



YOUR RIGHTS, YOUR COMMUNITY

The Resident's Guide to
Managed Residential
Communities in Connecticut



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Connecticut State Long Term Care Ombudsman Message to New and Existing Residents and Their Families

Dear Residents and Families,

Welcome to our consumer guide for new and prospective residents moving into Managed Residential Communities and receiving Assisted Living Services across Connecticut, and a heartfelt continuation to our existing residents. As your Connecticut State Long Term Care Ombudsman, my office is dedicated to supporting your experience in a dignified, respectful, and enjoyable living environment.

Understanding Your Managed Residential Community's Offerings

Our managed residential communities provide more than just housing—they offer a supportive and caring environment where independence is encouraged alongside the provision of necessary personal care. Our goal is for all residents to enjoy a vibrant, active lifestyle supported by services that cater to individual needs. Each community within the state has its unique array of services, activities, and amenities designed to enhance your daily living and healthcare needs. We encourage every new, prospective, and existing resident and their families to familiarize themselves with these offerings. Understanding what your community provides helps ensure that it aligns with your expectations and care requirements.

Your Rights as Residents

In Connecticut, the rights of residents receiving assisted living services at a managed residential community are protected under the Resident's Bill of Rights. Some of the rights include that your privacy, dignity, and autonomy are respected. Whether you are moving in or have been a resident for some time, it's crucial to understand these rights. If you ever feel these rights are not being upheld, I encourage you to reach out to my office.

Support from the Ombudsman Program

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is here to assist you and your families with any questions, concerns, or issues that may arise. We are committed to resolving conflicts, providing guidance on care options, and ensuring that your voices are heard, valued, and acted upon.

Engagement and Active Participation

Active participation in community life is highly encouraged. Engaging in activities, attending community meetings, and being involved in decision-making processes enrich your living experience and help ensure that the community meets the collective needs of its residents.

Reach Out for Assistance

Please do not hesitate to contact our office for support, whether you are navigating a concern, need assistance, or wish to share feedback about your experiences. Phone: 1-866-388-1888 | Email: LTCOP@CT.GOV | Website: <https://portal.ct.gov/ltcop>

Whether you are just beginning to consider assisted living, planning to move, or are already a part of our community, know that my team and I are here to support and advocate for you. Together, we work to ensure that your experience is positive, fulfilling, and aligned with the highest standards of care and respect.

Warm Regards,



Mairead Painter
Connecticut State Long Term Care Ombudsman

About Managed Residential Communities and Assisted Living Services in Connecticut

Overview of Managed Residential Communities (MRCs):

Managed Residential Communities in Connecticut are designed to support adults aged 55 and older and those who require assistance with daily living activities can enroll with the Assisted Living Services affiliated with the MRC. MRCs, coupled with Assisted Living Service Agencies (ALSAs), provide a supportive environment where residents can maintain an independent lifestyle while receiving the care they need.

Regulation of MRCs and Assisted Living Service Agencies:

- **Federal Regulations:** There are no federal regulations specifically targeting managed residential communities or assisted living services, although there is a growing advocacy and legislative interest in establishing federal regulations for assisted living services. There are however some federal influences such as the Americans with Disability Act and the Fair Housing Act which ensure that communities meet accessibility standards and prohibit discrimination in housing.
- **Connecticut General Assembly Statutes:** Managed Residential Communities (MRC's) in Connecticut operate under specific [state statutes that govern their functioning](#)¹, ensuring compliance with both general regulations and the state's [landlord-tenant statutes](#)². These communities must uphold tenant rights as outlined in Connecticut's laws that govern residential or apartment style settings. Additionally, if a Managed Residential Community includes a specialized Alzheimer's or memory care unit, it must meet more stringent requirements, including specialized staff training and operational standards detailed in CT General Statutes (CGS) section [19a-562](#)³. Furthermore, CGS section [19a-564](#)⁴ addresses the licensure requirements for Assisted Living Services Agencies (ALSAs), which play a crucial role in providing services within MRCs. CGS section [19a-699](#)⁵ further clarifies the relationship between ALSAs and MRCs, emphasizing their integration and the responsibilities of each within the context of assisted living care.
- **Connecticut Department of Public Health Regulations (DPH):** Unlike many states, Connecticut does not license the physical setting of MRC's directly. Instead, the CT Department of Public Health licenses and regulates the Assisted Living Services Agencies that operate within MRCs. These agencies are responsible for providing assisted living services as

¹ Connecticut General Assembly. (n.d.). *Chapter 368bb - Health care institutions*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_368bb.htm

² Connecticut General Assembly. (n.d.). *Title 47a - Landlord and Tenant*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/title_47a.htm

³ Connecticut General Assembly. (n.d.). *Chapter 368v - Public health and well-being: Section 19a-562 - Alzheimer's special care units or programs*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_368v.htm#sec_19a-562

⁴ Connecticut General Assembly. (n.d.). *Chapter 368v - Public health and well-being: Section 19a-564 - Licensure of assisted living services agencies*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_368v.htm#sec_19a-564

⁵ Connecticut General Assembly. (n.d.). *Chapter 368v - Public health and well-being: Section 19a-699 - Assisted living services agencies in managed residential communities*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_368v.htm#sec_19a-699

outlined in state regulations (Conn. Agencies Reg. § [19-13-D105](#)⁶). An MRC may either work with an affiliated licensed ALSA or contract with an outside ALSA to provide necessary services.

