



The Art of Long-Term Care Living

A Guide for Residents and Families



Brought to you by:

Valley Program for Aging Services
(VPAS)



The Art of Long-Term Care Living

A Guide for Residents and Families

Welcome

We are honored to have you as part of our community. This handbook was created to help you understand your rights as a resident and the many ways we are committed to supporting your health, dignity, and independence.

Your voice matters. If you ever have a question or concern, please know we are here to listen and to ensure your rights are respected.

Our Commitment

We believe every resident deserves:

- Respect, dignity, and compassion
- A safe and supportive environment
- Opportunities for choice, independence, and self-expression
- A community that values your well-being and individuality

Handbook Edition:

September, 2025



Table of Contents

I. Definitions and Staff Roles in Long-Term Care

- Common Long-term Care Definitions - Page 4
- Brief Legal Definitions - Page 5
- Typical Facility Staff Roles - Pages 6-7

II. Planning for Long-Term Care

- How to Access Online Information for Planning Purposes - Pages 8-9
- Signing the Contract with a Long-Term Care Facility - Pages 10-13
- Transitioning from Home to a Long-Term Care Environment - Page 14
- A Word to Family and Friends of Long-Term Care Residents - Page 15

III. The Exercising of Resident's Rights

- Resident's Rights concisely stated - Page 16
- The Role of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman - Page 17
- Advocacy for Medicaid-Managed Care - Page 17
- The Role of Resident Councils - Page 18

IV. Insuring Quality Care

- What families can do to insure quality care - Page 19
- Care Planning with Facility Staff - Page 19
- Red Flags in Long-Term Care Settings - Pages 20-21
- Communicating Effectively with a Facility - Page 22
- Complaints and Concerns - Pages 23-24
- Facility-initiated Discharges (30-day discharge notice) - Pages 25-26
- Scams—Warnings about Smart Phones and Computers - Page 27
- How to use the "Concerns Journal" Pages - Page 28
- "Concerns Journal" Blank pages - Pages 29-33

Definitions

- ADL- Activities of Daily Living (activities like bathing, dressing, eating, and toileting)
- ADON - Assistant Director of Nursing
- AL/ALF - Assisted Living Facility
- BOM - Business Office Manager
- CNA - Certified Nursing Assistant
- DME - Durable medical equipment
- DNR - Do Not Resuscitate
- DON - Director of Nursing
- ED - Executive Director
- IADL - Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (more complex, ex. Managing finances)
- IL - Independent Living (facility)
- LPN/LVN - Licensed Practical Nurse or Licensed Vocational Nurse
- LTC - Long-Term Care
- LTCOP - Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
- MAR - Medication Administration Record
- MC- Memory Care
- NH - Nursing Home
- NP - Nurse Practitioner
- OT- Occupational Therapist/Therapy
- PRN - “as needed” (primarily referring to medications or a treatment)
- PT - Physical Therapist/Therapy
- RN - Registered Nurse
- RP - Responsible Person (person, usually friend or family member who is a contact)
- SNF - Skilled Nursing Facility
- SW - Social Worker



This list is not exhaustive, and individual facilities may have their own specific abbreviations and a list of approved ones. When in doubt, it's always best to ask for clarification to ensure proper understanding and patient safety. As a resident, you have the right to have things explained to you in terms that you can understand.

Brief Legal Definitions

- **Power of Attorney (POA):** A legal document that gives someone (called an agent or attorney-in-fact) the authority to act on another person's behalf in matters such as finances, property, or health care. The person granting this authority is known as the principal. The authority is granted in the absence of that individual unable to make an informed decision or give informed consent.
- **Guardian:** An individual or entity appointed by a court to make personal and/or financial decisions for someone who is unable to manage their own affairs, often a minor or an adult lacking capacity as determined by medical professionals and the court.
- **Conservator:** A person or institution appointed by a court specifically to manage the financial affairs and property of an adult who is unable to do so independently due to incapacity or disability as determined by medical professionals and the courts.

It is best to discuss with an attorney which you may need.



