

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.

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

There are sites licensed both as Supported Residential Facilities and as Retirement Villages (under the Retirement Villages Act).

The accommodation type provided at these sites is usually serviced apartments.

For further information on this option see the relevant Catalyst Foundation fact sheets on housing options or contact us.

Is supported living right for me?

You might ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I discussed entering an SRF with 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?

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/contractual

- 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?
- 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?

Residential Care

Supported residential facilities



- 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 a Centrelink the single age pension combined with rent assistance (most charge 79%). 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.

Residents receiving a Centrelink income support payment (e.g. Disability Support Payment) may be eligible for Rent Assistance.

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.

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, your age and condition. **Catalyst Foundation** may be able to assist with information on support services that might be available (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 **South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT)** can review decisions made by the licensing authority, among others, determining a dispute between a resident of a Supported Residential Facility and the SRF's proprietor.

Tel. 1800 723 767, www.sacat.sa.gov.au/

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funded services, including accommodation, are subject to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, which can handle complaints from clients.

Tel. 1800 035 544; www.ndiscommission.gov.au/

Useful contacts and resources

Catalyst Foundation (including Seniors Information Service) maintains a list of SRFs in South Australia.

Tel. 8168 8776, Country SA 1800 63 63 68

(available for landline callers)

The local government which has licensed the SRF - Please note that the **Eastern Health Authority**

(**Tel 8232 3600, www.eha.sa.gov.au/**) licenses and regulates all SRF in the Adelaide's eastern metropolitan council areas on behalf of the local government agencies.

The **Supported Residential Facilities Association** represents a group of South Australian SRF operators which are NDIS approved providers.

<http://www.srfa.com.au/>

Catalyst Foundation is supported by the Australian Government Department of Health. Visit the website www.agedcare.health.gov.au for more information. Although funding for this publication has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.

Updated December 2019