



PO Box 441491  
Aurora, CO 80044-1491  
(720) 320-2641  
jim@myfathershousedenver.org

Dear friend,

Thank you for your interest in My Father's House (MFH). We would like to describe for you what we are doing at MFH, so you can make an informed decision. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

My Father's House is not simply a place to live; it is a community of life. What that means is that we are inviting men to find a different way of living that will bring them to a new place in their lives. We want to create a place where men can grow and heal. We want to find helpful and positive ways to assist men in coming to understand that they have an infinite value given to them by their Creator. We believe that we all can come to find that in our daily lives and in relationship with God and with other men and women. We are looking for men who are serious about changing their lives, leaving behind not only crime, but dysfunctional ways of living.

We are not just interested in becoming your landlord. Rather, we want to engage you in a friendship, to help you and accompany you on this next part of your journey, out of prison, onto parole, and on to better things.

We have one 4-bedroom house, with 4 men living in it. Attached to this letter is our *Way of Living* which describes more about the life of the community of men in that house. After you've read the *Way of Living*, please feel free to reach out to us with any questions you have. If you wish to fill out an application, you can obtain one by writing to us at address at the top of this page. If you have someone who can access the internet for you (someone outside prison or your Case Manager), our application can also be found at [www.myfathershousedenver.org/apply](http://www.myfathershousedenver.org/apply).

The purpose of the application is to help us begin a relationship with you, and to get to know you. To further this, we would also like you to write to us about yourself in a letter when you send your application. You can tell us anything about yourself that you think would be helpful in coming to know you better.

One of the things we do at MFH is to have community dinners each week, and we ask the men at the house to commit to participate in those. In addition to the men who live in the house, our volunteers attend these dinners, as well. Please indicate in your letter if you would be willing to commit to coming to our weekly dinners.

We look forward to hearing from you, soon. God bless you.

Yours in Christ,  
Jim Blum

---

[www.myfathershousedenver.org](http://www.myfathershousedenver.org)

*In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*

## **My Father's House**

*In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. Jn 14:2-3*

### **Core Values**

My Father's House works to create a community of life, and invites its members to experience that:

1. Our greatest need is to have a place that is prepared for us by Someone.
2. This place is not primarily a physical space; but becomes real in relationship.
3. When we are in such a place, we feel at home and are free.

In order to favor this experience, My Father's House (MFH) proposes a way of living together in a house which is meant to help one grow in responsibility and appreciation of one's own life and the lives of others. It is not a "program"; rather MFH relies entirely on each individual's personal responsibility to live in the house as a community of healing; in simple words, as a home.

Community members are responsible to the MFH community at all times, by supporting one another and helping fellow members to experience the beauty of mutual and shared responsibility.

### **The Way of Living of My Father's House**

#### 1. There is Someone who is preparing a place for us.

Prospective members will ask to live in a house by applying to MFH. Based on evidence gathered through the application process regarding the applicant's willingness to experience the three core values, MFH will choose persons to live in the house. Support Friends, men and women involved with MFH to accompany the members of the community in their journey on parole, will be available for each member, with the purpose of walking with him in his challenges and enabling him to experience love for his life.

MFH will welcome each member in the house by providing an initial "welcome kit" and will assign a single bedroom to each member. MFH will also furnish each house.

The following are specific norms of the way of living proposed by My Father's House to experience core value #1.

*Hours:* The way of living in the house seeks to facilitate the awareness that Someone is preparing a place for us where our life will be lived fully. Except for community members who work nights, the daytime activity in the house should be spent by carrying out meaningful activities, such as working, reading, and meditating. MFH does not consider it healthy, physically or emotionally, to sleep excessively, or late into the day, without a valid reason (e.g., sickness, odd hours of work). Members who are unemployed and of working age, for example, shall spend time looking for and applying for jobs. Hanging around the house with no purpose during the day leads us to forget that Someone is waiting for us. Members shall abide by the curfew given them by their parole/probation officer.

*Meals:* Each community member is responsible to provide his own food, but MFH encourages the members to work together to provide meals for the house. At a minimum, MFH proposes to the members to schedule one Common Supper weekly which will be shared by all members of the house. The members will not simply attend the dinner but also participate in the preparation and the clean-up afterwards. The Common Supper has the purpose of sharing challenges and experiences related to the life together. Support Friends and other members of MFH may attend the Common Supper. Food will be stored in the kitchen, not in community members' bedrooms.

*Cleanliness:* The common responsibility to prepare a place for everyone cannot disregard the importance of keeping the house clean. Each community member shall wash his dishes immediately after using them. Dishes shall not be left in the sink or on the counter. The house shall be kept clean. Basic guidelines for house cleaning include: (i) at least weekly cleaning of sinks, toilets, tub and floors in bathrooms; (ii) washing bedsheets every other week; (iii) vacuuming the carpet every week; (iv) dusting off the furniture every other week; (v) quarterly wiping down the window blinds; (vi) as needed, cleaning baseboards and under beds.

*Bedrooms:* Community members shall not ever go into another member's room or belongings. Each member is responsible for the cleaning of his own bedroom. Order helps us to experience the beauty of Someone who has prepared a place for us. Clothes must be put away in dressers or closets. Non-essential items can be boxed up and stored in storage spaces such as the garage or crawl space.

*Utilities:* The renters in the house will split the cost of the utilities (gas & electric, water & sewer). Thus, it is important to be conservative with the use of these utilities. In the case where a washing machine and dryer are available in a house, members will be allowed to use them after 7:30 am with the last dryer load started no later than 9:00 pm. Whenever the washer and dryer are used, members shall wipe out the washer and clean the lint from the dryer when they are finished with laundry. MFH will not provide a TV. If the members wish to share the cost of a television and cable service, they may choose to do so. They should consult with staff and Support Friends about this to find an equitable way to accomplish it.