Typical Facility Staff Roles

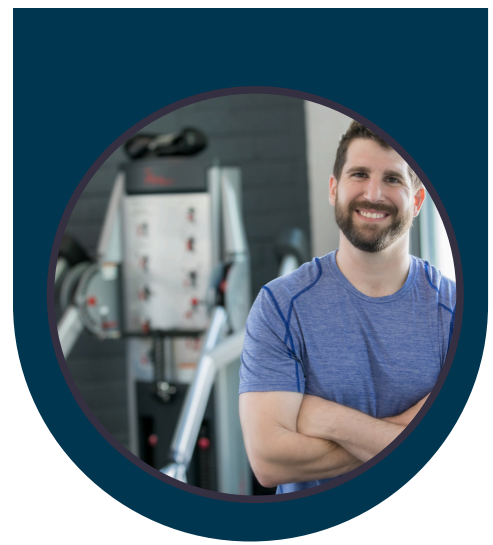


Typical Staff Roles in a Nursing Home

- Facility Administrator: The highest-ranking individual, responsible for the overall management and operation of the facility.
- Director of Nursing (DON): Oversees all nursing staff and care provided, reporting to the administrator.
- Nursing Supervisors/Managers: Manage specific units or shifts within the nursing department, often supervising charge nurses.
- Charge Nurses: RNs responsible for a specific unit or shift, overseeing the day-to-day care of residents and delegating tasks to other nurses and aides.
- Registered Nurses (RNs): Provide direct patient care, administer medications, and document resident information.
- Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)/Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs): Work under the supervision of RNs to provide basic nursing care and assist with daily living activities.
- Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs)/Geriatric Nursing Assistants (GNAs)/Licensed Nursing Assistants (LNAs): Provide direct care to residents, assisting with activities of daily living (ADLs) like bathing, dressing, and eating.
- Medical Director: Oversees the medical care provided in the facility.
- MDS Nurse: Focuses on resident assessments and care planning.
- Activity Director: Plans and implements recreational activities for residents.
- Social Services Director: Provides social and emotional support to residents and their families, involvement in care-planning and discharge planning as well.
- Business Office Manager: billing and other financial matters

Understand that individual facilities may differ in their organizational structure.

Typical Facility Staff Roles, Cont.



Assisted Living Facilities

- Ownership: The individuals or entities who own the facility and make major decisions.
- Administrator: The primary manager, responsible for the overall operation and ensuring compliance with regulations.
- Nurse: (not required but many facilities, especially larger ones, have a nurse/nurses on staff)
- House Manager (Optional): May handle building maintenance and other operational tasks.
- Medication Technicians: Certified to administer medications to residents.
- Caregivers: Provide direct assistance with daily living activities (bathing, dressing, etc.).
- External Contractors: May include nurses, therapists, or housekeeping staff who provide services but are not direct employees.
- Other Staff: Depending on the facility, there may be additional staff like activity directors, cooks, or maintenance personnel.
- Support Staff: Includes employees like cooks, maintenance, and custodial staff, who support the facility's operations.
- Administration and Management: This group includes the nursing director, facility managers, and others involved in managing the facility's operations.

Memory Care Units

Memory care units typically employ a variety of staff roles to support residents with cognitive impairments. These include nurses (RNs and LPNs), certified nursing assistants (CNAs), memory care directors, social workers, and activities staff, all of whom are specially trained in dementia care.

Planning for Long-Term Care



Are there Online Resources concerning Long Term Care?

There are many unbiased on-line resources available from your Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman covering topics like: beginning to search for a Long Term Care facility, questions to ask when visiting long term care facilities, quality care, resident rights, "Care Compare" (a government website that gives ratings to Nursing Homes), and websites with information on a wide range of concerns. Your ombudsman can send you a link to these resources. Just email a request to john@VPAS.info

Some examples of these resources are:

Senior Virginians Handbook (128pp.)

<https://vsb.org/common/Uploaded%20files/docs/pub-slc-handbook-english.pdf>

A resource for seniors, their families, and their caregivers to provide overviews and contact information for issues, opportunities, and choices facing senior citizens today, with summaries of how specific laws affect Virginia's older citizens and practical advice on issues such as Medicaid, Alzheimer's Disease, landlord-tenant relations, an extensive list of community service organizations and more.

