A Guide to Oregon Adult Foster Homes

for Potential Residents (Older Adults or Adults with Physical Disabilities), Their Family Members and Friends

Oregon Department of Human Services
AGING & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact the APD Adult Foster Home Program at (503) 373-7221 or email APD.AFHTeam@odhsoha.oregon.gov. We accept all relay calls or you can dial 711.

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Overview of adult foster homes

Adult foster homes

Adult foster homes are single family residences that offer care in a homelike setting. Adult foster homes in Oregon are inspected and licensed. The adult foster home provider must meet certain standards to obtain and retain a license. Staff from the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) program or the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) offices verify the qualifications of the caregiver, conduct yearly licensing inspections, and investigate complaints and concerns.

All adult foster home providers and primary caregivers must:

- Pass a background check
- Complete a basic training course and pass an exam
- Be physically and mentally able to provide care, and
- Provide care in a home that meets structural and safety requirements.

The resident's choice

Adult foster care is often chosen by residents because care is provided in a homelike setting and can be quite affordable. Informal adult foster care has been a part of our society for years. Adults unable to maintain their health while living alone moved in with family, friends or neighbors.

In adult foster homes, medical and personal care are provided to you in a manner that encourages maximum independence and enhances the quality of your life. Care and supervision are provided to maintain a safe and secure setting. You can decline the care and service offered if it conflicts with your preferences. Adult foster home providers strive to provide good care and services through a cooperative relationship between the care provider and you.

The adult foster home setting protects and encourages your dignity, choice and decision making. Your needs will be addressed in a manner that supports and enables you to maximize your abilities to function at the highest possible level of independence.

As a resident of an adult foster home, you should take an active role in discussing your care needs with the provider. You are encouraged to maintain contact with your family, friends and community groups as you adjust to your new home.

When adult foster care should be considered

Most people would like to remain in their own homes as long as possible. However, sometimes it becomes too difficult to do the everyday tasks of life, even with the help of others. Adult foster care offers the benefits of care and services in a homelike setting.

Any combination of the items listed below may mean that you or someone you know could benefit from the services offered in an adult foster home:

- Difficulty preparing meals or maintaining adequate nutrition
- Forgetting to take medications or taking the wrong amounts
- Unable to manage daily personal needs such as bathing, dressing, shopping, cooking, laundry or transportation
- Bruising, scratches or other injuries from falls
- Ongoing illness or a need for rehabilitation
- Difficulty coping with feelings of depression, anxiety or fear
- Difficulty remembering people, places or other things that were once familiar, or
- Family and friends are no longer able to provide adequate care and support.

Care services offered in adult foster homes

- Meals and help with eating
- Help with dressing
- Grooming and hygiene
- Bowel and bladder care (incontinence)
- Help with walking or getting in or out of bed (mobility)
- Help with behavioral needs (behavior support)
- Help with medications, and
- Activities.

Some providers are able to provide more complex care because of their training and background or with help from visiting nurses. A caregiver may receive instruction from a registered nurse to perform a care task specific to a particular resident. In some cases, providers may be able to meet your care needs if you are coming to the adult foster home directly from the hospital after surgery or you are recovering from a serious illness.

Other adult foster home providers have special training to provide care for people experiencing Alzheimer's disease, brain injuries, AIDS, respiratory failure or the need for hospice services.

Short-term versus long-term needs

The services provided depend on your individual wants and needs. You may only need short-term services to help you return home.

Some adult foster home providers offer short-term care for a few days or weeks. Usually, services are long-term because of a lifelong disability or illness. The adult foster home may be able to provide services for as long as they are needed. Remaining in the adult foster home depends on your choice, your needs and the provider's ability to meet those needs.

The care plan

The care plan is developed during the first two weeks you are at the foster home. It is updated on a regular basis to reflect your individual needs and wishes. Input from family members and medical professionals may also be included in the care plan at your request.

The care plan is the provider's written summary of your needs and abilities. It covers:

- What you can do for yourself
- What care is needed
- Who will provide the care, and
- When and how often care is needed.

