

Evaluating Retirement Communities

Making the decision to move to a retirement community can seem overwhelming. Where do you start? Who do you talk with? What questions should you ask?

To help you make an informed decision, Touchmark has developed the following list to guide you through the process of researching any retirement community.

Most people start their search by looking at retirement communities and getting pricing information, similar to hunting for a new car. And just like shopping for a car, to really understand the benefits and how it feels, you have to “test drive”—or experience—what it’s like to live in a retirement community before you make the move.

The following list will help you do just that. Use it as you evaluate each community you are considering. If you use it consistently and pay attention to how you feel throughout the process, you will know what’s right for you. Have fun ... and enjoy new experiences!

Look at apartments/homes and become familiar with costs.

- Do you understand what’s included in the monthly service fee for the home you are considering?
- Are you considering both the tangible (e.g., apartment, food, transportation) and intangible (e.g., social opportunities, activities, staff friendliness) benefits when you consider value?
- Does the value seem reasonable?
- Do you have concerns about long-term affordability and how the costs may change, if your service needs change in the future?
- Does the community answer your questions to your satisfaction?

Evaluate the community.

- Are residents warm and engaging?
- Do they seem happy?
- Do you “feel good” when you are in the community?



Participate in community events and activities.

- Would you like to participate in them regularly?
- Look at the calendar: Are the offerings diverse and interesting? Are they ones you would enjoy?
- Is the community open to adding events, activities, or outings that you suggest or might like to lead?
- Would you have more fun as a resident of this community than you are having in your home right now?
- Is there opportunity to interact with the broader community?

Talk to residents and learn what their experience has been.

- Do you know residents who live here? If so, have you talked with them about the community?
- Do they like it? What advice do they give you about your possible move?
- Can you picture some of them becoming your friends?

Talk to care staff to understand the services offered to help support aging in place.

- Do you understand all the care services this community offers?
- Do you feel all the care services offered will meet your long-term needs?