Piecing Together Quality Long-Term Care: A Consumer's Guide to Choices and Advocacy (82pp.)

[https://theconsumervoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/piecing-together-quality-long-term-care.pdf?](https://theconsumervoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/piecing-together-quality-long-term-care.pdf?_rt=NHwxfHBpZWNPbmcdG9nZXRoZXIgcXVhbGl0eSBsb25nLXRlcm0gY2FyZ)

[_rt=NHwxfHBpZWNPbmcdG9nZXRoZXIgcXVhbGl0eSBsb25nLXRlcm0gY2FyZ](https://theconsumervoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/piecing-together-quality-long-term-care.pdf?_rt=NHwxfHBpZWNPbmcdG9nZXRoZXIgcXVhbGl0eSBsb25nLXRlcm0gY2FyZ)

[XwxNzUzMTEwMTY4&_rt_nonce=0d34b6c7c1](https://theconsumervoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/piecing-together-quality-long-term-care.pdf?_rt=NHwxfHBpZWNPbmcdG9nZXRoZXIgcXVhbGl0eSBsb25nLXRlcm0gY2FyZ)
(project of Consumer Voice, excellent information, a good place to start learning about LTC, available free as a PDF download)

Nursing Home Quality Standards, a Primer for Residents, Families, Ombudsmen, and Advocates (54pp.)

<https://nursinghome411.org/ltccc-primer-nursing-home-quality-standards/>

(An excellent resource)

Planning for Long-Term Care



More Online Resources

The Consumer Voice Website

<https://theconsumervoice.org/>

(specialized information for long term care residents, family members, and advocates. Consumer Voice is a good “go to” resource covering most all topics in Long Term Care)

Long Term Care Community Coalition Fact Sheets

<https://nursinghome411.org/learn/facts/>

(excellent resource—can search by topic for nursing home issues. It cites the Federal Code and then gives an explanation. This resource applies to Nursing Homes, not Assisted Living)

Care Compare

<https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare/?providerType=LongTermCare>

Official government website that gives ratings to Nursing facilities (doesn't include assisted living).

Assisted Living

<https://www.dss.virginia.gov/facility/search/alf.cgi>

above link goes to VA Dept. of Social Services to search for Assisted Living Facilities. Checking the boxes will filter for “memory care” [special unit], etc. you can also read the latest inspection reports of these facilities at this website.

Signing a Contract with a Long-Term Care Facility



I'm about to sign a contract with an assisted living facility. What's important for me to know? (covered by legal code 22VAC40-73-390. "Resident agreement with facility")

When signing a contract for an assisted living facility, it's crucial to understand the terms and conditions of the agreement to ensure it meets your needs and protects your rights. Key aspects to focus on include the specific services covered, the cost of those services, termination policies, and dispute resolution procedures. Here's a breakdown of what to look for in the contract:

Services and Costs

- **Specific Unit:** The contract should detail the exact unit number you'll be renting.
- **Included Services:** List all included services, such as meals, housekeeping, recreational activities, and transportation, and whether they are included in the monthly fee or incur extra charges.
- **Dining:** If meals are provided, the contract should specify the scope and extent of the meal program.
- **Additional Fees:** Be aware of any additional charges for services not included in the base fee.
- **Payment Schedule:** Understand the payment schedule and any penalties for late payments.

Termination, Discharge and Transfer

- Understand the conditions under which you can terminate the contract, including the required discharge notice period and any potential fees.
- Be aware of the facility's termination (discharge) rights, including the conditions under which they can terminate the contract and the required notice period.
- Check for special provisions regarding termination due to death or health changes like hospitalization or need for skilled nursing care.

Other Important Considerations

- Understand the process for appealing a termination if you feel it's unjust.
- Know how disputes will be handled, such as through mediation or arbitration.
- Consider how your care needs might change over time and whether the facility can accommodate those changes.
- It's highly recommended to have an attorney review the contract before you sign it, according to some legal professionals.

Signing a Contract with a Long-Term Care Facility, cont.



