

HOST FAMILY MINISTRY

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WHAT IS THE CCC RESIDENCY PROGRAM?

The Christ Community Church Residency is a two-year program that combines focused leadership training with practical ministry experience, enabling residents to earn their master's degree through Crown College. Our purpose is to raise up and equip next-generation leaders for work in church ministry. We offer a well-rounded experience that will develop a resident with various leadership, ministry, practical, and personal skills and competencies needed to succeed in full-time church ministry. Additionally, we offer various "Areas of Focus" which allow residents to gain experience and training within their specific callings, gifts, and passions.

A CCC resident experiences:

- A two-year program at CCC (three-year if counseling track)
- 28–30 hours per week of practical ministry experience and general competency development
- 12–18 hours per week of graduate-level academic work through Crown College
- Monthly support raising with a church stipend match of up to $400/month
- Option of living with a host family
- Higher education through Crown College
    - For college graduates, a fully funded master's degree
    - For non-college graduates, thirty credit hours of Bible and Theology

HOST FAMILY MINISTRY CONSIDERATIONS

One aspect of the resident's development is providing a healthy, positive place to live while in the program through the Host Family ministry opportunity.

The information below describes what is involved in being a Host Family.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A HOST FAMILY

- **Pray.** First, we ask that you listen to the Holy Spirit to discern if this ministry opportunity is right for you and your family.
- **Be in agreement.** If you are married, we ask that you and your spouse be united on the decision to host. Both of you should be 100% on board for this journey.
- **Agree to host a resident for one to three years.** Long-term stability is better for the resident's development than quarterly shifts. It also allows the opportunity for you to build a deeper, long-term relationship with the resident, which aids in their overall development.
- **Fill out the online application and background check.** One member of the host family must fill out and submit the online application form. All adults living in the host home will need to submit to a background check. We also require this from our incoming residents. The application and background forms can be found at **cccresidency.org/hosthome**.
- **Participate in a home visit**. After the application is received, a member of the CCC Residency staff will set up a time to walk through the living space and connect with you again regarding the ministry. This may be done in person or virtually.
- **Provide a private bedroom and private/semi-private bathroom.** This could include a basement, mother-in-law suite, guest house, etc., with standard amenities (bed, bedding, dresser, closet). This space should be solely for the resident's use for the duration of their stay with you. Access to a bathroom with a high level of privacy is also essential.
- **Provide a clean and safe living environment.** We don't expect a home to be spotless all the time. However, we would expect the host to keep a house that is generally clean and secure so that the resident feels comfortable and safe. The residents will be given similar expectations of cleanliness and respect.
- **Don't expect payment for rent and utilities.** Offering to host a resident free of charge helps the resident avoid the substantial cost of living and helps the church financially.

- **Provide an adequate internet connection.** Because each resident will take online courses through Crown College, a stable Wi-Fi connection at home is required.

- **Communicate early and proactively.** A wise host will have discussions with their resident early in the experience concerning house rules, desired codes of conduct, and expectations.

- **Don't require/expect babysitting or pet sitting or heavy tasks/**chores above normal, lighter housekeeping tasks. You certainly can ask the resident for help with certain things (for example, "Could you please help me move a couch into the other room?"), as long as it doesn't become a consistent expectation that takes away from their residency experience (for example, "I'm spending the day in the yard, and you have to clear your schedule to help me").

    - *Regarding babysitting or pet sitting:* As a rule, please plan to pay your resident if babysitting is needed for an extended period or on a consistent basis (an exception to this might be something like, "I'm running to the store to get a few things. Are you going to be here for the next thirty minutes? If so, can you keep an eye on the kids?").

