

## Out of Home Living Options

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When an individual can no longer live on their own, they are often confused about options and where to turn for available assistance. Some are familiar with various living options for seniors, but may have questions about the different levels of senior living or care.

All Assisted Living Facilities in our area (large or small) and their administrator must be licensed by the State of California. All Assisted Living offer a room or apartment, meals, housekeeping, laundry, activities and socialization. There are different levels of assistance from just medication management (medications maintained by staff), to assistance with activities of daily living. Prices can range from a low of \$1500 per month to a high of \$6000 or more, depending on the type of assistance needed, amenities offered, location, etc.

A common belief is if a person needs personal assistance, they are non-ambulatory, incontinent, require assistance with dressing or bathing, or they have dementia, that they must go to a Skilled Nursing Facility. This is not true anymore.

Let's look at some specific living situations:

Independent Living Complexes or Retirement Communities - The residents must be able to live independently as there is no personal care provided. These communities offer social opportunities, meals, activities, housekeeping, security and more.

Assisted Living (ALF) - Generally refers to large facilities with 100 or more residents and offer many amenities and options from a shared studio to a 2-bedroom apartment. They generally have many planned activities (bingo, bridge, crafts, and outside trips to shopping, movies, and other points of interest. Some have beauty parlors or little shops to buy treats or rent videos.

Most have large dining rooms where residents can socialize. Most do not have full kitchens in their rooms but may have kitchenettes with a refrigerator/freezer, a microwave, and a coffeepot. Although some ALF's may have a nurse on board, the staff is comprised of trained caregivers; available, awake, & accessible 24 hours per day.

Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE or Board & Care Home) – Is licensed for up to six residents in the home. These homes are in many neighborhoods and the residents share the home with 24 hr. live in caregivers who provide more individualized care, do all the housekeeping, cooking etc.; all included in the monthly rate. Meals are shared in the homes' dining room, offering a family ambiance.

Memory Care Facilities - Are dedicated to caring for individuals with Dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or other cognitive impairments. The facility is a secure environment where residents are safe and cared for by specifically trained caregivers to work with individuals with memory care issues. Some of these facilities are *all* individuals needing Memory Care, where others may be a separate section of an Assisted Living Facility.

Multi-Level Facilities - Multi-levels facilities offer care from Independent Living to Memory Care to Skilled Nursing all at one facility. A resident whose needs change would not need to move to another location in order to receive more care.

Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) or Convalescent Hospitals are for individuals who need care that requires a nurse or other skilled medical personnel (person whom requires injections or wound care).

Seniors who were basically healthy but needed some assistance had limited choices but now there are several options available and we at Seniors First are trained to guide them to these alternative resources. Give us a call, we make a difference in people's lives every day!  
530-889-9500

*The views expressed here are those of Candace Roder, and do not necessarily represent those of the Commission or individual members.*