Adult foster home lists

Before you visit any adult foster homes, you may want to contact your local ODHS or AAA office to obtain a list of licensed adult foster homes in your area. To obtain a list, call the ODHS or AAA office in your area. You can also access information about APD adult foster homes on the long-term care website: ltclicensing.oregon.gov.

Adult foster home public files

To help you decide which foster home you would like to choose, you can review the public files to obtain information about any foster home. The information includes:

- The location of the adult foster home
- A description of the home
- A copy of the current license that indicates the level of care provided (see Classification of adult foster homes, page 11)

- The date the license was first issued
- A report and date of the last licensing inspection
- Copies of complaint investigations
- Corrective action involving the home, and
- Whether care is provided primarily by the licensed provider, an administrator, a resident manager or shift caregivers.

You can review the public files in person by visiting the local ODHS or Area Agency on Aging office in your area.

Visiting adult foster homes

It is important to visit adult foster homes before making a choice. You and your family could visit together. You may want to spend several hours or an entire day, when possible, at the home. Some things to keep in mind while visiting the home are:

Who provides care in the home?

- The owner who lives in the home
- An administrator who lives in or helps oversee the home
- A resident manager who lives in the home, or
- A qualified caregiver or shift caregiver.

Other questions to consider are:

- What are the schedules or routines of the home?
- What are the home's house policies?
- Would you feel comfortable living with the other residents and caregivers in the home?

One of the best ways to review a home is to plan a visit around mealtime. Meals are an important social time and visiting during that time will allow you to see the kind and quality of food being prepared. You can also see:

- How caregivers relate to the residents, and
- How residents interact with one another.

Although any foster home should be neat, clean and orderly, you should also look for good care. Caring staff who respect the dignity of each resident is important.

Select the home that feels right for you!

Payment for adult foster home care

Cost is an important factor when considering care and services. Most providers charge a monthly rate based on care needs and whether a bedroom is shared with another resident. All adult foster homes must have a residency agreement. The residency agreement is required to include the following:

I. Basic monthly rate, which includes:

- Basic services to be provided (room, meals, laundry, and other specified care and services)
- Refund policy
- Conditions under which the rate may change.

II: House policies, including:

- Any restrictions on the use of alcohol, tobacco, legal medical or recreational marijuana, pets
- Fees (such as for storage or to hold a bed)
- Any limitation to the implementation of advance directives on the basis of conscience.

III: Optional fee for additional services such as:

- Incontinence care
- Assistance with eating
- Diabetic care
- Special diets
- Transportation
- Mobility and transfers
- Skilled nursing tasks
- Night-time care, and
- Dementia care.

The basic monthly rate will always require 30 days' written notice to the resident before it can be changed. However, the additional service fees can be made effective at the time the service becomes necessary, if it has been stated in the residency agreement.

Services and costs vary between homes and must be specified in the residency agreement. Be sure to review the residency agreement and ask questions before choosing a home.

Medicaid financial assistance

If you cannot afford to pay for your care and want to know if you qualify for Medicaid assistance, contact your local office of the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) or Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

You do not need to use all of your assets to qualify for Medicaid assistance. It is important to check with a ODHS or AAA office when only one spouse needs long-term care services. In such cases, a portion of the assets of the spouse living in the family home may be protected. When you are considering any of the long-term care options for yourself or for others, you need to know what choices are available.

If you are eligible for Medicaid assistance, the local ODHS office will determine the total amount the provider will be paid for your care. Based on your income, ODHS will decide how much Medicaid will pay and how much you will need to pay of the total amount. The provider must accept that amount as payment in full and cannot ask you or any other person to pay more money.

If you become eligible for Medicaid after you are in a foster home and the provider has a Medicaid contract, the provider cannot ask you to move if the amount of the Medicaid payment is lower than the amount you paid privately. If the provider does not have a Medicaid contract, you may be asked to move. When visiting homes be sure to ask if the provider has enrolled with the state to accept Medicaid payment.

The Residents' Bill of Rights and Freedoms

When you move into an adult foster home, you do not give up any of your civil rights nor any rights as an Oregon citizen. Caregivers must respect your privacy, dignity, independence and your right to make choices. Each adult foster home must post the Residents' Bill of Rights and Freedoms in the home and discuss those rights with each resident at the time of admission.

All residents have the right to:

(a) Be treated as adults with respect and dignity

(b) Be informed of all resident rights and all house policies

(c) Be encouraged and assisted to exercise constitutional and legal rights including the right to vote

(d) Be informed of their medical condition and the right to consent to or refuse treatment

(e) Receive appropriate care and services and prompt medical care as needed

(f) Be free from abuse

(g) Complete privacy when receiving treatment or personal care

(h) Associate and communicate privately with any person of choice and send and receive personal mail unopened

(i) Have access to and participate in activities of social, religious and community groups

(j) Have medical and personal information kept confidential

(k) Keep and use a reasonable amount of personal clothing and belongings, and to have a reasonable amount of private, secure storage space

(l) Be free from chemical and physical restraints except as ordered by a physician or other qualified practitioner. Restraints are used only for medical reasons, to maximize a resident's physical functioning, and after other alternatives have been tried. Restraints are not used for discipline or convenience

(m) Manage their own financial affairs unless legally restricted

(n) Be free from financial exploitation. Providers must not charge or ask for application fees or non-refundable deposits or solicit, accept or receive money or property from residents other than the amount agreed to for services

(o) A written agreement regarding services to be provided and the rates to be charged. Providers must give at least 30 days' written notice before a rate change and before any change in their home's ownership

(p) Not to be transferred or moved out of the adult foster home without 30 days' written notice and an opportunity for a hearing. Providers may transfer residents only for medical reasons or for the welfare of the resident or other residents, or for nonpayment

(q) A safe and secure environment

(r) Be free of discrimination in regard to race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or religion

(s) Make suggestions or complaints without fear of retaliation, and

(t) Be free of discrimination in regard to the execution of an advance directive, Physician's Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) or do not resuscitate (DNR) orders.

All residents have the following freedoms:

(a) To live under a legally enforceable Residency Agreement with protections and substantially equivalent to landlord-tenant laws.

(b) The freedom and support to access food at any time.

(c) To have visitors of the resident's choosing at any time.

(d) To privacy in the resident's bedroom, and to have a lockable door in the resident's bedroom, which may be locked by the resident.

(e) To choose a roommate when sharing a bedroom.

(f) To furnish and decorate the resident's bedroom according to the Residency Agreement.

(g) The freedom and support to control the resident's schedule and activities.

Adult foster home providers

Adult foster home providers lose some privacy when they choose to provide care and services in their homes. Additionally, providers have specific responsibilities that help to ensure safety and efficiency, some of these might require resident participation. Cooperation and mutual respect make it easier for the provider to give the quality of care residents deserve.

One necessary area of cooperation is fire evacuation drills. For the safety of all, every resident is expected to participate in fire evacuation drills.

Involvement of family and friends

Many people rely on the support of family and friends when making a decision to live in an adult foster home. Those close to you may offer helpful advice to consider before you move in, but remember, the choice is yours. No one except a court-appointed legal guardian may select a home against your wishes.

Once you have chosen a home, family and friends can help to make the move as easy as possible. Continue to do the things you enjoyed. Keep in touch with family and friends and ask them to visit you often.

Problem solving

People often have an adjustment period when they move to an adult foster home. This adjustment period may affect you, your family, your friends and the foster home household. You may have mixed feelings about moving to an adult foster home. It is common to feel loneliness, resentment, anger or worry about this major life change. Adjusting may take weeks and you may need more support at this time.

Ongoing contact between you, your family, your friends and the provider may help to address concerns before they become problems. Cooperation and a willingness to try to resolve problems are important.

