

EMO's Metro HomeShare: Creating Community & Changing Lives



Paula [name changed for privacy] moved to Portland in the winter of 2019 to be closer to extended family. She moved in with her relatives in anticipation of securing a place of her own. Paula quickly found that the affordable housing crisis in our region extended deeper than she had expected. Like so many low-income seniors, she earned enough from retirement and social security to pay rent, but had no savings to pay for move-in costs like first and last month's rent and a deposit. This made it nearly impossible for her to secure any traditional market rentals.

In addition to the difficulty of finding an affordable unit that was also wheelchair accessible, Paula's temporary home situation was becoming untenable. She was facing a terrible choice: seek a bed at a local shelter, become homeless, or continue to live in an unsafe and unstable environment. She called around to local homeless shelters and was told there was a long wait for ADA accessible beds, but maybe a program called Metro HomeShare could help.

Around the same time, William [name changed for privacy] contacted Metro HomeShare (MHS) as a home provider with a ground floor "mother-in-law" unit—a perfect fit for Paula. There was one caveat: William required a security deposit that Paula did not have.

Metro HomeShare had recently been awarded a grant that would help to pay for Paula's deposit, and Client Coordinator Gregory Maloof quickly got Paula the funds she needed to move into William's unit.

Although William had several interested renters who were ready and able to take the unit, he held it for MHS based on our reputation, Gregory's skill, and William's desire to help someone in need. He held the apartment for three weeks for Paula, as we all wrestled with stay at home orders, social distancing, and federal grant requirements.

Thanks to Gregory's dedication and funding through the grant, Paula moved into the unit in the last week of March. Paula and William completed their lease signing via Zoom meeting and Elise Schaff-Laubach, our Washington County Client Coordinator, worked with her church congregation to provide some basic household items, as the stores were all closed. Paula is now safe in her new home, and her last communication with us was a heartfelt message expressing her gratitude for MHS's care and attention.

Metro HomeShare knew that it would be a challenge to make the puzzle pieces fit, but with the dedication of our client coordinators and the compassion of one Home Provider, MHS offered hope for Paula.

Metro HomeShare is committed to the health and safety of its participants, partners and staff. We are humbled by the fortitude and cohesion our community has brought to bear in these trying times. We need your help and support to emerge from this, ready and able. We invite you to join us in transforming relationships into affordable housing for all who need it by contributing to Metro HomeShare (emoregon.org/give).

Learn more about Metro HomeShare at metrohomeshare.org or call (971) 271-5195.

