

# Red Flags When Touring Assisted Living

A printable tour checklist — use it on a calm tour, or in the 48–72 hours after a hospital discharge.

We don't own or operate any community, and no facility pays to be listed here — so this checklist can tell you to walk away. A tour brochure never will.

## WALK THE BUILDING — CHECK ANY YOU SEE

- 1. Odors**  
Urine, or heavy air-freshener masking it — a hygiene and staffing shortfall.
- 2. Understaffing signs**  
Call lights ringing unanswered, residents waiting, staff visibly stretched.
- 3. Neglected or withdrawn residents**  
Unkempt, slumped, parked in hallways, no one engaging them.
- 4. Cold staff–resident interactions**  
Residents talked over or about, not to.
- 5. Maintenance or safety hazards**  
Broken grab bars, wet floors, blocked or unmarked exits.
- 6. Licensing report is hard to get**  
“Unavailable” or “we’ll send it later” is a transparency flag.
- 7. High-pressure sales or a rushed tour**  
“This unit won’t last — sign today.”
- 8. Evasive answers on cost**  
Won’t put the all-in monthly number in writing.
- 9. Vague on memory care**  
Unclear on security, wandering protocols, or trained staff.
- 10. A staged or restricted tour**  
Can’t drop in, can’t see a real apartment, can’t meet residents.

Not every flag means “walk away” — but two or more unanswered is a pattern worth a hard second look. Before you sign: ask the day & overnight staffing ratio, get the all-in monthly cost in writing, and make a second, unannounced visit at a meal or in the evening.