

## Home+ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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### General

#### **1. What is Home+?**

A free citywide program of the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV) that helps survivors of domestic violence (DV) and gender-based violence (GBV) stay safely in their homes by providing:

- Pendant alarm systems to call for help within the home if safety is threatened by an abusive person
- Lock change and repair services for doors and windows
- Flexible funding grants to help cover expenses to maintain or secure housing

All **Home+** participants are connected to additional support services, like case management and safety planning through contracted community based organizations.

**Home+ was previously called Alternatives to Shelter.**

#### **2. How can I receive Home+ services?**

You can reach out directly to the Home+ provider in your borough:

**Brooklyn:** HELP ROADS

Hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00am - 5:00pm

Helpline: 718-922-7980

[homeplus@helpusa.org](mailto:homeplus@helpusa.org)

**Bronx:** Violence Intervention Program (VIP)

Hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00am – 11:00pm

Helpline: 1-800-664-5880

[homeplusteam@vipmujeres.org](mailto:homeplusteam@vipmujeres.org)

**Manhattan:** Rising Ground Paths to Healing

Hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00am – 6:00pm

Helpline: 1-877-783-7794

[stepshelpline@risingground.org](mailto:stepshelpline@risingground.org)

**Queens:** Womankind

Hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00am – 7:00pm

Helpline: 1-888-888-7702 (24/7)

Text: 929-207-5907

**Staten Island:** Seamen’s Society for Children and Families

Hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00am – 5:00pm

Hotline: 718-447-7740 x4792 (24/7)

[homeplus@seamenssociety.org](mailto:homeplus@seamenssociety.org)

### **3. Do I need a referral to apply for Home+?**

No. While the providers can accept referrals from other service providers, you can always directly contact the provider to receive services.

### **4. How do I know if I’m eligible for Home+?**

- You are eligible for Home+ if you are a resident of New York City and a survivor or victim of domestic and/or gender-based violence.
- You do not need to provide any documentation to demonstrate that you are a survivor or victim of domestic and/or gender-based violence.
- If you are seeking financial assistance from a Home+ provider, city law requires your income to be 300% or less of the federal poverty guidelines. 2024 Federal Poverty Guidelines can be found [here](#).
- Your consumer credit history, criminal history, and/or immigration status **will not** impact your eligibility for Home+ services.
- Determination of eligibility will be at the discretion of the service providers.

### **5. What is the intake process for survivors who wish to receive services through Home+?**

Providers will ask you for information to help understand your needs and safety concerns.

Providers will safety plan with you and walk you through options available to address your specific needs.

Based on the client's needs, the Home+ provider will connect the client to the appropriate resources and services. These may include Home+ alarm system services, locksmith services, financial assistance, or other relevant services.

### **6. Is Home+ operated directly by staff from the Mayor’s Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV)?**

Although ENDGBV oversees Home+, client services are provided by staff from different community-based organizations. See list of providers and contact information in **Question 2** above.

**7. Is Home+ accessible to people who communicate in a language other than English?**

Yes. You can receive information and services in your preferred language. If a provider does not have a staff person who speaks your preferred language, the provider will use telephonic interpretation services. You can also receive written materials in your preferred language.

**8. Is Home+ accessible to people with disabilities?**

Yes. ENDGBV and Home+ providers are committed to continuing to make the Home+ program accessible for people with disabilities. If you have any questions related to accessibility and the Home+ program, please email [AccessENDGBV@endgbv.nyc.gov](mailto:AccessENDGBV@endgbv.nyc.gov).

**9. Do Home+ clients have to pay to receive any Home+ services?**

No. All Home+ services are free for Home+ clients.

**10. Can Home+ clients be reimbursed if they paid for an alarm system or locksmith services from a company or organization outside of the Home+ program?**

No. Home+ clients cannot be reimbursed for the cost of any services that are not received through the Home+ program. All services provided directly through the Home+ program are free for Home+ clients.

**11. What happens with Home+ clients' private information?**

All Home+ providers must adhere to strict privacy policies to protect clients' personal identifying information.

Clients' personal identifying information is securely stored by the Home+ provider and is not shared with ENDGBV or other city agencies. Home+ providers will only report aggregated data to ENDGBV. Aggregated data combines information from many people to show general trends without revealing anyone's personal details.

