



**LARMAX HOMES**

Innovative aging. Inspired living.

**Family  
Handbook**

**2023**



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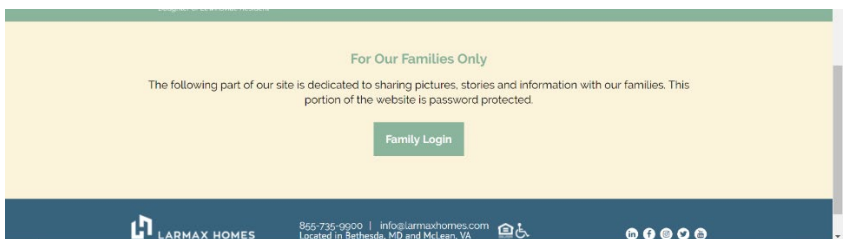
Rev 2023

# Welcome to our Larmax Homes' Family!

We are thrilled and honored that you chose Larmax Homes to care for your loved one. We believe that maximizing quality of life involves teamwork and we are dedicated to supporting our residents and their families on this journey. We hope this handbook will answer some of the common questions that you may have.

**A great resource, in addition to this handbook, is the family section of our website. To access, go to [www.larmaxhomes.com](http://www.larmaxhomes.com) and navigate to the “Families” tab. At the bottom of the page you will see the following: Click “Family Login”.**

**Use the password: familymember**



## Art Therapy



Art therapy is a form of expressive therapy that uses the creative process of making art to improve a person's physical, mental and emotional well-being. The creative process can help people resolve issues as well as develop and manage their behaviors and feelings. This process can also reduce stress, improve self-esteem and enhance awareness. One does not need to be talented or an artist to benefit.

Our Art Therapist works with groups in each house and, at times, will work one-on-one with residents who might particularly benefit from art therapy. For residents where art is a strong expressive medium, arrangements can be made for regularly scheduled, private sessions. This time together is based on a detailed therapeutic plan developed by our Art Therapist. There is an additional charge for this service; however, all residents will routinely spend time engaged in art activities. Extra sessions are only in the event the family would like additional exposure. Art therapy can achieve different things for different people such as healing, treatment, and rehabilitation.

## Assistive Equipment Resources

Our Engagement Team uses several assessment methodologies to determine the best possible Engagement programs for our residents. Additionally, these evaluations tell us when assistive equipment can help your loved one be as independent as possible while participating in leisure interests. For example, if a resident enjoys music but has difficulties hearing, there are several easy-to-use devices that may help them participate more fully. Our team will provide you with information on options and what might be useful for your loved one.

## Beautician Fees & Services

An excellent, third-party beautician comes regularly to each house. She provides haircuts, coloring, blow-drying, and other grooming services. If you would like your family member to receive services at home from the beautician, please contact the House Manager to indicate the frequency and services desired. To find the list of possible services, and the cost, please see the family section of our website. We will add the charges to your monthly invoice.

## Care Planning

Ongoing, two-way communication is the key to good teamwork. Our goal is to keep you consistently informed and up to date about your loved one. We routinely do this through email, phone calls and in-person visits. In addition, we use an individualized service plan (known in some states as an ISP) or a care plan for each resident. This plan guides the staff daily as to what the services and desired outcomes are for each resident. Plans are reviewed with families whenever there is a major change, but never less frequently than twice a year. These meetings, which include our full interdisciplinary team, can be held in person, through a conference call, or even using Microsoft Teams. This allows us to ensure that everyone is focused on consistent goals and objectives for your loved one.

## Communication

Open communication is paramount to our relationship. To obtain accurate information and to ensure messages are delivered properly, it is important that you speak with the appropriate person about your question or concern. For medical questions, please contact one of our Nurses. Contact the Vice President of Operations or House

Manager (not floor staff) regarding day-to-day scheduling, questions, or non-medical concerns. See the “Contact List” for your house on the family section of our website for the most current contact information.

We do ask that you respect our staff’s need for some time away from work and limit night and weekend calls to medical emergencies. Questions about care and medications can wait until the next business day. Also, our staff spends most of their time with the residents, so the most effective and timely way of asking questions will be through email.





## Doctor's List

Residents are welcome to continue working with physicians with whom they have had long-standing relationships. We do, however, have exceptional physicians with whom we work very closely. The advantage to using one of these physicians is, because they work with many of our residents, they are often in our houses and our access to them is much greater. Should you be interested in switching to one of these doctors, please speak with one of our Nurses.

## Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency, the Nurse (or in some cases the Manager or Night Supervisor) will call you with information about your loved one, including a very brief description of what happened, and the actions currently being taken. If 911 is called, as soon as we know, we will update you on the hospital where your loved one will be evaluated. The doctor will also be informed of this information.

During the day, a member of our staff is generally (but not always) available to accompany your family member to the hospital and will remain there until you arrive (up to about 2 hours). Please be prompt in your arrival at the hospital so that the staff can return home to assist in the care of other residents. If

we are not able to escort a resident (as is likely between 8:00 PM and 8:00 AM) the Nurse will give a complete report to the emergency staff and paperwork will be sent with the EMS with your contact information, medical diagnosis, diet needs, ambulation status, medication list, CPR request, and allergies.

The nurse is on call 24/7 for emergency information with hospital staff.



## Engagement

Our Engagement program strives to meet the physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and cognitive needs of each resident. Our goal is to keep your loved one on their toes, so they continually challenge themselves with novel experiences aimed at maintaining or even improving physical and cognitive health. We base our person-centered care

around each resident's needs and interests when providing programming.

To help us reach these goals we have a highly skilled Engagement team. More about the team members, their contact information and what they specialize in can be found on the family website under "Engagement". The team rotates throughout all of the Larmax Homes. They work closely with the house teams to come up with personalized activities for each house and its unique residents.

Our monthly Engagement Calendar can be found on the refrigerator in the kitchen of each House, as well as on the family section of our website. Check in regularly to see what your loved one has scheduled; you may want to join them!

## Events

We host family events throughout the year! The best event of the year is an annual Thanksgiving Feast. We encourage you and your family/friends to participate in these events; they can create very memorable moments for you and your loved one.

The dates for these events can be found on the Engagement calendar on the family section of the website. We will also send invitations to all family members that have provided their contact information. When you receive these invitations,

please RSVP in a timely fashion so that we can plan accordingly. If your contact information has changed, or if you would like to add other family or friends' information, please let your House Manager know or complete the online form which can be found in the family section of the website. We will add anyone you wish to the invite list; the more the merrier!

## Family Meals

We invite family members to join our residents for meals. Please give the House Manager at least 48-hours' notice so they will have enough food for everyone. A quick email to the House Manager is the best way to do this. Your Resident Agreement includes two meals per month for family members. Any extra meal charges will show up on your monthly invoice. A list of charges for extra meals can be found on the family section of our website.

## Family Photo Albums

Visit the Family Photo Album in the family section of our website to see photos of your loved one. This is a good way for you and other members of your family to enjoy seeing moments that your loved one experiences from time to time. Please feel free to share the log-in information (password “familymember”) with others in your family.



## Gratuities & Gifts

Our staff thrives on feeling valued and recognized. We invite families to bring tokens of their appreciation to the houses to be shared by everyone, including our residents. Our success depends upon the ability of the staff to work as a team. They support each other all day, focusing on not just their assignments but the quality of life for every resident. We understand the desire to recognize the exceptional work of one staff member; if you would like to do that, please offer a verbal compliment or send an email to Lori ([llarson@larmaxhomes.com](mailto:llarson@larmaxhomes.com)) noting their exceptional work. We have numerous ways of

ensuring that they are recognized by not only leadership but their peers.

We ask that you not give individual gifts or gratuities to a staff member. Doing so, while thoughtful, can create misunderstandings and discontent among the rest of the team, who likely had an indirect hand in your experience. Instead, we invite families each November to contribute to our family holiday pool. Through this, every staff member participates based on the time they work each week, their seniority and their performance. Each year, we send out information about how to share in this staff recognition pool.

## Health & Illness of Visitors

For the protection of our residents and team members, we ask that anyone that has respiratory, Covid-19 or flu symptoms and anyone under the age of 12 (during flu season) not visit at that time. Please do not visit at any time of year if you have any signs or symptoms such as: cough, sore throat, fever, chills, runny nose, body aches, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.



## Hospice

Making decisions about end-of-life care is difficult. Along with the roller coaster of emotions and uncertainty, the complexity of medical options makes it challenging to talk about and come to the right decisions for you and your family. One choice that families often make is hospice care. Hospice care is provided when a resident, along with their family, determines that they will no longer aggressively treat a disease instead opting to diligently manage pain and other symptoms. To be eligible for hospice services, a physician must certify that a patient's life expectancy is six months or less.

We welcome the opportunity to speak with you and your family about hospice, as well as other end-of-life options. We work very closely with several hospice providers and strongly encourage families to consider this option. To learn about the most current list of preferred providers, please speak with one of our Nurses.

