless of their racial or ethnic identity, religious affiliations, or lack thereof, gender identity or sexual orientation
- We acknowledge that youth’s sexual and gender identity may change throughout their adolescence; a youth who identifies as straight or a specific gender when they are referred into the program may begin to question their sexual orientation or gender identity at any time
- We believe in trauma-informed and harm reduction strategies that affirm youths’ strengths and their own agency
- We believe in leading through example and fostering shared leadership
- We understand that all youth will sometimes make choices we don’t agree with, and we acknowledge the youth’s right to make those choices for themselves
- We understand that choices youth make about sexual activity or other behaviors might be different from those we might wish or expect for our own children and we do not fill a parental role for the youth in the program
- We believe that youth benefit from living with adult allies who are aware of the inherent power dynamics of the host home model and strive to minimize misuse of power

GLBT HOST HOME PROGRAM APPLICATION Date of Application: _____

Applicant's Name (Last, First, MI):	Gender Identity:	Pronoun Used:	Birth date:
Co-Applicant's Name (Last, First, MI):	Gender Identity:	Pronoun Used:	Birth date:
Relationship of Applicants:			
Street Address:		Telephone/e-mail	
City:	<i>Home:</i> <i>Work applicant:</i> <i>Cell applicant:</i> <i>e-mail applicant:</i>		
State:	<i>Work co- applicant:</i> <i>Cell co-applicant:</i>		
Zip Code:	<i>e-mail co-applicant:</i>		
Is e-mail a good mode of communication for you?			
How long have you lived in MN?			
Applicant: ____/____ years/mos	Applicant: ____/____ years/mos		
What other states have you lived in (past 10 years)?			
Applicant:	Co-Applicant:		

Please describe how to reach your home from downtown Minneapolis:

Bus lines near your home: _____

All Children and Adults Living/Working in Your Home			
Name (Last, First, MI):	Relationship:	Gender Identity:	Birth date:
1.			
2.			
3.			

Do you have any pets living with you? Please specify: _____

Housing Information (check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Owned	<input type="checkbox"/> Rented	<input type="checkbox"/> Single Family House	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Home
<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-unit	<input type="checkbox"/> Basement unit	<input type="checkbox"/> Second Floor	<input type="checkbox"/> Apartment/Condo
How long have you lived there?			
Do you have homeowner's/renter's insurance? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no			
If yes, what is the name and policy # of your carrier?			
Are you able to provide an extra bedroom/private space for a youth?			
Are you planning on moving within the next year?			

Do you have a current MN driver's license? ___ yes ___ no

If yes, what is your driver's license number?

Applicant: _____ Co-Applicant: _____

What is the name of your car insurance company?

Applicant: _____ Co-Applicant: _____

List two references whom you have known at least 1 year and one reference whom you have known 5 years. If you are applying with another person, your references should know both of you and how you function as a family. An e-mail will be sent to them with questions.

Name	E-mail address	Relationship
1.		
2.		
3.		

The following pages contain questions which are to be answered individually. There are two copies: one for the applicant, one for the co-applicant. If you are applying by yourself, please mail the blank co-applicant form to Rocki together with your completed application.

Or recycle it. Thank you.

APPLICANT

Are you (check all that apply):

Lesbian Bisexual Gay Transgender Heterosexual

Queer Genderqueer Other: _____

How would you characterize your comfort level with your sexual orientation and gender identity (please circle corresponding number below)? 1= not comfortable at all 5= extremely comfortable

sexual orientation 1 2 3 4 5 gender identity 1 2 3 4 5

If you are GLBTQ, are you out to/at:

friends work parents siblings relatives other (specify)

How easy is it for you to talk about sexual orientation and gender identity issues?

1= not easy at all 5= extremely easy

sexual orientation 1 2 3 4 5 gender identity 1 2 3 4 5

How would you characterize your ability and willingness to talk about power and privilege, especially re: racial and economic justice?

ability 1 2 3 4 5 willingness 1 2 3 4 5

Are you bilingual or multilingual? If yes, what languages do you speak?

You may use the back of the page for the following questions if you need more space.

1) Please write a little bit about why you are interested in hosting a young GLBTQ person in your home:

2) Please describe the characteristics of a young person you **would** wish to host:

3) Please describe the characteristics of a young person you **would not** wish to host:

4) How do you self-identify (i.e. gender, race, ethnicity, class, ability)?

5) Please write about your strengths, skills and any other relevant information that you would like to share:

6) Please describe any physical and/or mental health concerns in your family that could impact someone living in your home:

Are you currently licensed as a foster parent? (this is not a requirement for the GLBT Host Home Program)

yes no

Have you ever

	YES	NO
been arrested by any law enforcement officer?		
been charged with any offense even if dismissed?		
been convicted of any offense?		
been charged with or convicted of an offense against a youth/minor?		
abused, neglected, or molested any child?		

If you checked yes to any of the above, please explain the circumstances and dates:

Employment for past 5 years, starting with current job				
Occupation:	Place of employment:	City:	Phone:	Time employed:
If you are currently not working, what is your source of income/resources?				

<p>Do you smoke? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no If yes, do you smoke in your home? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>Do you drink alcohol? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>Do you have any concerns about your drinking? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>If yes, please explain why you are concerned:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Have you ever used illegal drugs? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>If yes, do you currently use illegal drugs? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p>
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I hereby certify that the facts contained in the GLBT Host Home Program Application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.	
Signature Applicant:	Date:

Don't forget to complete the **creative assignment**, and mail it along with this application to:
 Raquel (Rocki) Simões, GLBT HHP, 1708 Oak Park Avenue North, Minneapolis, 55411. Thank you.

CREATIVE ASSIGNMENT!

Please write a letter talking about yourself, your family and community, some of your life experiences, strengths, etc. Write it with a young person in mind as the reader. The purpose of this letter is for them to get to know you a bit, find out why you want to be a host, and see if you might be someone they would like to live with. In addition, this letter will help the GLBT HHP manager have a better sense of you as a potential volunteer host. Poems, drawings, and other ways of expression are welcomed too!

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