

The Senior Snippet

Written by Erin LeBlanc

Residents have the right to receive notice before the room or roommate of the resident is changed.

The facility should be sensitive to the trauma a move or change of roommate causes some residents, and should attempt to be as accommodating as possible. This includes learning the resident's preferences and taking them into account when discussing changes of rooms or roommates and the timing of such changes.

For a resident who is being moved at the facility's request, a staff member should explain to the resident the reason for the move and support the resident by providing the opportunity to see the new location and meet the new roommate and to ask questions about the move.

For a resident who is receiving a new roommate, a staff member should give the resident as much notice and information about the new person as possible while maintaining confidentiality regarding medical information.

The facility should support a resident whose roommate has passed away by providing a little time to adjust before moving another person into the room, depending on the resident's level of connection to the previous roommate.

The facility should provide necessary social services for a resident who is grieving over the death of a roommate.

A Medicare or Medicaid approved nursing home must give you advanced written notice before your room or roommate is changed. The home should also explain why the change is necessary.

Federal law gives each resident the right to receive notice before the resident's room or roommate is changed. While the regulation does not include a specific time frame for the notice, the interpretive guidelines clarify that the facility is to lessen resident trauma associated with the

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change and accommodate the resident as much as possible.

General rule is three days notice before a room or roommate change, unless a longer or shorter notice is necessary.

When should you contact an ombudsman?

—to resolve complaints.

—to request better individualized care.

—to confidentially communicate problems and concerns.

—to gain feedback prior to choosing a nursing home.

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