

GROUP HOMES IN SCW

Who to call at ADHS

Arizona Department of Health Services Bureau of Residential Facilities Licensing (RFL)
Phone: 602-364-2639 (main RFL line) **Alternate Licensing Line: 602-364-2536**

Both numbers reach the licensing division that oversees:

- Assisted living homes
- Behavioral health residential facilities
- DDD group homes
- Sober living homes (if licensed)

Where do group homes have to register to be in SCW?

Group homes in Sun City West must **register and be licensed with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS)**. They do **not** register with Sun City West or PORA. They may also trigger **Maricopa County zoning notifications**, depending on the type of home.

Where group homes must register to operate in Sun City West

1. Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) — REQUIRED

All group homes operating in Arizona must be **licensed through ADHS**, which regulates health-related residential facilities, including group homes for individuals with developmental disabilities and behavioral-supported group homes.

- ADHS is the **state licensing authority** for group homes.
- Applicants must submit a full application packet, including identity documents, facility address, accreditation (if applicable), and allow inspections.
- As of **July 1, 2023**, all behavioral-supported group homes and DES-contracted group homes must be licensed through ADHS.

This is the primary and controlling registration requirement.

2. Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) – Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

If the home serves individuals with developmental disabilities, the operator must also have a **service provider contract with DES/DDD**.

- ADHS licensing requires proof of a DES contract or pending contract.

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3. Maricopa County — Zoning & Use Compliance (NOT a license)

Group homes do **not** need a county “license,” but they must comply with county zoning rules.

- Arizona law exempts licensed group homes from certain zoning restrictions, but counties may still enforce **occupancy, safety, and building standards**.

What they do *not* have to do

- They **do not register with Sun City West, PORA, or the Recreation Centers**.
- They **cannot be blocked** by HOA-style rules because federal law (Fair Housing Act) protects them — but they **must** meet state licensing and county safety requirements.

Bottom line for SCW

If a group home is operating legally in Sun City West, it must appear in **ADHS’s Residential Facilities Licensing system** and, if serving DDD clients, must have a **DES/DDD provider contract**.

To check the current ADHS license status, the following is required:

The exact address of the group home to be checked.

- The **street address** (full or partial is fine)
- Or the **name of the operator**, if you have it

ADHS will provide:

- License status (active, expired, unlicensed)
- License type (behavioral, DDD, assisted living, etc.)
- Capacity
- Owner/operator
- Any enforcement actions on file

Can a resident call ADHS’s Residential Facilities Licensing to find them? If so, how?

Yes -call ADHS’s Residential Facilities Licensing office, and it is actually one of the **fastest** ways to confirm whether a group home is legally licensed to operate in Sun City West.

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What to say :

“I need to verify whether a residential group home at **[insert address]** in Sun City West is currently licensed with ADHS. Can you confirm the license status, license type, and owner/operator?”

They will:

- Look up the address
- Tell you if it is **licensed, unlicensed, expired, or pending**
- Tell you the **license type** (ALH, BHRF, DDD, etc.)
- Provide the **facility name and owner**
- Confirm whether any **enforcement actions** exist

They **will not** give resident names — protected by law.

What ADHS cannot tell you

- They cannot tell you **zoning compliance** (that’s Maricopa County).
- They cannot tell you **who lives there**.
- They cannot tell you **complaint details**, only whether enforcement exists.

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ADHS-REGULATED RESIDENTIAL FACILITY TYPES

Definitions for all group-home-type facilities allowed in Sun City West

1. Assisted Living Home (ALH)

License type: Assisted Living Facility – *Home* (10 or fewer residents) **Regulator:** ADHS Bureau of Residential Facilities Licensing **Definition:** A residential home providing **supervisory care, personal care, or directed care** to adults who cannot live independently.

- Must be located in a residential home setting.
- Maximum of **10 residents**.
- Staff provide assistance with daily living (bathing, dressing, medication management).
- Can serve seniors, disabled adults, or those with cognitive decline.

Relevance to SCW: This is the most common licensed residential facility in Sun City West.

2. Assisted Living Center (ALC)

License type: Assisted Living Facility – *Center* (11+ residents) **Regulator:** ADHS **Definition:** A larger facility providing the same care levels as ALHs but with **11 or more residents**.

- Typically commercial-scale buildings.
- Must meet higher staffing and fire-safety requirements.

Relevance to SCW: Allowed, but rare due to SCW's residential zoning and lot sizes.

3. Behavioral Health Residential Facility (BHRF)

License type: Behavioral Health Residential Facility **Regulator:** ADHS Division of Licensing Services **Definition:** A residential facility providing **treatment, supervision, and supportive services** to individuals with behavioral health conditions, including:

- Substance use recovery
- Serious mental illness
- Co-occurring disorders

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Key points:

- Can be up to **10 residents** in a single-family home.
- Must provide therapeutic programming and clinical oversight.
- Must meet strict staffing and service requirements.

Relevance to SCW: These are the “rehab-type” homes residents often ask about. They are **legal** under federal law if licensed and serving disabled individuals.