**I'm about to sign a nursing home agreement.
What do I need to know?**

Before signing a nursing home contract in Virginia, it's crucial to understand the agreement's terms, especially regarding costs, services, and your rights. Review the contract thoroughly, ask questions about anything unclear, and consider seeking legal advice, especially if you are not in an emergency situation. Realize that often you will be going through pages and pages of documents during a stressful time.

Key Areas to Focus On

Financial Obligations:

- **Basic Daily Rate:** Ensure the contract clearly outlines what services are included in the basic daily rate and what incurs additional charges.
- **Additional Fees:** Inquire about potential extra costs for services not covered by the basic rate, like specialized care or therapies.
- **Third-Party Guarantees:** Avoid signing as a personal guarantor of payment. If you are acting as an agent or under a power of attorney, make that clear in your signature.

Services and Care:

- **Included Services:** Understand what services are included in the daily rate and what is considered extra.
- **Specific Needs:** Discuss with the facility how their services address the individual needs of the resident, including potential limitations on services.
- **Additional Services:** Inquire about the availability and cost of additional services that may be needed in the future.
- **Discharge Policy:** The contract should clearly state the reasons for discharge and the conditions under which discharge can occur.

Signing a Contract with a Long-Term Care Facility, cont.



**I'm about to sign a nursing home agreement.
What do I need to know?**

In general, Read Carefully and ask for clarification on anything unclear. If possible, have an attorney or other trusted individual review the contract before signing, especially if it's not an emergency. If you disagree with any part of the contract, cross it out, initial the change, and have the nursing home staff do the same. When signing on behalf of a resident, make it clear that you are acting as their agent, power of attorney, or guardian.

What do I need to know about memory care units?

Memory care in Virginia provides specialized care for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia within secure, structured environments. These facilities, often part of larger assisted living communities or stand-alone centers, focus on personalized care plans, cognitive-stimulating activities, and 24-hour supervision. Virginia regulations mandate specific training for staff and administrators, along with safety and security measures to protect residents.

Memory care facilities in Virginia are regulated by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and must adhere to strict guidelines for safety, staffing, and care standards.

For individuals needing a higher level of care than assisted living, memory care provides a structured and supportive environment. A diagnosis of dementia is typically required for admission, though exceptions may be made for spouses or close family members.

These facilities are designed to be safe and secure, with features like controlled access, wandering prevention systems, and emergency response protocols.

If your loved one is about to be admitted to a memory care unit, give accurate information on their cognitive state so that the facility can develop an appropriate care plan.

Signing a Contract with a Long-Term Care Facility, cont.



Additional Resources

**What Nursing Home Information is available at CMS website:
“CARE COMPARE”?** <https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare>

Under the “Resources and Information” tab you can find resources such as:

- Guide to choosing a Nursing Home (visiting, questions, comparing facilities)
- Guide to Living in a Nursing Home (brief overview of some aspects of NH life)
- Information concerning Medicare’s coverage of Nursing Homes and Skilled Nursing
- Locate potential Facilities

<https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare/?providerType=NursingHome>
(within the Care Compare Website allows you to look up government star ratings and read inspection reports)

Transitioning from Home to a **Long-Term Care Environment**



Transitioning from home to a long-term care facility can be challenging for both the individual moving and their family. It's crucial to allow time for emotional adjustment, be patient, and actively participate in the process to ease the transition. Engaging with staff, understanding the facility's routines, and fostering a strong support system are key to a successful move.

Understand the costs of long-term care and explore payment options, which may include personal savings, long-term care insurance, or government programs like Medicaid. Be aware of the median costs, such as approximately \$5,350 per month for assisted living and over \$9,000 per month for a private room in a nursing home. Consult with a financial advisor and potentially an elder law attorney to create a sustainable plan.

Both the individual moving and their family may experience a range of emotions, including sadness, guilt, or even relief. Openly discuss these feelings with each other and seek support from social workers or mental health professionals if needed.

Allow ample time for everyone to adjust to the new environment and routines. The first few visits may be uncomfortable, but with time and support, the transition can become smoother.

