



COHABITATION CHARTER

The cohabitation charter accompanies living together in shared accommodation.

Its purpose is to encourage communication from the beginning and to define together what is important for each person through rules of cohabitation. Indeed, the respect of the way of life and the rhythm of life of all is the key of a successful cohabitation.

Cohabitation requires agreement on many points. During the first meeting, the two parties meet in the presence of the municipal agent/representative of the Citizen Platform. During this meeting, both parties adapt the accommodation framework to their unique situation.

However, it is complex to discuss everything right away. Therefore, we recommend scheduling informal moments over coffee or tea to talk about the cohabitation, which naturally evolves over time.

Don't be afraid to ask. It is better to ask for clarification several times to avoid any misunderstanding.

This document exists in 5 languages (French, Dutch, English, Ukrainian and Russian). It is recommended that everyone reads it in their own language to get the same information.

0. Mandatory hosting framework

Key principles :

1. **Principle of respect** of differences of individuals; of freedom and self-determination; of confidentiality of information shared in the context of hosting
2. **Principle of accountability** for power differences in any relationship; of the impact of emotional expression; of the emotional weight that we may have on each other.
3. **Principle of integrity:** safeguarding intimacy, sexuality, body and feelings triggered by common living; duty to inform about cultural differences in perceptions of human relationships (male/female, adult/adult; adult/child)

4. **Duty to inform:** to be aware of the differences between the multiple ways of helping and the norms of cohabitation between hosts, it is important to inform and relativize on behaviors that may be a result of other behaviors observed/taught in other families.
5. **Benevolence**
The primary goal is to protect and not to harm.

Framework	Out of frame
<p>To host for a specific period of time. if circumstances change (in case of extension/termination of hosting), notify the city hall/Citizen Platform with 2 weeks notice if circumstances change</p>	<p>To host for an indefinite period of time.</p> <p>To force yourself or others to exceed the number of nights/persons originally proposed to host.</p>
<p>Inform the hosting manager (see the list of useful contacts at the end of this document) in case of relocation of a guest. Contact the family hosting team for assistance with the relocation. It is not obligatory to look for an intermediary for the people you are hosting.</p> <p>If you are looking for a new hosting family for particularly vulnerable people (women, young people,...), it is even more important to contact the hosting team which will be able to contact hosts who would take over.</p> <p>Under no circumstances can we send women or young people to a family without knowing them, nor can we host a wombat at a single man's place, or where men are already hosted.</p>	<p>To rehost a refugee at a stranger's place without informing the hosting team. To look for a place to stay for a person in such a situation and to propose to new host families to take them in, without any knowledge of the facts, is not respectful of the host family or of the people being hosted.</p>
<p>To be reasonable in what you offer to your guests. Remember that what you offer at home will probably become the standard and expectation for the next hosting.</p>	<p>To be unreasonable in what we propose, knowing that it may cause expectations for new hosting.</p>
<p>Emotions: Be sure to stay positive. Know how to step back when you feel overwhelmed by emotions.</p>	<p>Not knowing how to step back and force yourself.</p>
<p>Ethical framework: To respect the personality of others without judgment.</p>	<p>To have prejudices or preconceptions related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender or political affiliation.</p>
<p>Limits & Respect for others: To suggest without imposing. To respect free choice. To</p>	<p>Limits & Respect for the other person: To impose, coerce, insist, use emotional</p>

