

Independent Living Units

These may be bedsitter, single or double self-contained units and located in small or large blocks. The units are for older people or people with a disability who are able to live reasonably independently.

Services & Facilities

All units have their own kitchen and bathroom. Some units may offer various communal facilities, but these are minimal in most instances.

Who runs the units?

The majority of independent living units are run by not-for-profit organisations, such as churches, philanthropic organisations or local government.

Cost

Costs vary significantly. An increasing number of units require a sizeable ingoing contribution. This may or may not be means tested. Rental also varies but is usually means tested in relation to income or set at a proportion of the age pension.

Who is eligible to apply?

Eligibility criteria vary from place to place. Generally, units are for people 60+ (but in some instances may be for people 50+) and are sometimes available to younger people with disabilities. Some are specifically for pensioners on low incomes. Units operated by church organisations may not require church membership for entry. Some organisations, for example, Vasey RSL Care or the Old Colonists, have more specific eligibility criteria.

How many units are there ?

In Victoria, we are aware of close to 300 sites which offer nearly 7,300 units in total. Units are scattered all over Victoria with the greatest concentration in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Demand will generally mean waiting lists will apply, it is always wise to ask.

Contracts

Lifetime leases or periodic tenancy agreements are common. However, residents' contracts or agreements vary widely in their terms and conditions. For this reason, it is essential to seek clarification of all terms and conditions before signing a contract or agreement, perhaps from a solicitor.

Residents Rights?

If any resident in a block of units has paid an ingoing amount, the entire block of units will be regarded as a retirement village under the *Retirement Villages Act*. This legislation is administered by Consumer Affairs Victoria.

A listing of independent living units in up to three local government areas can be provided free of charge. Or else you can access the Seniors Information Victoria database of accommodation options through the online directory at www.cotavic.org.au.

CONTACTS

Seniors Information Victoria on 1300 135 090, Retirement Housing Information & Support Service at Housing for the Aged Action Group on 9654 7389 or 1800 637 389 (country callers), or Consumer Affairs Victoria on 1300 558 181.