**Adult Family Home (AFH) Information Sheet**

Adult Family Home Characteristics

**Review** [**Chapter 388-76 WAC**](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true) **for current licensing requirements**

The following information can help interested parties make a good decision about the type of home to buy, rent, or lease for use as an adult family home.The applicant must consider what type of residents they will serve to determine if the structure and characteristics of the home are appropriate. If an applicant intends to only admit residents who are independent with ambulation and evacuation (as defined per [WAC 388-76-10870](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10870)), then a home with stairs may be an appropriate choice. However, if the applicant intends to allow independent residents to age in place as their abilities decline or admit residents who use assistive devices, then modifications may be needed to accommodate these types of residents. This document contains helpful information to consider when choosing a home.

Space Inside the Home

* If you intend to admit residents who require assistance, then minimally a bathroom, a common area, dining area, and a kitchenette must be on the same level of the home as the resident’s bedroom.
* Usable bedroom square footage is measured from floor board to floor board, taking total square footage minus space for toilet rooms, closets, lockers, wardrobes, vestibules, and door swings. Some bedrooms may have adequate square footage for two residents, but may be an odd shape which may not allow you to safely fit two beds into it with space for residents to use walkers or wheelchairs. This may require you to clearly identify the number of wheelchair-accessible bedrooms you have, and to plan accordingly to reasonably accommodate residents whose mobility declines – See [WAC 388-76-10000](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10000) and [388-76-10690](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10690).
* Bedrooms to accommodate two residents must be no less than one-hundred twenty square feet of usable floor space. Bedrooms to accommodate one resident must be no less than eighty square feet of usable floor space – See [WAC 388-76-10690](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10690).
* Common areas, such as dining and living rooms must be large enough to seat all residents at one time, with enough space for residents to move around when the rooms are being used. The home may have additional smaller common areas that may not be able to accommodate every resident at one time – See [WAC 388-76-10705](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10705).

Accessibility

* Ensure each resident, including those using mobility aids such as wheelchairs and walkers has direct, unrestricted, and free access from the bedroom through doors, hallways, and corridors to common use areas and other rooms used for care and services, including bathrooms – See [WAC 388-76-10685](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10685).
* If you intend to admit residents who use walkers or wheelchairs, the home’s halls and doorways must be wide enough to accommodate the walkers or wheelchairs. The department’s standard for minimum door clearance is 27 inches.

Safety

* A doorway leading to steps or a stairwell may pose a falling risk for residents. Areas such as these will need to be inaccessible to residents who require assistance.
* The home must have sufficient storage for hazardous materials and safety risks as necessary. Consider that unless specified in the resident assessment, the home must keep toxic substances and hazardous materials in locked storage. This applies to products with a label containing words like “poison,” “danger,” “toxic,” or “keep out of reach of children,” such as laundry detergent, dishwasher liquids, paints, batteries, hand sanitizer, and other common household items – See [WAC 388-76-10750](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10750).
* The home must have a place for locked storage of medications – See [WAC 388-76-10485](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10485).
* Floors must be free from tripping hazards.

Type of Lot

* If you intend to admit residents who require assistance, consider whether the grounds around the home will allow residents to enter and exit safely. You will want to avoid steep yards and driveways.
* You may need a ramp which allows residents requiring assistance to access outdoor space and evacuation areas without egress restrictions – See [WAC 388-76-10865](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10865).
* It is recommended that the part of the driveway nearest the home be level to allow residents to enter and exit the car with minimal effort.
* There must be a safe outdoor space that all residents can use. Outdoor space is typically a patio, deck or lawn area. You must ensure that elevated patios/decks, and any gate leading off the patio/deck, is safe for resident use. Lawns should be level and free of items that might trip a resident who is unsteady or who uses a cane or walker – See [WAC 388-76-10750](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10750).

Evacuation Considerations

* Residents must be able to evacuate the home from their bedroom to a designated safe location via a path through the primary egress door without the use of elevators, chairlift, or platform lift, and residents who need assistance must be able to evacuate from the home without the use of stairs – See [WAC 388-76-10865](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10865).
* If you admit residents who are independent to bedrooms not on the ground floor and their mobility declines, you will have to move them to a room that meets evacuation standards for residents who need assistance – See [WAC 388-76-10865](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10865).
* Ramps must have a shallow slope, not to exceed 8.3% – See [WAC 388-76-10865](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10865).
* All steps and ramps must have handrails on both sides for resident safety and stability – See [WAC 388-76-10730](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10730).
* The designated emergency egress door must have a lever-type door handle that unlocks with a single motion, does not automatically lock behind you, and allows for re-entry without a special key, tool or knowledge. The International Residential Code requires the emergency exit door to be hung by hinges on the side, not a sliding door. – See [WAC 388-76-10715](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10715).

General

* The home must be clean and in good repair – inside and outside – See [WAC 388-76-10750](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10750).
* There must not be any pests or rodents – See [WAC 388-76-10750](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10750).
* The paint must be in good condition – both inside and outside – See [WAC 388-76-10750](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10750).
* Carpets must be intact, clean, and free of stains and odors – See [WAC 388-76-10750](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=388-76&full=true#388-76-10750).

*(Updated October, 2021)*