

# Assisted Living in Massachusetts

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Assisted living emphasizes aging with dignity and choice, while offering a high-quality lifestyle in a supportive, non-clinical environment. Residents transitioning from living independently often choose assisted living for a variety of reasons. Most residents receive support with certain activities of basic daily living (ADLs), such as bathing, dressing, grooming, or mobility. Some of these individuals live in special memory care units that support those living with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. Regardless of need or ability, every resident can benefit from the community atmosphere that sets assisted living apart.

With loneliness on the rise among older adults, assisted living supports residents in staying active, developing new hobbies, and making new friends. Residences across Massachusetts have adapted to provide these benefits safely and in adherence with physical distancing guidelines.

Aging presents challenges that evolve over time, but assisted living is rooted in the value that seniors – even in very old age or with severe memory impairment -- shouldn't be defined by their medical needs. Assisted living promotes wellness through supporting residents with daily hygiene, managing medications, eating healthy and regularly, keeping a consistent sleep schedule, and staying physically active. Staff develop an individualized assessment and service plan for each resident, revised over time as needs change.

## Assisted Living Fast Facts

**260+# of assisted living residences across the Commonwealth**

**15,000+# of older adults in assisted living in MA**

**\$6 billion Assisted living annual contributions to the MA economy**

**32,000 Jobs directly and indirectly supported by assisted living**

## Policy

Any resident may bring in private supports such as hospice or a visiting nurse to provide skilled care, or family members will sometimes administer routine, noninvasive services such as insulin injections. To maintain safety during COVID-19, Massachusetts is temporarily allowing assisted living residences to wrap a handful of these common, limited health services into day-to-day care provided by staff if a resident prefers. Mass-ALA is advocating to make this a permanent option for families to ease their responsibilities and provide peace of mind.

## Investing in Assisted Living

The cost of assisted living varies with each assisted living community. On average, an assisted living apartment is half the cost of a private nursing home room. While more than 90% of assisted living residents in Massachusetts pay privately, certain long-term care insurance policies may cover some of the cost. Some assisted living communities also offer financial assistance programs and other creative pricing structures, and limited (state) public funds cover a portion of assisted living fees for eligible individuals. Mass-ALA and its members are pursuing state-level policy changes that would provide more options and affordability to put assisted living within reach of more older adults.

## About Mass-ALA

The Massachusetts Assisted Living Association (Mass-ALA) is a not-for-profit association that serves as the voice of the assisted living industry in the Commonwealth. A state affiliate of Argentum, the national association for assisted living, Mass-ALA represents the majority of assisted living communities of all sizes and service models across all corners of Massachusetts. The mission of Mass-ALA is to lead the assisted living industry in its service of older adults through advocacy, education, operational support, and enhanced growth opportunities.