

*The Workbook*

# HOW TO CHOOSE A NURSING HOME



PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY



**THE HIGGINS FIRM**  
TRIAL & INJURY LAWYERS

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# ABOUT THE HIGGINS FIRM



**OUR TRACK RECORD**  
Over 98% Success Rate

**OVER \$100M**  
in compensation paid to  
clients over the time  
The Higgins Firm has  
been practicing law.

The Higgins Firm, PLLC, was established to be a full service law firm in Tennessee for the general public. It has been divided into four interwoven divisions to help serve its clients more efficiently and to capitalize on each lawyer's strength

Our Civil Litigation division includes a group of attorneys who focus exclusively on Nursing Home Abuse and Neglect.

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# CHOOSE THE RIGHT NURSING HOME



Whether you are an elder looking for a nursing home to move into, or you are the family member of an elder who is in need of daily assistance, choosing the right facility might feel like a daunting task.

Before you sign a residential agreement, it is important to compare your options and make a sound decision based upon your needs. Use this workbook to keep track of your research, so you choose the right nursing home for your or your loved one.

**USE THESE QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU EVALUATE AND CHOOSE THE RIGHT NURSING HOME.**

## APPEARANCE AND LOCATION

What is the maximum distance you are willing to travel to visit?

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How close is the nursing home to a hospital and/or emergency services? Does it have a service agreement with them?

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Does the facility have outdoor space available for residents' use?

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How big is the nursing home? How big is each resident's room?  
Common areas?

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Do the facilities look clean, tidy, in good shape?

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Is the nursing home accessible (wheelchair use, etc.)?

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Do you see handrails and handle bars (included in the bathroom) so residents can move safely as needed?

## RESIDENT LIFE

Do residents' rooms have windows and good air circulation?

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What is included in each room?

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Does each room include storage? What kind?

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What is allowed inside the nursing home and in each resident's room? What is not allowed?

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Are private rooms available? Shared rooms?

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How are rooms assigned? If a resident shares a room, how are roommates selected?

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How is conflict among residents, including roommates, handled?

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What is the nursing home's bedhold policy? Is it possible to pay to keep a resident's spot while hospitalized?

## FEELING GOOD

Pay attention to residents and staff during your visit: do they seem happy? Active? Engaged?

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How responsive is the staff to the residents' needs?

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Are unannounced visits from family and friends allowed?

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Is there a space for residents to meet with family? Is it private?

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What activities are available and/or organized for residents?

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Is there a volunteer program?

## FOOD

Is water available in every room?

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What food is served? If possible, ask residents while you are there what they think of the food served.

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Are snacks available throughout the day? Are they healthy?

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Does your loved one have dietary preferences or restrictions? Make sure to ask whether they can be accommodated.

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## SAFETY

Has this nursing home been cited for violations in the past?

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Is the nursing home Medicare and Medicaid certified?

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What is the staff to residents ratio?

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What percentage of the staff is licensed as a Registered Nurse (RN) or Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)?

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How long has leadership been working at this particular nursing home? Is there a high turn over among staff?

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Is there a social worker on staff? How often are they available?

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Is there a doctor on staff? How often are they present?

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What preventative care is provided to residents? E.g. flu shot

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Can residents continue to see their own personal doctor?

## **COST**

What is included in the cost? What is an add on and how much will it cost? For example, some nursing homes might not include Internet connection in their cost.

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What kind of financial arrangements are available?

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Anything else you want to ask or that you observed?