**12. Are Home+ providers available 24/7?**

Home+ providers do not offer 24/7 services. They are non-residential providers and typically work from 9 AM to 5 PM.

If you need immediate assistance, please contact the New York City domestic violence hotline at 1-800-621-HOPE.

## **Alarm System**

**13. What is the alarm system?**

The alarm system is also known as a personal emergency response system (PERS). The alarm system is made up of a base unit and a pendant alarm necklace that you can carry with you while you are at home. The base unit needs to be plugged in to a power source and will automatically connect to a wireless cell service network when turned on.

You can activate your alarm system while at home by pressing your portable button. Once the button is pressed, staff from an emergency response center will try to communicate with you to verify if the alarm was activated by mistake or intentionally. Emergency response center staff will also listen for sounds of danger. Emergency response center staff will communicate with you through the base unit or by calling or texting your personal devices. Your preferred communication method (base unit or personal devices) will be documented when you are provided with an alarm system.

**14. Can I use my alarm system when I'm outside of my home?**

You must be in your home or very close to your home for the alarm button to work. The alarm button is connected to the base unit and if you are too far away, 400 feet from the base unit, the alarm button will not function properly.

**15. Does the alarm system include any cameras or monitoring systems?**

No. The alarm system does not include any camera monitoring systems, does not make any noises when someone has entered their home, and does not have any other features people may associate with other alarm systems.

**16. How quickly can I get an alarm system?**

Once you complete the intake process with a Home+ provider, the provider will arrange for you to receive an alarm system in the mail. Typically, an alarm system will be mailed to a home address or an alternative, safe address through standard shipping, which can take between 3 to 5 business days to arrive after shipment is commenced. You can request expedited shipping from a Home+ provider.

**17. How are the alarm systems set up in my home?**

The alarm systems are mailed with all the required components and self-installation instructions to a home address or an alternative, safe address. The self-installation instructions will be in English or the client's preferred language. The instructions include a telephone number that the client can call for installation assistance. Staff from the alarm system company will also try to reach the client through call, text, or email to guide the client through the self-installation. If a client has difficulty with self-installation, they can request in-person installation by a technician. Units do not require Wi-Fi in the home, as they work independently from Wi-Fi. Each unit has its own SIM card that works based on cellular coverage.

**18. What happens when I press my alarm button because they feel unsafe?**

When you press your alarm button, emergency response center staff will try to communicate with you through the base unit or through your personal devices to determine if the alarm was activated intentionally. They will also listen through the base unit for signs of danger.

If you do not tell the emergency response center staff that you pressed the button accidentally, they will notify your designated contact(s). You will designate your contacts when you sign up for an alarm system with a Home+ provider. Your designated contacts can be trusted friends,

family members, staff from an organization, and/or police. Information about your designated contacts will be stored in the alarm system company's confidential database.

**19. Can I have multiple alarm buttons?**

Yes, on a case-by-case basis. You can request multiple buttons that are connected to the same base unit if you believe multiple household members need a personal alarm to remain safe.

**20. Is it required for New York City Police Department (NYPD) or any other specific agencies to be notified after I press my alarm button?**

No. You can choose who is notified of alarm activations, and they may or may not choose to include police (NYPD) or any other specific City agencies.

**21. If I live with the person who is abusing me, can I still get a Home+ alarm system?**

Yes. You can get an alarm system even if you are living with the abusive person so long as you believe it is safe to have the alarm system in your shared home. Home+ provider staff can help you determine if this would be a safe option and what might help reduce potential risks. For example, alarm systems can be mailed to a different address than the client's home, such as a P.O. Box or a service provider's office, if that would increase safety.

**22. How long can I have an alarm system through the program?**

Currently, there is no fixed minimum or maximum period of time that a Home+ client can have an alarm system through the program, but this is not meant to be a permanent service. Home+ providers will work with you to evaluate whether you have an ongoing need for the alarm system. Typically, Home+ providers will evaluate ongoing need after you have the alarm system for six (6) months.

**23. What happens when I no longer want or need an alarm system?**

You should inform the Home+ provider staff that you no longer need or want the alarm system. Home+ provider staff will then inform the alarm system company. Deinstallation instructions will be provided to you in your preferred language. The instructions include a telephone number that you can call for assistance. Staff from the alarm system company will also reach out to the client via call, text, or email to offer to guide the client through the de-installation. If you have difficulty with deinstallation, a request can be made for in-person deinstallation by a technician. The instructions will also include information about returning the alarm system to the alarm system company. You should also receive a prepaid shipping label from the alarm system company so that you can return your device.