## Hospital Beds/Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

There may come a time when a Resident's physician prescribes the use of a hospital bed or other assistive devices. Transferring to a hospital bed may be a difficult concept for a family as they may see it as an indicator of their loved one's decline. But hospital beds are ordered for a variety of reasons concerning not only health, but safety.

A doctor must determine the need for any medical equipment, sometimes requiring an additional evaluation by a Physical or Occupational Therapist. The therapist will recommend what, if any, equipment is appropriate. At that time, the doctor must provide an order to the DME company and Medicare must approve. This can take 6-8 weeks or longer depending on the doctor and how quickly they get the forms to Medicare.

Please keep in mind that leasing a hospital bed is between you and the leasing company. We will assist you as much as possible but completing the transaction will most likely require your attention. Also, Medicare has become VERY conservative in approving payments for hospital beds. The process can take a while and, in all honesty, be frustrating; please be patient. It is up to the physician to write an order; we cannot do that. Therefore, if you have



concerns, you will want to address them with the physician.

We do ask that our families pay the additional monthly fee to upgrade to a fully electric bed, rather than a bed with a hand crank, for the safety and well-being of our staff. Most hospital beds remain the property of the leasing company; however, over an extended period (usually 13 months), ownership of the bed may vest in the family. When a resident using a hospital bed leaves the facility, the family is responsible for removing the hospital bed – both physically and financially. If ownership of the bed remains with a leasing company or Hospice, they will arrange to remove it. Otherwise, we can recommend a company that will do so on your behalf for a reasonable fee.

We do not accept donations of hospital beds as they are very difficult to store and move. In fact, we cannot allow our staff to move them due to workmen's compensation restrictions.

The power of attorney for a Resident needing a hospital bed will be asked to complete a specific form which will help us to assist you in both obtaining and returning the bed to the proper company.

Oxygen can only be ordered by a doctor and has very strict parameters if Medicare payments are involved. Only the doctor can assist in this process.

## Hours

Families are welcome to visit at any time. If you plan to visit later at night (generally after 8:00 PM), we recommend that you call and let the house staff know you are coming. Also, please be patient as caregivers may be with residents and cannot come to the door until they are finished.

## Incontinence Products

Residents may need to use incontinence products. If this is the case, you have a choice of purchasing your own or we can provide the products. If you elect to use the products provided by Larmax, we will add the fees, based on actual usage (by the package) to your monthly invoice.

## Laundry

Staff will handle normal laundry for your loved one on a as needed basis. They will wash all items separately from the other residents' belongings. Since we are unable to provide ironing, we ask that Residents' clothing be made of wrinkle free fabric.

There are many excellent new choices of fabric that are easy to care for and comfortable. Please do not bring special sweaters or other clothes that need to be hand washed or require any special handling; our staff wants to spend their time with your loved one rather than the laundry.

Please do not include clothing that needs to be dry-cleaned. We do not have the ability to manage this service.

## Linens/Towels/Blankets/Pillows

All linens are included in the monthly charge. Should you prefer, you are welcome to bring your own. Please make sure they are clearly marked and have been laundered before bringing them to the house. If you are providing your own linens, please use only linens that can be easily and frequently laundered.



## Long Term Care Insurance Submissions

Larmax is pleased to work with families to expedite any Long Term Care (LTC) Insurance claims. While we do not accept payments directly from LTC providers, and families are responsible for paying monthly board and care consistent with the Resident Agreement, we will work with LTC companies to provide whatever information is needed to facilitate reimbursements.

When a resident moves into one of our homes, please notify the LTC company immediately, and give them permission to share information with Larmax Homes. The LTC company should be asked to send Larmax Homes a request for any information they need to start a claim. Please instruct them to contact the Finance Department at [Longtermcareinsurance@larmaxhomes.com](mailto:Longtermcareinsurance@larmaxhomes.com), and not to send any requests to the residence as this is handled by the Finance Department, not the Care Staff.

Once a claim number is assigned, please send it to us, along with the policy number, as LTC companies need this on all communications with them. Also, Larmax Homes will send your LTC company a copy

of your invoice each month as a convenience to you, and these numbers are necessary for processing. Some of the companies we have worked with in the past include John Hancock, Genworth, CNA, New York Life, Banker's, Federal LTC, Metropolitan Life, and others. We are pleased to work with any company to provide any information needed from Larmax Homes.

## Mail

We know how important it is for residents to receive cards and letters. We will ensure they receive these parcels. Some residents may need assistance with opening and reading mail, which we will gladly do absent instructions from the power of attorney to the contrary.

