

Residential Care

Supported Residential Facilities



What is a Supported Residential Facility?

Supported Residential Facilities (SRFs) provide accommodation and personal care for people who require low-level assistance, accommodation and support in a group setting. These facilities typically cater for people with a disability or a mental illness. SRFs are regulated by the South Australian *Supported Residential Facilities Act 1992 (amended in 2018)* and *Supported Residential Facilities Regulations 2009* (amended in 2020), and are privately operated.

The Supported Residential Facilities sector does not offer aged care at the higher level provided by Commonwealth-funded aged care homes. Unlike aged care homes, SRFs do not receive government subsidies.

Services vary between SRFs and may include personal care, medication monitoring, meals, laundry and cleaning. Some of the SRFs in South Australia are registered providers under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

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, support coordinator, social worker, general practitioner or other relevant person?
- What special help do I need?
- Are there any other types of accommodation or services that can better provide the services I need?

Documentation

The proprietor of an SRF must prepare a **prospectus** relating to the facility and the personal care services provided or offered. It must contain among other details:

- description of the nature of the facility according to the type (s) of accommodation available;
- types of services directly provided or offered at or by the facility, and the current fees or charges for those services;
- rules or policies that apply to residents;

- the rights and responsibilities of residents;
- any amount payable on becoming a resident; recurrent fees or charges; and, if an amount, fee or charge is not a fixed sum—its nature, purpose and method of calculation; and any provision for the variation of an amount, fee or charge.

Copies of the prospectus must be kept on display on the premises. The proprietor must, at the request of a prospective resident (or their representative), provide a copy of the prospectus.

The **resident contract** between the proprietor of a Supported Residential Facility and a resident relate to:

- the provision of personal care services to the resident;
- the terms and conditions of residency;
- other matters relevant to the care or accommodation of the resident agreed between the parties.

The Supported Residential Facilities legislation requires that a resident contract will be entered into within seven 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.

Before a person enters into a resident contract they must be given a copy of the **service plan** prepared in consultation with them or their representative, containing among other information:

- the details of the personal care services to be provided to the resident, including the nature, extent and frequency of the provision of those services
- current information on the general state of health of the resident, and any instructions or information relating to their health or care.

Questions to ask:

When choosing an SRF you may wish to check some features and clarify issues that might be relevant:

- What physical facilities are available? Lounge, TV room, wi-fi, 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 facility? Is transport provided to and from the service available?
- Are the services that I may need available on site or within easy reach – health and care, hairdresser? How are these services accessed?

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- Is there assistance available 24 hours a day? What kind of assistance? How do I get assistance at night?
- 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)?
- What are the house rules? Are pets allowed? Are there set visiting hours?
- What is the procedure for making a complaint about the management of the facility?
- 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?
- Are residents consulted about changes to the facility that may affect them?
- Is there an entry fee? What are my rights and reimbursements when I leave?
- What are the financial consequences if I do not like living in the 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?
- 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 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?

Standards of care

The *Supported Residential Facilities Regulations 2009* sets the standards of care covering the following aspects: privacy dignity and respect, personal hygiene, nutrition, mobility, activities, medication and notification of certain events (e.g. if there is any significant deterioration of resident's health or well-being).

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 an 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.

Complaints about the management of an SRF or about the conduct of a resident may be made to the licensing authority.

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 and a vacancy register. **Tel. 8168 8776.**

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 SRFs 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/>**

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