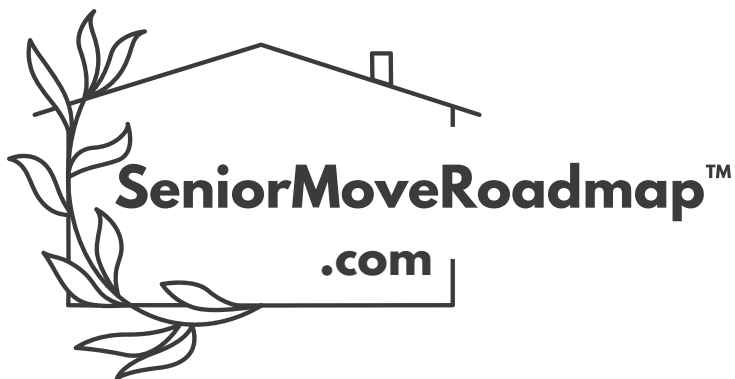


Senior Move Timeline Options

How to move a parent without delays



Wondering how best to plan your move?



Included Within:

- A simple 5-step framework for any senior move
- Three timeline paths depending on your urgency and finances
- The legal document that prevents costly delays — and when you need it
- How to build the right support team before problems arise
- Emotional preparation: what your parent will feel when planning gets real
 -

Creating the Plan

Creating a Plan for Moving a Parent

How to avoid delays, reduce stress, and make better decisions

Without a plan, it's easy to:

feel overwhelmed

delay important decisions

make choices under pressure

👉 A simple plan helps you stay in control and avoid costly mistakes.



THE 5-STEP TIMELINE

Most senior moves follow a similar path. Understanding the steps helps you stay ahead of problems before they happen.



Assess — Understand your parent's care needs and your family's timeline



Plan - Choose your timeline/approach and line up the right support



Choose Care - Tour and secure assisted living



Prepare the Home - Downsize, declutter, get organized and make ready



Move - Transition, Move in and handle the home

Most delays happen between “Plan” and “Prepare the Home”

The reason is almost always the same: families haven't lined up the right legal authority, the right support team, or a clear picture of how the home fits into the timeline.

Choosing your Timeline/Approach

Most families fall into one of these three paths depending on urgency, finances, and the home.

The right choice depends on three things:

- How quickly you need to move
- Whether you need the home to fund care
- How much time you have to prepare the home

	Move First (Fastest)	Sell Fast, Then Move	Prepare & Maximize Value
Speed to Move	Immediate (Days - Weeks)	Short Term (2-6 Weeks)	Slower (1-3 Months)
Upfront Funds Needed	Yes (Cover Care before Sale)	No (Sale Funds Move)	Yes (Prep & Carrying Costs)
Home Prep Required	Minimal (Handle Later)	Minimal to None	Moderate to High (Clean, Repair, Stage)
Financial Outcome	Moderate to High	Moderate	Highest Potential
Best For	Urgent Situations / Safety Concerns	Home must sell before care can start	Time, Flexibility Maximizing Value
Tradeoff	Temporary financial strain	Less control on sale price	Slower Timeline, More Coordination

Most families don't fit perfectly into one path—your situation may be a combination of these. The key is choosing a direction and moving forward. The home is usually the unknown that stalls everything. Getting a realistic number early — before you need it — removes the biggest variable in the plan.

Biggest Delays to Avoid

Most delays don't come from the move itself—they come from uncertainty and lack of coordination.

Avoid these common issues:

- Waiting too long to start downsizing
- Trying to “fix everything” before making a decision
- Family disagreements slowing progress
- Not understanding how the home impacts timing
- Waiting for a crisis to force action



👉 **A simple plan early can prevent most of these problems.**

HOW THE HOME IMPACTS EVERYTHING

The home plays a bigger role than most families expect.

It affects:

- Timing – when the move can happen
- Finances – how care is paid for
- Stress – how complicated the process becomes
- In many cases, the home is the key to making everything else work.

👉 **Coordinating the move and the home together is what prevents delays.**

Regardless of Approach

No matter which path you take, these steps apply:

- Continue having conversations with your loved one so everyone is aligned
- Begin touring and evaluating assisted living options
- Start downsizing and preparing for the move
- Complete any basic cleanup or small repairs if possible
- Line up the right support
- Plan ahead and finalize a Power of Attorney (POA) to avoid delays later on

Note: The planning framework in this guide is educational. For legal documents, Medicaid planning, and financial decisions related to this transition, consult a qualified elder law attorney.

Documents That Prevent Delays

Before any other planning step in this guide, one question matters more than any other: does your parent have the legal documents in place that allow your family to act on their behalf?

Most families assume this is handled. Many find out it isn't at the worst possible moment — when a decision needs to be made and no one has the legal authority to make it.

