



Residential Care.

Supported residential facilities

What is a supported residential facility?

Supported Residential Facilities (SRFs) provide accommodation and care services for people with disabilities, mental illness and older people in a group setting. SRFs are regulated by the *Supported Residential Facilities Act 1992* (South Australia) and are privately operated.

The Supported Residential Facilities (SRF) sector offers low level supported accommodation – not aged care at the level provided by Commonwealth-funded facilities.

The South Australian Government SRF Intake and Support Team (SRFI&SS), determines eligibility for the Board and Care Subsidy. There is no restriction on who can refer. Following SRFI&SS approval and the person's move into an SRF, the Government pays a subsidy to the proprietor on behalf of the eligible person. The SRFI&SS assessment considers factors such as: medical and general health diagnosis, mental health, personal care needs and behavioural issues. Referrals can also be received for a needs-based, functional assessment of a person living in the SRF sector to determine eligibility for additional supports or services to enhance or maintain their accommodation. It is **not** a placement or crisis service.

Services vary between SRFs and may include personal care, medication monitoring, meals, laundry and cleaning.

Is supported residential care right for me?

You might ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I discussed entering an SRF with the SRF Intake and Support Team, my family, friends, local aged care worker, social worker or general practitioner etc.?
- What special help do I need?
- Are there any other types of accommodation or services that can better provide the services I need?

Choosing a facility

If, after your assessment by the SRF Intake and Support Team, you decide that SRFs are the best option for you, it is time to visit some facilities. The following questions may assist you further:

Facilities and Services

- What physical facilities are available? Lounge, TV room, library, games room, garden plots, outdoor recreation, hobby area, etc.?
- What happens if I require a service that is not provided by the management, or is located outside the home? Is transport provided to and from the service available?
- Are the services that you may need available on site or within easy reach – health and care, hairdresser? How are these services accessed?
- Is there assistance available 24 hours a day? What kind of assistance? How do I get assistance at night?

Ongoing care

- What happens if, after moving into the facility, I need higher levels of care than are offered here? Who decides if I should be moved and what criteria are used (for example, mobility or incontinence problems)?

Conditions

- What are the house rules? Are pets allowed? Are there set visiting hours?
- How long may I be absent from the facility and will my place be kept for me? What do I pay to hold my place if I am away?
- Do I have to share a room? Are there rooms for couples?
- If the accommodation is taken as a couple and one partner dies, or is moved on, what happens to the remaining partner?
- Is there a Residents' Committee? Are residents consulted about changes to the facility that may affect them?

Financial

- Is there an entry fee?
- What type of agreement or contract applies?
- What are my rights and reimbursements when I leave?
- What are the financial consequences if I do not like living in a facility and wish to move out?

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- What recurring costs will have to be met, e.g. weekly fees, fees whilst on holidays?
- Exactly what services are included in the basic fee? What services incur an additional cost? How much? How often do I pay? What is the process for adjusting those fees? How often?
- If I take my own furniture, will I need private contents insurance?

For details of costs and services contact facilities to obtain a prospectus.

Building features

- Have security precautions been taken in the construction of the facility? Are there safety locks and screens on the doors and windows?
- Does the facility meet with the required fire safety standards?
- What type of heating/air conditioning is provided?
- Is the building accessible in the event that I become disabled and need a wheelchair or walking aid?
- What internal fixtures, such as ramps or rails, are in place to assist mobility?

How much will I pay?

If you choose to live in a 'pension only' facility you pay no more than 80% of the single age pension combined with rent assistance. The proprietor of the facility will receive a small state government subsidy on your behalf to help cover basic living expenses and meet requirements under the Act. *Serviced apartment-type facilities are free to set their own fees and no State Government subsidies apply. Rent assistance may apply depending on the entry contribution paid.*

The contract

The *Supported Residential Facilities Act* requires that a resident contract will be entered into within 28 days after personal care services are first provided to you. Prior to signing the contract, make sure that you understand it, your rights and responsibilities. Ask questions to the proprietor and obtain answers in writing if necessary.

A copy of the contract will be given to you at the time you become party to the contract and a signed copy will be kept in a safe place at the facility at all times.

If the SRF charges an entry fee (i.e. serviced apartments) the facility may also come under the *Retirement Villages Act 1987*.

Standards of care

According to the *Supported Residential Facilities Act* residents are entitled to:

- quality care
- reasonable levels of nutrition, comfort and shelter in a home-like environment
- a safe physical environment
- treatment with dignity and respect
- a reasonable degree of privacy
- independence and freedom of choice
- manage their own affairs
- freedom from exploitation

Who regulates the quality of SRFs?

The licensing authority is the local council. Its roles include:

- administrating and enforcing the *Supported Residential Facilities Act*
- licensing and inspecting facilities
- receiving complaints about facilities and other residents and providing information on dispute resolution.

After you move in

If you have moved to a pension-only SRF and face barriers preventing you from participating in the wider community you may be eligible for support with social integration and independence depending on where you live. Contact Catalyst Foundation or the SRFI&SS for information on support services in your area (contact details below).

If you do have any complaints speak to the manager of the facility. If this does not resolve the difficulty, speak to the local environmental health officer at your council.

The **Community Visitor Scheme (CVS)** aims to protect the rights of people experiencing an acute mental illness, and those with disability who live in disability accommodation or in a Supported Residential Facility. The Scheme promotes the proper resolution of complaints and advocate for the rights of individuals. Tel. 1800 606 302 (available from mobile phones and within SA); email cvs@sa.gov.au.

Useful contacts and resources

Catalyst Foundation (formerly Seniors Information Service) maintains a list of SRFs in South Australia and a vacancy register. Tel. 8168 8776, Country SA 1800 636 368.

For more information about SRFs contact:

- Your local council
- Department for Communities and Social Inclusion – Supported Residential Facilities Intake and Support Service (SRFI&SS), tel. 8448 4600; email dcsi.SRFintake&support@sa.gov.au.