Highlight the benefits of the new living situation, such as increased social interaction, access to care, and a safe environment. Actively participate in care plan meetings, communicate concerns, and work with the staff to ensure your loved one's needs are being met. Regular visits from family and friends can provide comfort and support. Even short visits can make a big difference.

A Word to Family and Friends of **Long-term Care Residents**



Having a loved one in an LTC facility means you will likely be involved with various facility staff (during visits, care-planning, etc.). The better your relationship with the facility staff, the better your loved one's stay will be.

Families of residents in long-term care should strive to build positive, respectful, and communicative relationships with staff, recognizing that they are vital partners in the resident's care. This includes open communication, mutual respect, and a collaborative approach to care planning and daily routines.

Recognize that staff work long hours, often with challenging situations. Be patient, understanding, and supportive of their efforts.

Engage in shared decision-making about care plans, actively participate in activities that support the resident, and be open to working together to address challenges.

The Exercising of Residents Rights

What are my Resident Rights concisely stated?

Residents of Long-Term Care facilities have the right to:

- Respect and Dignity
- Choices about care and daily life, finances and other matters
- Safety—to be free from abuse and neglect
- Privacy in your care, personal matters, guest visits, and mail
- Information—informed of and give input to your Care Plan
- Preferences—to have reasonable preferences accommodated
- Grievance—to make a complaint without fear of punishment or retaliation
- Protection from unfair discharge—to file a complaint



What is the Role of a Long-Term Care Ombudsman?



An ombudsman is an advocate for:

- Quality of Care
- Quality of Life
- Basic Rights of Long-Term Care Recipients

An ombudsman helps those receiving care in:

- Nursing Homes
- Assisted Living Facilities
- Home and Community Settings

An ombudsman helps individuals:

- Solve problems with their care
- Understand and exercise their rights
- Obtain needed assistance

Long-Term Care Ombudsmen are:

- Solution-oriented
- Confidential
- Person-centered
- No cost

Your local Long-Term Care Ombudsman contact information is below:

- Phone: 540-471-9244
- Fax: 540-307-8526
- Email: John@VPAS.info



What if I need help with Medicaid Managed Care—who will advocate for me?

Need help with managed care under Medicaid Managed Care (Cardinal Care)
Call 804-663-7821

What is the Role of a Facility Resident Council?

Resident Council is an organized group of residents who meet regularly to discuss and address concerns about their rights, quality of care, and quality of life within the facility.

These councils provide a platform for residents to voice opinions, make recommendations, and work with facility administration to improve living conditions and overall resident satisfaction.

The council aims to improve residents' lives by discussing concerns, recommending solutions, and working with the facility to implement changes.

Facilities are typically required to provide support for resident councils, such as scheduling meetings, providing meeting spaces, and responding to recommendations.

Essentially, resident councils serve as a vital mechanism for residents to have a voice in their living environment and actively participate in shaping the quality of care and life within the facility.

As a resident, it is your right to participate in Resident Council.



Insuring Quality Care

What can families or “responsible persons” of residents do to insure quality care of their loved one?

- Visit your loved one often
- Get to know facility staff
- Participate in Care Planning
- Note changes in physical, mental, and all aspects of well-being
- Be prepared to advocate for your loved one
- Tell your loved one to participate in the facility Resident Council



Care Planning with Facility Staff:

I'm about to have a Care Plan Meeting, what do I need to know?

If you're attending a care plan meeting in an assisted living facility, it's a valuable opportunity to ensure your needs and preferences are being met. Here's what you need to know and how to prepare:

- What it is: A care plan outlines how the assisted living facility will manage your care, including health services, personal care (Activities of Daily Living or ADLs), staff involvement, frequency of services, supplies needed, dietary preferences, and your goals.
- Purpose of the meeting: To review the results of your health assessments, decide upon your care goals, collaborate with staff, adjust your individual care plan if needed, share personal preferences and input, voice concerns, ask questions, and ensure the plan remains up-to-date.
- Legal requirement: If the facility is federally funded or accepts Medicare/Medicaid, they are legally required to conduct a comprehensive assessment and create a care plan for you.
- Frequency: Meetings are typically held quarterly (every three months) or when there's a significant change in your physical or mental health requiring a care plan adjustment.
- Before the Care Plan meeting: Gather information: Identify your needs. Set goals. Write down questions. Consider who to invite.
- During the Care Plan meeting: Be vocal and share information. Participate in discussions. Understand your rights. Take notes. Focus on building positive relationships. Ask for a copy of the care plan.

