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Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County

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Catholic Charities and the County of Santa Clara
Launch New House Sharing Program

Santa Clara County, CA – Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County has partnered with the County of Santa Clara to launch a new House Sharing program, providing County residents with more affordable housing options. Catholic Charities—the largest multi-service agency serving individuals and families in need in Santa Clara County for more than 63 years—matches people willing to rent a room in their home with people seeking affordable housing. The agency is the trusted matchmaker to ensure that room providers and renters are screened and compatible.

“We are incredibly excited to be partnering alongside the County of Santa Clara’s Office of Supportive Housing for this much needed housing resource for our community,” said Lindsey Caldwell, Director of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County Emergency Programs & Housing Services Division. “I believe the House Sharing Program is going to be a great success and will truly assist those in need of housing here in the heart of Silicon Valley.”

The County’s Board of Supervisors approved a contract of $1.5 million with Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County to launch the new House Sharing Program on April 3, 2018. The pilot program has a goal to match 100 households (renters with providers) each year over the next two and a half years.

“We’re proud that we can support this working partnership to find creative solutions to our housing crisis,” said Supervisor Joe Simitian, President of the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors. “If we can expand affordable housing options by matching people with extra space with those who are struggling to find a safe, affordable home, I’m all for it.” Simitian noted, “We can have a real impact here without ever pounding a single nail.”

What is House Sharing? House Sharing is an arrangement by which two or more unrelated people share a home. This could be a homeowner or renter (House Provider) renting out vacant bedrooms to a person (or persons) seeking housing (Renters). It could also include two or more people renting a home together. Each resident typically has his or her own bedroom but shares the home’s common living areas. Bathrooms may be private or shared, depending on the property. No two house sharing situations are alike; each is tailored to the needs and desires of the people involved.
Priority for rooms will be given to County residents with incomes below the area median income. In particular, seniors and young adults may find this a helpful solution to their housing costs. Seniors who are “house rich but cash poor,” who own their own homes and have vacant rooms, may find this option not just an attractive source of revenue, but also an opportunity for creating new friendships.

House Sharing is a County program administered by Catholic Charities. Catholic Charities will conduct marketing, outreach, facilitate the housing agreements, screen the House Providers and the Renters through background checks, and will provide advice and support to the participants. The agency operated a similar program in the past.

“Catholic Charities is honored to offer a creative way for people of different incomes to make ends meet by sharing the cost of housing, even as we work to create a just and compassionate community,” said Gregory R. Kepferle, CEO at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County. “We operated a similar House Sharing program for 25 years and are excited to partner with the County to help our residents in need.”

Based on a national model, House Sharing is an alternative way for people to meet their housing needs that provides numerous benefits to homeowners and renters alike. House Sharing has been successfully implemented in various locations throughout the North Bay, including San Francisco, San Mateo, Marin, and Contra Costa.

Individuals interested in participating in the new House Sharing program should call (408) 325-5134 or email HousesharingSCC@catholiccharitiesscc.org. For more information, please visit www.catholiccharitiesscc.org/house-sharing-home.

About Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County
Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County has worked to strengthen families and build economic self-reliance for the poor and vulnerable in the county for more than 63 years. Each year, more than 500 employees and 1,000 volunteers serve more than 40,000 individuals of all cultures and beliefs through more than 30 programs. Program areas include behavioral health, youth and family services, economic development, employment, housing, immigration legal services, older adult services, refugee resettlement, refugee foster care, emergency services, and more. Catholic Charities is working to reduce poverty with social change goals that target the alleviation, prevention, and reduction of poverty in our communities. To learn more, please visit http://www.catholiccharitiesscc.org.

About the Office of Supportive Housing
The Office of Supportive Housing’s (OSH) mission is to increase the supply of housing and supportive housing that is affordable and available to extremely low income and/or special needs households served by the County. One of its primary aims is to support the County of Santa Clara’s mission of promoting a healthy, safe, and prosperous community by ending and preventing homelessness. OSH’s major activities include efforts to organize and operate homeless services countywide, including homelessness prevention, crisis response, and Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-Housing programs. In addition, OSH strives to increase the supply of housing by funding and spurring the development of housing for low income households, with a particular focus on extremely low incomes. OSH is the lead department within the County implementing the 2016 Measure A Affordable Housing Bond program.

About the County of Santa Clara
The County of Santa Clara government serves a diverse, multi-cultural population of 1.9 million residents in Santa Clara County, the fifth largest county in California. With a $7 billion budget, more than 70 agencies/departments and 20,000 employees, the County of Santa Clara plans for the needs of a dynamic community, offers quality services, and promotes a healthy, safe and prosperous community for all. The County provides essential services including public health and environmental protection, medical services through Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC), child and adult protection services, homelessness prevention and solutions, roads, parks, libraries, emergency response to disasters, protection of minority communities and those under threat, access to a fair criminal justice system, and scores of other services, particularly for those members of our community in the greatest need. To learn more, please visit http://www.sccgov.org.