

A Guide for Selecting an Assisted Living Residence



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The Rhode Island Assisted Living Association

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Visit us on the web at www.riala.org

What is Assisted Living?

Assisted living residences are a special combination of housing and personalized support services designed to meet the needs of those who require help with activities of daily living. Activities of daily living include tasks related to bathing, dressing, grooming, and eating. Assisted living is a residential option that promotes self-direction and participation in decisions regarding care and services. Its philosophy is to support choice, individuality, privacy, and independence. Services available in assisted living residences include:

- Three meals a day served in a common dining area
- Housekeeping services
- Transportation
- Assistance with eating, bathing, dressing, and other activities
- 24-hour security and staff availability
- Health promotion and exercise programs
- Medication management
- Personal laundry services
- Social and recreational activities
- Emergency call systems
- Supervision and direction

Licensing

In Rhode Island, assisted living residences and their administrators are licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Health, Facilities Regulation. Residences are further licensed in terms of medication management and fire evacuation rules. There are two levels of medication management. M1 residences are for people who need to have their medication managed and administered. People living in M2 residences must be able to take their medication with only a reminder from the staff. In the event of a fire, people living in F1 residences are able to remain in their room and wait for rescue, while people living in an F2 building must be able to leave the building within a specified time. People who live in a F2 building have to be more mobile. There is a specialty care license for residences that provide a more secure environment for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

Getting Started

RIALA is an association of the providers of assisted living in the state. There are 69 licensed providers and most of them are RIALA members. As you consider assisted living keep in mind that every person is unique, just as every assisted living residence is different. The costs of assisted living vary with the residence, the room size and the services needed by the resident. Under the regulation, each residence is required to distribute a Disclosure Statement which includes, facts about the residence, level of licensure, details about services and costs, and the Residency Agreement to all potential residents.

Making the Decision

Choosing the right assisted living residence is a very important decision for an individual and their family. Carefully research and visit several assisted living residences, and meet the staff. Ask questions and discuss any issues you feel might arise. Sample a meal, observe activities, make sure you are comfortable with the information you receive. Once you have narrowed your choices to a few prospective residences, carefully review their disclosure statements. Make another visit at different time of day. Broaden your view! Is this residence near your church, your doctor, family and friends? Compare features, services, location, and pricing. Some resources that may help you with your decision are:

- The Guide to Choosing an Assisted Living Residence
Argentum, formerly Assisted Living Federation of America
Online at www.argentum.org/or call 703-894-1805
- How to Choose an Assisted Living Residence
Lt. Governor's Long Term Care Coordinating Council
Online at www.ltgov.ri.gov or call 401-222-2371.
- Department of Elderly Affairs
Call for information on SSI and Waiver Programs 401-462-0570
Online at www.dea.ri.gov
- The Rhode Island Assisted Living Association
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