- **Give adequate notice if a new host home is required.** In the rare instance that both you and your resident determine that they need to find a new host home (due to irreconcilable conflict, significant life changes, or other reasons that can't be resolved), please notify the Residency staff as soon as possible. We require sixty days' notice in order to have enough time to find a new host.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CCC RESIDENT

- Be respectful of the host's personal space and house rules.
- Abide by the same Code of Conduct standards as CCC staff (see Resident Handbook 1.2, page 4).
- Please clean up after yourself in both your private and common spaces (including weekly bathroom cleaning, cleaning the kitchen after use, etc.).
- Proactively offer to help with light tasks around the house and yard (e.g., trash removal, sweep/vacuum, leaf raking, snow shoveling).
- Ask permission before inviting guests to the home.
- Be responsible for your own groceries and meals.
- Provide your own vehicle and transportation.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CCC RESIDENCY STAFF

- Communicate expectations and boundaries to both the host and the resident.
- Provide mediation and conflict resolution as needed.
- Provide ongoing support through quarterly check-ins (or as needed) and two host family gatherings per year.
- Recruit additional hosts for future years as needed for current and future residents.
- Provide another host for the resident if the need arises.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS WHEN HOSTING A RESIDENT

1. **Communicate clearly from the beginning** (see the *Communication Guide* on page 8 of this document).
    - Cover your house rules within the first couple of days.
    - Clearly define boundaries, especially regarding personal space and common spaces.

2. **Don't let any potential conflict or tension build.**

    Residents appreciate the hospitality and want to follow host families' boundaries and house rules but may be unsure of what those are if they haven't been discussed. They appreciate clear, direct communication of expectations!

    If you feel your resident isn't respecting your expectations, communicate as soon as possible. Difficult conversations happen best in person, not via a string of texts or e-mails.

    If you need someone from the church to help mediate a situation or you need advice, please contact Shanna at **ShannaB@cccomaha.org**.

3. **Check your expectations.**

    Before applying to host a resident, ask yourself these questions:
    - Do I expect the resident to be an active member of my family, or am I comfortable with the potential that they may do their own thing and not be as involved/relationally close with me/my family?
    - Do I expect the resident to be home by a specific time each night, or do I understand that they need community and may sometimes be involved in late-night ministry?
    - Am I willing to frequently and clearly communicate our expectations and boundaries with the resident when needed?

    None of these expectations are wrong in themselves, but the questions will help you assess if the time is right for you to host and will help you define the type of relationship you wish to have with your resident.

COMMUNICATION GUIDE

The CCC Residency staff highly recommends you read through and discuss this guide together as a host family. Once you have sorted through some of your expectations and boundaries, start this conversation with your resident before their arrival. We realize many expectations and boundaries work out naturally, but you will find some recommended discussion topics below. Every host and resident is different; you should not assume the resident will have the same expectations or needs as you!

We acknowledge that even when a person knows they are following God's will and are united with their spouse on a decision, there may still be nervousness and unknowns to navigate. Continue to lean into prayer to discern what the Holy Spirit intends during this time of hosting a resident and to help navigate the process. Our prayer is not that this process will be perfect but that this journey will be God-honoring, life-giving, and joyful for all involved!

Recommendations for Communication

- Communicate early and proactively, in a direct, kind, and frequent manner
- As the situation permits, communicate in person (or over Zoom/FaceTime before their arrival)
- Acknowledge your nervousness, as it will affirm the same with them
- Convey openness to any topic the resident may feel needs to be addressed
- Open the discussion around house rules, boundaries, and expectations rather than waiting for the resident to bring up the conversation

Recommended Topics to Cover

- **Logistics**
    - Share about yourself and your family (and vice versa)
    - Offer to show them around town if they are new to the area
    - Provide information regarding the living space
    - Find out what the resident's living situation was prior to your home
    - Convey your preferred method of communication (text message, phone call, email) and your expectation on response time
- **House Rules** (create your own priority list from these ideas)
        - Allergies
        - Food sharing

    - Food storage space *(residents are responsible for their own groceries and meals; they may need a designated shelf in the pantry and/or drawer in the fridge/freezer, etc.)*
    - Sharing kitchen/cooking spaces
    - Cleanliness of resident's bedroom, personal living spaces
    - Cleanliness of shared living spaces *(dishes, laundry, etc.)*
    - Shared living space chores, if applicable *(taking out the trash, running a load of dishes, etc.)*
    - Laundry usage
    - Guests *(including overnight guests)*
    - Boundaries regarding dating/significant others
    - Alcohol *(Is it allowed in your home? Do you have any boundaries concerning its use?)*
    - Firearms *(Do you own any, and are they safely stored?)*
    - Entry and exit *(keys, garage door openers, alarm codes, garage code, etc.)*
    - Parking
    - Internet access
    - Other *(e.g., shoes off at the door, lights off when leaving a room, etc.)*

- **Boundaries**
    - Opposite-gender communication *(group texts and emails)*
    - Physical boundaries *(side hugs vs. front hugs; home alone with opposite-gender spouse; etc.)*
    - Space boundaries *(knocking before entering personal spaces)*
    - Time
        - Communicate what a "normal" schedule is, what to expect
        - Acknowledge the resident's ministry, school, and relationship commitments/needs (their need for alone time and decompressing is key!)
        - Express your own personal commitments and personal/alone time needs
        - Open a dialogue about how to avoid monopolizing each other's time and what to do if one party feels this is happening
    - The nature of the host home family-resident relationship (what are both parties' expectations?)

Example Emails to Start the Conversation

The below examples are from former host couples. They communicated some information via email and FaceTime conversations. Once the resident couple moved in, the host family took them out for dinner and initiated the discussion of expectations and boundaries. The resident couples appreciated the host families' directness and open communication right off the bat because it cultivated openness and frequent communication as they all navigated the process together.

EMAIL #1

We are very excited for you and your fiancé on your pending nuptials and graduation. We certainly want to be respectful of your schedule, knowing the pressures of having to do a lot in a very short amount of time, so we can talk, email, or video chat when it's convenient. While we have never hosted or participated in this type of program, we are very much looking forward to meeting you two and having you both live in our home. We know that there are a lot of uncertainties and anxieties that can occur in this type of situation, and we're sure we'll have a lot of questions for each other. Still, we're confident that the Holy Spirit will guide us appropriately.

We'll have plenty of time to discuss your transition to Omaha and the move, but we didn't want too much time to pass before we had a chance to say welcome and that we want to help in any way we can.

Sincerely,
John & Jane Doe

EMAIL #2

Good evening,

Thank you for your contact information and for writing. We've probably written or rewritten this message more than a few times, trying to not only answer your questions but also to properly convey the blessing it'll be to have you both here. It might be easier to do a FaceTime call sometime to talk through the logistics of move-in—likes, preferences, etc. Please keep in mind that we've never done this before. Much of what needs to be determined we may need to work out as things progress, but again, we're happy you're coming to Omaha and staying with us!

Below is our attempt at answering your questions:

House Rules: This is one where we may need to figure things out on the fly. In general, however, we're a shoes-off-at-the-door type of family. In terms of privacy—and maybe this goes without saying—your bedroom and bathroom are yours exclusively. Most of the house is open and available for use as you see fit, and we can talk more about this later. You are welcome to use the kitchen and laundry room as needed. Hopefully, we can share some meals as schedules permit. We want you two to truly feel free to eat any food we have in the house—this may require some additional explanation (and we don't mean restrictions), but we should discuss things like allergies, preferences, etc.

Bedroom: The bedroom you'll be using is our son's former bedroom. He's in the Navy now, and as of late, it has been turned into a storage room of sorts. We would be horrified to send you photos presently, but we will do so after some cleanup. The short version is that the room is furnished with a bed (full), armoire, dresser, bookcase, and a large walk-in closet. Attached to the bedroom is a bathroom—shower, toilet, sink, and some storage. We'll have sheets, towels, washcloths, soap, toilet paper, etc. Again, it's probably something to discuss, as I'm sure we're forgetting something.

Furniture & Housewares: I strongly suspect—and not knowing your needs or wants yet—that you will not need to bring any housewares or furniture. As mentioned above, you all are welcome to use the kitchen anytime. While we would enjoy shared meals, we also understand that there will be times when you want your own meal space. The downstairs bar area has a dishwasher, sink, refrigerator, plates, utensils, etc. There isn't a microwave down there, but we could easily add one.

Move-In: The move-in date works great. We would be happy to help and understand if it needs to be moved up or back. Let us know. The preferred way of entering the house is through the garage. We'll need to get you the garage code, openers, alarm code, etc.

Do you both have time for a call this week or weekend?

Sincerely,
John & Jane Doe

CCC RESIDENCY STAFF INFO

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Would you like to talk to a former host family about their experience and receive some advice about yours? Contact one of us and we'll connect you with another host who would love to be a resource and encouragement to you and your family!