



What Is Needed for a Congregation to Host?

Hosting families speaks to the scripture of all faiths and provides families who have lost their homes with safe, secure lodging and a sense of community. It gives volunteers the opportunity to provide hands-on outreach in their own congregational facility. The following are the basic elements needed for a congregation to be a host in its local Interfaith Hospitality Network:

- * Space for up to 5 families, 14 individuals, to stay for a week at a time, once every 2 or 3 months. The space used can be classrooms, offices or a large hall with dividers. Since a host congregation is providing hospitality to families for the week, the guests' areas are not broken down during the day. (Usually, congregations host 2 to 4 families at a time.)
- * A common area for meals, homework, relaxation and fellowship.
- * Two bathrooms: one for women; one for men. (The day center provides showers.)
- * Space for volunteers to sleepover (any available space at the congregation can be used, e.g. offices, hallway, etc.).
- * A kitchen for meal preparation (dinners may be cooked at the congregation or brought in and heated there), a refrigerator, food staples and necessary clean up items.
- * The congregation is responsible for all meals (nutritious cooked dinners, simple breakfasts and supplies for sack lunches), utilities (heat/cooling, water and electricity), linens, and various basic items such as toys, soap, etc. The network supplies the beds.
- * Volunteers: A congregation should always have at least 2 volunteers present and generally not more than 4 at a time. Volunteers can come from other congregations and organizations; all volunteers undergo orientation before they begin.