

# Shared Living: FAQ Guide for Providers

## What is Shared Living?

Shared Living is a service model of residential support where a person with an intellectual and developmental disability lives with and receives support from a person without a disability. The person without a disability is known as the Shared Living Provider (SL Provider). SL Providers are caring, compassionate people who open their hearts and homes to support others.

## What Are a Few Of The Benefits To Supporting People In a Shared Living Arrangement?

Shared Living arrangements closely replicate a private home experience. SL Providers not only provide a residence, but offer support, friendship, companionship, and opportunities for growth. Providers will receive the satisfaction of making a difference in another person's life, training, as well as a generous tax-free monthly stipend.

## What Types of SL Providers Do We Recruit?

It all depends on what the person with a disability is looking for, their support needs, and the needs of the SL Provider. People's ideal living situations vary – ranging from traditional families with children to single housemate arrangements. It's all in the match!

## Do I Need to Own a House to be a SL Provider?

No. As long as your home meets environmental requirements, determined through a Vinfen Home Assessment, and is deemed a good place for the person to live, you can either rent or own your home.

## Do I have to be a Vinfen Employee to be a SL Provider?

No. The SL Provider is not an employee of Vinfen; they are an independent contractor.



## Could I Be an Employee of Vinfen at the Same Time?

Yes. The SL Provider can be an employee with Vinfen as long as they do not support the individual directly in their role as an employee.

## How Long of a Commitment Does Vinfen Require?

Vinfen expects a minimum of one year's commitment. However, most arrangements last much longer.

## Is There a Screening Process?

Potential SL Providers go through a rigorous screening process. Criminal background checks are conducted, professional and personal references are checked, work history is analyzed, and a thorough set of interviews and assessments are conducted to ensure we select only the very best candidates.

## Will I be Supervised?

SL Providers receive thorough supervision and support after the initial move-in and later monthly supervision and home visits by the coordinator. The SL Coordinator will sometimes make unannounced visits to the home to check on the individual and provider. When needed, the frequency of visits and support increases until the home is stable.



### **What Are Some of the SL Providers' Responsibilities?**

Responsibilities are all inclusive in most cases with support from the agency as delineated in the written contract. Examples include serving meals, ensuring a safe and comfortable home environment, administering medication, implementing and documenting Individual Support Plan goals, providing transportation to medical appointments, and arranging for respite care.

### **What Type Of Training Would The Provider Receive by or Through Vinfen?**

Training will include but will not be limited to: Medication Administration, CPR, First Aid, Emergency Response, and Seizure Management.

### **How Do I Get Paid?**

SL Provider is paid via a tax-free stipend once per month after services are rendered.

### **How Much Are SL Providers Paid?**

How much an SL Provider is compensated according to the level of support they need to provide to the person living with them. This is established through completion of the Vinfen Stipend Formula, which takes into account items like transportation, level of care and support required, and respite needs.

### **Are There Medical And Dental Benefits Associated With Being An SL Provider?**

No, there are no medical or dental benefits associated with the role.

### **How Do I Learn More and/or Become a SL Provider?**

If you are willing to share your life and home with a person with an intellectual and developmental disability, please contact Vinfen's Director of Community Living Meg Gaydos at 617-516-5758 or [sharedliving@vinfen.org](mailto:sharedliving@vinfen.org).

You can also call us at Vinfen's Main Office Phone Number at 877-284-6336 or 617-441-1800.



Established in 1977, Vinfen is a nonprofit, health and human services organization and a leading provider of community-based services to individuals with disabilities. Each year, Vinfen provides a comprehensive array of services to adolescents and adults with psychiatric conditions, intellectual and developmental disabilities, brain injuries, and behavioral health challenges. Vinfen's 2,700 dedicated employees are experienced, highly-trained professionals who provide a full range of supportive living, health, educational, and clinical services in more than 200 programs throughout eastern Massachusetts and Connecticut.