- **Core Services Required by MRCs:** A managed residential community shall provide or arrange to make available the following core services to its tenants who choose to use any or all of the core services:
 - regularly scheduled meal service for three (3) meals per day;
 - regularly scheduled laundry service for personal laundry and linens;
 - regularly scheduled transportation for personal shopping, social and recreational events, health care appointments and similar needs and for which public bus transportation shall not qualify as the only form of transportation;
 - regularly scheduled housekeeping services;
 - maintenance service for tenants' living units, including chore services for routine domestic tasks that the tenant is unable to perform; and
 - programs of social and recreational opportunities.

A managed residential community shall also provide:

- a formally established program that provides tenants with twenty-four (24) hour a day security designed to protect tenants from intruders;
- an emergency call system in each living unit;
- on-site washers and dryers sufficient to meet the needs of the tenants; and
- common use space that is sufficient in size to accommodate at least fifty percent (50%) of the tenant population.

Additionally, it should be noted that a "Private residential unit" means a living environment belonging to a tenant(s) that includes a full bathroom within the unit including a water closet, lavatory, tub or shower bathing unit and access to facilities and equipment for the preparation and storage of food.

Staffing and Special Care Units:

- **Staffing Requirements:** Each MRC that engages an ALSA must have an on-site service coordinator. This coordinator ensures services are provided to all residents and assists with daily needs arrangements. Additionally, ALSAs must appoint an assisted living service agency supervisor, who is a Connecticut licensed registered nurse (RN). This RN oversees the adequacy of licensed nurse staffing, which must meet specific requirements based on the number of residents and assisted living aides.
- **Memory Care Units:** Some MRCs include secure units specifically for residents with a diagnosis of probable Alzheimer's disease, dementia or other similar disorder. All direct care staff in memory care units are required to complete annual dementia-specific training. Statutes covering those requirements are outlined in CT General Statutes section [19a-562](#)⁷.

⁶ Connecticut State Department of Public Health. (n.d.). *Regulations of Connecticut state agencies: Section 19-13-d105 - Assisted living services agencies*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/RCSA?id=Title_19Subtitle_19-13-DSection_19-13-d105&content=19-13-d105/

⁷ Connecticut General Assembly. (n.d.). *Chapter 368v - Public health and well-being: Section 19a-562 - Alzheimer's special care units or programs*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_368v.htm#sec_19a-562

Industry Overview and Costs:

- **Facility and Ownership Statistics:** As of 2024, Connecticut had 152 MRCs and 122 ALSAs serving nearly 9,000 assisted living apartment units. About 60% of all MRCs and ALSAs are part of national or regional chains, with the remainder being regionally owned, part of state chains, or publicly funded.⁸ Further, Managed Residential communities in the state are owned and operated by both for profit, and non-profit organizations.
- **Cost of Living:** The average cost for traditional assisted living in Connecticut was \$6,300 per month or \$75,000 annually in 2020. Memory care services, which require more specialized care, typically cost 20-30% more.⁹

Choosing a Managed Residential Community

Assessing Needs:

Choosing the right Managed Residential Community is a critical decision for ensuring your well-being and happiness, or the well-being and happiness of a loved one. This process can feel daunting, but by using comprehensive guides and resources, you can simplify your decision-making and focus on finding a community that prioritizes autonomy and independence. Below are expanded guidelines to help you in this important selection process:

Understanding the Philosophy of Assisted Living:

- Managed Residential Communities are designed to support residents in living as independently as possible, providing the right balance of assistance and autonomy. Despite these ideals, real-world challenges can make these goals difficult to achieve. Familiarize yourself with each community's mission and operational philosophy to ensure it aligns with your expectations of promoting resident independence and choice.

Comprehensive Evaluation:

- **Guides and Resources:** Utilize guides developed by reputable organizations like the [Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled \(CIAD\)](#) and the [Nursing Home Community Coalition of New York State](#)¹⁰, which are supported by grants from foundations such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. These guides are tailored to assist potential residents, current residents, facility managers, and staff to collaboratively work towards a community where decision-making and independence are actualized.
- **Initial Assessment:** Start by evaluating the potential resident's needs. Consider whether the community's philosophy aligns with their desire for independence and if the services offered meet their current and future needs.

Visiting and Assessing Communities:

- **Multiple Visits:** Make multiple visits at different times to get a true sense of the community's operation. An unannounced visit can also provide a clearer picture of everyday life in the facility.

