

Living in an APD-Licensed Home: A Guide for Families, Guardians and Individuals with Developmental Disabilities



agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

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This document will help you...

- Measure the quality of the programs provided by an APD-licensed home, and
- Know what to do about any quality concerns you may have.



Moving Day...

Moving into a new home is an exciting and stressful time for anyone. However, if you have a developmental disability, it is even more important that services you are already receiving (such as nursing and behavioral services) are in place immediately to prevent any undue stress or disruption in care.

A time for the admission should be arranged that is mutually convenient for everyone. The support coordinator should be present at any new admission and should be able to present all of the required documentation to the staff of the home at the time of admission.



An admission documentation checklist is typically provided to the home's operator (to be completed prior to admission and forwarded to APD staff) to make sure the move goes as smoothly as possible.

Post-Admission Issues of Concern

- If you are the parent, guardian or advocate for a person that has been admitted into an APD-licensed home, you are encouraged to visit the home at various times of the day and week to make sure things are going smoothly.
- Regular visits will allow you to get to know the staff of the home better and will let those staff know that this person has someone who is willing to advocate on their behalf for quality care and services. Research indicates that individuals with developmental disabilities who have such individuals involved in their lives are less likely to experience abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- After admission, you may become aware of some issue in a home that gives you cause for concern regarding the training, treatment, safety or health of those individuals who live in the home. You should report any concerns to the home's manager (or your local APD office if you feel more comfortable doing so).

“Red Flags” to watch for....

- Do staff actively engage residents in conversations and activities or do they mainly interact with each other (or spend a great deal of time talking on the telephone)?
- Is watching television the only activity you ever observe?
- Do money, clothes, or other personal possessions seem to “disappear” over time without explanation?
- Are the activities in the home based upon the needs and desires of residents or do they appear to be driven by staff preference and convenience?
- Are dietary requirements being met with the meals that are served?
- Are the responses by staff to problem behaviors consistent with what is contained in the resident’s behavior plan?
- Do staff discourage or restrict visitors to the home and/or phone calls made by residents?

Quality of care issues to look for...

Care and Treatment of Residents	Residents should be treated with respect, be dressed in clothing appropriate for the weather, and maintain good hygiene. Health concerns should be monitored by staff with appropriate medical care and treatment secured in a timely manner as needed.
Outdoors	Exterior of home should be well maintained (grass cut and no trash/debris present) with no broken windows or doors.
Indoors	Home should be clean (with only minor maintenance issues). No foul odors should be present. Furniture and lighting should be sufficient and in good working order.
Bedrooms and Personal Possessions	Bedrooms should be nicely decorated and organized (with adequate storage and bedding). Personal possessions should be evident and residents should have full access to those items.
Temperature	A comfortable temperature should be maintained in the home.
Personal Funds	Resident personal funds and expenditures should be accounted for and documented (with receipts for purchases costing more than 15 dollars).

Quality of Care Issues (continued)

Recreation	Recreation schedules should be available and show a variety of activities which are selected by the residents.
Food Services	There is enough appetizing and healthy food for the individuals living in the home (with menus and snacks available). Dietary restrictions for any residents should be followed by staff.
Medication	Medications should be (1) administered in accordance with the directions on the prescription, (2) logged by staff after each administration, and (3) kept in a locked container.
Medical/Dental Care	Staff of the home should consistently take residents to routine medical/dental appointments and follow-up visits and comply with all physician-ordered treatments.
Staffing	There should be enough staff in the home to ensure that a healthy and safe environment is present and that all residents are able to receive adequate attention and care.

Probably the most important aspect of a home is how each person that lives there is treated. Below is what you should expect from all APD providers:

- Calls me by the name I want to be called.
- Talks to me in a nice way.
- Looks at me when talking to me.
- Asks me about my feelings and ideas.
- Gives me extra time to talk or **COMMUNICATE** if I need it.
- Gives me extra time to do things if I need extra time without making me feel hurried.
- Asks me if I need help before giving me help.
- Includes me in the **CONVERSATION** when other people are in the room and they are talking about me.
- Knocks on my door before entering.
- Respects my personal things when they use them.
- Respects my privacy.
- Supports and helps me to select goals that I want to work on.
- Knows what my personal goals are on my support plan and implementation plan.
- Helps me to work on things that are part of my goals.
- Helps me find better or other ways to reach my goals when I am having a hard time reaching a goal.
- Helps me change my goals and helps me to work on my new goals.
- Asks me what I want to work on or where I want to go.
- Takes their time in doing the things I want to do when we go into the community.
- Helps me to do things and I feel they are nice, gentle and listen to me.
- When I am with them, I feel we are really having a good time, learning things and enjoying our time together.
- If I have a problem with what they are doing, I feel they listen to me and fix the problem quickly.



If you have a computer with Internet access and want more information about how to tell if you (or someone you know) is receiving the best quality services from an APD-licensed home, please check out the following website:

<http://www.dfmc-florida.org/public/docs/PersonalCompass.pdf>

Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

Negative changes in the behavior, health, finances, or personal appearance of a person with a developmental disability (which are observed after he or she moves into a home) may be signs that this person is being mistreated.

If you believe that any of the individuals who live in an APD-licensed home are being abused, neglected, or exploited, you should call the DCF Abuse Hotline immediately at 1-800-96 Abuse (1-800-962-2873). You can choose to remain anonymous when you call the Hotline but it is important that you make the call to make sure that your concerns are investigated.

Additional information on recognizing the signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation can be found on APD's website at:

<http://apd.myflorida.com/zero-tolerance/>

What should you do about other concerns you may have?

For other quality-related concerns,
Please talk with the manager of the home.

If the issue(s) cannot be
fixed to your satisfaction,
please contact your local
APD office for assistance. You can
get the telephone number of your local
APD office from your support coordinator
or by visiting our website at <http://apd.myflorida.com/>



Remember: APD has over 1,500 licensed homes throughout Florida so there is simply no reason to stay in a home that cannot meet your needs. You have the right to choose where (and with whom) you want to live!