

The *Resident and Family Councils Act*

Persons with Developmental Disabilities Engagement
February – March, 2018

Resident and Family Councils

- A resident and family council is:
 - A group of residents of a home and/or their family members.
 - A group that meets regularly to:
 - Discuss ways to make your life and the lives of other residents better; and,
 - Share thoughts with the staff of your home about issues that matter to you.

Resident and Family Councils (2)

- Resident and family councils are meant to:
 - Encourage you, other residents and your family to share what's important to you;
 - Let you, other residents and your family tell the staff of your home what's important to you; and,
 - Be a space where everyone's voice can be heard.
- Right now operators of homes for persons for developmental disabilities are not required to support residents and families in forming a council to come together to discuss what matters to them.

The *Resident and Family Councils Act*

- The Government of Alberta has passed a law to support resident and family councils.
- The *Resident and Family Councils Act* requires operators to support residents who live in a home to create a resident and family council if they want to.
 - This includes residences of persons with developmental disabilities that have four or more people.
- The new law will be in place in Spring 2018.

What the Act Says Staff Must Do

- The Act says staff have to:
 - Let you, other residents and your families know that you can start a resident and family council;
 - Support you, other residents and your families to start a resident and family council if you want to have one;
 - Take part in council discussions if the council asks them to;
 - Talk to the council about decisions that affect you and other residents; and,
 - Provide information about your home to the council.
- The Act does not require that residents and families create a council, if they do not want one.

How the Act Would Apply to You

- If you live in a home with four or more residents:
 - You, the other residents and your family would be supported by the staff of your home to start a resident and family council if you would like to.
 - You would not have to participate in a resident and family council but will have the opportunity to do so.
- If you live in a home with three or less residents the law would not apply to you.

What Could a Council Look Like?

- A resident and family council can be as simple as the individuals of a home holding a house meeting, where:
 - You, a family member or the staff takes notes on what is talked about at the meeting and any decisions that are made.
 - Notes are kept in a binder or notebook, so that all the individuals in the home can access them.
 - The council could discuss things like food and social activities.
 - If there are issues that cannot be dealt with during a meeting, staff will work on the issues and discuss them at the next meeting.

Benefits of a Resident and Family Council

- If you choose to participate in a resident and family council in your home:
 - You would be supported by the staff of your home to start the council and to arrange for meetings;
 - You would have an opportunity to meet regularly with other residents, your family members and staff of your home;
 - You would have a chance to ask the staff of your home questions about what matters to you;
 - You would be able to be involved in more decisions about your life.

Support to Start and Run a Resident and Family Council

- A toolkit is being created that will provide advice to individuals who want to start or participate in a resident and family council.
- The toolkit will include materials that you can use to guide council meetings.
- The toolkit will be posted on Alberta Health's website.

Monitoring

- Alberta Health inspectors visit all homes with 4 or more residents, every year.
- These inspectors will now look to make sure that the rules of the new Act are being followed.
- As part of their visit, the inspectors will talk to staff in your homes about what they do to support a council and may want to talk to you about the council.

What We've Heard So Far

“Our resident and family council has helped residents here feel that this is truly their home.”

– Doreen Wilson (Site Administrator, St. Marguerite Manor)

“...the council at St. Marguerite Manor has been truly beneficial.”

– Kate Friesen (Participant in RFC at St. Marguerite Manor)

“*The Resident and Family Councils Act* offers yet another opportunity to ensure that voices of Albertans with disabilities are reflected in decisions that affect them.”

- *Irfan Sabir, Minister of Community Services*

“It is important for government to hear directly from Albertans with disabilities on the issues that matter to them.”

- *Bruce Uditsky, CEO, Inclusion Alberta*

We Need Your Input

1. To decide if the new law should include homes of persons with developmental disabilities licensed under *SLALA*.
2. To learn how we could help you to start and operate a resident and family council.

Question #1

1. Do you think that people with developmental disabilities and their families should have the opportunity to create a council in their *SLALA* licensed homes?
 - Do you have any concerns?

Question #2

2. What information and support would you like from us, to help create a resident and family council for your home?

Question #3

3. Is there any other information or thoughts you'd like to share with us?

Thank you!

Next Steps

More info: [Alberta.ca/RFCAConsultation](https://alberta.ca/RFCAConsultation)

Contact us: RFC.PDD@gov.ab.ca