

Ohio Assisted Living (Residential Care) Facilities

Assisted living combines a home-like setting with personal support services to provide more intensive care than is available through home care services. Assisted living homes vary considerably, but most provide meals, housekeeping, laundry, transportation, and social activities. They also offer personal care, such as help with eating, bathing, grooming and personal hygiene. Some nursing care is also provided, including medication administration and dressing changes.

In Ohio, the typical "Assisted Living" home is licensed as a Residential Care Facility. The [Ohio Department of Health](#) licenses residential care facilities and conducts on-site inspections/surveys for compliance with state rules and regulations. To determine if assisted living in a Residential Care Facility is a good option for you, contact your [Area Agency on Aging](#) and request a free assessment.

How to Select? There are over 600 licensed Residential Care Facilities, also known as Assisted Living homes, in the state of Ohio. How do you determine which will meet your needs? The first steps involve reviewing the possibilities to narrow your selection.

Services. Review the services each home offers to identify the homes that will meet your needs. Each home may indicate on the [Long-Term Care Consumer Guide](#) the special services they offer. Does the description of services match the medical, social and community connections you prefer?

Location. Use the [geographic search](#) function to find homes within a comfortable travel distance from friends and family.

Quality Indicators. All consumers of long-term care services deserve excellent care. Ohio's Long-Term Care Consumer Guide contains the following information about each home licensed by the State of Ohio:

- *Inspection Reports*, from the Ohio Department of Health, provide information on the Residential Care Facility's compliance with state and federal law.
- *Facility Details*, such as the special services provided, the religious or fraternal affiliations, accreditation, costs, and staffing ratios, are provided by the homes.
- *Resident Satisfaction Survey Scores* reflect the perceptions of residential care (assisted living) facility residents gathered through face-to-face surveys. Spreadsheets of overall satisfaction scores for residential care facilities are available.

Review the quality information available particularly for the medical, social, spiritual and community needs you have. A facility that scores low on clinical measures, has low satisfaction with direct care staff and is repeatedly cited for medication errors would not be an appropriate choice for a resident at risk for medical complications. On the other hand, a facility with high satisfaction with activities and few or no citations in the areas of choice and dining areas may be a good choice for a resident who enjoys socialization and activities.

Costs. Confirm with the facility staff that the nursing homes you consider will accept your insurance coverage, or Medicaid or that the rates are within your ability to pay privately. See below for information about paying for long-term care.

Visit. Once you've narrowed your list of prospective nursing homes, it is very important to visit the homes you're considering. If possible, you should visit multiple times and at different times of day to see what the home is like on a day-to-day basis. Speak with current residents and their families about their experiences. Use this consumer [checklist](#) to ask the administration about the facility's performance on Ohio's quality incentive measures.

Positive observations

- The interactions between residents and staff are marked by friendliness, patience and respect. Staff seem to know the residents well, call them by name, and know what they like and don't like.

- Staff knock before entering residents' rooms and residents have privacy available to them, even in shared rooms.
- Look for residents engaged in age-appropriate activities, able to get outside, or able to rest comfortably.
- Meal service is appetizing and the dining room(s) are appealing. Residents are assisted with eating, if needed.

Concerns

- Loud overhead paging and call lights going unanswered.
- Staff clustered without interacting with residents. Residents with nothing to do, slumped in wheelchairs.
- Meals are served late, aren't appealing, or served at the wrong temperatures. Residents left unassisted in front of their meals or not served at the same time as their table-mates.
- Residents dressed inappropriately for the weather or in gowns or clothing that doesn't sufficiently cover their bodies. Residents' personal grooming is not dignified.
- Poor maintenance or cleanliness in the resident and common areas. Pervasive odors, unwashed linens.

Need help in selecting an Assisted Living (RCF)?

If you need further help in selecting an Assisted Living (Residential Care) facility or are not sure it's the right setting for you, please contact the [Long-Term Care Ombudsman program](#) serving your area. Ombudsmen link residents with services or agencies, offer advice on selecting long-term care providers, inform consumers about their rights and provide information and assistance with benefits and insurance.

What to do if you have a problem in a home

Know your rights as a long term care consumer. Please review the [Residents' Rights Flier](#) for information about rights regarding discharge, choice, information and privacy.

Read *Nursing Homes: Getting Good Care There*, a publication by the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care. Though this book is intended for use by consumers in nursing homes, it contains valuable information about your rights as a consumer of long term care, how to communicate with staff and what to do when you need to advocate for your loved one's rights. Ohio residents may email consumerguide@age.ohio.gov for a free copy of this publication.

Ohio's Office of the State Long-term Care Ombudsman advocates for people receiving home care, assisted living and nursing home care. Paid and volunteer ombudsmen work to resolve complaints about long-term care services. Ombudsmen do not "police" nursing homes and home health agencies. Instead, they work with providers, residents, their families and other representatives to resolve problems and concerns. Ombudsmen advocate a person-centered approach to meeting the needs and honoring the preferences of their clients.

Paying for Assisted Living (Residential Care Facilities)

- Private Pay Costs for long term care vary according to the location and type of facility and services offered. Statewide, the cost for a residential care facility can range between \$3,000 and \$6,000 per month.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' [National Clearinghouse for Long-term Care](#) has information about costs of long term care, which refers users to GenWorth.com for costs by state.
- [Ohio's Assisted Living Waiver Program](#) pays the *costs of care* in a *participating* assisted living facility for certain people with Medicaid, while the consumer uses his or her resources to cover "room and board" expenses. Individuals who meet certain service and care needs and meet established financial criteria may be eligible. *Not all assisted living facilities accept Medicaid payment.* To find out if you are eligible, please contact your contact your [Area Agency on Aging](#).
- As a veteran, you may be eligible for long-term care support through the Veteran's Administration. Please contact [Ohio Department of Veterans Services](#) for help in navigating veterans' benefits.
- Long-Term Care Insurance. Whether or not Long-Term Care Insurance is right for you can be a difficult decision. Please review the [Guide to Long-Term Care Insurance](#) published by the Ohio Department of Insurance.

Source: [Ohio Long-Term Care Consumer Guide](#), Ohio Department of Aging, Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman