

231C.3 Certification of assisted living programs.

1. The department shall establish by rule in accordance with [chapter 17A](#) minimum standards for certification and monitoring of assisted living programs. The department may adopt by reference with or without amendment, nationally recognized standards and rules for assisted living programs. The rules shall include specification of recognized accrediting entities and provisions related to dementia-specific programs. The standards and rules shall be formulated in consultation with affected state agencies and affected industry, professional, and consumer groups; shall be designed to accomplish the purposes of [this chapter](#); and shall include but are not limited to rules relating to all of the following:

a. Provisions to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, the health, safety, and well-being and appropriate treatment of tenants.

b. Requirements that assisted living programs furnish the department with specified information necessary to administer [this chapter](#). All information related to a provider application for an assisted living program submitted to the department shall be considered a public record pursuant to [chapter 22](#).

c. Standards for tenant evaluation or assessment, and service plans, which may vary in accordance with the nature of the services provided or the status of the tenant. When a tenant needs personal care or health-related care, the service plan shall be updated within thirty days of occupancy and as needed with significant change, but not less than annually.

d. Provisions for granting short-term waivers for tenants who exceed occupancy criteria.

2. Each assisted living program operating in this state shall be certified by the department. If an assisted living program is voluntarily accredited by a recognized accrediting entity, the department shall certify the assisted living program on the basis of the voluntary accreditation. An assisted living program that is certified by the department on the basis of voluntary accreditation shall not be subject to payment of the certification fee prescribed in [section 231C.18](#), but shall be subject to an administrative fee as prescribed by rule. An assisted living program certified under [this section](#) is exempt from the requirements of [section 135.62](#) relating to certificate of need requirements.

3. The owner or manager of a certified assisted living program shall comply with the rules adopted by the department for an assisted living program. A person including a governmental unit shall not represent an assisted living program to the public as an assisted living program or as a certified assisted living program unless and until the program is certified pursuant to [this chapter](#).

4. a. Services provided by a certified assisted living program may be provided directly by staff of the assisted living program, by individuals contracting with the assisted living program to provide services, or by individuals employed by the tenant or with whom the tenant contracts if the tenant agrees to assume the responsibility and risk of the employment or the contractual relationship.

b. If a tenant is terminally ill and has elected to receive hospice services under the federal Medicare program from a Medicare-certified hospice program, the assisted living program and the Medicare-certified hospice program shall enter into a written agreement under which the hospice program retains professional management responsibility for those services.

5. The department may enter into contracts to provide certification and monitoring of assisted living programs. The department shall:

a. Have full access at reasonable times to all records, materials, and common areas pertaining to the provision of services and care to the tenants of a program during certification, monitoring, and complaint investigations of programs seeking certification, currently certified, or alleged to be uncertified.

b. With the consent of the tenant, visit the tenant's unit.

c. Require that the recognized accrediting entity providing accreditation for a program provide copies to the department of all materials related to the accreditation, monitoring, and complaint process.

6. The department may also establish by rule in accordance with [chapter 17A](#) minimum standards for subsidized and dementia-specific assisted living programs. The rules shall be

formulated in consultation with affected state agencies and affected industry, professional, and consumer groups.

7. A department, agency, or officer of this state or of any governmental unit shall not pay or approve for payment from public funds any amount to an assisted living program for an actual or prospective tenant, unless the program holds a current certificate issued by the department and meets all current requirements for certification.

8. The department shall adopt rules regarding the conducting or operating of another business or activity in the distinct part of the physical structure in which the assisted living program is provided, if the business or activity serves nontenants. The rules shall be developed in consultation with affected state agencies and affected industry, professional, and consumer groups.

9. An assisted living program shall comply with [section 135C.33](#).

10. The department shall conduct training sessions for personnel responsible for conducting monitoring evaluations and complaint investigations of assisted living programs.

11. Certification of an assisted living program shall be for two years unless certification is revoked for good cause by the department.

[96 Acts, ch 1192, §3](#); [2003 Acts, ch 166, §10](#); [2005 Acts, ch 60, §6 – 10, 21](#); [2006 Acts, ch 1010, §72](#); [2007 Acts, ch 215, §162 – 166](#); [2009 Acts, ch 156, §12](#); [2025 Acts, ch 120, §70](#)

Referred to in [§53.8, 53.22, 235E.1](#)

Subsection 2 amended