

Guide
to
Choosing
Care
in an
Adult
Family
Home
or
Boarding
Home



*Aging &
Adult Services
Administration (AASA)*

*Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services*

Even though you feel a decision must be made quickly, it's important to spend time learning about the different services. Don't be rushed; ask for help and explanations from people who have experience with these services.



Are you looking for care, for yourself or another person? This can be a difficult and confusing time. There are many different services available and many terms that will be new to you. This brochure provides a quick reference about **adult family homes** and **boarding homes**, two options for long-term care in the community.

Review Your Needs

Your first step is to carefully consider what care and help you or your loved one require. Make a list of medical, physical, and social needs.

For example

- Does someone need to do your laundry and cooking?
- Do you need help getting to the bathroom or with dressing?
- Do you need reminders to take a medication regularly?

Ask For Information

Depending on your financial situation, staff from your local Home and Community Services office or Area Agency on Aging can help you with this assessment. The staff person can visit you at your home to assess your needs, choices, and resources. He or she will help you identify services to meet your needs.

It may be that personal care or health services provided in the home are what's needed. For instance, you can have help in your home with bathing, dressing, laundry or housecleaning. You can have meals delivered to your home. Some people may need assistive equipment, such as a walker, wheelchair or hospital bed, to stay at home. Home modifications can make a house or apartment more accessible and safer for someone who uses such equipment.

On the back of this brochure are numbers for regional Home and Community Service (HCS) offices. When you call this number, they will refer you to your local office. Or you can call the statewide toll-free HelpLine at 1-800-422-3263 to get your local number. Local staff will help you make these important decisions.

You can also call 1-800-422-3263 to borrow a free video, **Options: You Have A Choice**. This 15-minute video shows different types of long-term care in Washington State, including adult family homes, adult residential care, and assisted living services.

If you decide on an adult family home or boarding home

Invest the time and energy to make the best possible decision. You should visit more than one facility. There is a wide range of adult family homes and boarding homes in Washington State. Some boarding homes will have a state contract to provide assisted living, adult residential care, or enhanced adult residential care services. It's important to pick a good match for the person needing care.

It is best if you visit and compare two or three homes; you don't have to move into the first one you see. Explore the reputation of each facility you visit. Use several sources:

- Ask the provider to show you the last state inspection report.
- Ask for references from former residents and their family members.
- Call the local Adult Family Home office for information regarding complaints. (See the back page for numbers to call.)
- Call the Department of Health for information and complaints about boarding homes. (See the back page for the number to call.)
- All adult family homes must be licensed. Be sure that any home you visit has a current Washington State license.

Some definitions...

Adult Family Homes are residential homes licensed to care for up to six residents. They provide room, board, laundry, necessary supervision, assistance with activities of daily living, personal care, and social services. Some provide nursing care.

Assisted Living is a licensed boarding home that offers private apartments; this service emphasizes privacy, independence, and personal choice. Services include meals, personal care, medication assistance, limited supervision, organized activities, and limited nursing services.

Adult Residential Care (ARC) facilities are licensed boarding homes. They provide room and board and help with medications and personal care. Residents may have limited supervision.

Enhanced Adult Residential Care offers the same as ARC, with the addition of limited nursing care.

If you have a fax machine...

If you have access to a fax machine, you can use the Community Resource System to find out about vacancies in Adult Family Homes and Boarding Homes. You can request the information by zip code or by county. Call toll-free 1-800-372-0186 and follow the directions that you are given.

*This checklist
will help you choose
a qualified facility
that meets your needs.*



Costs and Finances

Ask for the basic rates. It's a good idea to get this information in writing.

- What services are covered by these rates?
- Are there charges additional to these rates?
- What are the payment policies?
- What is the refund policy if someone leaves before the end of a month?
- Be sure to ask about the policy for rate increases.

Surroundings

- As you arrive, do you like the location and outward appearance?
- 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 look like people you will want to live with?
- Are staff suitably dressed, personable, and outgoing?
- Do the staff members treat residents with respect and dignity?
- Do staff members treat each other in a professional manner?
- Will there be adequate supervision?

Think about the facility's location.

- Is it close to friends and relatives?
- Is it on a noisy street?
- Are there shops, a library, a park, or other amenities within walking distance? Is it close to activities you enjoy?
- Is it on a bus line?
- Is there an outside area to sit, walk, or garden?