If you have any suggestions or concerns about the adult foster home you have chosen, do not ignore those feelings. Talk about them. It's your right to voice complaints. There are several ways to do this:

- You can tell your concern to the provider
- You can contact the local office of the Oregon Department of Human Services or the Area Agency on Aging
- You can call the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, and
- You can ask family or friends to help on your behalf.

You may decide you are not satisfied with the home you live in and the services you receive. You have the right to give the adult foster home provider a written notice if you decide to move. Another move may seem difficult but there is help for you. Contact your local ODHS office, or call the Statewide Abuse Reporting Line at 1-855-503-SAFE or the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

The Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

A major goal of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is to visit and respond to resident needs and concerns. The program protects the rights and privileges of the residents of long-term care facilities and can be helpful to residents, their families and their friends.

Anyone with concerns about the quality of care or the rights of residents at an adult foster home can call the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman at **1-800-522-2602** or email LTCO.info@rights.oregon.gov.

Adult foster home classifications

There are three classifications of adult foster home licenses in Oregon. The classifications are based on the experience and/or training of the provider. Each home has a license posted that indicates the classification of the home.

The provider may only admit residents that fit within the criteria for their license classification. These criteria are defined according to six major activities of daily living (ADLs) and each resident's ability to accomplish those ADLs with or without assistive devices or caregiver assistance.

Activities of daily living (ADLs)

The activities of daily living are eating, dressing and grooming, bathing and personal hygiene, mobility, elimination (toileting, bowel and bladder management), cognitive and behavioral support needs.

- **Eating.** The ability to eat.
- **Dressing and grooming.** The ability to dress, undress and brush one's hair.
- **Bathing and personal hygiene.** The ability to bathe and wash hair, including the ability to get in and out of the bathtub or shower.
- **Mobility.** The ability to get around, both inside and outside of the home, using items like canes, walkers or wheelchairs, if necessary. This includes the ability to transfer to or from a chair, bed or wheelchair.
- **Elimination.** The ability to get to and from the toilet, to wash afterward and to adjust clothing.
- **Cognition and behavior support.** The ability to understand one's needs in areas such as health and safety. Any support needs for confusion, disorientation, forgetfulness or wandering may require intervention in order to ensure safety.

Classification of adult foster homes

Classification	Qualifications of provider	Type of care provided
Class 1	Less than two years' experience providing direct care. Completion of basic training course. Completion of pre-service dementia training. Current CPR and First Aid Certification.	Residents may need assistance in up to four activities of daily living (ADLs).
Class 2	Two or more years' experience providing direct care. Completion of basic training course. Completion of pre-service dementia training. Current CPR and First Aid Certification.	Residents may need assistance in all ADLs but are dependent in no more than three.
Class 3	Licensed health care professionals or others with at least three years of experience providing care to people who are dependent. Completion of basic training course. Completion of pre-service dementia training. Current CPR and First Aid Certification.	Residents may be dependent in four or more ADLs. The home may have only one resident at a time who is totally dependent.

ODHS may allow, by written exception, a person to live in any classification of a home. The provider must be able to meet your needs, the needs of other residents, and all health and safety standards.

ADL needs checklist

To determine which adult foster home is licensed to meet your care needs, you may find the following tool useful:

Instructions: For each activity of daily living, use the following checklist:

- **Independent:** You do not need the help of another person to do a task.
- **Assistance:** You need the help of another person to do part of a task.
- **Dependent:** You need the help of another person to do all of a task.

Check the box that identifies the care you need for each activity of daily living.

Activities of daily living	Independent	Assistance	Dependent
Eating /nutrition			
Dressing			
Bathing /personal hygiene			
Elimination			
Mobility			
Cognition / behavior support			
Total			

Total each column.

- If you have checked all the ADLs as being independent or have checked you need assistance with up to four ADLs, any classification could meet your needs.
- If you have checked you need assistance in all ADLs or have checked you are dependent in less than four ADLs, a class 2 or 3 home could meet your care needs.
- If you have checked you are dependent in four or more ADLs, a class 3 home could meet your needs.