The legal document that prevents the most costly delays: Power of Attorney

Before a parent transitions into care, two separate legal documents need to be in place — not one.



A **Financial Power of Attorney**

authorizes a designated person to make financial decisions on the senior's behalf — including selling the family home, managing bank accounts, and paying care costs. Without it, a family may be legally unable to sell the property or access funds when they need them most.

A **Healthcare Proxy** (also called a Medical Power of Attorney or Healthcare Power of Attorney) authorizes a designated person to make medical decisions when the senior cannot. This is a separate document from the financial POA and serves a completely different function.

If neither document exists and a parent loses capacity, families may face a court-ordered guardianship or conservatorship proceeding — a process that can take months, cost thousands of dollars, and create family conflict at the worst possible time.

Both documents should be prepared by an elder law attorney while your parent still has the legal capacity to sign them. Once capacity is lost, the window closes.

If you are unsure whether these documents are in place, that is the most important question to answer before taking any other planning step in this guide."

Next Steps Based on Approach

If You've Identified Your Path, Here's What to Do Next:

Move First (Fastest Path)

Goal: Get your parent safe and moved as quickly as possible

- Select and secure an assisted living community
- Coordinate a move-in date (often within days or weeks)
- Move essential belongings first (not everything)
- Create a plan to handle the home after the move
- Evaluate whether to sell as-is or prepare later



Move First

👉 **Focus on safety and speed—everything else can be handled after.**

Sell Fast, Then Move

Goal: Use the home to fund the move quickly

- Prepare the home for a quick sale (light cleanup only)
- Get a pricing strategy focused on speed, not perfection
- List or explore fast-sale options
- Begin researching and touring communities during this time
- Plan the move once funds are available



**Sell Fast,
Then Move**

👉 **Balance speed with access to funds—don't delay both at the same time.**

Prepare, Then Move (Prepare and Maximize)

Goal: Maximize value and create a smoother transition

- Begin downsizing and clearing out the home early
- Complete needed repairs, updates, or staging
- Develop a plan to list the home at full market value
- Take time to carefully evaluate assisted living options
- Coordinate the move around the sale timeline



**Prepare &
Maximize**

👉 **This path gives your family the most options — financially and emotionally — if the timeline allows for it.**

Line Up the Right Support

Most families try to handle everything themselves at first.

Having the right people involved early can save time, reduce stress, and prevent costly mistakes.

1. Senior Living Advisor / Placement Specialist

- Helps identify the right care options
- Guides tours and availability
- Often free to families

2. Real Estate Specialist

- Helps determine timing of the home
- Coordinates the home sale with the move
- Can provide multiple avenues to sell the home in addition to a traditional listing such as buying it directly and/or multiple finance options
- The home often drives the timing and financial side of the transition—so having someone who understands both is critical.
- Not all agents understand senior transitions or offer creative timing solutions. Look for someone who can present multiple options — not just a traditional listing.



3. Downsizing / Move Manager

- Helps sort, organize, and reduce stress
- Coordinates packing and logistics

4. Estate / Elder Law Attorney (if needed)

- Prepares financial and healthcare powers of attorney, advises on Medicaid planning and eligibility, handles estate planning, and manages probate when needed. Engage one early — before a crisis makes it urgent

5. Family Decision Maker(s)

- Clarify who is leading decisions
- Avoid delays and conflict

Not sure who to call about the home?

Reach out at

SeniorMoveRoadmap.com/for-help

What Your Parent May Feel When the Plan Becomes Real

Making the Decision & Creating the Plan

Deciding to move forward with assisted living is often one of the most emotional parts of the journey. Even after touring communities, many seniors struggle with mixed feelings as the decision starts to feel more real. Here are five common feelings parents frequently experience during this stage, along with ways to respond with understanding and support.

1. “I’m terrified of making the wrong decision”
2. “I feel like I’m being rushed or pressured”
3. “I feel guilty about giving up my home and independence”
4. “I’m really worried about the cost and our finances”
5. “This is starting to feel too real — I’m not sure I’m ready”



What if I make the wrong choice?

1. “I’m terrified of making the wrong decision”

Why they might feel this way

This is one of the biggest life changes a senior will ever make. They worry that choosing the wrong community could negatively affect their happiness, health, or finances for years to come. The fear of regret can feel overwhelming and paralyzing.

Helpful Responses

- “I completely understand why this feels so scary. This is a big decision, and it’s normal to worry about getting it right.”
- “We don’t have to be 100% certain today. We can take the time we need to make a decision you feel good about.”
- “Even if we choose a place and later realize it’s not perfect, we can always make adjustments. You’re not locked in forever.”

