

Accommodation for People with Disability

People with disability enjoy a wide variety of accommodation arrangements that reflect their personal needs and preferences.



General information

The Department for Communities and Social Inclusion supports the right of people with disability to live in a setting that suits them best. Support can be provided so that this can occur. The support may include personal care, personal development, making choices and important life decisions, monetary self-reliance and independence.

Demand for accommodation for people with disability is high. Access to accommodation support is determined on a priority system, based on need. The Department gathers data on unmet needs and service gaps to provide information to the South Australian Government for services, planning and budgeting purposes.

Types of accommodation

When thinking about accommodation for a person with disability it is important to consider two main areas:

- The style/accessibility and location of housing (for example is it located near shops, transport, recreation facilities).
- The support the person may require to live in that accommodation.

As with any member of the community, people with disability live in many diverse types of accommodation, with levels of support to suit their needs. The following are some examples of the options available.

Living in the family home

Many people with disability live with their families, receiving varying levels of support from family members and other supports, including respite services.

Some people live in self-contained units or granny flats, on the same property as their families.

Living alone

People can rent accommodation through public or private systems. People with disability may receive support through family and friends, or through the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion. People on low incomes can receive financial assistance from Centrelink to help pay their rent.

A guardianship order – administered by [the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal \(SACAT\)](#), can help people to manage their personal finances and may be essential for successful independent living in some situations.

Sharing with others

Some people with disability live with friends or others with similar needs, sharing costs, helping each other with tasks and providing mutual support.

Sometimes people with disability live with friends, housemates or relatives and pay rental costs or other reimbursements in exchange for assistance with some tasks.

Community housing organisations

Community housing organisations are non-profit community groups that provide rental housing that is secure, affordable and appropriate. They generally do not provide any personal support, but help with housing and maintenance issues.

Boarding arrangements

Some people who require minimal support may pay board to live in someone's home in return for cooked meals, washing and cleaning.

Supported Residential Facilities: SRF (boarding houses, hostels)

SRF are residences that provide communal living for people who require help in some daily living tasks. People living there may include people with disability/mental health issues or older persons.

These residences are licensed under local councils, who oversee the standards of care provided.

The person is required to pay full board in return for cooked meals, help with medication, finances, laundry and cleaning of rooms. People may share or have their own rooms, depending upon availability. The amount and type of support varies from facility to facility.

Host family arrangements

There are some established schemes coordinated by disability services where selected professional carers are paid to provide support to people with disability who live with them.

Aged care services

Ageing people with disability requiring accommodation may find suitable options through aged care services in rest homes or nursing homes, depending on personal needs and eligibility for services. People with disability under the age of 65 years must receive approval from the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion for an ACAT assessment (Aged Care Assessment Team).

Group homes

Various agencies that provide for people with disability have homes in the community where several people with similar needs live together supported by paid staff.

Generally there are four to five people with disability in each group home. This style of accommodation is for people who require 24-hour support but not necessarily one-on-one. Substantial support is given with daily living tasks during the day along with active or passive support at night.

Cluster Groupings (Group Cluster)

A cluster group is where a group home for four to five people with similar needs and five or six two-bedroom units are situated together. The size of each house varies according to need.

Each person has a roster planned around their needs, including time each week when they receive assistance with shopping, appointments or recreational pursuits. There is access to 24-hour on-site support, usually available via an internal communication system. Staff can provide emergency and ad hoc responses anywhere on the site.

Cluster Site (Single Cluster)

At a single cluster site, up to six two-bedroom units are co-located on one site. Each person has a roster planned around their needs, including time each week when they receive assistance with shopping, appointments or recreational pursuits. People living in this type of accommodation are generally comfortable with spending some time alone each day. There is access to 24-hour on-site support, usually available via an internal communication system. Staff can provide emergency and ad hoc responses anywhere on the site.

Staff have an on-site unit or an attached bedsit so they can provide passive or active support to the residents at night.

Group Home

A group home provides supported accommodation in a house setting for four to five people with similar needs. Minimising risk is a priority in this setting (for example for people who wander or have challenging behaviour). People living in this type of accommodation need 24-hour support, including active support at night.

High support homes

High support homes provide supported accommodation for up to four people with high health care needs. The house may include shared facilities such as an ensuite bathroom (usually placed between two bedrooms) and kitchen/dining. Separate lounge and bedroom areas provide each person with their own private space.

Active 24-hour support is provided with back up support and daily visits from a Registered Nurse. This style of accommodation is for people who require extremely high levels of support in all activities of daily living.

Large facilities

Strathmont Centre, Highgate Park and Minda Inc provide the only specialised care in large facilities for people with varying disabilities in South Australia. However, these facilities are being downsized, with the aim of housing most clients in the community.



Considering options

When deciding on living options, it may be helpful to consider these issues:

Living skills

- What practical tasks is the person able to carry out?
- What are his/her strengths and capabilities?
- What skills would he/she need to live in the community, and how can family and or carers help the person learn these skills? Learning independent living skills prior to moving out of home may increase the range of available options.

Assistance

- What style of accommodation would best fit the person's desires and abilities?
- What help, if any, would be best from family, friends and neighbours? Would additional support be required? Is this support available?

Location

The location of the accommodation can influence the success of the move. Consider:

- Is the accommodation close to supports such as family and friends?
- Is there access to public transport, shops and local facilities? Is the accommodation close to work/day activities and interests?

Some steps to take

- Consider the person's desires and the assistance they need to move into new accommodation in the short-term and long-term
- Talk openly and plan together for the move to help ease the transition when it comes
- Visit some of the different venues available and ask for information so that the person (and their family, if appropriate) can make an informed choice
- Ask if there are requirements to meet if a vacancy arose, such as furniture, financial arrangements, being able to catch a bus, etc. Some of these factors may increase the chance of being offered a position
- Let your case manager know about any updated information or if the situation changes
- Consider regular centre-based respite to introduce the person to the experience of living away from home while awaiting new accommodation. This may help them to adjust more easily when fulltime accommodation is found.

Contact Us

For more information on accommodation options, contact your Disability Services regional office or case manager. Alternatively, call 1300 786 117 for assistance.