

Residence Tour Checklist

Touring Retirement Residences: What to Ask, What to Watch

Bring one copy per residence. Tour at least three residences before deciding, and try to visit once unannounced, around a mealtime.

Part 1: Before the tour

	Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	Requested the full rate card in writing, including care package prices
<input type="checkbox"/>	Asked which levels of care this residence can and cannot provide
<input type="checkbox"/>	Checked the residence on the public register (in Ontario: the RHRA register at rhra.ca)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Booked the tour to overlap a meal service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrote down the three things that matter most to your parent (not to you)

Part 2: Watch for these during the tour

	What to observe
<input type="checkbox"/>	How staff greet residents by name (or do not)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Whether residents look engaged or parked in front of a television
<input type="checkbox"/>	The smell, especially in hallways away from the lobby
<input type="checkbox"/>	How the dining room actually runs at mealtime: choice, pace, help offered
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notice boards: are the posted activities recent and real?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cleanliness of handrails, elevators, and shared bathrooms, not just the lobby
<input type="checkbox"/>	How the tour guide answers when your parent asks a question directly

Part 3: Questions to ask, and write the answers down

Question	Answer / notes
What is included in the base rate, and what is charged as extra care?	
How much did rates increase in each of the last three years?	

Question	Answer / notes
What are the staffing levels overnight, and who is on site (PSW? RN?)?	
What happens when a resident's care needs increase beyond what you offer?	
Is there a trial stay option? What does it cost?	
Is the waitlist deposit refundable, in writing?	
How are complaints handled, and can I see the residents' council minutes?	
What is the discharge policy? Under what conditions can a resident be asked to leave?	

Part 4: Compare your top three

	Residence 1	Residence 2	Residence 3
Name			
Base monthly rate			
Care extras our situation needs (\$)			
All-in monthly estimate			
Gut feeling after the tour (1-10)			
Your parent's own rating (1-10)			
Second visit done? (unannounced)			

The residence is your parent's home first and a building second. If the numbers tie, the residence where staff knew residents' names wins.