Unless your loved one is handling their own finances, please ensure that all bills are sent to the financial power of attorney for disposition. That includes physicians' bills, Medicare statements, and anything that requires timely action. It is very difficult for each house to receive and forward mail that someone other than the Resident needs to handle. We do our best but, in an effort of creating appropriate expectations, we are not always able to package and forward that mail on a timely basis.

Please be sure to file a timely mail forwarding notice with the US Post Office upon the termination of a Resident Agreement. Change of address notices can be easily filed on-line through the US Postal Service web site ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)).

## Move Out Process

Other than in the event of a Health Emergency (as defined in the Resident Agreement), the Resident Agreement requires that at least 30 days' written notice be given to terminate the Agreement. Notices can be sent by email (to [llarson@larmaxhomes.com](mailto:llarson@larmaxhomes.com)) or letter (mailed to PO Box 59664, Potomac, MD 20859). Any other notification, including to house staff, is not enough to meet the terms of the Agreement. This notice allows us to assist you in a well-organized move out process. It also gives us time to work with other families who may be waiting for a room to be available. Rent is due and payable throughout the responsibility period; please keep in mind that the room is not considered vacant, and rent remains due until all possessions are removed, should that extend beyond the responsibility period.

## Music Therapy

The American Music Therapy Association defines music therapy as the “clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program”. Documented benefits of Music Therapy with seniors include: enhanced memory, improved communication, non-pharmacological pain and discomfort management, physical strengthening through rhythmic and continuous movement or vocal fluency, increased social engagement, decreased depression and enhanced positive feelings and expanded outlet for expression of feelings.



We have a board-certified Music Therapist on staff who leads group sessions at each house. They also offer private, goal-based sessions, to our Residents for an additional charge. If you are interested in learning more about our Music Therapy program, please contact our Music Therapist directly.

## Newspaper/Magazines

Each house receives 4 to 5 magazines monthly. Depending on the house, the Washington Post may also come daily. Families are encouraged to order magazines and newspapers of interest to their loved ones and have them delivered to the home. Staff enjoy reading publications with each Resident, and magazines and pictures are an excellent conversation starter when families visit.

## Outings

We provide outings for Residents monthly. These outings often include meals, museums, sporting activities, or scenic rides depending on your loved one's ability and interest. We strive to provide each person with opportunities that best suit them which means that not all residents attend all outings. We encourage you to check the schedule and, to the maximum extent possible, arrange your visits and other plans so that residents do not miss these outings as they are a source of great enjoyment. To view the calendar of events and outings, please see the calendar on the family section of the website.



## Parking

Since most of our houses are in neighborhoods, parking can be a challenge. Unfortunately, we do have a few neighbors that believe that the street parking in front of their homes belongs solely to them; at times they have been aggressive in asserting this. We encourage each family to talk to the lead staff in each home to understand what the recommended parking arrangements are to avoid any misunderstandings. We encourage you to leave the driveways clear for pick-up, drop-off, deliveries, and emergency vehicles.

## Personal Calls and Phones

Residents are welcome to receive and make phone calls on the house phones. If they prefer a private phone in their room, with your help, they can obtain a personal cell phone.

## Pets

Well-mannered, well-groomed, small to mid-sized animals are welcome at the houses. In fact, we encourage you to bring pets to visit- especially a pet that previously lived with your loved one. Before visiting with your pet, please check with the House Manager to ensure that there are no residents with serious allergies to pets. There are also certain state requirements that must be met. First, we must have a certificate on file from your veterinarian that the pet is free from disease and has had all appropriate inoculations. Second, we will send you a copy of the [Pet Policy](#) that will need to be read and signed before visiting. When you visit, you will also need to sign a Pet Visit Log prescribed under state regulations.

Cats that are not declawed should generally not visit because our residents' skin can be seriously hurt by an inadvertent scratch.

If you do not have a pet to share, do not worry! We have several four-legged visitors including certified therapy dogs and equine assisted therapy (yes, horses) that come visit multiple times during the year.

## Pharmacy Information

At admission, a resident can bring their medication they have left at home. For the first month, we will use up that supply if they are bottled, labeled correctly, not expired, exactly match provided doctors' orders, and have no other issues.

Quick access to medication is an important component to providing quality service. Not all pharmacies are created equal. To ensure the best possible service for our residents, we work directly with Foer's Pharmacy to provide medications to the houses. We encourage all families to use this group to limit delays, mistakes, and ineffective communication. In fact, Foer's Pharmacy has direct access to our medical record system and can input important data on filled prescriptions immediately upon receipt from a physician, which improves the outcomes for residents.

