



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Department of Aging Announces Expansion of its Shared Housing Program into Five Additional Counties

Hawley, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Aging today announced that its Shared Housing and Resource Exchange Program, also known as SHARE, has expanded into five additional counties: Bucks, Lackawanna, Montgomery, Northumberland, and Philadelphia. The program began five years ago as a pilot in Pike, Wayne and Monroe counties and is also currently available in Carbon, Crawford, Adams, Union, and Snyder counties.

SHARE is an affordable housing choice that brings together home hosts who have extra room in their home with home seekers who are looking for housing, in exchange for rent, help around the house, or a combination of both. Program participants must be at least 18 years of age and one of the individuals in the match must be over 60.

"The SHARE program has shown it is a win-win for both the older adult and their matched participant. The program allows the senior to remain in their home for as long as possible while providing housing to someone with common interests and a need for an affordable place to live. SHARE can also help combat social isolation and ageism while helping to close gaps between generations," said Secretary of Aging Robert Torres. "I thank the participating Area Agencies on Aging, the SHARE counselors, the Department's support staff, and stakeholders for their advocacy and dedication to the program. They are a testament to SHARE's successes and sustainability as the program strengthens and expands."

Since the program began in 2017, more than 90 matches have been made in the eight counties currently participating. During the last five years, there were four matches that lasted more than three years, with one still active and residing in Monroe County.

"We are facing unprecedented challenges in securing affordable housing and in-home assistance for older adults in our communities. Innovative programs like SHARE help us proactively take steps to combat both of these issues and impact the lives of the participants with not only their basic housing needs, but with long-term benefits positively influencing their health and well-being," said Jason Kavulich, Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) director.

In addition to Kavulich, joining Secretary Torres for today's announcement were Carin Tinney, Bucks County AAA; Tracey Flynn, Montgomery County AAA; Matthew Osterberg, Pike County Commissioner; Larisa Yusko, Pike/Wayne SHARE counselor; Rev. Fr. David Rude; SHARE host; and Robin Skibber, Pike County AAA director.

"The SHARE program has been many years in the making. Pike County has been meeting with collaborators to discuss methods in addressing the housing shortage and places for people to

be able to age in our community without having to move away," said Skibber. "We are fortunate to have had the right team to put this concept into a tangible program to be used in our small towns, rural areas, and bigger towns where seniors often are burdened by the cost of maintaining their homes after they may have lost a spouse and or the ability to pay for fuel, taxes and home maintenance."

The SHARE program follows a structured, one-on-one, thorough application process to ensure safety, verify compatibility and collaboratively establish ground rules with the host and sharer. A home host and home sharer meet separately with the SHARE Housing Counselor to discuss needs and preferences, complete the application, and provide references. A SHARE Housing Counselor will conduct an introduction with the potential home host and home sharer, conduct reference and criminal background checks, and arrange a home sharing trial.

Upon completion of a successful trial, a written home sharing agreement is developed with the SHARE Housing Counselor, home host and home sharer. Once the home sharer has moved into the home, the counselor provides scheduled contacts with the home host and home sharer to provide ongoing support throughout the match. The counselor also serves as a referral source to community resources for all SHARE participants.

To learn more about the SHARE program and to check out videos and audio from the department's marketing campaign to promote the program, [visit the Department of Aging's website](#). Individuals can also call 888-801-SHARE-HOME.

EDITORS: Photos and video from the event will be available at [PACast.com](#).

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