Adult foster home checklist

After you know the classification of the adult foster home you need, the next step is to call and visit some homes. The following checklist can help you decide which home you want to live in. Some questions may be more important to you than others.

Instructions: Fill in the answers for the following two questions.

Caregiver questions	Home #1	Home #2	Home #3
Who is the main caregiver in the home?			
If an administrator or a resident manager provides the care, how long have they worked in the home?			

Instructions: Answer the following questions with a "Yes" or a "No."

General issues	Home #1	Home #2	Home #3
Does the home have a current adult foster home license posted?			
Does the home have the license classification for your care needs?			
Is the home close to family, physician and social contacts?			
Do you like the home, yard and furnishings?			
Does the daily routine of the home meet your lifestyle?			
Do the residents interact well with each other?			
Would you feel comfortable living with the residents and caregivers in the home?			
Do the caregivers respect the residents' privacy (for example, knocking on doors, not disclosing personal information about residents)?			
Does the home seem comfortable to you?			

General issues *(continued)*	**Home #1**	**Home #2**	**Home #3**
Do the other residents appear well cared for and content?			
If pets, smoking or alcohol use is allowed in the home, is that OK with you?			
Do you like the house policies?			
If the provider's family members are in the home (spouse, children, relatives), is that OK with you?			
Has this owner been a licensed provider long enough for you to feel comfortable?			
Do they understand your needs?			
Will your personal choices such as religious practice be supported?			
Bedrooms			
Is the available bedroom private?			
If you must share a room, is that OK with you?			
Do you like the furniture (such as bed, dresser or lamp)?			
Can you bring your own furniture?			
Is there space to bring some of your own furniture, if you want to?			
Is phone and/or TV/cable available?			
Is phone and/or TV/cable included in the cost?			
General environment			
Are there smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, fire extinguishers and a posted evacuation plan?			
Is there good lighting throughout the home?			

Accessibility	Home #1	Home #2	Home #3
Are halls, doorways and bathrooms wide enough for walking and the use of canes, walkers or wheelchairs?			
Is there enough room in the rest of the home to use canes, walkers or wheelchairs?			
Are there objects or stairs that would make it hard to move around by yourself? Look inside and outside the home.			
Are ramps available for wheelchair use?			
Bathroom(s)			
Is it clean and odor-free?			
Is it close to the bedroom?			
Does it have safety grab bars and equipment?			
Are there fans or windows for ventilation?			
Care issues			
Is there an intercom system between residents' and the provider's bedrooms?			
If yes, can it be turned off for privacy?			
If you have hearing or vision support needs, can the provider meet your needs?			
Will the provider meet nighttime needs to your satisfaction?			
Are there activities offered (as a group or alone) that you would enjoy?			
Is transportation available?			
Does the provider/caregiver have experience caring for persons with your health needs?			

Care issues *(continued)*	**Home #1**	**Home #2**	**Home #3**
Are there caregivers in the home when the provider is gone (shopping, vacations, social outings, etc.)?			
Meals			
Do the meals and snacks appear tasty and nutritious?			
Are the residents asked what they want to eat when planning meals?			
Can special diet needs be met?			
Will meals meet your cultural, religious or food preferences?			
Financial			
Does the provider have a residency agreement for you to review?			
Is there a fee for transportation?			
Is there a bed hold fee?			
Is there a refundable deposit for damages beyond normal wear and tear?			
Do you like the terms of the residency agreement and house policies?			
Does the home accept Medicaid residents?			
Does the residency agreement have a schedule of rates?			
Does the residency agreement require an advance payment?			
Is there an acceptable refund policy?			

Notes...

Review your responses to these questions. That will help you select the home that meets your needs.

Notes *(continued)*...

Notes *(continued)*...

Oregon Department of Human Services
Safety, Oversight and Quality Unit

P. O. Box 14530
Salem, Oregon 97309

503-373-2227

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