Red Flags in Long-Term Care Settings



Red flags in long-term care nursing encompass a range of issues related to resident well-being, facility conditions, and staff behavior, indicating potential neglect or abuse. Key indicators include unexplained injuries, unsanitary conditions, poor hygiene, medication errors, and disrespectful or dismissive staff.

Physical Signs of Neglect and Abuse

Unexplained Injuries: Bruises, cuts, fractures, burns, or other injuries without clear explanations are major red flags, potentially indicating physical abuse or neglect.

Bedsore (Pressure Ulcers): These wounds can develop from prolonged pressure on the skin, often due to lack of repositioning or inadequate care.

Sudden Weight Loss and Dehydration: Poor nutrition and inadequate fluid intake can lead to rapid health decline.

Poor Hygiene: Dirty clothing, unwashed hair, foul odors, and soiled bedding indicate neglect of basic care.

Frequent Falls: Falls can be a sign of inadequate supervision or unsafe conditions.

Other Warning Signs in Long-Term Care Settings



- **Dirty or Unsanitary Conditions:** Cluttered hallways, unsanitary bathrooms, and presence of pests indicate a poorly maintained facility.
- **Staff Ignoring Call Lights or Taking Too Long to Respond:** Delayed or absent response to resident needs is a serious concern.
- **Medication Errors:** Missed doses or improper administration of medications can have serious health consequences.
- **Disrespectful or Dismissive Staff:** Rudeness, belittling, or intimidation from staff is a sign of potential abuse.
- **Residents Appear Withdrawn, Anxious, or Fearful:** These behaviors can indicate abuse or neglect.
- **Low Staffing Levels or High Turnover:** Inadequate staffing can lead to neglect and compromised care.
- **Poor Food Quality or Missed Meals:** Inadequate nutrition can negatively impact residents' health.
- **Limited or No Socialization Opportunities:** Lack of activities and social interaction can lead to isolation and decline.
- **Unexplained Loss of Money or Personal Items:** This can be a sign of theft or financial abuse.
- **Restricted Visiting Hours:** Limiting family visits can be a way to hide neglect or abuse.

If you have any concerns about a Long-Term Care Facility, it's crucial to:

Visit the facility and observe: Pay attention to cleanliness, staff interactions, and resident well-being.

Ask questions: Inquire about staffing levels, training, and how they handle various situations.

How do I Effectively Communicate a Concern to a Long-Term Care Facility

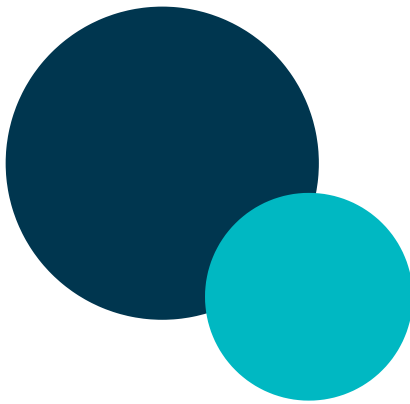


- Write down the “who, what, when, and where” facts so that you have a record
- Find the right person to voice your concern to
- Be clear as to what the problem is
- Don't use judgmental language, state the facts (be objective)
- Emphasize that you want the problem addressed
- Be willing to listen to the facility's perspective
- Ask the best way to follow up on the concern
- Write down who you spoke with and when
- Most facilities have an internal grievance process in place for formal complaints
- Know that should you need it, help is available through your ombudsman

How do I file a complaint in a Long-Term Care Facility?

Most Long-Term Care facilities have an internal grievance procedure in place for filing formal complaints. This would likely be the most expedient way to have your concern addressed by the facility. If the complaint is of a less serious nature, you may want to discuss it first with the facility administrator, the social worker, or the nursing staff (depending on the nature of the concern).

