

Housing for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Housing and Services

When you begin to think about long term housing plans, one of the first things to consider is whether or not support services (e.g., personal care assistance, skill development, nursing, etc.) will be needed as well. If so, you'll need to plan for how the services needed will work with the housing option you select. To learn more about publicly funded services through the Medicaid Waiver, visit <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/#waivers>. To see options for hiring drop in care staff, visit <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/#c-d-s>, or <https://thearcofnova.org/resource-library/#l-i-c> for information on live-in caregivers.

Weighing the Options

As you explore these choices, think about what you value. Ensure you are looking at options that respect your wishes for independence and flexibility, as well as offer options to bring in any and all services you need. You may try more than one option over time, which is perfectly normal. Options may be more or less appealing at certain points in the lifespan or as services available to you change.

Waiting Times

Waiting times for affordable housing options can vary widely. If you've prepared a budget, know where you'd like to live, have materials needed for your home, and have services and/or subsidies available to support you, you could be ready to move in just a few months. If you have restrictions on where exactly you can live, the type of housing you want, you are still waiting for a Medicaid Waiver, or want an option that has a waiting list, the wait can be many years in some cases.

Types of Housing

It is never too early to start weighing housing options since some require more time, planning, and resources than others. Here are some brief descriptions of common housing options for adults with developmental disabilities. In all of these models, you could use Medicaid Waiver support options and/or private pay to bring in services.

Housing Resources

1. For more in-depth information on the topics on this handout, roommates, local housing programs, and more, visit <https://thearcofnova.org/programs/transition/finding-home-adults-disabilities/>.
2. To watch recorded webinars that walk you through housing tours, options, and resources, visit <https://www.youtube.com/user/VideosatTheArcofNoVA>
3. To sign up for The Arc of Northern Virginia's e-newsletter that shares housing news and learning opportunities- <https://thearcofnova.org/about-us/newsroom/newsletters/>

Housing Type	Funding for Housing	Getting Started
Owned or rented apartment or other home where services and supports can be brought in up to 24/7, or can allow for live-in staff.	Use income or a rental subsidy to fund the rental costs and/or look for a “tax credit unit” that may have lower rents.	Talk to your Waiver Support Coordinator (even if on the waiting list) about preparing for this option. You could move within months if you’re prepared.
Shared Living Waiver service where person with a Waiver has live-in staff, plus other staff as needed.	Use income or a rental subsidy to fund the rental costs.	Talk to your Waiver Support Coordinator about preparing for this option. You could move within months if you’re prepared and have a Waiver.
Supported Living Waiver service that involves moving into a unit owned by a service provider or leased by person with disability, and provider then brings in staff.	Use income or rental subsidy to fund the rental costs.	Talk to your Waiver Support Coordinator about preparing for this option. You could move within months if you’re prepared and have a Waiver.
Group Homes are usually 4-7 unrelated people living in a home staffed and owned by a service provider.	Use income to pay for rent, food, and program fees.	Talk to your Waiver Support Coordinator about preparing for this option. You could move within months if you’re prepared and have a Waiver.
Sponsored Residential is a Waiver service where a person with a disability lives with a caregiver who provides needed services, usually in the home of the caregiver.	Use income or rental subsidy to fund the rental costs.	Talk to your Waiver Support Coordinator about preparing for this option. You could move within months if you’re prepared and have a Waiver.
Shared a home or rent a room in someone else’s home to keep rent costs low.	Use income or rental subsidy to fund the rental costs.	Work with your support team to figure out a budget, identify, and select a good fit.
Buy a home with a low interest microboard or other loan.	Use income or rental subsidy to fund the rental costs.	Research low interest loans and figure out what you can where, for how much, and what type of home you’d need.
Public housing is a housing unit owned and maintained by a local government.	Use income to pay for reduced rental costs.	See if your locality has public housing and getting on waiting lists when they open.