

Frequently Asked Questions about...

The Virginia Department of Health Office of Licensure and Certification

Q. What is the Virginia Department of the Health - Office of Licensure and Certification?

A. The Office of Licensure and Certification (OLC) is the part of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) that administers five state licensing programs that cover nursing facilities, home care organizations, hospitals, hospice programs, and outpatient surgical hospitals.

Q. What kind of activities does the OLC conduct?

A. The OLC provides a variety of services:

- Acts as the state survey agency for Medicare and Medicaid
- Conducts regulatory compliance inspections that satisfy both state licensure and Medicare/Medicaid requirements
 - These inspections are conducted by medical facilities inspectors who are health care professionals such as physicians, registered nurses, dietitians, social workers, or laboratory medical technologists
 - Nursing facilities are inspected every 2 years under state licensure and on an average of every 12 months under Medicare/Medicaid certification (which applies to almost all Virginia nursing homes)
- Investigates consumer complaints regarding the quality of health care services received
- Administers the state's certification and registration programs for Managed Care Health Insurance Plans licensees (MCHIPs) and private review agents
- Administers the Certificate of Public Need (COPN) program

Q. Does the OLC regulate all long-term care facilities?

A. No. The OLC, through their Long Term Care division, is only responsible for the licensing and federal certification of nursing facilities and Medicaid certification of intermediate care facilities for the mentally retarded (ICF/MRs). Assisted living facilities (ALFs) are regulated by a different licensing agency, the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS).

Q. When should nursing home facilities contact the OLC?

A. Nursing homes should contact the OLC for the following:

- Report a disaster, fire, emergency, or any other condition that may jeopardize the health, safety, or well-being of residents
 - This includes all communicable disease outbreaks, which should also be reported to the local health department
 - Contact the Long Term Care Division and ask for the OLC supervisor for your facility
 - Long Term Care Division: **804-367-2100** or **804-367-2101** (phone) / **804-527-4502** (fax)
- Certification and Annual Renewal (Recertification).
 - Virginia state law requires that all nursing facilities obtain and maintain a license to operate
- Communicate changes in number of licensed beds or facility ownership/operator
- Contact the OLC with complaints that may seriously jeopardize patient health and safety
 - Complaint Unit phone number: **1-800-955-1819** (toll-free) or **804-367-2106** (Metro Richmond)