

HOMELIKE ENVIRONMENT REGULATION

F252 (Rev. 168, Issued: 03-08-17, Effective: 03-08-17, Implementation: 03-08-17)

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§483.10(e) *Respect and Dignity.*

The resident has a right to be treated with respect and dignity, including:

§483.10(e)(2) The right to retain and use personal possessions, including furnishings, and clothing, as space permits, unless to do so would infringe upon the rights or health and safety of other residents.

§483.10(i) *Safe Environment.*

The resident has a right to a safe, clean, comfortable and homelike environment, including but not limited to receiving treatment and supports for daily living safely.

The facility must provide--§483.10 A safe, clean, comfortable, and homelike environment, allowing the resident to use his or her personal belongings to the extent possible.

(i) This includes ensuring that the resident can receive care and services safely and that the physical layout of the facility maximizes resident independence and does not pose a safety risk

(ii) The facility shall exercise reasonable care for the protection of the resident's property from loss or theft.

For purposes of this requirement, "environment" refers to any environment in the facility that is frequented by residents, including (but not limited to) the residents' rooms, bathrooms, hallways, dining areas, lobby, outdoor patios, therapy areas and activity areas. A determination of "homelike" should include the resident's opinion of the living environment.

A "homelike environment" is one that de-emphasizes the institutional character of the setting, to the extent possible, and allows the resident to use those personal belongings that support a homelike environment. A personalized, homelike environment recognizes the individuality and autonomy of the resident, provides an opportunity for self-expression, and encourages links with the past and family members. The intent of the word "homelike" in this regulation is that the nursing home should provide an environment as close to that of the environment of a private home as possible. This concept of creating a home setting includes the elimination of institutional odors, and practices to the extent possible. Some good practices that serve to decrease the institutional character of the environment include the elimination of:

- Overhead paging and piped-in music throughout the building;
- Meal service in the dining room using trays (some residents may wish to eat certain meals in their rooms on trays);
- Institutional signage labeling work rooms/closets in areas visible to residents and the public;

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- Medication carts (some innovative facilities store medications in locked areas in resident rooms);
- The widespread and long-term use of audible (to the resident) chair and bed alarms, instead of their limited use for selected residents for diagnostic purposes or according to their care planned needs. These devices can startle the resident and constrain the resident from normal repositioning movements, which can be problematic. For more information about the detriments of alarms in terms of their effects on residents and alternatives to the widespread use of alarms, see the 2007 CMS satellite broadcast training, "From Institutionalized to Individualized Care," Part 1, available through the National Technical Information Service and other sources such as the Pioneer Network;
- Mass purchased furniture, drapes and bedspreads that all look alike throughout the building (some innovators invite the placement of some residents' furniture in common areas); and
- Large, centrally located nursing/care team stations.

Many facilities cannot immediately make these types of changes, but it should be a goal for all facilities that have not yet made these types of changes to work toward them. A nursing facility is not considered noncompliant if it still has some of these institutional features, but the facility is expected to do all it can within fiscal constraints to provide an environment that enhances quality of life for residents, in accordance with resident preferences.

A "homelike" or homey environment is not achieved simply through enhancements to the physical environment. It concerns striving for person-centered care that emphasizes individualization, relationships and a psychosocial environment that welcomes each resident and makes her/him comfortable.

In a facility in which most residents come for a short-term stay, the "good practices" listed in this section are just as important as in a facility with a majority of long term care residents. A resident in the facility for a short-term stay would not typically move her/his bedroom furniture into the room, but may desire to bring a television, chair or other personal belongings to have while staying in the facility.

Although the regulatory language at this tag refers to "safe," "clean," "comfortable," and "homelike," for consistency, the following specific F-tags should be used for certain issues of safety and cleanliness:

- For issues of safety of the environment, presence of hazards and hazardous practices, use, Accidents, Tag F323;
- For issues of fire danger, use Life Safety from Fire, Tag F454;

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- For issues of cleanliness and maintenance of common living areas frequented by residents, use, Housekeeping and Maintenance, Tag F254;
- For issues of cleanliness of areas of the facility used by staff only (e.g., break room, medication room, laundry, kitchen, etc.) or the public only (e.g., parking lot), use §483.70(h), Tag F465 Other Environmental Conditions; and
- Although this Tag can be used for issues of general comfortableness of the environment such as furniture, there are more specific Tags to use for the following issues:
 - For issues of uncomfortable lighting, use, Tag F256 Adequate and Comfortable Lighting;
 - For issues of uncomfortable temperature, use, Tag F257 Comfortable and Safe Temperature Levels; and
 - For issues of uncomfortable noise levels, use, Tag F258 Comfortable Sound

Levels. **Procedures**

During interviews, ask residents and families whether they think the facility is striving to be as homelike as possible, and whether they have been invited to bring in desired personal property items (within space constraints). Observe bedrooms of sampled residents for personalization. By observing the residents' surroundings, what can the survey team learn about their everyday life and interests? Their life prior to residing in the facility? Observe for family photographs, books and magazines, bedspreads, knickknacks, mementos, and furniture that belong to the residents. For residents who have no relatives or friends, and have few assets, determine the extent to which the facility has assisted these residents to make their rooms homelike, if they so desire. If potential issues are discovered, ask responsible staff about their efforts to provide a homelike environment and to invite residents to bring in personal belongings.

NOTE: Many residents who are residing in the facility for a short-term stay may not wish to personalize their rooms nor bring in many belongings. If they express no issues regarding homelike environment or personal property during interviews, there is no need to conduct further investigations for those residents.