*Vehicles:* To be on the house's property, all vehicles must be licensed, insured, and operational. MFH prohibits repairing of cars in the garage or driveway.

*Telephone:* MFH may provide a home phone in each house for practical needs. Community members should not arbitrarily and superficially use the phone to entertain meaningless conversations. Each member should avoid disturbing others while using the telephone. The use of the telephone should never interfere with the moments of shared life (e.g., community dinner). Where a home phone is not provided, each member shall provide his own cell phone.

*Computers:* To share the responsibility of making everyone feel welcome, community members who have permission from parole/probation officers to use computers or smartphones shall have a password to access the devices. The costs directly related to the usage of personal devices, including the cost of the monitoring software required by parole/probation, and any internet service, will be borne by the respective devices' owners. Each member shall use computers and other devices in accordance with the parole/probation officer's rules and will be personally responsible for violations of such rules.

## 2. A place made of relationships.

Each house will aspire to function as a community. Within this community, relationships have the purpose of accompanying each other on a journey of discovery of the infinite value of our persons.

Support Friends (non-resident volunteers) will be available for each member, with the purpose of accompanying him in his challenges and enabling him to experience love for his life.

The following are specific norms of the way of living proposed by My Father's House to experience core value #2.

*Chores:* Community members shall be responsible for keeping the house clean and orderly at all times, and caring for the lawn. All members will share in the agreed-upon chore schedule. They will develop this chore schedule for the common areas together, as a community; and divide the work equally. This will include, but not be limited to, the following: (i) daily wiping of dining table and kitchen countertops; (ii) keeping personal belongings picked up and putting away any clutter; (iii) weekly washing/drying of kitchen towels and washcloths and towels; (iv) bi-weekly sweeping and mopping wood floors with appropriate chemicals and tools; (v) monthly cleaning out of refrigerators, food cabinets and pantry; (vi) annual cleaning of cabinets inside and out; (vii) weekly mowing and trimming of the lawn; (viii) weeding the yard and gardens as necessary; (ix) raking the yard as necessary; (x) sweeping the carport and walks weekly; (xi) snow removal from the driveway, walks and public sidewalk in front of the house according to the local ordinances.

*Fraternal Charity:* MFH proposes to avoid borrowing and lending money among community members. Fraternal charity is encouraged and permitted under the care of the staff of MFH, which *may* allow a member to borrow money from someone else in the home in very limited amounts and for very short periods of time. In seeking counsel about ways to help each other, including financially, members are invited to seek counsel from Support Friends. In general, MFH requires that, *if* money is allowed by staff to be lent, the amount borrowed by a member from another member shall not exceed \$25 and all loans must be paid back within two weeks. A Promissory Note for the amount borrowed, stating the date by which the money will be repaid shall be written and signed by both members.

*Respect for Persons:* MFH encourages respect for all the members of the community. Insulting, derogatory, vulgar and profane language are not permitted in talking to or about other persons, whether they are part of the community or not. Foul language is offensive, and shall be avoided.

*Houseguests:* Each house is the home of all the community members. Hence, guests must be courteous with every member and spend their visits in the common areas of the house. Visiting is only to be done in the common areas of the home. No visitors in the members' individual rooms. No minors may ever come to the house. No guest is permitted to be at the house before 8 am or after 10 pm. Support Friends, members of the Board of Directors, and other staff are not considered guests/visitors.

## 3. A place where we can experience true freedom.

True freedom is not simply being out from under rules. Rather, it is the ability to be the person whom God created one to be; to live out the purpose to which he has been called and for which he has been created. It is journeying towards a fulfilled life, a life that has meaning.

MFH aspires to create places where it starts being possible to live this experience of freedom.

*Dress Code:* In all common areas of the house, community members shall be dressed modestly (pants, shorts, or sweats and a shirt; not pajamas or underwear only), ready to receive and interact with others.

*Drugs, Alcohol, and Pornography:* Any place marked by the use of drugs or pornography is dysfunctional and does not allow the experience of true freedom. Those on parole cannot use alcohol. MFH has zero tolerance for substance use and pornography that denigrate the value of the human person. Therefore, staff will mandate immediate removal from the house in case of use of drugs, alcohol or pornography.

*Parole Officers:* Community members shall always follow the rules given them by parole/probation and their parole/probation officers. They are prohibited from doing anything that would conflict with any other member's parole/probation rules. They will always grant access to the home to their own and each other's parole/probation officers. The commission of any criminal offense will result in the member's immediate removal from the home. Any violation of parole/probation will result in a review to determine if the resident should be removed from the home.

## **A Personal Responsibility**

Each community member is personally responsible for the way of living of MFH, described above. Practical dissent from the way of living proposed by MFH may lead to the termination of the residency at MFH. Practical dissent will be reported and examined by the staff of MFH, in collaboration with the member's Support Friend.

The personal responsibility begins with two fundamental aspects of the life in the house.

*Rent:* Each community member must pay \$755 per month for a private room, plus the cost of the monthly utilities. Members will share the cost of paper products and cleaning supplies. MFH will collect the rent and utilities on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Other arrangements may be made for weekly or bi-weekly rent payments to accommodate pay schedules.

*Damage Deposit:* Each community member will be required to make a damage deposit of \$500 when they enter the house.

## **Flexibility of This Way of Life**

The community of MFH is an organic structure, and needs to be flexible to bring forth the community of life it proposes to create. Therefore, this *Way of Living* will be adapted, from time to time, to meet the needs of the community and its members. Members of the community will follow the changes to the community's way of life as they are proposed.