

# Helpful Links and Numbers for Seniors

## Helpful Local Government and Private Links and Sites

### [West Central Florida Area Agency on Aging, Inc.](#)

This organization has information and services on a range of assistance for older adults and those who care for them in Hardee, Hillsborough, Highland, Manatee, and Polk Counties. 5905 Breckenridge Pkwy., Suite F, Tampa, FL 33610-4239, call 813-740-3888.

### [Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas](#)

This organization has information and services on a range of assistance for older adults and those who care for them in Pinellas and Pasco Counties. 9887 4th Street North, Suite 100, St. Petersburg, FL 33702, phone 727-570-9696

### [United Way of Suncoast Support Services](#)

The Support Services site for the United Way for Hillsborough, Pinellas, DeSoto and Sarasota Counties which may be able to provide emergency assistance.

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## Helpful State Links and Sites

### [Guide to Resources by the State of Florida](#)

A guide with multiple links to sites and phone numbers for assistance for Florida seniors on many topics, including the following: Getting the Help You Need, Disease Prevention & Medical Care, Caregiver & Consumer Support, Housing & Property Rights, Insurance, Pensions & Retirement, Elder Rights, Abuse & Fraud, Safety & Emergency Services, and Life Planning & Related Preparations

### [Florida Department of Elder Affairs](#)

With more than 4.9 million elders age 60 and older, Florida currently ranks first in the nation in the percentage of its citizens who are elders, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The DOEA has a substantial list of programs and services available throughout the state.

### [Florida Health Care Advance Directives](#)

A site with information on a person's right to decide his or her own health and healthcare with offering descriptions, definitions,

explanations and forms for advance directives such as living wills, healthcare surrogate designations and other documents as well as senior and end of life issues.

### **[Florida Health Finder](#)**

Resources on long-term care providers who offer health care and other types of support in the home or in a residential facility.

### **[Florida State Office of the Insurance Regulation](#)**

Information on the legislative agenda; health insurance reform; insurance scams and information on requesting assistance with an insurance question or on filing an insurance-related complaint.

### **[Florida Aging & Disability Resource Centers](#)**

Florida's Aging and Disability Resource Centers are committed to helping persons who are age 60 and above and those who care about them understand and navigate the complex web of available services, agencies and other options.

### **[Long Term Care Ombudsman](#)**

A statewide, volunteer-based system of local units that act as advocates for residents of long-term care facilities.

### **[AARP \(American Association of Retired Persons\)](#)**

The leading private advocate for seniors in the US.

### **[Medicare/Medicaid Fraud Reporting](#)**

Call the Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-HHS-TIPS (1-800-447-8477). TTY: 1-800-377-4950.

### **[United Way Community Resource Directory](#)**

Resource guide to help available in many areas nationally with local referrals. Call 2-1-1 or 407-839-4357 or Text (text zipcode to 898-211).

### **[Florida Bar Consumer Helps](#)**

This site of the Florida Bar Association has legally approved and sound Pamphlets and Guides on many topics including insurance, identity theft, consumer protection.

[Another Florida Bar link](#) has information on Living Wills, Health Care Surrogates, and Advanced Directives including a link to a Health Care Directives toolkit.

## **National Federal and Private Professional and Legal Resource Links**

### **[Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services](#)**

Medicare and Medicaid enrollment info; prescription drug plan info.

### **[Elder Justice](#)**

A national site of Health and Human Services of the federal government supporting elder justice in America.

### **[Medicare.gov](#)**

Information on Medicare programs; provider information; prescription drug plans; Medicare eligibility.

### **[Medicare Plans in Florida](#)**

A helpful site with information on the often very confusing world of Medicare plans with information specific to Florida.

### **[National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys](#)**

Locate an attorney in your area; programs; educational opportunities.

### **[National Center on Elder Abuse](#)**

FAQ's, prevalence/incidence rates; laws; NCEA events; publications.

### **[Aging Life Care, formerly the National Geriatric Care Manager](#)**

Info on finding a GCM; GCM resources.

### **[Social Security Administration](#)**

SSA news; benefits information; Medicare Part D information; disability information; information for healthcare professionals; and information for local/state/federal government officials

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## **Other Helpful Links**

### **[Aging in Place Ideas](#)**

Information on changes to the home and home environment to improve access and safety for staying in the home longer.

### **[Senior Connection Center](#)**

A website with an Elder Hotline as well as information and links on Medicare help, Health and Wellness, Elder Abuse Prevention, and more.

## **Smart Tech for Seniors**

A commercial website with tech-oriented ideas to make your home more tech and living friendly.

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## **Family Resource Links**

### **AARP**

AARP site with info on member services; senior issues: elections, health care, family/home/legal, money, work, travel.

### **Paying for Senior Care – Understanding Your Financial Options for Long Term Care**

A guide with very helpful information to help Florida seniors and their loved ones understand the various senior care costs in Tampa and throughout the state, including the cost of assisted living, home care and adult day care.

### **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality**

A guide for hospital visits, what to know and what to ask, when you leave the hospital.

### **Senior Guidance**

SeniorGuidance.org is a site helping seniors and their families choose a new home in assisted living. As daily activities become more challenging, this site can help with long-term placement options.

### **National site for Adult Day Services Association**

Information on Adult Day services in your community; services available, programs and resources.

### **Hillsborough County Aging and Long Term Care**

Info on mental health services, family caregiver support services, drug/alcohol treatment; family resources coordination.

### **Senior Assisted Living**

A helpful commercial site on assisted living and memory care facilities that can, by inputting your zip code, give you a good listing and description of facilities near you.

### **Web Of Care**

Links to online health and medical information, home care opportunities, and home healthcare providers.

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## **Before You Sign or Pay Recommendations and Links**

Before you sign a contract or start home repairs/renovations, read this. All homeowners should follow the following recommendations when hiring a contractor:

- Always require a written estimate, signed by a contractor before any work begins.
- Get written estimates from several contractors. Make sure bids are based on the same project details.
- Check out the contractor with your local or Florida consumer protection officials.
- Ask the contractor for customer references who have projects similar to yours.
- Ask for a copy of the contractor's current insurance certificates and licenses, if licenses are required
- Get all guarantees, warranties and promises in writing. Always remember that old saying: "if it isn't in writing, it didn't happen."
- Agree on start and completion dates, and have them written into the contract.
- Never pay money up front for deposits without a written and signed contract.
- Report suspicious contractor behavior to the Better Business Bureau and local law enforcement.
- Never pay for work that is not completed to your satisfaction.
- Florida has very strict lien laws that can either help you or harm you. Always require a signed acknowledgment of payment in full and a release of all liens. If materials are supplied by a different company or laborers are provided by a different company, be sure you get lien releases from them as well. Require that your contractor prove payment of all material suppliers and workers.

Below are two links to additional resources that may provide you with the latest background information on prospective service providers:

[\*\*The Better Business Bureau\*\*](#)

[\*\*Background Check - USSearch\*\*](#)

New resources are coming online all of the time. Before hiring a contractor or allowing work to start – and especially before you pay any money – check every possible source and reference.