⁸ Connecticut General Assembly. (2022). *Assisted Living Facilities Licensing and Regulation* (OLR Research Report No. 2022-R-0269). Retrieved from <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2022/rpt/pdf/2022-R-0269.pdf>

⁹ [Connecticut General Assembly. \(2022\).](#)

¹⁰ Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled. (2023). *Assisted living guide*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from <https://ciadny.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Assisted-Living-Guide-1.pdf>

- **Focused Observations:** Pay attention to how staff interact with residents and whether they treat them with respect and dignity. Notice if the environment feels home-like and supports independence.
- **Detailed Questions:** Prepare a list of detailed questions to ask during visits, focusing on resident service plans, the involvement of residents in decision-making, and speak to staff about how the community handles the increasing needs of residents as they age. You can use the [Consumer Expectations Checklist](#) in Appendix A as a starting point or develop your own all together.

Special Considerations for Dementia Care:

- Facilities that offer specialized memory care should have staff trained specifically for dementia care and enhanced supervision in that area. Check if the staff has required trainings especially for special memory care areas.

Advocacy and Planning Ahead:

- **Resource Utilization:** Refer to resources like '[Piecing Together Quality Long-Term Care](#)'¹¹ from the Consumer Voice and other resources mentioned earlier in this Guide to understand all aspects of living in a managed residential community.
- **Plan Ahead:** Avoid making decisions during a crisis by planning ahead. Understand the contractual obligations, costs involved, and the level of care provided.

Integration and Community Engagement:

- Consider how well the managed residential community integrates with the surrounding community. Accessibility to local amenities and social and religious centers can significantly impact the quality of life for residents. Evaluate how the community supports involvement with external community activities, ensuring residents maintain their social connections and hobbies.

Financial Considerations and Rights:

- Discuss the financial implications of moving to a managed residential community. Understand the fee structure, any potential increases, and what those fees cover. Familiarize yourself with the residents' rights to ensure they are upheld.

Continuous Evaluation and Advocacy:

- Once a community is chosen, continue to evaluate the living conditions and care provided. Engage with resident and family councils to advocate for improvements and address any concerns that arise.

By using these guidelines and harnessing the power of detailed, consumer-focused resources, families can make informed decisions that honor the preferences and needs of their loved ones, ensuring a fulfilling and independent life in a Managed Residential Community.

¹¹ National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care. (2011). *Piecing together quality long-term care: A consumer's guide to choices and advocacy*. Retrieved from <https://ltcombudsman.org/uploads/files/support/piecing-together-quality-long-term-care.pdf>

Reviewing your Residency Agreement

When you decide to move into a managed residential community one of the most important documents you will encounter is the residency agreement. This legal contract outlines the mutual obligations and expectations between you (the resident) and the community. It is designed to clarify key aspects such as services provided, costs, policies, and procedures for handling complaints.

The Role and Function of a Residency Agreement

- 1. Transparency and Clarity:** The residency agreement serves as a comprehensive guide that details all aspects of living in the MRC. It includes information on the services you can expect, the charges applicable for different services, and the conditions under which refunds are provided. This transparency is crucial in setting clear expectations from the outset.
- 2. Protection of Rights:** This document also delineates your rights as a resident and the responsibilities of the community. By having these rights and responsibilities in writing, the agreement empowers you to claim the services and respect you are entitled to, and it provides a legal basis for resolving any disputes that may arise.
- 3. Empowerment Through Information:** Understanding the details of your residency agreement can significantly empower you as a resident. It enables you to make informed decisions about your care and to be an active participant in the planning of your day-to-day life within the community.

Tips for Reviewing Your Residency Agreement

- 1. Take Your Time:** Before signing the residency agreement, take ample time to read through it carefully. Do not feel pressured to sign it immediately. Consider consulting with a trusted family member, friend, or legal advisor who can help interpret and understand the details.
- 2. Understand the Services and Fees:** Make sure you fully understand what services are included in your monthly fee and what services might incur additional costs. For written residency agreements entered on and after October 1, 2024, this includes the manner in which the managed residential community may adjust monthly fees or other recurring fees, including, but not limited to, (A) how often fee increases may occur, (B) the schedule or specific dates of such increases, and (C) the history of fee increases over the past three calendar years. This understanding is crucial to avoid unexpected expenses.¹²
- 3. Check the Complaint Procedure:** Familiarize yourself with the procedure for making complaints. Knowing how to voice concerns effectively is vital for resolving any issues that may arise during your stay. Understand that complaints regarding the ALSA care and services can be sent to DPH for investigation.
- 4. Review Policies on Refunds and Contract Termination:** Pay special attention to the policies regarding refunds and the conditions under which you or the community can terminate the agreement. These clauses are crucial for understanding your financial and legal commitments.
- 5. Right to Review:** Remember, you have the right to review and negotiate the terms of the residency agreement before signing. If there are clauses that you find unfavorable or unclear, discuss these with the community Executive Director.

