



Options for Residential Care:

Adult Family Homes & Assisted Living Facilities

If you or a loved one need more help than you can get at home, it may be time to consider some type of residential care. Residential care is a term used to describe a home or residence where an adult can live and get help with care in a community setting. There are several types of residential care options, each offers different housing and care services.

There are three types of residential care facilities licensed by the State of Washington: Nursing Homes, Adult Family Homes, and Assisted Living Facilities.

This handout talks about two options:

Adult family homes

Assisted living facilities

An adult family home (**AFH**) is licensed to provide housing and care services for up to 6 adults in a regular house located in a residential neighborhood. The AFH may be run by a family, a single person or business partners. The AFH may also hire other employees. Some AFHs allow pets. In some homes, multiple languages are spoken.

An assisted living facility (**ALF**) is licensed to provide housing and care services to seven or more people in a home or facility located in a residential neighborhood.

All AFHs and ALFs provide housing and meals (room and board) and assume general responsibility for the safety and care of the resident. Additional services may be offered and can be different for each place. These may include:

- Assistance with personal care (bathing, dressing, toileting, grooming, etc)
- Intermittent nursing care (a nurse available on a part-time basis)
- Assistance with or administering of medications.

Some AFHs and ALFs also provide specialized care to people living with developmental disabilities, dementia, or mental illness.

There are other non-licensed housing options **not** covered in this handout – retirement communities and continuing care retirement communities. Additional information is available from Pathways Information and Assistance.

There are many issues to keep in mind when considering a residential care option for an individual who can no longer manage living independently.

What are your needs?

- Consider what care and help you (or your loved one) need now or in the future.
- Assess your needs by using our [Personal Needs Assessment Tool](#)

There are also agencies and businesses that may assist with doing a comprehensive assessment; some are at no cost, and some must be paid for privately. Contact Pathways Information & Assistance for more specific information.

Get a List of Adult Family Homes or Assisted Living Facilities

To begin finding a place that is a good fit for you, get a list of facilities in the geographic area you wish to live. There are many resources available to help you get this list.

For people with internet access:

- Use the Washington State DSHS locator tools to search for licensed facilities by county, city, zip code: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/residential-care-services/long-term-care-residential-options>
- The list provides name, address, phone, contact name and if the facility is contracted to accept Medicaid as payment.

If you do not have internet access:

- Call Pathways Information & Assistance (206) 448-3110 or (888) 435-3377
- Use a private placement service:

Several businesses exist that provide you with personalized referrals for senior housing, senior care, and in-home care services. Fees for this service are normally paid by the facility to the advisor as a referral fee, with no cost to the consumer. However, payment of fees should always be clarified. Contact Pathways Information & Assistance for more information about how these referral services work and a list of businesses.

- Social worker / discharge planning:

If you or your loved one is in a hospital or rehabilitation facility, a social worker or discharge planner has been assigned. This person can be a resource to you.

Ask questions:

Concerns about cost, quality of care, and safety will be large factors in your decision-making. We have put together a list of [Questions To Consider for Adult Family Homes and Assisted Living Facilities](#) that may help you choose a facility and evaluate its services. Feel free to make extra copies if you are going to evaluate several places.

When you visit a prospective site:

- Take our list of questions with you
- Plan to spend some time
- Don't be rushed into a decision
- Ask for references or numbers to contact former residents or their family members.
- (Assisted Living Facility only) – ask for a copy of the disclosure form that sets out the care and services that the facility offers.
- Visit the site more than once, sometimes unannounced
- Visit at mealtimes, sample the food
- The facility must keep a copy of their latest inspection report and make it available for you to read. This report will give you insight into any potential problem areas of the home. It will indicate if enforcement letters have been issued and how they were addressed.
- Contact the Washington State long-term care ombudsman. The ombudsmen are advocates for residents of residential care facilities. They work to resolve problems of individual residents and to bring about changes to improve care. They can be a good source of information. Contact: 800 562-6028 to find the office nearest you.

Payment

It is very important to find out what is included in the basic rate and how much other services will cost. The average cost of a long term care facility may range widely from \$4000-\$12000 per month depending on your care needs and the services available.

- Medicare does not cover the cost of room and board for adult family homes or assisted living facilities. Medicare will cover short term stays at a Skilled Nursing Facility under certain circumstances.
- Some health and long-term care insurance policies may cover part of the costs. Check with your insurance company.
- Some residences have their own financial assistance programs. Check with each facility.
- If you are a veteran, you may qualify for assistance. Call the King County Veterans Information & Assistance Call Center at 206 263-8387.
- Medicaid may pay for some of the costs of long term care. A person would need to apply and meet financial eligibility guidelines in order to qualify and not all facilities accept Medicaid.

Pathways Information & Assistance can provide you with information on how to pay for long term care and provide information and screening for state Medicaid programs.

Sound Generations Pathways Information & Assistance
Tel: 206-448-3110 or 888-435-3377