<p>be aware of the asymmetry of the relationship of hosting-hosted people, of the fragility of the other person and of his or her deficiencies. To be aware that consent is relative and that a dominant/dominated relationship can easily arise despite good intentions.</p>	<p>blackmail. To create a subordinate relationship, an expectation of compensation. To believe that a YES surely means that the consent is free, whereas this is often not the case in an asymmetrical relationship;</p>
<p>Integrity: To safeguard intimacy, sexuality, body and feelings triggered by the situation of hosting.</p>	<p>Integrity: To create relationships of physical and psychological dominance.</p>
<p>Duty to inform and communicate clearly: To inform about cultural differences in human relationships. To actively avoid misunderstandings and be mindful of the messages being conveyed. To be clear.</p> <p>To contact the hosting team (see contacts at the end of the charter) in case of need for mediation, translation.</p>	<p>To leave room for confusion of roles, relationships and intentions. To intimidate, frighten, make others feel uncomfortable. To not express boundaries, lack clarity for fear of creating discomfort. To wait for the critical moment to ask for help with mediation/translation.</p>
<p>To help with psycho-medico-social, administrative, legal, etc. procedures. IF you have the resources (time, energy, knowledge) to do so. It is not an obligation.</p> <p>Refer or be referred to the appropriate services (see the list of useful contacts at the end of the agreement).</p>	<p>To feel obliged to help/be helped in psycho-medico-social, administrative and legal procedures, etc.</p>
<p>Benevolence: To protect/ do good. To be aware of vulnerability and the contexts of social insecurity.</p>	<p>To harm. To offer alcohol, psychotropic substances, to encourage addictions, to expose oneself to danger, to be outlawed or no longer in full possession of one's faculties.</p>

1. The project of the person being hosted

Temporary accommodation allows refugees to find housing when the rental market is probably inaccessible to them because of the costs or the time needed to find accommodation after fleeing their country of origin. By temporarily freeing themselves from the problem of housing, refugees can focus on their eventual integration: finding a job, sending their children to school, and gradually looking for sustainable housing once their income has stabilized.

Once the host has settled in and the host and the hosted know each other better, it is advisable to talk together about the project for mutual understanding.

However, do not forget that some of the people you might host are facing a situation of great uncertainty. They may not yet have clear plans for the future. Be aware of possible changes in their situation and be understanding about them.

2. Domiciliation

For practical reasons, the hosted person will need to be domiciled with the host. This has no fiscal impact on the host. The host retains his rights unchanged (the conservation of the amount of an unemployment or integration income, the family allowances).

We advise you to accept this domiciliation but the host can refuse. The hosted person(s) will then have to register at the PCSW as a "reference address". This will make the administrative procedures more complex for the refugee.

3. Duration

The duration of the accommodation must be limited in time. The Region advises against hosting for less than a month. This is done to avoid the hosted person spending most of his or her time doing administrative procedures related to the regular change of residence. In addition, the need to constantly move from one accommodation to another can be both mentally and physically challenging for refugees.

It is recommended to host for a minimum of 2-3 months. The 6-month periods facilitate the children's schooling, the search for employment and conventional housing, and integration in the neighborhood.

4. Keys & Security

It is important that the hosted person(s) know(s) the details of how you close the doors/windows when you leave.

The host provides the guest with keys to access In case of loss, the hosted person is responsible for replacing the key(s) and the lock if necessary. The key(s) must be returned to the host at the end of the stay.

5. Living at host's and the respect of the personal schedules

Each person has a very different understanding of quiet, respect of schedules, visits. We advise you to clarify the notions of quietness, late arrivals and the needs of each person. Think of discussing the possibility for the hosted person to receive friends/relatives in your home and the right time for this.

6. Common areas

What are the spaces (living room, garden, garage, cellar...) that the refugee can use apart from the private space(s) mentioned in the temporary accommodation agreement?

7. Meals and Food

It is nice to share a meal and get to know a new person and their culture. Don't hesitate to suggest, without imposing or insisting, to have a meal together.

Keep in mind, however, that sharing a meal is not an option for everyone for a variety of reasons (language barrier, personal reasons, different food preferences...).

Don't take it personally if the other person doesn't seem as motivated in sharing a meal as you do.

Don't feel embarrassed to discuss who will be in charge of communal meals, who will go grocery shopping or who will cook.

Some people prefer to eat alone in a space where they feel safe and relaxed, such as their room. Consider this and see if it might be an option for your accommodation.

If you decide not to share meals or to do so occasionally, keep in mind your "cooking schedule."

Depending on how you live together and whether you share meals or not, don't forget to discuss the use of the refrigerator and the purchase of food. How would you arrange to share a refrigerator? Perhaps you have a special place to store certain products? Do you want to buy some products for common use and others just for you?

8. The use of the bathroom / Shower

Each person has his or her own habits: leaving the water running or turning off the tap, rinsing the bathtub, scrubbing it after each bath, taking a bath every day or once a week... Don't hesitate to communicate your habits and what you expect from the other person. For example, would it be possible for the hosted person to use the washing machine and how often?

