

HOMESHARING, INC.

The PeopleCare Center
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Bridgewater, NJ 08807
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www.HomeSharing.org

HOMESHARING'S MISSION

HomeSharing's mission is to create affordable housing solutions. We match those seeking housing with those who need additional income or services to maintain their homes, while fostering independence and dignity.

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HomeSharing®



HomeSharing NEWSLETTER

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HomeSharing Responds to COVID-19



Now that we are six months into the pandemic, HomeSharing has adapted to our "new normal", continuing to create affordable housing solutions to meet the increasing needs in our community. It has been a challenge to match those who need or want to share their homes with those looking for safe and affordable housing. While economic and practical needs are leading to more people wanting to share

housing, health is also a factor they consider when weighing the benefits and risks of sharing. HomeSharing has responded to these new needs and concerns in the age of COVID-19.

The Need in the Community

We have seen an increase in individuals wanting or needing to share their homes, including people who have become unemployed, older adults, and working parents helping their children with remote learning. Those who have lost their jobs or have decreased pay due to COVID-19 still have to pay their mortgages and could use the additional income from sharing. Older adults are lacking companionship and could use help with shopping, errands and cleaning, as well as the additional income. Their worried children have been overwhelmed by their new caregiving roles and could use some respite. Working parents have been similarly stressed by balancing their jobs with the supervision needed by their children who are learning from home.

Those seeking housing are similarly needy, due to lack of income. Many work in retail, restaurants and service industries which are now closed or open at reduced capacity and staffing. By now, much of their limited reserve has run out, unemployment benefits have been reduced and the moratorium on evictions has been lifted. They are now more anxious about reducing their costs, given the uncertainty about whether and when they will be employed again.



HomeSharing is a great temporary solution for the coronavirus crisis when everyone needs more money and practical and emotional support.

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From Our President

Karen Thomas



It's time to wish a healthy fall season to all the HomeSharing family. It was an honor to be elected President of HomeSharing in June and I look forward to the next two years in serving a Healthy Community. It seems like yesterday when Charley Huck introduced me to HomeSharing in 2015. We miss him; his legacy and contributions are still giving to the organization. We were all blessed that he was part of our family and I am grateful to know him and that we had a chance to work together.

I want to thank Andriette Mathews, our Past President for her perseverance and dedication in providing direction for our financial, operational and strategic planning during this time period when grants were decreasing in size and through the pandemic issues that began earlier this year. Thank you to Lisa Blum, our Executive Director, and to staff members Jill Stein-Collins and Lori Herpen for keeping our Home Providers and Home Seekers as their number one priority during the COVID-19 pandemic period. While our office was closed,

we were open and working from home and occasional home visits allowed matches to be completed during this period.

The Board of Trustees and I would like to thank our Corporate and Individual supporters and volunteers. Without your continuous support financially, attending our events, volunteer time, and food/home donations, the mission of HomeSharing would not be possible.

Did you know HomeSharing helps each town to be a Healthy Community? Healthy Communities are those that have a diverse population that contributes to the functioning, success and prosperity of the community. If a significant number of community members cannot afford to live in that community, it will not survive as taxes, goods and services continue to grow. According to the United Way study, ALICE, 51% of jobs pay less than \$20/hour, 36% pay between \$20-\$40/hour and 13% pay more than \$40/hour. It is estimated for a two adult, two child family having an income of \$74,748, a \$1,330/month housing cost budget. Senior Citizens with a limited income have home property taxes in the range of \$10,000-\$25,000/year plus other expenses that will significantly rise in the future.

HomeSharing provides a solution to the dilemma by creating affordable housing solutions by matching those seeking housing with those who need additional income or services to maintain their homes, while fostering independence and dignity.

HomeSharing continues to support our clients through the year whether it is giving information on the latest COVID-19 best practices, relieving stress from not knowing where to live, providing a solution to a homeowner who does not want to move, working through life issues and keeping valuable members of the community in the community. HomeSharing is always ready to serve.

During 2020, we could not hold our normal fundraising events that are so critical to keep HomeSharing continuing its mission. Please help us through our fund drives by mail; our new Go Fund Me page, <https://charity.gofundme.com/en/campaign/help-homesharing-help-others>; and Paypal links on our web site, www.homesharing.org. Amazon purchasing also helps to raise funds for HomeSharing- see how to set up your account for HomeSharing on our website. And of course if your Corporation matches gifts through United Way or direct, please keep us in mind.

We are also continuously looking for volunteers, students and interns, please call the office at 908-526-4663.

Thank you for all your support and helping us to sustain Healthy Communities here in New Jersey.

Karen Thomas
President
HomeSharing Board of Trustees

HomeSharing Responds to COVID-19

Is Sharing a Home Safe During COVID?



A match usually consists of a housing Seeker moving into a home Provider's household. The Seeker has a separate bedroom; common areas are shared. Only one person is being brought into the household and agreement about health and safety practices is reached, so risk may be reduced. For older adults, HomeSharing may be a safer alternative to congregate care facilities or home health aides who serve many people. Of course, HomeSharing cannot make any representations about or know the health status of the Provider(s) or Seeker(s).

Precautions are taken at every step of the HomeSharing process to insure that sharing a home is as safe as possible.

- Staff is working remotely and staggering office time.
- There are no walk-in hours at the office; meetings must be scheduled.
- Interviews and home assessments are conducted using video conferencing when possible.
- Any in-person meetings are held outdoors or in well-ventilated areas, with six feet of distance and masks. Gloves will also be used inside the home.
- Initial meetings for potential matches take place remotely between the clients.
- Matches are made when all parties are educated about the risks and benefits of HomeSharing, have discussed their safety standards and practices, feel comfortable and wish to proceed.
- Before any move is scheduled, a shared living agreement between the parties is made, which outlines all of the aspects of living together including financial and service arrangements. There is a focus on cleaning and distancing practices, shared and private areas, what precautions (testing if available, social distancing) need to be taken before moving in.
- HomeSharing monitors the match and will help re-negotiate the agreement as conditions change.

How You Can Help HomeSharing Help Others

There are many ways you can help us continue to provide existing services and meet the increased needs of new Providers and Seekers.

1, Support our Annual Gala, "Caring for HomeSharing". This is the first year in more than a decade that HomeSharing will not hold its annual gala, an evening that allows us all to come together and raise funds for this much needed service. Events comprise one-third of our agency's budget, which is now a significant challenge for us due to COVID-19. We hope that our donors will continue to care for HomeSharing, despite us not being together in person. **Sponsorship Information is enclosed.**

2. Please consider supporting us and increasing your donation if possible. You may use the enclosed envelope or make a secure donation via Paypal on our website ([homesaring.org](https://www.homesaring.org)).

3. Visit our Go Fund Me Charity Campaign and donate. Don't forget to share the link with all of your contacts! <https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/help-homesaring-help-others>



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120 Finderne Avenue
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The Company We Keep

HomeSharing thanks the following foundations, corporations, organizations, and individuals that have generously supported our work in 2019.

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Creating Affordable Housing Solutions

Interested in Sharing Your Home?

Benefits of HomeSharing include:

- Extra income
- Companionship and added security at home
- Assistance with household chores and errands, including remote learning

To find out more about the HomeSharing process and have your questions answered, please contact our office and leave a message at 908-526-4663.

We check messages throughout the day and will return the call as soon as possible, no later than the next business day.

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