Pharmacy Information:

Foer's Pharmacy

301-216-1190

[Foerspharmacyrx.com](http://Foerspharmacyrx.com)

After admission, medications will need to be in a single dose form (known as a bubble pack) packaged by the pharmacy. If you choose our recommended pharmacy, the pharmacy will automatically bubble pack all medications in single dose form. Larmax requires that all medications are packed in single dose form for the safety of our residents.

## Private Duty Aides

Some families want to hire a private duty aide for a resident. This is permitted (although we generally discourage it as having a private aide often leads to greater isolation of a resident). Private aides in assisted living must abide by state-imposed, mandatory regulations as well as our procedures. By state regulation, all private duty aids must have a background check, documentation of CNA licenses, CPR/ First Aid Cards, and Vaccinations (PPD/Chest X-ray, MMR shots or Immunization records). Before engaging a private aide, please ask your House Manager or the Vice President of Operations for a copy of our Private Duty Aide Manual for more detailed information. Also, we encourage you to have an extended conversation with the Vice President of Operations about your expectations and goals for the private duty aide. This will enable us to

better incorporate them into the care and support team.

## Recreational Therapy

Larmax Homes has a wonderful Recreational Therapist who provides both group and individual programs for residents. Recreational Therapy is a process that utilizes recreation and other activity-based interventions to address the assessed needs of individuals. Documented benefits of Recreational Therapy with the elderly include improved gross and fine motor, cooperation, and coping skills. It can also improve life satisfaction, mobility, appetite, strength and development while reducing social anxiety, pain, blood pressure, depression, tension, and reliance on medication. If you are interested in learning more about what your family member is doing, please contact the Engagement Staff member, whose information can be found in the Families section of the website.

## Religious Services

Supporting your loved one's religious needs is important to Larmax Homes. Currently, we host Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant services at several

houses each month. Arrangements are made to bring Residents to the service of their choice. Our officiants come from outside of the homes; please understand that sometimes they, too, experience events which may prevent them from hosting the services and replacements may not be available on short notice.

## Residents' Personal Items

Residents with cognitive challenges can experience heightened concerns about their personal belongings. To ensure their belongings are safe, a resident may hide them somewhere in the house. Unfortunately, when a staff or family member asks where they are, the resident may not remember where they hid them. For this reason, we ask that residents not have items of monetary or sentimental value with them. Many families choose to find items very similar to the ones of value (for example, diamonds can easily be substituted using cubic zirconia). Since, according to the Resident Agreement, Larmax Homes is not responsible for such items, if you absolutely must send these items, please make sure that you have adequate personal insurance to cover their cost in the event they are lost.

## Special Foods

Larmax staff works every day to provide the residents with nutritious, tasty home-cooked meals. With the input of a licensed dietitian, our menus cater to the needs of our residents. Since the houses are small, we make only one menu per meal; however, we invite our residents to review the menus and, should they not care for any item, they are encouraged to request a substitution. We can generally accommodate special dietary needs such as gluten free, diabetic support, dairy free and other medical needs. We encourage families to work with the staff on a resident's needs before they move in.

Some residents may have favorite foods that are beyond those provided as part of our standard offerings. We invite families to provide these special items (which can be anything from favorite candies or cookies to a special drink or even a cocktail – with the doctor's permission, of course). They will be labeled with the resident's name and provided in the regular course of the day. Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to make special trips to local stores for unique grocery or food items; however, we will be happy to order special foods if they are available from our normal suppliers and bill the resident for the actual cost of the item. If preferred,

we will let a family member know when supplies are running low so that they may reorder.

## Transportation

Larmax provides all transportation needed for engagement trips including lunch outings, scenic rides, museums and all other community activities that are scheduled as part of the Engagement Program.

## Voting

After many years of participating in American democracy, seniors know better than anyone the importance of casting a ballot on election day. Luckily, voting while a Resident at Larmax Homes is easy. We have two options for Residents who wish to vote.

An Absentee Ballot: This method is particularly useful if you want to assist your loved one in casting their vote. Absentee ballots can be obtained through the two following websites:



<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/Absentee/AbsenteeApplication.html>

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/Files/Forms/VoterForms/VirginiaAbsenteeBallotApplication.pdf>

Many residents enjoy the opportunity to go to the polls. Engagement staff members are happy to arrange escorted transportation for residents able to cast their own ballots.

## WiFi

All houses provide complimentary WiFi for our residents. Please see the House Manager for the access information and password.