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of an internal grievance process, you can call your local long-term care ombudsman. Ombudsmen are available to answer questions you may have about your care or quality of life and can interact with facilities to attempt to resolve concerns.



Ways to File a Formal Complaint in a Long-Term Care Facility

Nursing Home or Skilled Nursing Facility

If you are filing a formal complaint with an agency, you should be as specific as you can. List names, dates, descriptions, and anything that will help an investigator look into the matter.

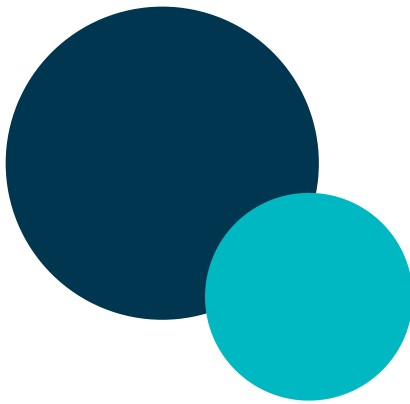
If the facility is a Nursing Home or Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF), you can file a complaint by email or by letter to the Office of Licensure and Certification Complaint Department. Their contact information is available on the Residents Rights poster in your facility.

Nursing Home (or SNF) Complaints contact info:

Complaint Unit, Office of Licensure and Certification
Virginia Department of Health
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 401
Henrico, VA 23233-1463

Hot Line Number: 800-955-1819
Local Number: 804-367-2106
Email: OLC-Complaints@vdh.virginia.gov

Online form:
<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/licensure-and-certification/complaint-unit/>



Ways to File a Formal Complaint in a Long-Term Care Facility

Assisted Living Facility, Residential Living Facility, or Hospice Provider

If the facility is an Assisted Living or Residential Living facility you can contact the Department of Social Services State Inspector. The Inspector's information is on the Resident's Rights poster in your facility.

Assisted Living, Residential Living complaints contact info:

The Division of Licensing Programs
5600 Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060
Phone: (800) 543-7545

Online form:

https://www.dss.virginia.gov/about/email_licensing_complaint.cgi

(Your local Inspector's contact info is on the Resident's Rights Posting in your facility.)

If your complaint concerns a **Hospice Provider**, you can file a complaint with your hospice provider directly. If you are uncomfortable filing a complaint with your hospice provider, or if you're dissatisfied with how your hospice provider has responded to your complaint, you can file a complaint with your BFCC-QIO by visiting [Medicare.gov/claims-appeals/file-a-complaint-grievance/filing-a-complaint-about-your-quality-of-care](https://www.medicare.gov/claims-appeals/file-a-complaint-grievance/filing-a-complaint-about-your-quality-of-care) or calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

If you have questions about which agency to speak to, contact your long-term care ombudsman.

How Do I Go About Reporting Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation?

Adult Protective Services (APS): (888) 832-3858 (report abuse to the elderly or disabled adults). APS also has local offices where abuse, neglect, or exploitation may be reported. APS will need the resident's name in order to investigate but can keep it confidential if requested.

I received a 30-day discharge notice from a Nursing Home/Skilled Nursing Facility.

What do I do if I'm not ready to leave?



If you received a facility-initiated 30-day discharge notice from a Virginia Nursing Home or Skilled Nursing Facility, you have the right to appeal the decision and remain in the facility pending the outcome of the appeal. You should request assistance from the facility to file the appeal, and you should also contact the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program for support and advocacy.

Initiating an Appeal:

The facility is obligated to assist you in filing the appeal. The appeal should be filed before the stated discharge date (but as early as possible). You have the right to remain in the facility pending the appeal's outcome.

Recognize that Nursing Homes are regulated by Federal Code, while Assisted Living Facilities are regulated by State code. Your Ombudsman can help you to understand the differences.

In some cases, a discharge may be necessary due to an immediate and serious risk to the resident's or others' health and safety. However, the facility must still document the reasons for the discharge and inform relevant parties.

A discharge notice must be in writing and in terminology and in a language you understand.