4. DDD Group Home (Developmental Disabilities Group Home)

License type: ADHS Residential Group Home **Regulator:** ADHS + DES Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) **Definition:** A home providing **24-hour care and habilitation services** to individuals with developmental disabilities.

- Must have a DES/DDD contract.
- Must meet ADHS residential licensing standards.
- Typically 3–6 residents.

Relevance to SCW: These are long-standing, stable group homes with strict oversight.

5. Adult Foster Care Home (AFC)

License type: Assisted Living Home (AFC endorsement) **Regulator:** ADHS **Definition:** A small home where a **single caregiver** provides room, board, and personal care to **up to 4 adults** who cannot live independently.

- Caregiver must live in the home.
- Lower capacity than ALH.

Relevance to SCW: Allowed, but uncommon.

6. Sober Living Home (Certified)

License type: *Certification*, not a license **Regulator:** Arizona Department of Health Services (Sober Living Home Certification Program) **Definition:** A home providing **peer-based recovery support** for individuals recovering from substance use disorder.

- Must be **certified** by ADHS if they accept referrals from licensed treatment providers or courts.
- Cannot provide medical or clinical treatment onsite.
- Must follow strict rules on drug testing, house rules, and staffing.

Relevance to SCW: Allowed if certified. If operating without certification when required, they are in violation.

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7. Unlicensed Residential Home (Illegal if providing care)

Definition: A home operating **without ADHS licensure** while providing any level of care or supervision. Examples of illegal operation:

- Providing medication management without a license
- Providing personal care (bathing, toileting) without a license
- Operating a behavioral health home without ADHS approval

Relevance to SCW: These are the homes residents most often complain about. They can be shut down by ADHS.

Summary Table (Operational)

Facility Type	Max Residents	Regulator	Provides Care?	Allowed in SCW?
Assisted Living Home (ALH)	10	ADHS	Yes	Yes
Assisted Living Center (ALC)	11+	ADHS	Yes	Yes
Behavioral Health Residential Facility (BHRF)	10	ADHS	Yes	Yes
DDD Group Home	3–6	ADHS + DES	Yes	Yes
Adult Foster Care	4	ADHS	Yes	Yes
Sober Living Home (Certified)	Varies	ADHS	No medical care	Yes
Unlicensed Care Home	Any	None	Illegal	No

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1. One-Page Enforcement Guide

ADHS-Regulated Residential Facilities in Sun City West Enforcement, Oversight, and Who Handles What

A. Assisted Living Homes (ALH) • Up to 10 residents in a single-family home • Provides supervisory, personal, or directed care • Regulated by ADHS Residential Facilities Licensing • Violations: unlicensed care, medication errors, unsafe staffing • Enforcement contact: ADHS Residential Licensing 602-364-2639

B. Assisted Living Centers (ALC) • 11+ residents • Commercial-scale assisted living • Regulated by ADHS • Enforcement contact: ADHS 602-364-2639

C. Behavioral Health Residential Facilities (BHRF) • Up to 10 residents • Provides behavioral health treatment and supervision • Regulated by ADHS Behavioral Health Licensing • Violations: unlicensed treatment, unsafe staffing, improper clinical oversight • Enforcement contact: ADHS Behavioral Health Licensing 602-364-2536

D. DDD Group Homes • 3–6 residents • For individuals with developmental disabilities • Regulated by ADHS + DES Division of Developmental Disabilities • Violations: unsafe conditions, improper supervision • Enforcement contact: ADHS 602-364-2639; DES/DDD 602-542-0419

E. Adult Foster Care Homes • Up to 4 residents • Caregiver lives in the home • Regulated by ADHS • Enforcement contact: ADHS 602-364-2639

F. Certified Sober Living Homes • Peer-based recovery support • Must be certified by ADHS if accepting referrals • Cannot provide medical treatment • Violations: operating uncertified, unsafe environment • Enforcement contact: ADHS Sober Living Program 602-364-2639

G. Illegal Unlicensed Care Homes • Any home providing care without ADHS licensure • Violations: all care activities without a license • Enforcement contact: ADHS Unlicensed Facilities Unit 602-364-2639

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2. Flowchart: Who To Call for Each Type of Home

Operational Decision Path for Sun City West

Step 1: Identify the type of home • Does the home provide personal care, medication help, or supervision? → Treat as **Assisted Living**. • Does the home provide behavioral health treatment or recovery programming? → Treat as **BHRF**. • Does the home serve adults with developmental disabilities? → Treat as **DDD Group Home**. • Does the home provide peer-based recovery only? → Treat as **Sober Living Home**. • Does the home provide care but has no visible license? → Treat as **Unlicensed Care Home**.

Step 2: Direct to correct enforcement authority

If Assisted Living (ALH/ALC): → ADHS Residential Licensing 602-364-2639

If Behavioral Health Residential Facility: → ADHS Behavioral Health Licensing 602-364-2536

If DDD Group Home: → ADHS Residential Licensing 602-364-2639 → DES/DDD 602-542-0419

If Sober Living Home: → ADHS Sober Living Certification Program 602-364-2639

If suspected unlicensed care: → ADHS Unlicensed Facilities Unit 602-364-2639

If zoning or occupancy concern: → Maricopa County Planning & Development 602-506-3301

If immediate safety threat: → MCSO District 3 Non-Emergency 602-876-1011

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3. PORA-Ready Briefing Sheet

Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association (PORA) Residential Group Homes: Definitions, Oversight, and Enforcement

Purpose: Provide PORA leadership, committees, and residents with clear definitions and enforcement pathways for all ADHS-regulated residential facilities operating in Sun City West.