Ask about staff.

- Who will provide the needed personal care?
- Who will provide any nursing care?
- Is staff available to meet scheduled and unscheduled needs?
- What language do they speak?
- Is there frequent turnover of staff?

Remember, it will probably be the staff, rather than the owner, who provide the day-to-day care.

Physical Setting

- Is the floor plan easy to follow?
- Are doorways, hallways, and rooms accommodating to wheelchairs and walkers?
- Are there hand rails to help with walking and in the bathrooms?
- Are cupboards and shelves easy to reach?
- Are there nonskid floors and firm carpets to assist walking?
- Does the facility have good natural and artificial lighting?
- Is the facility clean, free of odors, and well heated and cooled?
- Does the facility meet your standards of cleanliness?
- Is the facility free from obvious hazards?
- Are the facility's rooms clean, safe, and adequate for your needs?
- Will you have free use of the kitchen?
 - Activity rooms? Toilet facilities?
 - Dining room? Grounds?
- Can residents smoke in their rooms? In public spaces?

See the room.

- What pieces of furniture are provided?
- Is there a chair, a reading lamp, and an overhead light?
- Is there a sit-down shower?
- Can you bring along some of your own furniture or other personal items?

Services and Activities

- Are doctors, nurses, and emergency assistance available if needed?
- Who will take you to doctors' appointments?
- Can residents arrange for transportation on fairly short notice?
- How will needed specialized services, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, or recreational therapy, be arranged?
- What recreational activities are available?
- Will you be able to attend religious services of your choice?

Ask about procedures for emergencies.

- Are emergency procedures clearly posted throughout the facility?
- Do staff know what they are?

What are house policies?

- Does each resident get a copy of house policies and resident rights?
- Ask about policies regarding visitors and pets.

What are the schedules?

- Must everyone get up and eat at the same time or is the facility flexible?
- Are there regularly planned activities that you will enjoy?

- Will staff plan for **your** activities, such as a hair appointment or regular poker game?
- Will staff work out a plan of care with you to meet your needs?

Food

Be sure to make at least one visit at a meal time.

- Is the food pleasing, nutritious, adequate, and attractively served?
- Are snacks available?
- Are there specific meal times, or can you snack throughout the day or evening?
- Will the facility meet your dietary or cultural food preferences? Can residents request special foods?

It's best to visit the facility several times.

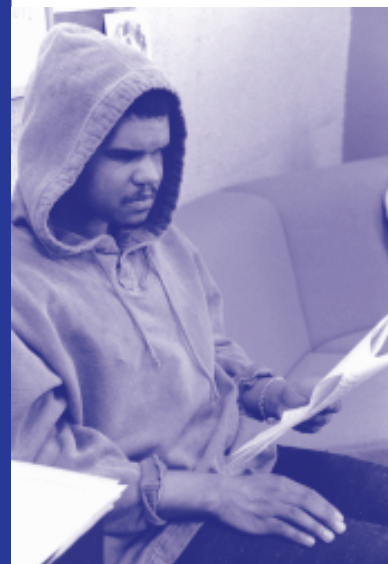
Visit one time unannounced. Visit again at meal time. Spend some time to sit around and visit; this will give you a better idea what it would be like to live there.

Most importantly...

Does the adult family home or boarding home meet **your** needs? If there are special needs, such as Alzheimer's disease care or mental health, are staff trained in these areas?

If you need special health care or physical assistance, can the facility provide it?

The person who will live in the adult family home or boarding home has the last word about the facility; their wishes and preferences are the most important part of this process.



Making the change into a new living situation can be difficult, but the rewards can be great. You should congratulate yourself for taking the initiative to search out the best place to meet your needs.



If You Decide to Move In

Once you find the right residence, take along special furniture, photographs, books, or other personal mementos. These will help ease the transition.

Make a list.

It's good to make a written list of all possessions and clothing. Keep one copy, and be sure to give a copy to the adult family home or boarding home operator or staff.