¹² Connecticut General Assembly. *Public Act No. 24-141: An Act Concerning Room Occupancy Limits in Long-Term Care Facilities*. 2024. <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2024/ACT/PA/PDF/2024PA-00141-R00HB-05046-PA.PDF>

By thoroughly understanding and carefully reviewing your residency agreement, you equip yourself with the knowledge to advocate for your needs and rights effectively, ensuring a more fulfilling and respectful living experience in the community.

Exercising Your Rights as a Managed Residential Community Resident

Resident's Bill of Rights:

Managed Residential Communities (MRCs) in Connecticut operate under specific statutory and regulatory frameworks designed to ensure the safety, dignity, and autonomy of residents. These communities are primarily regulated under Chapter 368bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, including Section [19a-697](#)¹³, which outlines the Resident's Bill of Rights. Additionally, the Assisted Living Service Agency must comply with public health regulations, specifically Section [19-13-D105](#)¹⁴ of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, which stipulate operational requirements and service standards for assisted living services within these communities.

Resident's Bill of Rights:

The Resident's Bill of Rights enshrined in CT General Statutes section 19a-697 ensures that residents of managed residential communities are afforded essential rights that promote a respectful and dignified living environment. These rights are foundational in safeguarding the personal dignity and independence of residents while ensuring their safety and comfort.

Specific Rights and Responsibilities:

1. Live in a clean, safe and habitable private residential unit;
2. Be treated with consideration, respect and due recognition of personal dignity, individuality and the need for privacy;
3. Privacy within a private residential unit, subject to rules of the managed residential community reasonably designed to promote the health, safety and welfare of the resident;
4. Retain and use one's own personal property within a private residential unit so as to maintain individuality and personal dignity provided the use of personal property does not infringe on the rights of other residents or threaten the health, safety and welfare of other residents;
5. Private communications, including receiving and sending unopened correspondence, telephone access and visiting with persons of one's choice;
6. Freedom to participate in and benefit from community services and activities so as to achieve the highest possible level of independence, autonomy and interaction within the community;
7. Directly engage or contract with licensed health care professionals and providers of one's choice to obtain necessary health care services in one's private residential unit, or such other space in the managed residential community as may be made available to residents for such purposes;

¹³ Connecticut General Assembly. (2019). *Chapter 368bb - Health care institutions: Section 19a-697 - Assisted living services*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://www.cga.ct.gov/2019/pub/chap_368bb.htm#sec_19a-697

¹⁴ Connecticut State Department of Public Health. (n.d.). *Regulations of Connecticut state agencies: Section 19-13-d105 - Assisted living services agencies*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/RCSA?id=Title_19Subtitle_19-13-DSection_19-13-d105&content=19-13-d105/

8. Manage one's own financial affairs;
9. Exercise civil and religious liberties;
10. Present grievances and recommend changes in policies, procedures and services to the manager or staff of the managed residential community, government officials or any other person without restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal from the managed residential community, including access to representatives of the department of the CT Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman;
11. Upon request, obtain from the managed residential community the name of the service coordinator or any other persons responsible for resident care or the coordination of resident care;
12. Confidential treatment of all records and communications to the extent required by state and federal law;
13. Have all reasonable requests responded to promptly and adequately within the capacity of the managed residential community and with due consideration given to the rights of other residents;
14. Be fully advised of the relationship that the managed residential community has with any assisted living services agency, health care facility or educational institution to the extent that such relationship relates to resident medical care or treatment and to receive an explanation about the relationship;
15. Receive a copy of any rules or regulations of the managed residential community;
16. Privacy when receiving medical treatment or other services within the capacity of the managed residential community;
17. Refuse care and treatment and participate in the planning for the care and services the resident needs or receives, provided the refusal of care and treatment may preclude the resident from being able to continue to reside in the managed residential community; and
18. All rights and privileges afforded to tenants under title 47a.
19. A managed residential community shall post in a prominent place in the managed residential community the resident's bill of rights, including those rights set forth in subsection (a) of this section. The posting of the resident's bill of rights shall include contact information for the Department of Public Health and the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, including the names, addresses and telephone numbers of persons within such agencies who handle questions, comments or complaints concerning managed residential community.

These rights ensure that residents of Managed Residential Communities in Connecticut live in a supportive, respectful environment that values their contributions and addresses their needs comprehensively.

Understanding and Utilizing Your Rights:

Residents of MRCs have the right to live with dignity and autonomy. To ensure these rights are upheld, residents should be familiar with the avenues available for addressing concerns or rights infringements:

- **Communicate with Management:** Initially, residents should discuss any concerns directly with the management. This could include speaking with the service coordinator, health care provider, or administrative staff responsible for resident care.
- **Participation in Resident Councils:** Engage in resident councils or similar bodies within the community. These councils are effective platforms for voicing concerns, suggesting improvements, and making decisions that affect community life.

