



Duluth Aging
Support
Senior support led by love

HELPFUL QUESTIONS **SENIOR HOUSING**

Looking into senior housing options?
Arm yourself with this list of questions.

QUESTION CATEGORIES

- 1** Types of housing page 2
- 2** Amenities pages 2-3
- 3** Cost and financing page 4
- 4** Staff page 5
- 5** Grievance process page 6
- 6** Accreditations page 6
- 7** Referrals page 6
- 8** Surveys page 6
- 9** Additional information page 6



HELPFUL QUESTIONS SENIOR HOUSING

1 TYPES OF HOUSING

What types of housing do you offer? Have them describe the options that interest you the most.

Some possible options are:

- Independent living
- Residential care home
- Assisted living
- Skilled nursing
- Memory care
- Rehabilitation
- Hospice
- Others

2 AMENITIES

What amenities are offered?

Be sure to identify which amenities are available for the housing option that applies to your situation.

Some possible amenities are:

A. Fitness center

- Group exercise - types of group classes
- Individual exercise - fitness equipment and accessories
- Swimming pool - indoor or outdoor
- Other

B. Social and recreational activities

- On-site group activities - types of activities
- Affinity clubs or resident council
- TV, video, musical instruments, or other available for resident use
- Off-site - types of activities (entertainment, lunch or dinner outings, grocery shopping)
- Other

C. Walking trails

- On-site - surface type (gravel, concrete, pavement), wheelchair or walker accessible
- Nearby - distance from site, surface type (gravel, concrete, pavement), wheelchair or walker accessible
- Other





HELPFUL QUESTIONS SENIOR HOUSING

2 AMENITIES *continued*

D. Personal care services

- Barbershop or beauty salon – cost, in-room option available
- Massage – cost, in-room option available
- Manicure, pedicure - cost, in-room option available
- Other

E. Meals/Food service

- Full independent kitchen
- Café' or group dining area
- Private dining room available (private party)
- Can meals be delivered to room, cost
- Other

F. Internet Service

- Included or extra cost
- Other

G. Chapel

- Space on-site
- Service times
- Other

H. Security services

- 24/7 on-site security staff
- Locked main entrance
- Locked entrance to separated housing units
- Protocol for visitor entrance
- Emergency call system for each resident's home
- Other

I. Housekeeping services

- Laundry
- Vacuuming, dusting, cleaning surface areas
- Trash removal
- Repair and maintenance
- Other

J. Access to health and medical service

- Assistance with eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, and walking
- Medication reminders
- Palliative care for serious or life-threatening illness
- Other

K. Transportation

- Shuttle or van available for group outings, social activities, grocery shopping
- Transportation available for medical appointments
- Other





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3 COST AND FINANCING

How much does it cost and how can I pay for it?

Costs for senior housing options vary a lot based on the housing option, level of service, entrance fees, move-in fees, monthly fees, and a lot more. If you are interested in a place, it is important to call and speak to the staff at the location. They are the experts of their costs and offerings; they will answer all your questions to determine your potential costs based on your needs.

At Duluth Aging Support, we do not recommend basing your choice of senior housing on a monthly rate because that can be deceiving and does not tell the whole story. It's also important to note that financing senior housing is complicated and varies for every situation. The following points of discussion can help guide your cost and financing options conversation with the facility staff.

A. Costs

- Home in on what type of housing and which services best meet your needs
- Size and configuration of room cost difference
- Identify fixed costs – upfront and monthly
- Additional costs for hospitality and care services
- Additional costs for life enrichment programs
- Additional costs for transportation
- In the case of unexpected illness or medical situation, cost of temporarily increasing care
- Medical treatment and therapy costs – on-site or in community with affiliated clinic
- Other

B. Financing

- Private pay
- Elderly waiver – Minnesota's Medicaid
- Medicare
- Senior living line of credit
- Long-term care insurance
- Supplemental security income (SSI)
- Veteran's benefits – aid and attendance
- Life settlements
- Annuity payments
- Housing assistance (through HUD)



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4 STAFF

Tell me about your staff?

The housing option that you choose makes a big difference in terms of the staff composition. In general, most housing options have a combination of administrative staff, care staff, medical staff, and operations. Training and education requirements, certifications, qualifications, and experience vary greatly among the different types of staff. The following list of possible staff roles and other points of discussion will help you home in on the staff that you are interested in knowing more about. This is not a complete list but will give you a good place to start.

A. Possible staff roles or departments

- Administrative
 - Facility or program directors and managers, sales (often your first point of contact), financial or business office, fundraising/development, marketing, administrative support, other
- Medical and Care
 - Resident care provider, home health aide, certified nursing assistant, certified medication aide, clinical care coordinator, clinical services director, hospice aide, physician, nurse (LPN and RN), physical therapist, social worker, other
- Operations / Community Support
 - Activities, dining, drivers, security, housekeeping, maintenance, health and wellness, other

B. Training and education (differs per staff position)

- Initial and on-going
- Dementia
- State or federally mandated
- Customer service
- Other

C. Background checks for employees

- Initial and on-going
- Company that provides background checks
- Components of a background check
 - Criminal records history
 - Credit background check
 - Identity and address
 - Employment verification
 - Education verification
 - Credentials verification and licensing
 - DMV and MVR background checks
 - Reference verification
 - Drug screening



HELPFUL QUESTIONS SENIOR HOUSING

5 GRIEVANCE PROCESS

How does your facility handle grievances against employees or the facility as a whole from residents? Please describe process.

6 ACCREDITATIONS

What accreditations does your facility have? When were they achieved (are they current)?

7 REFERRALS

Could you provide me with a list of referrals?

8 SURVEYS

Could I have access to any recent surveys conducted by your facility or by independent sources?

9 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide any additional information that will help me make my decision.
