

## Scope of Service – Retirement Village Program

ARAS provides free, independent and confidential information and advocacy support to current and prospective residents of registered retirement villages in South Australia. This service reflects the reforms to the *Retirement Villages Act 2016* and *Retirement Villages Regulations 2017* that commenced on 2 February 2026, including strengthened protections relating to contracts and disclosure, fees and charges, accessibility alterations, exit entitlements and dispute resolution.

### ARAS supports older people to:

- identify, articulate and raise their concerns with the retirement village operator;
- communicate with the retirement village operator on their behalf and at their direction to address concerns or complaints;
- understand their residence contract or agreement, including its terms, fees, charges and the operator's obligations;
- understand and exercise their rights and entitlements under the Retirement Villages Act 2016 and Retirement Villages Regulations 2017, including amendments introduced by the Retirement Villages (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 2024 that commenced on 2 February 2026, and seek to have those rights respected by the retirement village operator;
- access information and advocacy support about dispute resolution, including help to understand the process, prepare relevant documents and, where appropriate and within the program's role, attend South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) proceedings; and
- consider available options for addressing and resolving a dispute with a retirement village operator.

### Consent and the older person's voice

- ARAS seeks the older person's informed consent before acting on their behalf. Where the older person has impaired decision-making capacity, ARAS supports them to participate in decisions to the greatest extent possible and works with a legally authorised representative where appropriate.
- ARAS does not advocate for a family member, representative or other person where their wishes conflict with the older person's rights, wishes, preferences or interests.

### ARAS cannot:

- provide legal advice or legal representation;
- review a prospective resident's residence contract for the purpose of providing legal advice;
- provide financial planning, taxation or investment advice;
- assist with property transactions that are unrelated to a retirement village residence contract;
- assist with disputes solely between residents where the operator or village management has no relevant role or responsibility;
- assist with family or inheritance disputes;
- assist with matters unrelated to retirement village residency or the operator's responsibilities;
- assist with matters concerning lifestyle villages, residential parks or independent living units that are not registered retirement villages; or
- act on behalf of a deceased resident's estate in relation to exit entitlements.

*The Retirement Village Program is funded by the South Australian Department of Human Services through Office for Ageing Well.*