Given the increase in the price of water and energy, it is not taboo to insist on the necessary savings.

9. Tasks & Services

When discussing common tasks (cleaning, gardening, watering plants, taking out the garbage), be reasonable and realistic.

On the one hand, keep in mind the possible asymmetrical relationship between the host and the hosted person(s). It is possible that they feel obliged to do all these tasks, including cleaning the whole apartment/house, out of a sense of gratitude. On the other hand, the host should not be afraid to ask that the common areas and the hosted person's private spaces be kept clean. And the hosted person(s) can always offer to help with something he/she really likes to do (for example, walking a dog if you like dogs or helping with the garden if you have a green thumb).

You can also make arrangements for services, but remember that these arrangements must be fair. For example, one helps with language learning and the other takes care of the children. Also, the agreement about services must be voluntary and made before the refugee moves in.

The maintenance of the common parts (take turns / together / ...), private places and its frequency? Keep in mind that the notions of cleanliness and maintenance always vary from one person to another.

Sorting waste and taking out the garbage?.....

10. Use of equipment

Everything that belongs to the host is not necessarily the hosted person's. Be clear about what can be used and what cannot (the washing machine, the TV, the Netflix account, the radio, the musical instruments, the books...). Do you have preferred times to use them?

There are alternatives, such as laundry facilities or the provision of a computer for the children's schooling via the PCSW, for example.

11. Heating / ventilation & doing the dishes

As already mentioned, the cost of energy has increased so much that it is normal to talk about these issues. Ecological considerations are not a taboo either.

Keep in mind that some habits (e.g., turning off the heat when opening windows or leaving) that may seem natural and obvious to you, may be new to the other person. Also discuss what your normal home temperature is.

Even the dishes are washed differently by everyone: some put everything in the dishwasher to save water, others wash the dishes in the water in the sink or under an open faucet.

12. Tobacco / alcohol

The host has every right to refuse smoking in their home, even with a window open or outside near the front door. The same applies to the consumption of consciousness-altering products.

Also, avoid any misunderstanding. The use of syringes is, for example, usual for a diabetic.

13. Spending time together

Hosts and hosts have different expectations regarding spending time together (or not).

Just like sharing daily meals, it's always great to offer to watch a movie, go for a walk or play a board game together. But it's okay to respectfully decline. Don't be afraid to offer, but don't take a refusal personally and don't insist. It is possible that someone needs more time or has other personal reasons to refuse.

14. Confidentiality

Do not give out any personal data (name, address, mobile phone number...) of the host/the hosted person(s) without his/her explicit consent, even in order to help him/her (except in emergency situations).

15. Possible conflicts

If misunderstanding between the host and the refugee(s) occur, the parties agree to :

- meet at the first request of one of the parties;
- ask the municipality to appoint a mediator, possibly accompanied by an interpreter (see the contact sheet);
- find an amicable solution.

If no solution is found to the conflict, the renunciation mentioned in the temporary accommodation agreement can be activated.

In order to find a new accommodation, the guest can get support from the OCMW of the municipality where he/she lives or go to the Pacheco center, Boulevard Pachéco 44, 1000 Brussels. It is also possible to ask the Ukraine team of the municipality to find a new solution for *temporary* accommodation with a family.

16. Specific points

The parties complete this framework with any points they deem necessary.

Please confirm that you are aware of the hosting framework by signing below.

The host(s)

The hosted person(s)

NECESSARY CONTACTS

for hosts & refugees

Matching host and guest, mediation, translation, orientation:

Elena Stupakova

Project manager " Family housing ".

Schaerbeek City Hall • The Citizen Platform

+32 472 92 12 38

estupakova@1030.be

Administrative procedures:

Olena Carbou

SPOC Ukraine, Refugee Reception Coordinator

Schaerbeek City Hall

02/244 73 37 • 0490/67 44 36

ocarbou@1030.be

ua@1030.be

CPAS (Social Services) at Schaerbeek

<https://www.1030.be/fr/cpas>

02/240 30 80

info@cpas-schaerbeek.brussels