Overview: Federal Fair Housing Act protections allow licensed group homes to operate in residential neighborhoods. Arizona law requires these homes to be licensed or certified depending on the service type. Sun City West does not license or regulate these homes; oversight is handled by state agencies.

Facility Types Allowed in SCW: • Assisted Living Homes (up to 10 residents) • Assisted Living Centers (11+ residents) • Behavioral Health Residential Facilities • DDD Group Homes • Adult Foster Care Homes • Certified Sober Living Homes

Not Allowed: • Any home providing care without ADHS licensure • Any sober living home accepting referrals without ADHS certification

Regulatory Authorities: • ADHS Residential Facilities Licensing • ADHS Behavioral Health Licensing • ADHS Sober Living Certification Program • DES Division of Developmental Disabilities • Maricopa County Planning & Development (zoning compliance) • MCSO (public safety issues)

Key Enforcement Numbers: • ADHS Residential Licensing: 602-364-2639 • ADHS Behavioral Health Licensing: 602-364-2536 • DES/DDD: 602-542-0419 • Maricopa County Planning & Development: 602-506-3301 • MCSO District 3 Non-Emergency: 602-876-1011

PORA Role: • Provide residents with accurate information • Direct complaints to the correct enforcement agency • Track patterns of concern for community advocacy • Maintain neutrality and compliance with federal housing law

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If people don't want group homes – who to call

1. Start: Maricopa County Planning & Development

Why: This is the only agency that can act on **zoning, occupancy, parking, nuisance, or building-code issues.**

What they can do: • Investigate zoning violations • Investigate over-occupancy • Investigate unpermitted construction • Investigate nuisance or property-maintenance issues

What they cannot do: • Remove a legal, licensed group home • Restrict group homes based on resident preference

Contact: Maricopa County Planning & Development 602-506-3301

2. Next Level: Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS)

Why: ADHS is the licensing authority for all group-home-type facilities.

What they can do: • Confirm whether the home is licensed • Investigate unlicensed care • Investigate unsafe conditions • Investigate improper staffing or violations

What they cannot do: • Shut down a home simply because neighbors dislike it • Restrict group homes based on neighborhood preference

Contacts: ADHS Residential Licensing: 602-364-2639 ADHS Behavioral Health Licensing: 602-364-2536 ADHS Sober Living Certification: 602-364-2639

3. If the home serves adults with developmental disabilities: DES/DDD

Why: They oversee DDD group homes and can investigate service-related issues.

What they can do: • Investigate safety concerns • Investigate improper supervision • Investigate contract violations

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What they cannot do: • Remove a legal group home from a neighborhood

Contact: DES Division of Developmental Disabilities 602-542-0419

4. If the concern is about resident treatment or rights: Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Why: They advocate for residents in assisted living homes.

What they can do: • Investigate resident-care complaints • Mediate issues with facility operators

What they cannot do: • Remove a licensed home from SCW

Contact: Arizona Long-Term Care Ombudsman 602-542-6454

5. If the concern is about safety, crime, or disturbances: MCSO

Why: Law enforcement handles immediate safety issues.

What they can do: • Respond to disturbances • Investigate criminal activity • Enforce noise or disorderly conduct laws

What they cannot do: • Remove a group home because neighbors object to its presence

Contact: MCSO District 3 Non-Emergency 602-876-1011

6. If the resident simply objects to group homes existing in SCW: Elected Officials

This is the **top of the line** for complaints based on **policy preference**, not violations.

A. Maricopa County Board of Supervisors They oversee county zoning and can hear constituent concerns. District 4 Supervisor (SCW): Debbie Lesko **602-506-3011**

B. Arizona State Legislators They write the laws governing group homes, zoning protections, and Fair Housing compliance. Residents may contact their **LD28** Senator and Representatives.

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C. Federal Representatives Because group homes are protected under the **Fair Housing Act**, residents may express concerns to: • U.S. Representative (Congressional District 8) • U.S. Senators for Arizona

Important: None of these officials can remove a legal, licensed group home, but they can hear concerns and consider legislative changes.

7. What PORA can do (and cannot do)

PORA can: • Educate residents • Provide correct agency contacts • Track patterns of concern • Advocate for safety, zoning enforcement, and compliance • Facilitate communication with county and state officials

PORA cannot: • Restrict, ban, or remove group homes • Enforce zoning or licensing • Violate Fair Housing Act protections

Summary: The “UP THE LINE” Escalation Path

1. Maricopa County Planning & Development
2. ADHS Licensing
3. DES/DDD (if applicable)
4. Long-Term Care Ombudsman
5. MCSO (safety issues)
6. County Supervisor
7. State Legislators
8. Federal Representatives

This is the **complete and correct** escalation chain for residents who object to group homes in Sun City West.