

# How to Pay for Assisted Living

## What it costs, how families pay for it, and what to do next

If you're starting to worry about your parent's safety or well-being at home, this will help you understand what costs to expect and how to afford care.

### What Does Care Cost

Assisted living costs vary across the country based on the level of care and the community. (SE/Gulfcoast being the most affordable and NE being the highest)

Typical monthly range:

- Independent Living: \$2,000 – \$5,500+
- Assisted Living: \$3,800 – \$9,200+
- Memory Care: \$4,800 – \$11,500+
- Skilled Nursing: \$6,000 – \$13,000+ (Semi Private)

That can easily amount to **\$60,000–\$100,000+** per year on Average

**Most families are surprised by how quickly these costs add up.**

### Three Things Most Families Get Wrong About Paying for Care

- Medicare does not cover assisted living. This surprises most families. Medicare covers short-term skilled nursing after a hospital stay — not long-term residential care.
- Medicaid may help lower-income families, but the rules are complex and the stakes are high. Eligibility varies significantly by state, and most states impose a five-year look-back period — meaning asset transfers made in the five years before applying can disqualify a senior from coverage. Home sale proceeds handled incorrectly can also affect eligibility. Do not make financial decisions related to Medicaid without first consulting an elder law attorney who specializes in senior care. Waiting lists are common in most states.
- Veterans benefits are frequently overlooked. The VA Aid and Attendance benefit can provide up to roughly \$2,900 per month for an eligible veteran or roughly \$1,550 for a surviving spouse toward assisted living costs (2026 rates; adjusted annually). If your parent served, contact an elder law attorney or accredited VA claims agent before assuming this doesn't apply. Benefit amounts adjust annually — verify current rates at [va.gov](http://va.gov) or through an accredited VA claims agent before planning around this benefit."



**The biggest question is usually:**

**“How does the home fit into this?”**

"Important: This guide is educational and does not constitute legal or financial advice. The costs, benefit programs, and eligibility rules described here are general in nature and change frequently. Before making any financial decisions related to a senior care transition — including decisions about the family home, Medicaid planning, or Veterans benefits — consult a qualified elder law attorney and a financial advisor."

## THE HOME IS OFTEN THE KEY

"For many families, the home drives 1. When the move can happen, 2. How care gets paid for, and 3. How much stress the transition creates."

## THE TIMING GAP (CRITICAL TO UNDERSTAND)

One of the biggest challenges families face is timing.

**Planning for this gap is what prevents stress and rushed decisions.**

**Care OFTEN needs to start before the home is sold.**

**The real challenge isn't the monthly cost —it's how long you can afford it.**

## WHAT TO DO NEXT

**You don't need a perfect financial plan —you just need a clear starting point.**

Step 1: Understand your monthly cost range

Step 2: Identify available funds

Step 3: Decide how the home fits into your timeline

The home is often the most important variable in all three of these steps. What most families don't know is that 'sell the house' is not a single option — it's a spectrum. A cash sale closes fast but at a discount. A traditional listing maximizes price but takes time you may not have. In between are structures most families never consider — and most agents never offer.

Not sure who to call about the home? Reach out at [SeniorMoveRoadmap.com/for-help](https://SeniorMoveRoadmap.com/for-help)

The Senior Move Roadmap —a step-by-step process to help families move forward with clarity



Is it Time?



Have the Conversation



Make the Plan



Understand the Costs



Choose the Right Place



Prepare the Home



Make the Move

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## Two Common Paths

### Move First:

- Care starts immediately
- Home is sold later
- Requires short-term funding

### Sell First:

- Home is sold first
- Funds are available
- Move happens after

Typical Range\*

\$3,800 – \$8,500/month

Real Planning Range

\$4,500 – \$10,000/month

\*National Averages