Reporting Violations:

If issues are not resolved at the community level, or if the violation is of a serious nature, residents have further options:

- **Department of Public Health (DPH):** Residents can file a complaint with the Connecticut Department of Public Health, which oversees the compliance of Assisted Living Service Agencies with health and safety regulations. This is particularly relevant for issues related to healthcare and safety. Physical environment concerns should be brought to the attention of the local municipality. ALSA services complaints can be filed at [FLIS Complaint Submission Page](#)¹⁵
- **Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman:** The Ombudsman's office is a critical resource for addressing grievances related to rights violations and abuse. They act independently of the managed residential community and provide confidential assistance. Residents can contact the ombudsman for mediation services, advocacy, and support in resolving complex issues.

Advocacy and Support:

- **Legal Representation:** Residents have the right to seek legal counsel to address grievances and disputes. All residents have the right to retain an attorney to represent their interests in court if necessary. Legal aid services are available and may offer free or reduced-cost assistance to those who meet certain income criteria.

How to Contact an Ombudsman for Help

Role of the Ombudsman:

Role of the Ombudsman: An Ombudsman acts as a dedicated advocate for residents of managed residential communities who receive assisted living services, providing crucial support and guidance in various areas impacting their well-being and rights. The role of the Ombudsman is to ensure that the voices of residents are heard and respected, offering a vital link between residents, community administrations, and regulatory bodies.

What is an Ombudsman? An Ombudsman is a trained professional appointed to assist residents of managed residential communities who receive assisted living services and residents of other long-term care settings. The Ombudsman's primary role is to address and resolve issues that residents face, including but not limited to quality of care, respect of rights, and violations of policies or regulations. The Ombudsman works to ensure that all residents receive the care and respect they deserve, fostering an environment where their rights and dignity are upheld.

Services Provided: The Ombudsman provides several critical services, including:

- **Mediation:** Assisting in resolving disputes between residents and community staff or management, aiming for resident satisfaction.
- **Investigation:** Conducting thorough reviews and investigations into complaints and concerns raised by residents or their families.
- **Advocacy:** Advocating on behalf of residents for their rights and needs, ensuring they receive appropriate care and live in a safe and respectful environment.
- **Education:** Informing residents and their families about their rights and available services, and educating community staff on best practices for resident care and rights.

¹⁵ Connecticut Department of Public Health. (n.d.). *FLIS complaint submission page*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from <https://dphflisevents.ct.gov/Complaints>

- **Support:** Offering ongoing support to residents and their families, helping them navigate the complexities of assisted living care and regulations. (Conn. Agencies Reg. § [19-13-D105](#)¹⁶)

Whether you need help resolving an issue, understanding your rights, or simply require someone to listen and provide guidance, the Ombudsman's office is here to support you. Do not hesitate to make contact if you feel your rights are being compromised or if you need assistance with any aspect of your care in a managed residential community.

Contact Information:

How to Reach Your Ombudsman:

If you or your loved ones require assistance, have concerns about the quality of care, or need to discuss any issues, you can reach the Connecticut Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman through the following contact details:

- **Phone:** 1-866-388-1888
- **Email:** LTCOP@CT.GOV
- **Website:** [Connecticut State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program](#)

These channels are monitored regularly, ensuring that your inquiries and concerns are addressed promptly and effectively by our dedicated team.

Steps for Making a Complaint:

Lodging a complaint with the Connecticut Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is a straightforward process designed to ensure that your concerns are handled efficiently and with the utmost sensitivity. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to lodge a complaint:

- **Identify the Issue:** Begin by clearly identifying the issue or problem you are experiencing. Be as specific as possible about what happened, who was involved, and when the incident occurred.
- **Gather Information:** Collect any relevant information or documents that support your complaint. This may include medical records, correspondence, witness statements, and any other documentation that can substantiate your claim.
- **Contact the Ombudsman:** Reach out to the Ombudsman's office using the contact information provided above. You can make initial contact by phone or email, based on your preference.
- **Provide Details:** When you speak with the Ombudsman or a member of their team, provide all the details of your complaint along with any supporting documents. Be clear about what resolution or outcome you are seeking.

¹⁶ Connecticut State Department of Public Health. (n.d.). *Regulations of Connecticut state agencies: Section 19-13-d105 - Assisted living services agencies*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/RCSA?id=Title_19Subtitle_19-13-DSection_19-13-d105&content=19-13-d105/

- **Formal Complaint Submission:** You may be asked to submit a formal written complaint, especially if your case is complex or involves multiple issues. The Ombudsman's office can guide you on how to format and where to send this document.
- **Review and Investigation:** Once your complaint is received, the Ombudsman will review the information and may conduct an investigation involving interviews with relevant parties and review of community practices. With appropriate resident consent, you will likely be kept informed throughout this process.
- **Resolution:** The Ombudsman will work towards a resolution that addresses the resident and/or legal representative concerns to uphold resident rights. This might include attending care plan meetings with the community changes to care practices, or other appropriate actions.
- **Follow-Up:** After the complaint process is complete, there will be follow-up to ensure that the resolution has been implemented and that you are satisfied with the outcome.
- Throughout the process, the Ombudsman's office is committed to maintaining your confidentiality and ensuring that your rights are protected. You are encouraged to reach out at any time if you have questions or need additional assistance.

