

Resident and Family Council

Fact Sheet

Overview

On April 1, 2024, a new legislative framework came into effect for the continuing care sector in Alberta. This legislative framework includes the *Continuing Care Act*, the new regulations and updated continuing care standards. Along with these changes, the *Resident Family and Councils (RFC) Act* is repealed. Legislation related to the resident and family council is now in the *Continuing Care Act*, the *Continuing Care Regulation*, and accommodation standards.

Resident and Family Councils

A resident and family council (RFC) is a group composed of residents, and/or family members of residents, of licensed supportive living accommodation or a continuing care home. This group meets to work together to improve residents' lives. RFCs are vital to maintaining and enhancing residents' quality of life.

As per the *Continuing Care Regulation*, the purpose of an RFC is to provide a supportive environment where residents and residents' family members can participate in discussions and decision-making about the continuing care home or supportive living accommodation and the care and/or services provided. RFCs are vital to maintaining and enhancing residents' quality of life.

RFC Requirements Within Legislation

The requirements for an RFC apply to type A continuing care homes (formerly nursing homes and auxiliary hospitals), type B continuing care homes (formerly designated supportive living) and supportive living accommodations. The legislative requirements for RFCs are in the:

- [Continuing Care Act](#),
- [Continuing Care Regulation](#),
- [Accommodation Standards - Continuing Care Home](#) (AS-CCH), and

- [Accommodation Standards – Supportive Living Accommodation](#) (AS-SLA).

Setting up an RFC

A resident, family member, group of residents and/or family members can set up a council in a home. Operators may support residents and families to set up and run a council if that support is requested.

Additionally, the resident and family council toolkit is a resource that can assist with forming and running a council. For more information on the toolkit visit: <https://www.alberta.ca/resident-family-councils>.

Definition of Family Member

A resident or a resident's legal representative can identify one or more relatives, friends, guardians, caregivers, or other individuals to be considered as family members in RFCs.

Operator's Role in RFCs

An operator is required to inform residents and/or families that they have the right to form an RFC. Additionally, an operator must help residents and families at a supportive living accommodation or a continuing care home to establish a council by providing a space and supporting them with needs. However, the legislative framework does not require residents and/or their families to establish a council if they do not want one.

When there is no RFC established, the operator is required to post a notice in a prominent place in the home to inform residents and families that they have the right to establish an RFC. When there is no council, the operator must ensure that there is an alternative mechanism available that fulfills the purposes of the RFC as set out in the *Continuing Care Regulation* and updated accommodation standards.

Feedback from RFCs

In accordance with the *Continuing Care Act*, *Continuing Care Regulation*, and accommodation standards, feedback from an RFC must be tracked, and issues must follow a resolution process. Operators must respond and document the issues identified and raised by the council. There should be a formal tracking process established by operators to assist with keeping track of issues and plans to resolve them.

Operator Attendance at RFCs

Operators, or facility representatives, are required to attend RFC meetings when invited. However, RFCs may ask staff or facility representatives to leave meetings at a set time. This allows residents and family members to raise concerns and discuss issues freely without the presence of facility representatives or operators.

More Information

If you have concerns about a continuing care facility or service provider not meeting a requirement in the standards, we encourage you to first speak with the operator or provider to discuss your concerns with them. If you find that your concerns are not appropriately addressed, then you are encouraged to report your concern to Alberta Health at CULO@gov.ab.ca or 780-644-8428 (toll free at 310-0000).

More information on RFCs can be found in:

- [Continuing Care Act](#): Section 37
- [Continuing Care Regulation](#): Section 37
- [AS-CCH](#): Standard 29 in Chapter 1 and Standard 30 in Chapter 2
- [AS-SLA](#): Standard 33

Alberta Health licenses and inspects supportive living accommodations and continuing care homes to provincial standards. The Government of Alberta also has a public reporting website, which currently provides information about compliance and complaints related to the accommodation standards as well as the results of inspections to the [Continuing Care Health Service Standards](#). For more information, please visit the Public Reporting website at: <http://standardsandlicensing.alberta.ca>.