

## Frequently Asked Questions: Bungalows at Century Park

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A home is more than four walls. It's the basic foundation for health and well-being. When someone lives on the street, it is extremely difficult to recover from a mental health issue, substance use disorder or manage a chronic health condition. Integral Care uses housing as a health intervention. With a safe place to live and appropriate support services, recovery from homelessness, mental health issues and substance use disorders begins. People thrive and our community is stronger.

Devastating losses in affordable housing in recent years and racial disparities in homelessness and public systems make it clear that an imbalance in supply and demand and inequitable access to resources led many people to become homeless in the first place. Bungalows at Century Park is a unique apartment community owned by the City of Austin and managed by Integral Care. Bungalows at Century Park provides private apartments with onsite support services to adults experiencing homelessness in Travis County. When someone has access to tools like housing to regain health and independence, counseling and a community to support emotional health, primary care to improve physical health, and drug and alcohol treatment to help with recovery, they can reach their full potential and contribute to the community.

### What are the features of Bungalows at Century Park?

Bungalows at Century Park is an apartment community that includes 60 fully furnished single occupancy efficiency apartments. Features include onsite staffing 24 hours a day, onsite security, onsite laundry facility, common gathering spaces, and internal and external security cameras. This community is modeled after other successful programs across the country and Austin.

### How does Bungalows at Century Park support the health of its residents?

Bungalows at Century Park is based on Housing First, an evidence-based model that offers permanent supportive housing (PSH) to address the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, who also live with mental illness. They may also live with substance use disorder and/or other chronic health conditions. PSH is a type of affordable housing that includes ongoing support services, such as case management, primary and mental health care, substance use treatment and employment services. It is designed for individuals with disabilities who need housing assistance and ongoing support to live healthy, stable, independent lives in the community. Housing First is a proven solution for people who have experienced chronic homelessness. This model removes barriers to housing that have contributed to people experiencing chronic homelessness in communities across the United States. Homelessness persists in our community because people have barriers to housing. A home is the foundation for recovery from homelessness, mental illness and substance use disorder.

## How are residents selected for Bungalows at Century Park and what are the qualifications?

The apartments are for adults who are experiencing homelessness and also live with mental illness. They may also live with substance use disorder and/or a physical disability. The following is an overview of the steps a potential resident goes through to be considered for an apartment. This is a collaborative community process that is governed by regulations of multiple agencies.

### 1. Coordinated Entry

For any person to be considered for an apartment, they must first go through the coordinated entry process. This process is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As part of the coordinated entry process, individuals complete an assessment that helps determine the type of housing that best matches the needs of the person experiencing homelessness. Once the assessment is completed, the person is placed on a list of all people who need housing in Travis County. This list is prioritized based on a person's level of need. Providers across Travis County, including Integral Care, use this list to identify individuals who are next in line for available housing. For more information about Coordinated Entry, visit <https://www.austinecho.org/get-help/experiencing-homelessness/>

To be considered for an apartment, a person must be experiencing chronic homelessness. HUD defines a chronically homeless person as "either (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years." A disabling condition is defined as "a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, a serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions." In addition, "a disabling condition limits an individual's ability to work or perform one or more activities of daily living."

### 2. Housing Vouchers

People who live in Integral Care properties may use housing vouchers to cover the cost of rent. Housing vouchers vary depending on the qualifiers of the tenant. Vouchers have different screening requirements. Some vouchers are managed by the Housing Authority of the City of Austin while other vouchers are managed by the federal government.

### 3. Texas Apartment Lease Agreement

All residents must sign and abide by the standard Texas Apartment Lease Agreement. This is used by many rental properties throughout Travis County. The property manager runs a criminal background check on potential tenants and is responsible for lease enforcement. Residents who violate the terms of their lease may be subject to eviction.

### **How does Integral Care support the safety of residents and neighbors near the property?**

Integral Care works to create safe and healthy communities for everyone – our residents, staff and neighbors. Property management staff are onsite 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to support residents and address any issues on the property. All visitors are required to check in at the front desk with Integral Care staff when visiting residents. To support the safety of our residents, there are interior and exterior security cameras on the property. Because this is a new initiative, as needed, Integral Care, the City of Austin, and the property management company will reevaluate staffing and security needs.

Integral Care will work with long-time collaborator Austin Police Department and the City of Austin should any issues arise. Integral Care also follows the City of Austin’s Good Neighbor Policy and stays in close contact with neighbors and neighborhood associations to respond to any issues as well as provide information about Integral Care and our services.

### **Is there overnight staff at the property?**

Yes. One property management staff member is onsite 24/7.

### **Do residents pay rent?**

Yes. Rent is determined based on an individual’s income and does not exceed 30% of that income. Rent includes all utilities. Rent may be subsidized through different types of housing vouchers or subsidy programs.

### **How long can people live at Bungalows at Century Park?**

Residents sign a 1-year lease with an annual option to renew. Residents are eligible to renew their lease annually as long as they follow the terms of their lease and do not exceed the income requirement. Most people live in an apartment community like this for an average of two to three years.

### **Is Bungalows at Century Park a homeless shelter?**

No. This is an apartment community. It is a permanent residence with private apartments for 60 people who’ve experienced homelessness in our community.

### **Are community organizations involved with Bungalows at Century Park?**

Yes. The property is owned by the City of Austin, which has made a commitment to address the need for affordable housing and support services to end homelessness. The property is managed by Integral Care.

### **How does Bungalows at Century Park impact public resources?**

People living on the streets who have conditions such as a mental illness, substance use disorder and chronic health conditions often use crisis and emergency services because they lack a regular source of care. This is expensive for the community. Providing housing and rehabilitation support offers the opportunity to create long-term stability and better health. It is more cost effective due to decreased utilization of health services such as EMS transport and hospital stays.



A recent return on investment study of Terrace at Oak Springs revealed a cost savings of almost \$14,500 per person per year. The savings results from a reduction of utilization in EMS transports, Austin Police Department response, emergency department visits, inpatient hospitalizations, and psychiatric hospitalizations. Based on that data, this apartment community can save our community nearly \$900,000 per year.

### **Who is Integral Care?**

Integral Care supports adults and children living with mental illness, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our services include a 24-hour helpline for anyone who needs immediate support, ongoing counseling to improve mental health, drug and alcohol treatment to help with recovery, and housing to regain health and independence. Integral Care is uniquely qualified to help individuals who have the most barriers to achieving housing stability. Through our housing programs, we currently provide access to housing and support services to nearly 1,500 individuals – in properties we own and in privately-owned apartments across the community. Integral Care uses the Housing First model to remove barriers, creating opportunities for individuals to move from homelessness to housing. Integral Care has been providing housing services in our community since the 1980s and adopted the Housing First model in the last decade.

Founded in 1967, Integral Care is a governmental entity that serves as the Local Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority for Travis County. Integral Care was formerly known as Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center (ATCMHMR) and Austin Travis County Integral Care (ATCIC). We updated our name in 2017 to make it easier for people to find the care they need and reduce confusion with other public organizations.

### **For More Information**

Questions or additional information? Please contact [neighbors@integralcare.org](mailto:neighbors@integralcare.org) or visit [integralcare.org](http://integralcare.org).