Appendix

Appendix A: Consumer Expectations Checklist

Community Name:

Date:

This document is crafted by the Connecticut Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to aid prospective assisted living residents and their families in evaluating and assessing MRC and Assisted Living Service Agencies. It serves as a guide highlighting some of the most important issues to consider when choosing a community, although it is not an exhaustive list of all potential considerations.

Basic Principles to Consider:

- **Appropriate Services and Courtesy:** Residents of MRC should expect to receive appropriate services, be treated with respect and courtesy, and continue to enjoy their basic civil and legal rights.
- **Control Over Life Decisions:** It is essential for residents to have ample opportunities to make personal decisions affecting their lives, reflecting a reasonable degree of control similar to what they would experience in the greater community.
- **Choice and Engagement:** Residents should have the option to choose from various activities and to participate in community engagements. This includes access to religious, political, civic, recreational, and other social activities that are essential for fostering a sense of self-worth and enhancing overall quality of life.
- **Safe and Comfortable Environment:** A safe, clean, comfortable, and homelike environment should be a standard expectation. This includes allowing the use of personal belongings to make the space feel more personal and comforting.
- **Trained Staff:** Staff should be adequately trained to assist residents in exercising their rights and to ensure that all interactions and services are delivered with professionalism and respect.

These principles form the foundation for evaluating a facility's adherence to standards that respect and enhance the life of each resident. The checklist items that follow allow you to determine whether these principles are met in practice at the facilities you visit.

Category	Checklist Item (when using "I" below it is referring to the resident)	Check if Met
Basic Principles	Does the community ensure I receive appropriate services and am treated with courtesy while enjoying my basic civil and legal rights?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do I have ample opportunities to exercise reasonable control over life decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do I have choices and opportunities for participation, privacy, and engagement in social activities that enhance my quality of life?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the environment safe, clean, comfortable, and homelike, with personal	<input type="checkbox"/>

Category	Checklist Item (when using "I" below it is referring to the resident)	Check if Met
	belongings allowed?	
	Is the staff trained to assist me in exercising my rights?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Atmosphere	Communication - Does the staff communicate respectfully and directly to me? Even if family members are in the room? Do they address me in a way that I like?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Privacy - Is privacy assured? Examples to consider include: Where are my care needs discussed? How is medication distributed? Is my mail delivered unopened? Is there a private place to make phone calls and to have personal conversations?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Personal Space - Do I have personal space and privacy where I can count on not being interrupted, similar to living in my own home?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Property - Is my property and personal space respected? Can I bring my own furniture? Is there a place to lock valuables? Is extra storage available if needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Personal Relationships and Visitors - Are there any barriers to receiving visitors anytime I wish without restrictive hours? Can my family and friends visit me, and can we have privacy whenever I want without restrictive visiting hours or other barriers?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can I make lifestyle choices that are significant to me? Including things like clothing, hairstyle, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the community respect my cultural identity and personal relationships ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there community involvement ? Are residents and staff involved in the neighborhood and local businesses? For instance, can the community host political forums, community forums, or guest speakers that integrate the community into the fabric of the neighborhood?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fees	What are the Fees? Have you asked the community about any fees you have identified but may not know what they mean or are being charge for? In addition to fees related to room and board, facilities might charge fees for certain kinds of assistance. Does the community help me to understand what the costs would be if I later needed it. For example, does the community charge a fee to help me bathe? What about escorting me to dinner? How much?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Under what circumstances can fees be increased? What are the requirements for advance notice? MRC's must provide a description of available services, charges, and billing mechanisms with the assurance that any changes shall be given to you orally and in writing. Does the MRC/ALSA	<input type="checkbox"/>

Category	Checklist Item (when using “I” below it is referring to the resident)	Check if Met
	fully explain the circumstances under which fees can be raised and how much notice I will be given if a fee increase is proposed.	
	Refunds of unused pre-paid fees: Is there a provision for refunds of unused pre-paid fees?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contracts	Don't rely on the staff explanation of the contract – if you do not understand the contract contact your ombudsman or legal services.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Read the fine print – Is the contract clear and understandable?	
	If I disagree with parts of the contract, can I modify/cross off parts of the contract I disagree with and still be admitted?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the community require signing a pre-dispute arbitration agreement , which would require arbitration to resolve disputes and prevent me from bringing a lawsuit?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If I spend down my resources, does the community participate in the Private Pay Assisted Living Pilot ¹⁷ and will they assist in the application process?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food	Is there a choice of food and drink, and are mealtimes flexible?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can I access food and drink anytime, similar to my own home?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are dietary accommodations accessible and adequate for residents with disabilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are residents assigned to sit in certain areas of the dining room or segregated according to physical or cognitive disability?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Can I bring food to my apartment that I haven't finished from a meal in the dining room, and I can have a snack whenever I choose?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety	Do I feel safe and comfortable with the caregiving staff during personal care sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do I trust in the abilities of my caregiver?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the community secure with controlled access, especially at night?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are there effective disaster plans in place? For example, when the power goes out in a storm, what is the plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹⁷ **Connecticut Department of Social Services.** (n.d.). *Private Pay Assisted Living Program*. Retrieved from <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/departments-and-agencies/dss/health-and-home-care/community-options/private-pay-assisted-living-pilot.pdf>