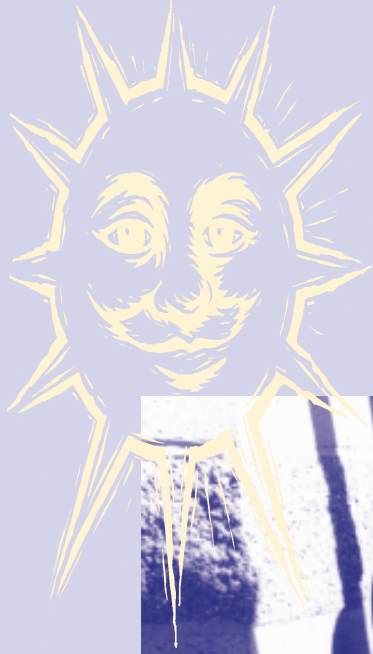
Expect an adjustment period after you move in.

There may be sleeping problems, confusion, or periods of being homesick. These are all normal. You may need to make some changes in your usual routines. It's important also to discuss your adjustment with the adult family home/boarding home operator. The staff may be able to make changes that will better meet your needs. Don't suffer in silence! Be sure to ask for what you need.

It's a good idea to sit down with the adult family home/boarding home operator after a few weeks to discuss the situation. Is this arrangement working? Communicate about any changes that may be in order.

As a resident of an adult family home or boarding home, you have certain consumer rights, guaranteed by law. The owner or staff should inform you of these rights.

Remember, by asking lots of questions, you will be able to choose the best adult family home or boarding home for **you**.



Statewide Boarding Home Information

1-800-526-6297

If you are concerned about abuse, neglect, or nurse delegation in an adult family home or boarding home, call

**1-800-562-6078 (voice)
or 1-800-737-7931 (TTY).**

It is the policy of the Department of Social and Health Services that people shall not be discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, age, or disability.

To order more copies of this brochure, send a FAX request to the DSHS Warehouse. In the request, state the name of this brochure, the publication number DSHS 22-707(X) and the number of copies you want. There is a maximum of 500 copies per order. Order any DSHS brochure with an "X" after its publication number from the DSHS Warehouse.

DSHS Warehouse
FAX number 360/664-0597

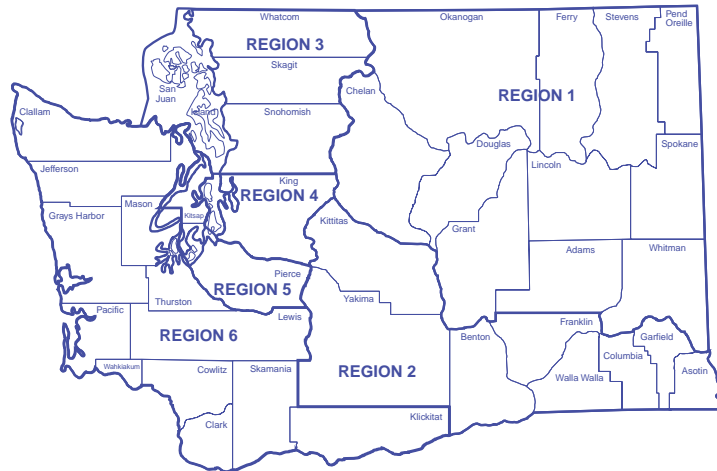
This information is available in alternate format. Call 360/493-2632.



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Photos by Carol Huff



Home and Community Services Regional Phone Numbers

(See above map to find your Region. Staff can visit you, assess your needs, and help you find a vacancy)

Region 1	1-800-459-0421 509/323-9400	Region 4	1-800-346-9257 206/587-5620
Region 2	1-800-822-2097 509/575-2006	Region 5	1-800-442-5129 206/597-3600
Region 3	1-800-487-0416 360/428-1434	Region 6	1-800-462-4957 360/438-8840

Adult Family Home Area Offices

(Staff can provide licensing and complaint information on facilities in your county.)

Area 1	509/456-3911	Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Chelan, Douglas, Lincoln, Grant, Adams, Spokane, and Whitman Counties
Area 2	509/456-3911	Kittitas, Yakima, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties
Area 3	360/653-0591	Whatcom, San Juan, Skagit, Island, and Snohomish Counties
Area 4	206/587-4285	King County
Area 5	253/597-4160	Pierce, Kitsap, Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, and Mason Counties
Area 6	360/493-2546	Thurston, Lewis, Cowlitz, Clark, Pacific, Skamania, Klickitat, and Wahkiakum Counties

Your Local Number