Arizona Assisted Living residences are licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services (www.AZDHS.gov/als) as “assisted living centers” or “assisted living home”.

Assisted living homes are licensed for 10 beds or less and are private residential homes located in neighborhoods. Assisted living centers are licensed for 11 beds or more and offer apartment style living. Assisted Living centers and homes both offer aging in place.

Staff must be available 24 hours a day seven days a week to meet both scheduled and unscheduled needs of their residents. Assisted Living promotes maximum independence and dignity for each resident and encourages the involvement of resident’s family, neighbors, and friends. There are activities which can include outings, parties, entertainment and crafts.

Assisted Living in Arizona supports our senior’s right to be treated with dignity, choice, and independence in an environment they select.

Social & Recreational Activities

- Is there evidence of an organized activities program, such as a posted daily schedule, events in progress, reading materials or visitors?
- Do residents participate in activities outside of the residence in the neighboring community?
- Do volunteers, including family members, come into the residence to help with or conduct programs?
- Does the residence create a sense of community by encouraging residents to participate in certain activities or perform simple chores for the group as a whole?
- Are residents’ pets allowed in the residence? Who is responsible for their care?
- Does the residence have its own pets?

Food Service

- Does the residence provide three nutritionally balanced meals a day, seven days a week?
- Are snacks easily assessable?
- May a resident request special foods?
- Are common dining areas available?
- May resident’s eat meals in their units?
- Are meals provided at a time residents would like or are there set times for meals?
Individual Unit Features

- Do dining room menus vary day to day and meal to meal?
- Are different sizes and types of living space available?
- Are apartments for single and double occupancy available?
- Do resident’s have their own lockable doors?
- Is a 24-hour emergency response system accessible from the unit?
- Are bathrooms private with handicapped accommodations for wheelchairs and walkers?
- Are resident’s able to bring their own furnishings and what may they bring?
- Do all units have a telephone and cable TV and how is billing handled?
- Is a kitchen area/unit provided with a refrigerator, sink and cooking element?
- May resident's keep food and cook in their living area?

What are the Levels of Care in Assisted Living?

Supervisory care services means general supervision, including daily awareness of resident functioning and continuing needs, the ability to intervene in a crisis and assistance in the self-administration of prescribed medications.

Personal care services means assistance with activities of daily living (ADL’s) that can be performed by persons without professional skills or professional training and includes the coordination or provision of intermittent nursing services and the administration of medications and treatments by a nurse who is licensed pursuant to Title 32, Chapter 15 or as otherwise provided by law.

Directed care services means programs and services, including personal care services, provided to persons who are incapable of recognizing danger, summoning assistance, expressing need or making basic care decisions.

These are the only levels of care within assisted living. These levels allow for aging in place as long as the provider is able to meet your scheduled and unscheduled needs.

Before moving in ask the community at what point you may be require to move to a different community.
How is Assisted Living Regulated in Arizona?

Assisted Living centers and homes are licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). All buildings are surveyed by ADHS and those results are posted to the ADHS website (http://www.azdhs.gov/als/hcb/index.htm). Survey results are also available at each center and home upon request.

When reviewing survey results, the deficiencies to focus on are those that relate to health and wellness or resident safety. If questions arise about the information contained in the survey, contact either ADHS or Arizona ALFA. Assisted Living centers and homes are both licensed by ADHS and offer the exact same levels of care.

Assisted Living Managers are licensed by the Arizona Board of Examiners for Nursing Care Institutions and Assisted Living Facilities Managers. Each manager is required to attend a managers’ training class and pass a licensing test before they receive their assisted living managers license.

Services

- Ask the residence to provide a list of services available.
- Ask if the staff is **awake and available** to provide 24-hour assistance with activities of daily living (ADL’s) if needed? ADL’s include:
  - Dressing
  - Eating
  - Mobility
  - Hygiene and grooming
  - Bathing, toileting and incontinence
  - Shopping
  - Laundry
- Does the residence provide housekeeping services in resident’s unit?
- Does the residence provide transportation to doctor’s offices, the hairdresser, shopping and other activities desired by resident’s? If not, how are you suppose to get to appointments?
- Can residents arrange for transportation on short notice?
- Are pharmacy services offered on-site? If not, what delivery system is available?
- Are barber or beautician services offered on-site?
- Are physical therapy services offered on-site?
Medication & Health Care

- Does the residence have specific policies regarding storage of medication, assistance with medications, training and supervision of staff and record keeping?
- What type of self-administration of medication does the community support?
- Is there a staff person to coordinate home care visits from a nurse, physical therapist, occupational therapist, etc. as needed?
- Are staff available to assist residents who experience memory, orientation, or judgment losses?
- Does a physician or nurse visit the resident regularly to provide medical checkups?
- Does the residence have a clearly stated procedure for responding to a resident’s medical emergency?
- To what extent are medical services available, and how are these services provided?

