

Assisted Living and Independent/Supportive Living Residences

Assisted Living Residences (Registered)

Assisted Living residences offer housing, hospitality services and personal assistance to adults who can live independently but require regular help with daily activities. By law, in order to carry the Assisted Living designation, these residences must be registered with the provincial government. In BC, this is the [Assisted Living Registrar's Office](#).

Accommodation can range from private rooms with lockable doors in a home, to an apartment-style building with private self-contained suites, usually with their own bathrooms and cooking facilities. The residence provides a place where people can eat together and socialize.

Assisted Living operators provide five hospitality services: meals, housekeeping, laundry, social and recreational opportunities and a 24 hour emergency response system. Residents also receive personal assistance with activities of daily living, such as eating, dressing, bathing, grooming and mobility and reminders or assistance with medications.

Assisted Living is intended for people who are able to choose and direct the services they receive (often referred to as being able to make decisions on their own behalf or direct their own care).

Assisted Living services are delivered in both publicly funded residences (subsidized by the local Health Authority and BC Housing) and in non-publicly funded (private pay) residences, in which residents are responsible for all costs. Some residences have both publicly funded and non-publicly funded units.

Independent / Supportive Living Residences

Independent / Supportive Living residences offer housing and usually one or more services to assist the resident. Possibly help with grooming, bathing, shopping, providing meals, transport to appointments, etc. Residents are independent for the most part, but may like to have, or require a little bit of assistance in their daily routines.

Independent / Supportive Living residences do not have the same obligations as Assisted Living residences to provide specific services such as the five hospitality services: meals, housekeeping, laundry, social and recreational opportunities and a 24 hour emergency response system.

Independent / Supportive Living residences may have any number of units. It may be a multi-unit complex or a home residence with a couple suites or bedrooms that are rented out on a monthly basis.

Independent Living / Supportive Living residential complexes often provide seniors with a lifestyle that can be compared with a stay in a luxury hotel. The difference is that the

stay doesn't end after a few days or weeks. Elegant décor, fine dining and regularly planned activities make this the ideal "getaway". Facilities will often have an in-house convenience store, library, pool, billiards room, craft room, exercise room, lounge and rooms for private functions. They may have a guest suite that can be booked by residents for out-of-town visitors. Shuttle buses can take those residents who don't drive to malls or on short outings.

Small home residences that offer independent or supportive housing may not have the deluxe decor or extensive amenities of a multi-unit complex, but can provide a very home-like atmosphere and personal touches. More and more home owners are expanding or opening their homes to several "guests". Accommodations may range from your own suite to a bedroom in a shared residence with the home owner. Most often these situations provide some level of supervision to ensure the resident stays safe, but are mainly there to provide companionship and socializing in a family-like setting. Often this will appeal to seniors who can care for themselves without outside assistance but who live alone and are struggling with isolation, lack of stimulation, and often a degree of concern for their well-being should they have an accident with no one around.

It is up to the individual residence to establish their own criteria as far as what they will or won't do for the resident. In considering such a residence it is important to get a written outline of what services are or are not available. You will also want to inquire into the staffing, security features, exit processes (e.g. if your health deteriorates can you bring staff in to assist you, or are you obligated to move out of the residence?)

Some provinces have established a legal "bill of rights" for seniors in residences. You may want to inquire into whether your province has this in place, and what those "rights" are.

Although they may appear similar, there is a difference between Independent / Supportive Living and Assisted Living. Independent Living / Supportive residences welcome retired adults who are capable of managing their own personal care.

Assisted Living residents have access to additional support services to assist with activities such as grooming, dressing, bathing or taking medications.

Independent / Supportive Living housing units typically provide a combination of private living space with a lockable door, monitoring and emergency support, optional meal services, housekeeping, laundry, social and recreational opportunities. Housing units may be large or small in scale and may include rented, owned or life-leased options.