It must include:

- The reason for the discharge,
- The proposed effective date,
- The location to which you will be discharged,
- Information on your rights to appeal the discharge and have an administrative hearing,
- Contact information for the LTCOP and, if applicable, the agencies responsible for advocacy on behalf of persons with mental illness and developmental disabilities.

The notice must be given to the resident and the resident's representative. Most discharge notices must be given at least 30 days prior to the discharge date. The listed discharge location must be specific, appropriate, available, agreeable to admitting you.

I think I'm being unfairly asked to leave an Assisted Living Facility. What are my options?



As of publication of this booklet, the Virginia Department of Social Services Appeals and Fair Hearings is developing procedures for appealing an involuntary discharge from an Assisted Living Facility. Some facilities have an internal appeal process that can be utilized. Keep in mind that the contract you signed had a section where you agreed that certain actions, circumstances, or conditions would result (or might result) in discharge from the facility.

If you believe you are being unfairly discharged it is recommended that you call an ombudsman, or consult legal counsel.

If I'm being discharged from an Assisted Living Facility, what will the facility do to help me?

When discharge planning begins, the facility will document the reason for the discharge and notify the resident, the resident's legal representative, and designated contact person. Written notice of the discharge date and place of discharge will be given.

The facility will assist the resident and the legal representative in the discharge process by helping prepare for relocation, to include discussing the destination.

I have a smart phone or computer

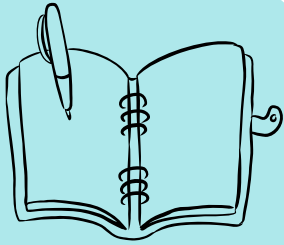
What do I need to know about scams?



As an assisted living or nursing home resident, it's crucial to be aware of and protect yourself from various scams targeting seniors. These scams often involve impersonation, financial requests, or fraudulent claims, and can be emotionally and financially devastating. Staying informed and taking preventative measures are essential for safeguarding your finances and well-being.

- Be wary of unsolicited calls and emails: Don't give out personal information to anyone who contacts you out of the blue.
- Verify requests for money: If someone asks for money, call the company or person directly using a number you know is legitimate (from your statement or the company's website).
- Don't be pressured into acting quickly: Scammers often try to create a sense of urgency to pressure you into making a decision without thinking it through.
- Talk to someone you trust: Discuss any suspicious requests with a family member, friend, or trusted staff member at your assisted living facility.
- Use strong passwords and two-factor authentication: Secure your online accounts with strong, unique passwords and enable two-factor authentication for added protection.
- Be cautious on dating apps: Be especially careful on dating apps and websites and don't send money to anyone you haven't met in person.
- Be aware of red flags: Watch out for requests for unusual payment methods (like gift cards or cryptocurrency), vague or inconsistent stories, and pressure.

How to Use the Following “Concerns Journal” Pages



Residents or families should make certain they document their complaints or concerns because facilities, ombudsmen, and state investigators will need specifics like:

- When did the situation happen?
- Who was involved?
- What happened, and when and to whom was it reported?

Concerns Journal

Date of occurrence: _____

Time of Occurrence: _____

Persons involved in occurrence: _____

What happened? _____

To whom did you report it? _____

When did you report the incident to this person? _____

Was there any follow up? _____

Other notes: _____

Concerns Journal

Date of occurrence: _____

Time of Occurrence: _____

Persons involved in occurrence: _____

What happened? _____

To whom did you report it? _____

When did you report the incident to this person? _____

Was there any follow up? _____

Other notes: _____

Concerns Journal

Date of occurrence: _____

Time of Occurrence: _____

Persons involved in occurrence: _____

What happened? _____

To whom did you report it? _____

When did you report the incident to this person? _____

Was there any follow up? _____

Other notes: _____

Concerns Journal

Date of occurrence: _____

Time of Occurrence: _____

Persons involved in occurrence: _____

What happened? _____

To whom did you report it? _____

When did you report the incident to this person? _____

Was there any follow up? _____

Other notes: _____

Concerns Journal

Date of occurrence: _____

Time of Occurrence: _____

Persons involved in occurrence: _____

What happened? _____

To whom did you report it? _____

When did you report the incident to this person? _____

Was there any follow up? _____

Other notes: _____