What Services Are Offered in Assisted Living?

Assisted living residences are licensed to provide health-related services. They offer a less expensive, more residential approach to delivering many of the same services available in a skilled nursing facility. Providers form strategic alliances on an as-needed basis with home care agencies and other outside professionals. The services available in assisted living typically include:

- Three meals a day served in a dining room along with one snack
- Medication management and assistance
- Housekeeping services
- Transportation (check who is responsible for transporting the resident to doctors’ appointments)
- Assistance with eating, bathing, dressing, toileting and walking
- Access to health and medical services
- 24-hour security and staff availability
- Emergency call system for each resident’s unit
- Health promotion and exercise programs
- Personal laundry services
- Social and recreational activities
What About Cost?

Costs vary with the residence, unit size, and the types of services needed. In Arizona the monthly basic fees range from approximately $1500 to $5000 - generally less expensive than nursing home care. The basic rate may cover all services, but there may be additional charges for special services. There may also be fees based on levels of care. Make sure you ask each community how they bill for their services. Most assisted living residences charge month-to-month rates, but a few require long-term arrangements.

Who Pays the Bill for an Assisted Living Resident?

 Residents or their families generally pay the cost of care from their own financial resources. Depending on the nature of an individual’s health insurance program or long-term care insurance policy, some costs may be reimbursable. Arizona’s form of Medicaid is called Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS). ALTCS provides for the residents care and their social security pays for room and board. For more information visit their website at http://www.ahcccs.state.az.us/SERVICES/Programs/ALTCS.asp.

Physical Features

- Is the community well-designed for resident’s needs?
- Is the floor plan easy to follow?
- Are doorways, hallways and room accommodating to wheelchairs and walkers?
- Are elevators available for those unable to use stairways?
- Are hand rails available to aid in walking?
- Are cupboards and shelves easy to reach?
- Are floors of a non-skid material and carpet firm to ease walking?
- Does the residence have good natural and artificial lighting?
- Is the residence clean, free of odors and appropriately heated/cooled?
- Does the residence meet local and/or state licensing requirements?
Needs Assessments, Contracts, Costs and Finances

- Is there a written plan for care of each resident?
- Is staff available to meet scheduled and unscheduled needs?
- Does the residence have a process for assessing a potential resident’s need for services and are those needs addressed periodically?
- Does this process include the resident, their family and community staff along with the potential resident’s physician?
- When may a contract be terminated and what are the refund policies?
- Are there any government, private or corporate programs available to help cover the cost of services to the resident?
- Is a contractual agreement available to include accommodations, personal care, health care and supportive services?
- Are additional services available if the resident’s needs change?
- Is there a procedure to pay for additional services when the services are needed on a temporary basis?
- Are there different costs for various levels or categories of services?
- Do billing, payment and credit policies seem fair and reasonable?
- May a resident handle their own finances, or should a family member or outside party be designated to do so?
- Are residents required to purchase renters’ insurance for personal property in their units?

How to Find an Assisted Living Residence

- Call Arizona ALFA for assistance in locating the perfect community in your state (602) 322-0100.
- Review Arizona ALFA’s member’s directory listing at www.azalfa.org.
- Visit the Arizona Department of Health Service’s website to view a complete listing of licensed properties, surveys and enforcement actions.
Checklist

The Arizona Assisted Living Guide and Checklist provides information to begin the journey of finding the right assisted living residence for you or a loved one. From how to locate an assisted living residences, to what to look for, and the questions to ask when visiting the community, this guide will assist you through the entire process.

During your search it is very important that you assess all of your present and possible future needs. It is important to assess any needs as they are now and ask each provider how they can and will accommodate changes over time.

We hope this checklist will assure you that the residence you choose will be one of the highest quality and meet your requirements.

Consider the following as you evaluate the various assisted living residences:

Atmosphere

- As you arrive at the residence, do you like its location and outward appearance?
- As you enter the lobby and visit the residence, is the décor attractive and homelike?
- Did you receive a warm greeting from staff welcoming you?
- Does the staff call residents by name and interact warmly with them as you tour the residence?
- Do residents socialize with each other and appear happy and comfortable?
- Are you able to talk with residents about how they like the residence and staff?
- Do the residents seem to be appropriate house mates for you or your loved one?
- Are staff appropriately dressed, personable and outgoing?
- Do the staff members treat each other in a professional manner?
- Are the staff members that you pass during your tour friendly?
- Are visits with the resident welcome at any time?