Category	Checklist Item (when using “I” below it is referring to the resident)	Check if Met
	Are the bill of rights, state licensing agency and long term care ombudsman information posted in a prominent place?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the community know its ombudsman and is the ombudsman’s contact information posted?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care	Does the community fully disclose all the services they will provide, and those they will not provide?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Am I involved in the initial care plan, and do I direct the day-to-day implementation of this plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Will I have ready access to review my own records?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are staff trained to meet my specific needs and will the community make reasonable accommodation to my changing needs: Hoyer lifts, transfer assistance, service animals, increased assistance with personal care and activities of daily living, assistance with eating?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Am I free from restraints, including chemical, and such things as being locked in my apartment?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transfer and Discharge Rights	Has the Community provided clear written policies for <u>discharge from the Assisted Living Services</u> and explained the criteria the community uses to issue a discharge notice for services?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Has the community adequately explained that if they are trying to evict me, I am afforded all the rights and privileges afforded to tenants in the landlord-tenant statutes found in Title 47a? Do they have procedures to follow that including providing proper notice?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Will they help me with a safe discharge plan and carry it through?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities	Do I like the people who live there? Would I want to spend free time with them?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are activities offered that align with my interests?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are there reasonable fees for special outings?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resident Power	Are residents involved in making decisions about how the community operates?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there a resident council and can it meet privately without staff? Does the community take its advice seriously?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Category	Checklist Item (when using “I” below it is referring to the resident)	Check if Met
	Has the community adequately explained their grievance process and, if so, what is it?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do I have direct access to decision-making staff for resolving complaints?	<input type="checkbox"/>

FAQ: Understanding Managed Residential Communities in Connecticut

1. **What is a Managed Residential Community in Connecticut?** A MRC in Connecticut offers a blend of housing, supportive services, and personal care tailored to meet individual needs. It provides an environment where older adults can maintain independence while receiving assistance with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, and medication management.
2. **How do Managed Residential Communities differ from nursing homes?** In an MRC, Assisted Living services provide a level of care that supports independence rather than providing intensive medical and nursing care found in nursing homes. It is suitable for individuals who require personal care services but do not need 24-hour skilled nursing care.
3. **What types of apartments are available in Managed Residential Communities?** Apartments in Managed Residential communities range from studios to two-bedroom units, typically including private baths, kitchen facilities, and areas for personal belongings. Residents are encouraged to furnish their apartments to their taste to maintain a homelike environment.
4. **Are meals and special diets accommodated in Managed Residential communities?** Three meals per day are provided, with some communities allowing residents to choose their meal plans. Basic special dietary needs are typically accommodated, and residents should inquire about the community's ability to meet specific dietary requirements and the access to facilities and equipment for the preparation and storage of food.
5. **What should I expect in terms of security and safety in these communities?** Some MRC's ensure safety through staffed front desks, or emergency call systems in each apartment. Residents enjoy the freedom to come and go, with additional security measures in place for those in dementia-specific units.
6. **Who regulates Assisted Living Service Agencies in Connecticut?** Assisted Living Service Agencies are regulated by the CT Department of Public Health. This includes licensing for on-site nursing and personal care services through licensed Assisted Living Service Agencies. The buildings themselves must comply with all state building and fire safety codes but are not licensed.
7. **Can I bring my own furniture and pets?** Residents are typically allowed to bring their own furniture to make their space feel like home. Pet policies vary by community, so it's important to ask about specific pet policies during your search.
8. **What amenities are commonly found in Managed Residential communities?** Common amenities include dining areas, libraries, exercise rooms, and recreational spaces. Many communities also offer conveniences like on-site stores, beauty salons, and regularly scheduled transportation for residents.

