

Media Release

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Residents to enjoy greater protection in retirement villages

Residents of retirement villages will receive better protection under a new code of practice.

Retirement Commissioner Diana Crossan has released the draft Code of Practice for Retirement Villages and is now seeking submissions.

Drawn up by the Retirement Villages Association, the draft code sets out minimum requirements for all retirement villages and covers staffing, residents' safety and personal security, resident involvement, complaints processes, accounts, maintenance and what happens when people leave.

Ms Crossan said the Code of Practice, which is a key part of the Retirement Villages Act 2003, will help protect residents in the future.

"As well as giving residents choice, transparency and a say in how their villages are run, the new Act provides ways to sort out problems that occur. The Code of Practice is important to residents' daily lives and has to work for everyone - residents and the industry," said Ms Crossan.

Retirement villages are an attractive option for people who want to live as independently as possible with support, security and companionship as they get older. It is estimated that more than 20,000 older New Zealanders now live in retirement villages and this number is set to grow as the population ages.

The draft Code of Practice is available on the Retirement Commission's website, www.retirement.org.nz or copies are available by request on 0800 438 767. Questions can be directed to Wendy Proffitt on 04 494 6249 or wendy.proffitt@retirement.org.nz

Submissions close on 7th March 2005.

Ms Crossan said she encouraged anyone involved or interested in retirement villages to make a submission.

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