

## Texas Health and Human Services Resources

**Texas Health and Human Services** - <https://hhs.texas.gov/>

Texas Health and Human Services now consists of 2 agencies: the **Texas Health and Human Services Commission** and the **Texas Department of State Health Services**. The newly restructured system, effective September 1, 2017:

- Makes it easier for people to find out about the services or benefits for which they may qualify.
- Better integrates programs and groups similar programs and services together.

**Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)** - <https://hhs.texas.gov/>

Experienced HHSC employees deliver benefits and services, including:

- Medicaid for families and children
- Long-term care for people who are older or who have disabilities
- SNAP food benefits and TANF cash assistance for families
- Behavioral health services
- Services to help keep people who are older or who have disabilities in their homes and communities
- Services for women and other people with special health needs

The agency also oversees regulatory functions including:

- Licensing and credentialing long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes and assisted living
- Licensing child care providers
- Managing the day-to-day operations of state supported living centers and state hospitals



Texas Health and Human Services Commission (Government Organization)

**LTC Regulatory Services** – This unit is responsible for overseeing the statutory requirements imposed on all regulated long-term care entities. The division includes Survey Operations, Licensing & Credentialing, Enforcement and a Policy, Rules and Training team.

**NF Providers Communications** - <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/providers/nf/>

Source for Information Letters (IL), Provider Letters (PL), Federal Survey & Certification Letters (S&C) and others.

**Complaint and Incident Intake (CII)** –

<https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/your-rights/complaint-incident-intake>

Call 800-458-9858 to report suspected abuse or neglect of people who are older or who have disabilities. You can call this number to report abuse that occurs in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, day activity and health services, home health and hospice agencies, as well as intermediate care facilities.

Agents answer calls Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. If you call outside those hours, leave a message; an employee will call you back by the next workday.

**Facility/Surveyor Liaisons** – <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/resources/regulatory-services-facility-surveyorsliaisons>

Facility surveyors/liaisons help improve the care for people who live in nursing facilities, assisted living facilities and intermediate care facilities for individuals with an intellectual disability or related conditions by enhancing communication between facility and surveyor staff.

**Policy, Rules and Training (PRT)** PRT consists of Policy Specialists, Rule Writers, Curriculum Developers and Trainers for each provider/ program type.

**Policy/Rules** - <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/policies-rules>

To be good stewards of the public trust, Health and Human Services employees and contracted providers must follow state and federal rules and statutes when delivering services to eligible Texans. HHS also takes into account stakeholder input when new rules and policies are being written to ensure interested parties can contribute to the process.

To contact Policy and Rules, email [LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:LTCRPolicy@hhs.texas.gov); subject line: include specific program or provider type. You may still call 512-438-3161. Advise the receptionist of the program area and nature of your inquiry (policy interpretation, licensing question, training availability, etc.). You will be transferred to the appropriate party.

**Joint Training** – <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/providers/training/jointtraining.cfm>

The Joint Training program offers a variety of classes and webinars to long-term care providers. Class schedules and registration are available on the website.

To contact Joint Training, email [LTCRJointTraining@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:LTCRJointTraining@hhs.texas.gov).

**Minimum Data Set (MDS)** - <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/long-term-care-providers/nursing-facilities-nf/texas-minimum-data-set-mds>

MDS is a standardized collection of demographic and clinical information that describes a person's overall condition. All licensed nursing facilities in Texas are required to submit MDS assessments for all residents admitted into their facility.

**Quality Monitoring Program** - <https://hhs.texas.gov/QMP>

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Quality Monitoring Program (QMP) helps detect conditions in Texas nursing homes that could be detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of residents. It is not a regulatory program and quality monitors do not cite deficient practices. Quality monitors focus on nursing homes that have a history of resident care

deficiencies, or that have been identified as having a higher-than-average risk of being cited for significant deficiencies in future surveys conducted by the HHSC Regulatory Services.

During these visits, the quality monitors — nurses, pharmacists and dietitians — may:

- Recommend changes to policies or procedures
- Conduct staff or in-service training
- Offer technical assistance
- Educate staff about evidence-based best practices

In addition to providing on-site visits, the Quality Monitoring Program provides many trainings for LTC providers such as its annual Quality in Long-term Care Conference (formerly known as the Geriatric Symposium). Information about these trainings and other initiatives such as Music & Memory and Texas Reducing Antipsychotics in Nursing Homes (TRAIN) can be found on the QMP website.



Texas Nursing Facility Quality Improvement Coalition (Community)

**Civil Money Penalty Funds for NF Projects** - <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/nursing-facilities-nf/civil-money-penalty-funds>

The Social Security Act allows CMP funds to be used for projects and activities that benefit residents. Twice a year, HHSC evaluates proposals to use CMP funds by using criteria developed by CMS and published in [CMS S&C 12-13-NH \(PDF\)](#).

**Pre-admission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR)** - <https://hhs.texas.gov/PASRR>

PASRR is a federally mandated program that is applied to all individuals seeking admission to a Medicaid-certified nursing facility, regardless of funding source.

PASRR must be administered to identify:

- individuals who have a mental illness, an intellectual disability or a developmental disability (also known as related conditions),
- the appropriateness of placement in the nursing facility, and
- the eligibility for specialized services.

In addition to several online courses, the PASRR website also posts any workshops or conferences available to providers.

Other trainings related to the IDD population can be found at

<https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/training/training-initiatives> and include:

- Positive Behavior Management and Support Workshops
- Mental Health Wellness for Individuals with IDD (online courses)

**NF Culture Change** - <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/long-term-care-providers/nursing-facilities-nf/nf-culture-change>

Changing the culture of nursing homes begins with viewing the facility as a place where people live — not just places where people go to work. Culture change is an evolving process whereby a nursing home moves from being an institution driven by tasks and schedules to a place that reflects the residents' wishes and their needs. With culture change comes a new way of thinking: focusing on residents' abilities, preferences and routines to provide care that meets their needs.

**Long-term Care Provider Search (formerly QRS)** - <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/ltcsearch/>

The Long-term Care (LTC) Provider Search helps consumers and their families learn more about providers and facilities. It provides some basic information about the facility, inspections and complaints. It directs consumers to review information on Nursing Home Compare for additional information on Quality Measures and for CMS 5 Star Ratings information. This site no longer provides a rating or information about potential advantages or disadvantages.

**LTC Ombudsman** - <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/your-rights/hhs-office-ombudsman>

Call 1-800-252-2412 to speak with an LTC Ombudsman in your area.

Long-term care (LTC) ombudsmen are advocates for resident rights. They help protect the quality of life and quality of care of anybody who lives in a nursing home or an assisted living facility. Ombudsmen can be volunteers or paid employees of agencies that are independent of any long-term care facility. Services are free, confidential and available statewide.

**Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)** - <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/>

Many of the direct client services that were performed by DSHS, such as services for women and children, and people with special health care needs, were transferred to HHSC in September 2016. DSHS now focuses on providing these functions:

- Vital statistics, such as birth and death records
- Compiling and disseminating health data on more than 25 topics
- Chronic and infectious disease prevention and laboratory testing
- Licensing and regulating facilities on topics from asbestos to mobile food establishments to youth camps

**Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)**

The 84th Texas Legislature, 2015, abolished this agency effective Sept. 1, 2017. DADS services were transferred to HHSC (see above).

**Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)** - <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>

House Bill 5, 85th Regular Legislative Session, 2017, established DFPS as an agency independent of Texas Health and Human Services effective Sept. 1, 2017. To comply with previous legislation, on Sept. 1, 2017, HHSC assumed responsibility for the child care licensing function previously managed by DFPS.