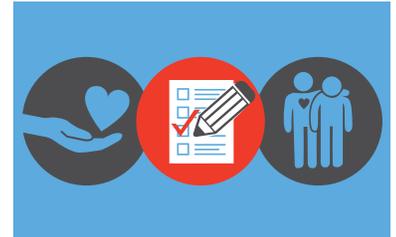


# Should You Take a Loved One Out of a Nursing Home During the Pandemic?

There are few more fraught decisions, and no clear-cut answers. Use this guide to help you navigate the process, as well as to find out how well a nursing home is handling COVID-19.

## 7 Steps for Thinking Through the Decision

- 1. Take your loved one's desires into account.**  
Can your loved one tell you what they want? If so, listen to their desires and needs. If your loved one cannot tell you what he or she wants or is unable to make decisions, make sure a legal representative takes responsibility for the decision.
- 2. Know your loved one's rights and restrictions.**  
A nursing home resident (or legal guardian acting for them) has the right to leave at any time. But you must learn the specifics about when the facility will allow residents to return — some say not until the crisis is “over,” which may be hard to define, and others say returning residents must prove they are COVID-free.
- 3. Understand Medicaid guidelines.**  
If your loved one is covered by Medicaid, see whether the program has restrictions for leaving and eventually returning to a facility.
- 4. Know your loved one's medical needs.**  
Talk to his or her doctor about specific conditions and what care these require in and out of the home.
- 5. Think about whether you can provide that care at home.**  
Are you able and willing to provide all aspects of your loved one's care that can't be covered right now by community services? Do you have the time, the expertise (or know where to learn), adequate food and supplies, and the financial circumstances to maintain them for an indefinite period? Is your home safe and accessible for someone in a wheelchair or rolling walker?
- 6. Make sure you can transport your loved one safely.**  
Discuss with their doctor whether they are able to travel.
- 7. Ensure that your home is a safe place.**  
Has everyone in your household been in self-isolation for at least 14 days? If yes, you should still be prepared to keep your loved one separate for 14 more days and identify one designated caregiver who needs to take precautions (such as personal protective equipment).



### KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

**No matter what you decide to do, the following sites can help. AARP offers extensive caregiving resources:**

AARP Nursing Homes Information:  
[aarp.org/nursinghomes](http://aarp.org/nursinghomes)

AARP Coronavirus Information:  
[aarp.org/coronavirus](http://aarp.org/coronavirus)

AARP Caregiving COVID-19 Tip Sheets:  
[aarp.org/employercaregiving](http://aarp.org/employercaregiving)

AARP Caregiving Resource Center & Family Caregiver Support Line (English):  
[aarp.org/caregiving](http://aarp.org/caregiving)  
or call 877-333-5885

Eldercare Locator can help you locate services in your area:  
[eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov)

Your Long-Term Care Ombudsman can help advocate for you:  
[theconsumervoicework.org/get\\_help](http://theconsumervoicework.org/get_help)

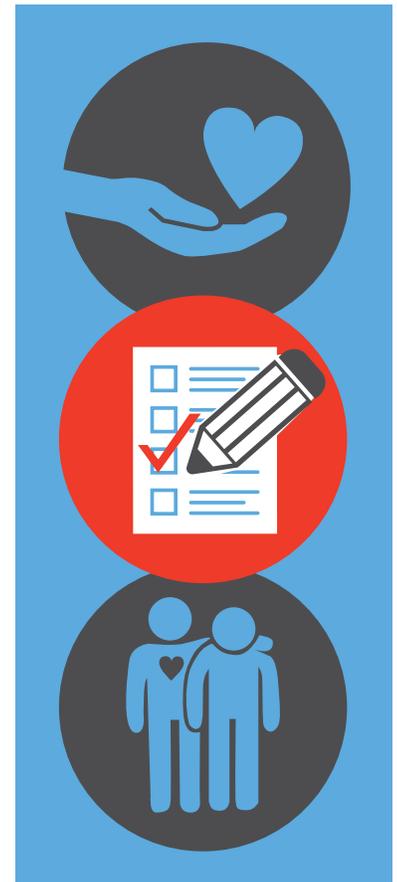
# Is your loved one in a nursing home?

## 6 Questions to ask.

If you have a spouse, sibling, parent, or other loved one in a nursing home, you may be worried about their safety and well-being because of the coronavirus pandemic. AARP has developed key questions for you to ask the nursing home.

- 1. Has anyone in the nursing home tested positive for COVID-19?**
  - This includes residents as well as staff or other vendors who may have been in the nursing home.
  
- 2. What is the nursing home doing to prevent infections?**
  - How are nursing home staff being screened for COVID-19, especially when they leave and re-enter the home?
  - What precautions are in place for residents who are not in private rooms?
  
- 3. Does nursing home staff have the personal protective equipment (PPE)—like masks, face shields, gowns, gloves—that they need to stay safe, and keep their patients safe?**
  - Have nursing home staff been given specific training on how to use this personal protective equipment?
  - If no, what is the plan to obtain personal protective equipment?
  
- 4. What is the nursing home doing to help residents stay connected with their families or other loved ones during this time?**
  - Does the nursing home help residents call their loved ones by phone or video call?
  - Will the nursing home set up a regular schedule for you to speak with your loved one?
  
- 5. What is the plan for the nursing home to communicate important information to both residents and families on a regular basis?**
  - Will the nursing home be contacting you by phone or email, and when?
  
- 6. Is the nursing home currently at full staffing levels for nurses, aides, and other workers?**
  - What is the plan to make sure the needs of nursing home residents are met—like bathing, feeding, medication management, social engagement—if the nursing home has staffing shortages?

AARP is providing information and resources about COVID-19 to help older Americans and their families protect themselves from the virus and prevent it from spreading to others. Resources are available online at [www.aarp.org/coronavirus](http://www.aarp.org/coronavirus).



### RESOURCES

If you are concerned about the safety and well-being of a spouse, parent, or other loved one who lives in a nursing home, visit [www.nasop.org](http://www.nasop.org) to find a Long Term Care Ombudsman near you.

Find local caregiving resources at: [www.eldercare.acl.gov](http://www.eldercare.acl.gov)