

# Community Residences

## What is a Community Residence?

A Community Residence is a residential living arrangement for 5 to 10 individuals with disabilities (excluding staff) who live together as a family in a single dwelling unit. Residents benefit from mutual support provided by other residents and may receive additional support services from staff.

Community Residences include:

- Sober living homes
- Assisted living homes
- Residential behavioral health homes

Community Residences do not include:

- Other group living arrangements for unrelated individuals without disabilities
- Shelters
- Rooming houses or boarding houses
- Transient occupancy facilities

**Note:** The classification of a Community Residence will be determined by the City of Mesa at the time of registration application, based on the proposed use, operational characteristics, and applicable standards and definitions.



# Who Needs to Register?

All Community Residences operating in Mesa must register with the Mesa's Planning Division. This registration helps ensure these facilities meet necessary requirements to operate safely and legally within the community

## Registration Process

This process includes verifying eligibility, submitting an application, reviewing it with staff, and final approval.

**Registration Process Details (<https://www.mesaaz.gov/Business-Development/Development-Services/Planning/Current-Planning/Community-Residence-Registration>)**

If you have questions about registration, contact the Planning Division at 480-644-4726 (tel:4806444726) or Planning.Info@mesaaz.gov (mailto:Planning.Info@mesaaz.gov).

## Important Information for Residents

### Allowed Locations

Community Residences are generally allowed in residential areas. The specific requirements depend on whether the residence is classified as a Family Community Residence or a Transitional Community Residence.

### Spacing Requirements

To prevent overconcentration, Community Residences must be located at least 1,200 feet from other similar facilities unless separated by a significant feature or granted special accommodation.

## Regulations and Oversight

Community Residences are regulated by both the State of Arizona and Mesa to ensure they provide appropriate support while maintaining neighborhood character.

### Checking Registration Status

If you have questions about whether a home in your neighborhood is registered as a Community Residence, contact the Planning Division at 480-644-4726 (tel:4806444726) or Planning.Info@mesaaz.gov (mailto:Planning.Info@mesaaz.gov).

## Additional Resources

For more detailed information, please see frequently asked questions below or review Section 11-31-14 ([https://library.municode.com/az/mesa/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=COOR\\_TIT11ZOOB\\_ART4DERE\\_CH31STSPUSAC\\_11-31-14CORE](https://library.municode.com/az/mesa/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_TIT11ZOOB_ART4DERE_CH31STSPUSAC_11-31-14CORE)) of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.

For information on State requirements, contact the Arizona Department of Health Services Licensing Division (<https://www.azdhs.gov/licensing/index.php>).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a Community Residence?

A Community Residence is a home where 5 to 10 people with disabilities live together like a family. These homes help residents support each other while they work toward greater independence. Residents live normal daily lives—going to work or appointments, sharing meals, and helping with household chores, just like any family. Staff (if present) provide support but don't provide intensive medical care.

**Types of homes:** Community Residences include sober living homes for people in recovery, small assisted living homes for seniors, and residential behavioral health homes. The goal is always to create a stable, family-like environment.

**How they operate:** Residents either govern themselves or are supervised by trained staff. The focus is on creating a supportive home environment, not a medical facility. Residents learn important life skills and receive encouragement from both housemates and staff.

**Community integration:** A key purpose of these homes is to help residents become part of the wider community. Research shows that well-managed Community Residences make good neighbors and don't affect property values or neighborhood safety (<https://planning.org/policy/guides/adopted/commres.htm>).

**Community Residences are NOT:**

- A home with 4 or fewer unrelated people living together
- Any number of related family members living together
- Group homes specifically for people with developmental disabilities
- Assisted Living Centers (larger facilities)
- Convalescent Homes
- Shelters
- Group Foster Homes
- Boarding Homes
- Correctional Transitional Housing Facilities

## **Are Community Residences legal in residential neighborhoods?**

Yes. There are two types of Community Residences:

- **Family Community Residences:** Allowed in the same areas as single-family and multi-family homes
- **Transitional Community Residences:** Allowed in multi-family areas, and may require a Conditional Use Permit in single-family areas

Neither type is allowed in Airport Overflight Areas One or Two.

## **Are these homes regulated?**

Yes. Community Residences must:

- Register (<https://www.mesaaz.gov/Business-Development/Development-Services/Planning/Current-Planning/Community-Residence-Registration>) with the City of Mesa
- Renew their registration annually
- Have proper state licensing or certification
- In some areas, obtain a Conditional Use Permit

If a home loses its state license or certification, it must cease operations within 45 days.

## **How close can Community Residences be to each other?**

To prevent too many Community Residences in one area, homes must be at least 1,200 feet apart from other Community Residences, Assisted Living Homes, or Assisted Living Centers. Exceptions may be granted in certain circumstances.

## **Will I be notified if a Community Residence opens in my neighborhood?**

Public notice is only required if:

- The home needs a Conditional Use Permit
- The home has requested special accommodations

## **How can I check if a home is a registered Community Residence?**

Contact the City of Mesa Planning Division:

- Phone: [480-644-4726](tel:4806444726) (tel:4806444726)
- Email: [Planning.Info@mesaaz.gov](mailto:Planning.Info@mesaaz.gov) (mailto:Planning.Info@MesaAZ.gov)

## What about other group living arrangements?

Other group arrangements have different requirements:

- **Group homes for people with developmental disabilities:** Follow state regulations and are treated like family homes
- **Assisted Living Centers and Nursing Homes:** Need Council Use Permit approval in specific zones
- **Social Service Facilities and Shelters:** Need Council Use Permit approval in specific zones
- **Boarding Houses:** Need county permits and Special Use Permit approval in specific zones
- **Correctional Transitional Housing:** Only allowed in certain industrial zones with Council Use Permit approval
- **Group Foster Homes:** Regulated by the state and treated like family homes

## Why are Community Residences important?

These homes provide family-like environments that help residents:

- Support each other
- Learn skills for independent living
- Integrate into the community
- Receive necessary care in a residential setting

Medical treatment in these homes is incidental, just as it would be in any family home.

# Contact Us

## Phone

480-644-4273 (tel:4806444273)

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## Hours

Monday - Thursday

7:00 am to 6:00 pm

Friday - Essential Service Call Center ONLY

8:00 am to 12:00 pm