



# Considerations When Called to a Long-Term Care Facility

When first responders, including Emergency Medical Services (EMS) or Law Enforcement, are called to a long-term care facility, they may be presented with situations that raise concerns, or for which additional information would be helpful as they work to resolve a problem.

## What Are the Types of Long-Term Care Facilities?

Often times you cannot identify the type of facility by the facility's name. "Sunrise Manor" doesn't clearly indicate what types of services are provided to residents. Additionally, states have different nomenclature for distinct types of licensed facilities. So let us start with the broad categories of licensed facilities.

**Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF)**, more commonly called a Nursing Home, is licensed by the state and typically certified to receive Medicare and Medicaid funds through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The nursing home provides:

- 24/7 supervision and oversight
- Registered Nurse (R.N.) and/or Licensed Practical Nurse (L.P.N) on duty (or on-call some shifts), medication administration
- Nurse aide services for assistance with bathing, grooming, and eating
- Meals, activities, social services, laundry, and housekeeping
- Therapy services if accepting Medicare reimbursement for rehabilitation

The broad term **Residential Care Communities (RCC)** is used to describe all of the diverse types of long-term care facilities, other than nursing homes, which are licensed by a state and may accept private pay, state funded assistance, or in some state Medicaid fund sources. A few of the common descriptions are Assisted Living Facilities, Board and Care Homes, Personal Care Homes, Adult Care Homes, Group Homes, etc. The RCCs most commonly provide:

- 24/7 supervision and oversight
- State regulations may or may not require an R.N. or L.P.N. to be on-site or available for on-call
- Typically staffed by nursing assistants (aides)
- Housing, meals, laundry, and housekeeping

Independent living communities, 55+ communities, and senior housing may provide some concierge services such as transportation, activities, and referrals for medical or support services. These communities are almost always private pay.

## Guidance and Tips

- Obtain a list of licensed/certified facilities for the regions that your precinct, station, EMS covers. Share the list with staff and post for reference.
- If you need additional clarification or a new facility has opened that is not on the state licensing list, ask your state or local Ombudsman representative.
- When entering a facility check for their license. It is usually posted near the front entrance. If you cannot find the license, ask the manager or staff in charge.
- If staff on-site are not forthright about the license or certification for the facility, you may have reason to suspect that they are operating an unlicensed facility. Report unlicensed facilities to the state licensing agency.
- If EMS needs law enforcement to respond to a situation, they can contact their own dispatch by radio or onboard systems, and dispatch will coordinate directly with the police. Some EMS agencies also use direct phone numbers or priority lines to request law enforcement without calling 911.



## RESOURCES

Contact information for state licensing agencies:

[cms.gov/medicare/health-safety-standards/quality-safety-oversight-general-information/contact-information](https://www.cms.gov/medicare/health-safety-standards/quality-safety-oversight-general-information/contact-information)

Contact information for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs:

[theconsumervoice.org/get-help](https://theconsumervoice.org/get-help)

Skilled Nursing Facility definitions, rules and regulations information from CMS:

[cms.gov/medicare/health-safety-standards/certification-compliance/nursing-homes](https://www.cms.gov/medicare/health-safety-standards/certification-compliance/nursing-homes)

Scan the QR code to watch the accompanying video.



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