

What is an SLF?

The term “Supportive Living Facility” has a specific meaning in Illinois. Commonly referred to as SLFs, these properties serve senior citizens and persons with physical disabilities with services normally found in assisted living, but differ from assisted living in their financial and regulatory dimensions.

SLF Services

A Supportive Living Facility integrates housing with personal care, and supportive services and offers residents their own separate, private, and distinct living units along with 24 hour supervision and assistance.

Each apartment has a full bathroom, emergency call system, heating and cooling controls, wiring for private telephone, access to cable television, a door that locks from the inside and a kitchenette with sink, microwave oven and refrigerator.

In addition, SLFs have a large community dining room and commercial kitchen, activity and recreational areas, a physical therapy and exercise room, library and a beauty/barber shop.

Most importantly, SLFs provide extensive support and services to their residents. These include:

- three meals per day prepared on site
- weekly housekeeping service
- laundry service
- social and recreational programming
- transportation for scheduled group shopping and other community and social activities
- assistance, as needed, with activities of daily living (e.g. bathing, grooming, dressing and other such activities)
- back up support is readily available if a resident falls, becomes disoriented, needs medical attention or otherwise needs some sort of assistance
- Quarterly resident health assessments
- medication oversight and assistance in self-administration of medication
- 24-hour response/security staff and emergency call systems
- health promotion programming and healthcare referral
- exercise and wellness programming

SLF Financial Features – Affordable to Persons of Any Income

Affordability makes an SLF different from market rate assisted living. SLFs provide truly affordable assisted living to persons of almost any income.

The law does not allow Medicaid to cover services in assisted living establishments; however, a certified Supportive Living Facility is eligible for Medicaid support for similar services.

SLF residents with sufficient financial means and assets (“private pay residents”) will pay a rent, plus a market rate for a service and food contract. Private pay residents may be charged higher rates than Medicaid residents; private pay charges are not limited by Illinois SLF regulations.

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If a senior “spends down” their assets, Medicaid eligibility will start up, giving comfort to the resident and their family that financial need won’t displace the resident.

Strength of State Medicaid Support

Cost Savings: The State of Illinois strongly supports the development of SLFs. One key reason is that SLFs save money for the State, as illustrated by these facts.

- Illinois’ own studies show that more than 20 percent of residents in nursing homes could be served in lower cost residential settings (i.e. SLFs) rather than the heavier care model of a nursing home.
- Recognizing these facts, Illinois took action to join 23 other states that have added assisted living as a component to their state Medicaid plans.
- Illinois regulations set the Medicaid rate for SLFs at 60% of the corresponding regional nursing home rate.

According to the Illinois Office of Comptroller Fiscal Year 2009 Public Accountability Report, State expenditures on Supportive Living Facility services were \$97 million in that year and the state would have incurred \$58.0 million of additional expenditures if residents served in Supportive Living Facilities had been served in nursing facilities.

Data from State of Illinois, Office of the Comptroller
Public Accountability Report, Fiscal Year 2008 and Public Accountability Report, Fiscal Year 2009

Fiscal Year	2006 actual	2007 actual	2008 actual	2009 actual	2010 projected
Number of SLF residents funded by State Medicaid program	3,597	4,681	5,765	6,883	7,350
Dollars spent for Supportive Living Facility services (in millions)	\$45.4	\$57.3	\$74.0	\$97.0	\$128.7
Additional costs that would have been incurred if residents in SLFs had been served in Nursing Facilities (in millions)	\$31.2	\$40.0	\$51.0	\$58.0	\$68.8
Difference between average SLF and average Nursing Facility rate per day (\$)	\$33.42	\$34.49	\$35.91	\$33.42	\$33.42

Preferred Choice in Quality Facilities: In addition to significant cost savings, seniors strongly favor the SLF alternative when given a choice. As evidence of this preference, approximately 32 percent of residents in SLFs moved there from a nursing home.