9. **How is my care managed in an Managed Residential Care community?** Care in Assisted Living is supervised by registered nurses who assess residents' health, develop care plans in consultation with physicians, and monitor ongoing health status. Staff are trained to provide personalized care while respecting residents' independence.
10. **Do I have to use the community's caregivers?** You have the right to have health care and companion services provided by the community (usually at an additional cost), your family or by any appropriate caregiver or companion of your choice. The community may want outside caregivers and companions to register with the community
11. **What are my rights as a resident?** Residents receive protections under a "Resident's Bill of Rights," which ensures participation in care planning, confidentiality of health information, and rights to socialize and engage in community activities. These rights are complemented by Connecticut's landlord-tenant laws, which govern housing aspects.
12. **What are the costs associated with Assisted Living?** Costs vary based on apartment size, location, and required services. Communities may charge a basic rate that includes some services, with additional fees for extra services. It's important to ask for a detailed breakdown of costs and understand how they may increase over time.
13. **What are the requirements for MRCs regarding the disclosure of fee increases?** MRCs must provide residents or their representatives with at least 90 days' advance notice of any increases in monthly or recurring fees. They must also disclose any nonrefundable charges in writing.
14. **Are MRCs required to provide a history of fee increases?** Yes, for written residency agreements entered into on and after October 1, 2024, MRCs must provide a history of fee increases over the past three calendar years upon request.
15. **What are Assisted Living Services Agencies (ALSAs) required to disclose about fee increases?** ALSAs must disclose fee increases to a resident or their representative at least 60 days before they take effect. They must also provide, upon request, the history of fee increases over the past three years.
16. **Can ALSAs immediately adjust fees, and under what circumstances?** Yes, ALSAs can immediately adjust fees if the adjustments are directly related to a change in the level of care or services necessary to meet individual resident safety needs, as determined at a scheduled resident care meeting or due to a resident's change in condition.
17. **What are the discharge requirements for Assisted Living Services?** Connecticut law does not list specific conditions or circumstances that would require an individual to leave an assisted living community. Decisions about discharge are made on an individualized basis, and always with the resident's involvement and in accordance with an assessment, when appropriate, in consultation with family members or other representatives. If more care is required than the community provides, under certain circumstances you may be able to arrange for supplemental care that will allow you to remain at the community. The licensed Assisted Living Services Agency may refuse to continue providing services to you if there are safety issues that endanger you or staff or if you have not paid for services. In addition, you may be asked to move out of the MRC if you fail to meet your obligations under the Resident Agreement, or if your behavior poses a risk to your own health, safety or comfort or the health, safety, or comfort of other residents.
18. **What if I need to move?** In the event it becomes necessary for you to move out of a MRC it is important for you, your family and the community's staff to work together to ensure that your needs are met. Your rights in this regard are governed by Connecticut's landlord-tenant laws and your Resident Agreement.
19. **Does Medicare cover the cost of a MRC?** Medicare (Title 18) does not pay for MRC's. However, if you need the services of a licensed home health agency while you live in a MRC, Medicare will pay for those services if you meet Medicare coverage criteria.

20. **Does Medicaid (Title 19) pay for assisted living services in Connecticut?** Medicaid does not pay for assisted living services in most communities in Connecticut, so you should plan on paying for all fees from your own resources. If your resources become insufficient to pay for the cost of your care, you may need to move. Connecticut does have several demonstration and pilot projects where some of the costs will be covered by Medicaid; some of these projects also offer subsidized rental assistance. There is also a limited pilot project that may allow you to stay in a private-pay community if you have exhausted your own resources. More information about Medicaid programs in assisted living is available by calling the Department of Social Services at 1-800-445-5394.
21. **Does long-term care insurance cover the cost of Managed Residents Communities or Assisted Living services, and what is the community's obligation to assist with this?** Some long-term care insurance policies do cover assisted living costs. It is essential to obtain prior approval from the insurance company, as coverage provisions vary widely. The community is obligated by regulation and statute to assist residents who have long-term care insurance policies in preparing and submitting claims for benefits to the insurer. This assistance includes ensuring the resident or their legal representative has executed a written authorization directing the insurer to disclose relevant information to the community and provide a copy of the acceptance or declination of a claim for benefits to both the resident and the community.
22. **Do I have to sign any legal papers?** You will be asked to sign a Resident Agreement that governs your right to live in your apartment and the provision of basic services such as meals, housekeeping, and laundry, as well as the provision of nursing and personal care services. You may also be asked to acknowledge in writing that you have read and received certain documents and if receiving ALSA services there may be an additional contract or paperwork to sign.
23. **Where can I get more information about MRC's and assisted living services in Connecticut?** Every assisted living provider that is a member of the Connecticut Assisted Living Association (CALA) will be pleased to provide you with specific information about the community, as well as copies of its Residence Agreement, Clients' and Residents' Bills of Rights, Resident Rules and other information. You can also contact the long-term care ombudsman program at 1-866-388-1888. You may also call CALA at (860) 434-5760 or visit CALA's web site at www.ctassistedliving.com, To generate a list of all Assisted Living Service Agencies: [eLicense Online](http://eLicenseOnline)¹⁸ or [Myplacect.org](http://MyPlacect.org)¹⁹.

¹⁸ Connecticut eLicense. (n.d.). *Generate roster(s)*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from <https://www.elicense.ct.gov/Lookup/GenerateRoster.aspx>

¹⁹ MyPlaceCT. (n.d.). *Assisted living facilities and managed residential communities*. Retrieved December 23, 2024, from <https://www.myplacect.org/services-and-supports/housing/assisted-living-facilities-and-managed-residential-communities/>