**24. Can I get an alarm system through the Home+ program if they already have an alarm system from a different program or private company?**

Possibly. Home+ provider staff will speak with you to ensure that the alarm systems work differently or serve different functions. If both systems are very similar, then provider staff will discuss whether replacing their current alarm system with the Home+ alarm system would be beneficial or potentially cause complications that could increase risk. To maintain a supply of alarm systems for as many survivors in need as possible, Home+ would likely not issue an alarm

system to a client who has an existing alarm system that they would like to keep and that is very similar to the Home+ alarm system.

## **Locksmith Services**

### **25. What specific services are offered as part of Home+ locksmith services?**

Home+ locksmith services include door lock installation and replacement, door repairs and replacement, and window security services, including installation of window locks and guards.

### **26. How quickly can I get locksmith services?**

Timing will depend on the specific need and service request. Once an appointment is scheduled between the client and the locksmith services staff, a technician will report to the client's home at the scheduled date and time. For most standard door lock installations, the job will be completed within one visit. For non-standard locks, doors and windows, the time to complete the job may be longer.

### **27. Can I get locksmith services through the program if I live in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) apartments?**

Yes. Survivors living in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) apartments can become Home+ clients and get additional locks installed on their apartment door through the program. However, the Home+ program or any other outside program, company, or organization are not permitted to alter, repair, remove, or replace the NYCHA-installed lock on apartment doors. Also, NYCHA will not replace or repair any additional locks installed by the Home+ program or any other outside program, company, or organization.

For all other repairs, including door repairs and replacements, Home+ clients who are NYCHA residents need to call NYCHA's Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771 or submit a work ticket through MYNYCHA ([www.nyc.gov/MyNYCHA](http://www.nyc.gov/MyNYCHA)).

### **28. Can locksmith services be provided through a client's building-contracted locksmith provider or other preferred provider?**

No. If a client wants to receive locksmith services through Home+, they can only use the company that is working with the Home+ program to provide locksmith services. If a Home+ client has any concerns about or issues with receiving locksmith services through the company working with the Home+ program, that client should communicate these points to the Home+ provider staff who is supporting them. Any locksmith services received and paid for through a company or organization outside of the Home+ program cannot be reimbursed or paid for by the Home+ program. However, all services provided through the Home+ program are free for Home+ clients.

## **Flexible Funding**

### **What is flexible funding?**

Flexible funding is intended to help survivors of domestic and gender-based violence maintain or secure housing. Flexible funding can be used to cover expenses including but not limited to: safety planning, housing expenses, legal expenses, medical expenses, utilities, moving and transportation expenses, and etc. Home+ providers can provide you with flexible funding in the form of electronic or physical gift cards.

### **How do I know if I'm eligible for flexible funding?**

You are eligible for flexible funding if you are a survivor of domestic or gender-based violence, reside in New York City, and have an income of 300% or less of the federal poverty guidelines. 2024 Federal Poverty Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Home+ providers will assess your eligibility for flexible funding when you contact them. Providers may prioritize clients with more urgent needs for assistance, and providers may implement a cap on the grants for a certain timeframe to ensure availability of flexible funding to clients throughout the year.

### **How do I request flexible funding?**

You can contact a Home+ provider who will speak to you about your needs and options, including flexible funding. Contact information about providers can be found in **Question 2** above.

### **Can I request flexible funding more than once?**

Yes, but eligibility is not guaranteed even if you have received assistance before. The providers will prioritize those with more urgent needs for assistance, and there may be a cap on the grants for a certain timeframe to ensure availability throughout the funding period.

### **What is the maximum amount I can apply for?**

Home+ providers will assess your needs with you and determine an amount based on your needs.

### **If I receive flexible funding, will it impact my eligibility for other public benefits?**

Flexible funding could impact your public benefits but the impact will depend on your particular circumstances and the type of benefit. If you are concerned about the impact of flexible funding, please speak to a public benefits specialist.

### **Is the financial assistance (flexible funding) taxable?**

Flexible funding may be taxable depending on the amount of funding you receive and your total annual income.