

How to Search for Housing for SMI in Florida

If you or a loved one live with a serious mental illness, you may need safe and secure housing that supports you in your journey to recovery. We hope this brochure helps you to find a good fit! We recommend consulting the housing specialist at the Managing Entity in your area. In addition to helping you determine the best option, the Managing Entity Housing Specialist may also be able to help you apply for benefits and possibly secure Optional State Supplementation (OSS) funds or a housing voucher to help with the cost.

Florida's Managing Entities and Housing Specialists

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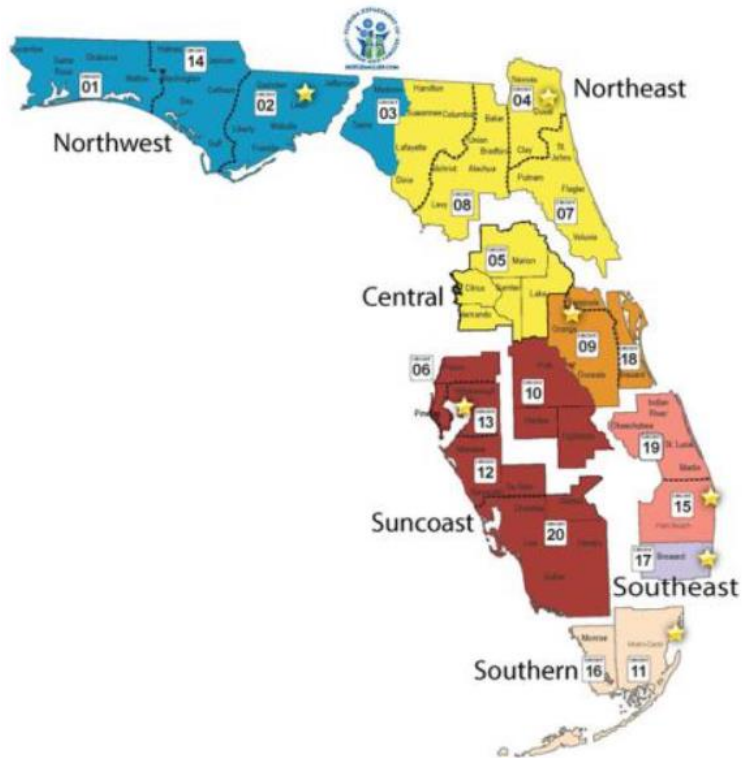
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Many thanks to the Florida Association of Managing Entities (FAME) for providing the names and contacts for the Managing Entity Housing Specialists.

Types of Housing

There are various types of housing, with costs and services that vary widely. The following types, like all Florida Health Care Facilities, are licensed by Florida AHCA (Agency for Health Care Administration). You can search for these facilities in your area by accessing AHCA's Health Finder Facility Search:

<https://quality.healthfinder.fl.gov/Facility-Search/FacilityLocateSearch>

1. **Assisted Living Facilities (ALF)** – An ALF provides services not limited to: housing and nutritional meals; help with the activities of daily living, like bathing, dressing, eating, walking, physical transfer, giving medications or helping residents give themselves medications; arrange for health care services; provide or arrange for transportation to health care services; health monitoring; respite care; and social activities. Assisted living facilities are licensed and surveyed by the State of Florida. The monthly cost of ALFs vary widely. **Limited Mental Health (LMH)** – An ALF with this license can provide limited mental health services. This type of license must be obtained if an assisted living facility serves three or more mental health residents. Services must be provided for the special needs of these residents, along with the basic services of an assisted living facility. A facility with a limited mental health license must consult with the resident and the resident's mental health case manager to develop and carry out a community living support plan.
2. **Community Residential Home** as defined by [419.001 F.S.](#), means a dwelling unit licensed to serve residents who are clients of the Department of Elderly Affairs, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Department of Juvenile Justice, or the Department of Children and Families or licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration (so disabilities vary) which provides a living environment for 7 to 14 unrelated residents who operate as the functional equivalent of a family, including such supervision and care by supportive staff as may be necessary to meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of the residents.
3. **An Adult Family Care Home** is a type of Community Residential Home and provides full-time, family-type living in a private home *for up to five elderly persons or adults with a disability*, who are not related to the owner. The owner lives in the same house as the residents. The basic services include, but are not limited to: housing and nutritional meals; help with the activities of daily living, like bathing, dressing, eating, walking, physical transfer, giving medications or helping residents give themselves medications; supervision of residents; arrange for health care services; provide or arrange for transportation to health care services; health monitoring; and social activities. Adult family care homes are licensed and surveyed by the State of Florida.

Crisis Stabilization and Residential Treatment Options may also be located on the AHCA Health Finder Facility Search. There are five levels of residential treatment, but they do not exist in all areas of the state.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is not licensed by AHCA and you will not find it on the AHCA Facility Finder website. PSH is *independent housing with wrap-around support services*. Affordable housing assistance is combined with *voluntary (residents choose)* supportive services that help the

resident live at the highest level of independence while choosing the supports that are needed to thrive. Case management, Peer Support, Therapy, Transportation to Doctors and Pharmacies are some examples of supportive services. Permanent Supportive Housing may be within one housing development or scattered within a community. Housing Specialists with the Managing Entities will know of the PSH in your area and if there is availability or a waiting list.

Recovery Residences, certified by the Florida Association of Recovery Residences (FARR), are for those recovering from substance use issues; mental illness may be present, but a substance use disorder must be the primary diagnosis. FARR offers homes with 4 levels of support. More information and a list of residences may be found on their website: <https://www.farronline.org/>

In-Home Options Licensed by AHCA:

Home Health Agency – A home health agency provides services to patients in private homes, assisted living facilities, and adult family care homes. Some of the services include nursing care; physical, occupational, respiratory, and speech therapy; home health aides; homemaker and companions; and medical equipment and supplies. Along with services in the home, an agency can also provide staffing services in nursing homes and hospitals. Home health agencies are licensed and surveyed by the State of Florida.

If it lists Medicare and/or Medicaid under Certification Status on Facility Locator that means the agency can serve Medicare and/or Medicaid patients.

Homemaker and Companion Services– Homemakers and companions companies provide housekeeping, prepare and serve meals, help with shopping, routine household chores and companionship in the client's home, and take the client to appointments and other outings. By law, homemakers and companions may not provide hands-on personal care, such as help with bathing, and cannot give medications. Homemaker and companion agencies are registered by the State of Florida. However, individuals who work on their own, outside of an organization and with no other workers helping them are not required to be registered. (A quick search showed 2,449 of these companies in Florida that are licensed by AHCA.)

Local Financial Assistance via SHIP (State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program)

Some cities offer various types of financial assistance for renting for those who qualify. This is the link to the SHIP page through FHFC:

[Local Government Information](#)

Then you can click on either the county or city to see if they offer for assistance. You can also get in touch with your local Continuum of Care (CoC) who offers services for the homeless population:

<https://fchonline.org/coc/>

They often work closely with Managing Entities to connect people to both services and treatment.