

Arc Guide

The Process of Finding Housing



There are several steps to finding housing for a person with a disability. Following is information to help you start the journey to finding housing.

Getting Started

Housing planning should start with a formal and/or informal assessment (often called person-centered planning) of the individual's goals, hopes and dreams. Next you will want to identify the individual's strengths and needs. This should form the basis for what kind of housing you seek.

Potential Supports

The next area to consider is which type(s) of supports will fit best, based on the individual's strengths and needs. Potential supports might include informal (unpaid or natural) supports or formal (paid) supports. Informal supports might include weekly check-ins by a neighbor, phone calls from family, or nightly walks with a friend. Formal supports might include equipment, such as assistive technology, or staffing, such as a Personal Care Attendance (PCA), personal supports staffing under a waiver program, and Supported Living Services (SLS).

Types of Housing

There are a variety of housing options available to people with disabilities. Funding options, levels of support and eligibility criteria for the different programs vary. See the Arc Guide on Housing Options for further information.

Resources and Funding

Funding is a critical component of housing decisions. Whether an individual is privately paying for housing and supports (either out of pocket or through a trust) or applying government benefits, it is essential to know what the budget is.

Often an individual will want to consider obtaining a county case manager or social worker to assist in accessing funding and supports. A detailed county service plan, including the type of housing and support situation an individual is pursuing, should be developed.

Medical Assistance can fund programs including Personal Care Attendant (PCAs), Consumer Support Grants, Intermediate Care Facilities, nursing services and waiver programs. These government programs may cover staffing and other supports.

Federally administered programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Retirement Survivors Social Security (RSDI) and wages can cover room and board. Additional funding may be available through food support programs and Minnesota Supplemental Aid (MSA).

In addition, first time home buyer financing, community block grants, etc. may assist with the purchase of a home. Subsidized rental programs such as public housing and Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) can help the individual pay the rent.

Key Questions To Consider

- What are the individual's goals, hopes and dreams with regard to housing?
- Is the individual able to obtain a case manager to access government programs?
- Does the individual's service plan include housing planning?
- Does the individual have Medical Assistance?
- Is there a special needs trust in place?
- What funding or resources are available (i.e., government programs, private pay, etc.)?
- What staffing supports might the individual need (i.e., daily check-ins, awake overnight staff, etc.)?
- Does the person want to live with other people or do they want to live alone?
- Who is available to informally assist the person (i.e., family members, friends, neighbors, etc.)?
- What type of assistive technology would be useful (i.e., a grabber to reach things, an environmental control system mounted to a wheelchair, visual cues, etc.)

For further information or advocacy services, contact Arc Greater Twin Cities at 952-920-0855 or visit www.arcgreatertwincities.org. Tell us what you think about this Arc Guide. Please complete a short survey online at <http://arcgreatertwincities.org/resources.aspx>. Thank you!