

# *The Resident and Family Councils Act*

Persons with Developmental Disabilities Engagement  
Proclaimed in force April 1, 2018

# Resident and Family Councils

- A resident and family council is:
  - A group of residents of a home and/or their family members.
  - A group that meets regularly to:
    - Discuss ways to make your life and the lives of other residents better; and,
    - Share thoughts with the staff of your home about issues that matter to you.

# Resident and Family Councils (2)

- Resident and family councils are meant to:
  - Encourage you, other residents and your family to share what's important to you;
  - Let you, other residents and your family tell the staff of your home what's important to you; and,
  - Be a space where everyone's voice can be heard.
  
- Right now operators of homes for persons for developmental disabilities are not required to support residents and families in forming a council to come together to discuss what matters to them.

# The *Resident and Family Councils Act*

- The Government of Alberta has passed a law to support resident and family councils.
- The *Resident and Family Councils Act* requires operators to support residents who live in a home to create a resident and family council if they want to.
  - This includes residences of persons with developmental disabilities that have four or more people.
- The new law will be in place in Spring 2018.

# What the Act Says Staff Must Do

- The Act says staff have to:
  - Let you, other residents and your families know that you can start a resident and family council;
  - Support you, other residents and your families to start a resident and family council if you want to have one;
  - Take part in council discussions if the council asks them to;
  - Talk to the council about decisions that affect you and other residents; and,
  - Provide information about your home to the council.
- The Act does not require that residents and families create a council, if they do not want one.

# How the Act Would Apply to You

- If you live in a home with four or more residents:
  - You, the other residents and your family would be supported by the staff of your home to start a resident and family council if you would like to.
  - You would not have to participate in a resident and family council but will have the opportunity to do so.
- If you live in a home with three or less residents the law would not apply to you.

# What Could a Council Look Like?

- A resident and family council can be as simple as the individuals of a home holding a house meeting, where:
  - You, a family member or the staff takes notes on what is talked about at the meeting and any decisions that are made.
  - Notes are kept in a binder or notebook, so that all the individuals in the home can access them.
  - The council could discuss things like food and social activities.
  - If there are issues that cannot be dealt with during a meeting, staff will work on the issues and discuss them at the next meeting.

# Benefits of a Resident and Family Council

- If you choose to participate in a resident and family council in your home:
  - You would be supported by the staff of your home to start the council and to arrange for meetings;
  - You would have an opportunity to meet regularly with other residents, your family members and staff of your home;
  - You would have a chance to ask the staff of your home questions about what matters to you;
  - You would be able to be involved in more decisions about your life.



# Support to Start and Run a Resident and Family Council

- A toolkit is being created that will provide advice to individuals who want to start or participate in a resident and family council.
- The toolkit will include materials that you can use to guide council meetings.
- The toolkit will be posted on Alberta Health's website.

# Monitoring

- Alberta Health inspectors visit all homes with 4 or more residents, every year.
- These inspectors will now look to make sure that the rules of the new Act are being followed.
- As part of their visit, the inspectors will talk to staff in your homes about what they do to support a council and may want to talk to you about the council.

# What We've Heard So Far

“Our resident and family council has helped residents here feel that this is truly their home.”

– Doreen Wilson (Site Administrator, St. Marguerite Manor)

“...the council at St. Marguerite Manor has been truly beneficial.”

– Kate Friesen (Participant in RFC at St. Marguerite Manor)

“*The Resident and Family Councils Act* offers yet another opportunity to ensure that voices of Albertans with disabilities are reflected in decisions that affect them.”

- *Irfan Sabir, Minister of Community Services*

“It is important for government to hear directly from Albertans with disabilities on the issues that matter to them.”

- *Bruce Uditsky, CEO, Inclusion Alberta*

# We Need Your Input

1. To decide if the new law should include homes of persons with developmental disabilities licensed under *SLALA*.
2. To learn how we could help you to start and operate a resident and family council.

# Question #1

1. Do you think that people with developmental disabilities and their families should have the opportunity to create a council in their *SLALA* licensed homes?
  - Do you have any concerns?

# Question #2

2. What information and support would you like from us, to help create a resident and family council for your home?

# Question #3

3. Is there any other information or thoughts you'd like to share with us?

# Thank you!

## Next Steps

**More info:** [Alberta.ca/RFCAConsultation](https://alberta.ca/RFCAConsultation)

**Contact us:** [RFC.PDD@gov.ab.ca](mailto:RFC.PDD@gov.ab.ca)