What to Say Next / Follow-up Tips

- “What would help you feel more confident about this decision?”
- “Would it help if we made a pros and cons list together for the communities we’ve seen?”
- “How about we take a few days to reflect before we talk about it again?”

Note: For most assisted living communities, a 30-day notice period is standard and transitions between communities are possible. If you're considering a CCRC with an entrance fee contract, that decision deserves more careful review before committing.

Why am I being rushed?

2. “I feel like I’m being rushed or pressured”

Why they might feel this way

Seniors often sense urgency from their adult children or even the community’s admissions team. They may worry they’re being pushed into a decision before they’ve had enough time to emotionally process it.

Helpful Responses

- “I hear you. I don’t want you to feel rushed at all. We can slow things down and move at a pace that feels right for you.”
- “My goal is not to pressure you — it’s to make sure you have the information and time you need to make a choice you feel peaceful about.”
- “Let’s agree right now that we won’t make any final decisions until you feel ready.”

What to Say Next / Follow-up Tips

- “What would make this process feel less rushed to you?”
- “Would you like me to tell the community we need more time before moving forward?”
- “Let’s set a date in a week or two to talk about this again — does that feel better?”

I Feel Guilty..

3. “I feel guilty about giving up my home and independence”

Why they might feel this way

Many seniors carry deep guilt about “burdening” their children or letting go of the home they worked so hard to maintain. They may also feel they’re failing at staying independent.

Helpful Responses

- “You’ve taken care of so many people for so long — it’s okay to let us help take care of you now. This isn’t failure; it’s wisdom.”
- “I know leaving your home feels heavy. You’ve done nothing wrong. You’ve earned the right to live somewhere that makes life easier and safer.”
- “This decision isn’t about giving up — it’s about choosing a new chapter where you can enjoy life with less stress and worry.”

What to Say Next / Follow-up Tips

- “What part of leaving the house feels the hardest for you right now?”
- “Would it help if we talked about ways we can honor the home and all the memories it holds?”
- “How can I support you so you feel less guilty about this change?”

I'm worried about the cost

4. "I'm really worried about the cost and our finances"

Why they might feel this way

Seniors often fear running out of money, becoming a financial burden on their children, or spending everything they've saved after a lifetime of hard work and careful planning.

Helpful Responses

- "Money worries are completely valid. Let's look at the actual numbers together so we can understand the real picture instead of guessing."
- "We have options, and we'll make sure this decision doesn't put anyone in financial stress. Your security matters to me."
- "Would it help if we met with a senior living advisor together to review the costs without any pressure?"

What to Say Next / Follow-up Tips

- "Would you like me to gather some information about how selling the house could help with costs?"
- "What would make you feel more comfortable about the financial side of this?"
- "Let's write down your biggest financial concerns so we can address them one by one."

I'm not sure I am ready...

5. "This is starting to feel too real — I'm not sure I'm ready"

Why they might feel this way

As the decision moves from "maybe" to "we're actually doing this," anxiety often spikes. Making it official can trigger a wave of sadness, fear, and resistance because it confirms that life is changing permanently.

Helpful Responses

- "I know this is starting to feel very real, and that can be scary. It's okay if you're not fully ready yet."
- "We can take this one step at a time. Finalizing the plan doesn't mean everything has to happen immediately."
- "It's normal for this part to feel emotional. You've handled so many big changes in life — we'll get through this one too."

What to Say Next / Follow-up Tips

- "Would it help if we paused for a little while before signing anything?"
- "What one small next step feels manageable to you right now?"
- "I'm here with you through all of this. You're not alone in feeling this way."

Please Be Aware: If this feeling persists across multiple conversations, consider involving a family therapist who works with aging families. Sometimes the barrier isn't information — it's grief, and grief needs a different kind of support than planning.

Tools to Move you Forward

This is one part of The Senior Move Roadmap

Feel free to click or request any of the other guides. For Convenience we have included Decluttering Tips, Move Planning, and more details regarding a cash sale vs Traditional financing at the end of this guide.



Is it Time?



Have the
Conversation



Make the Plan



Understand
the Costs



Choose the
Right Place



Prepare the
Home



Make the
Move

Additional Resources Included here

- Downsizing Checklist
- 30 Day Move Checklist
- Senior Living Essentials List



Download all seven guides free at SeniorMoveRoadmap.com

Want guidance delivered to your inbox?

Subscribe to The Senior Move Roadmap - Family Edition at
SeniorMoveRoadmap.com/newsletter



Downsizing Checklist by Room

BEDROOM – PRIORITIZE COMFORT & NECESSITY

✓ Keep:

- Bed frame & mattress (if suitable for new space)
- Essential bedding (2-3 sets of sheets, 1-2 comforters)
- A small selection of seasonal clothes (use the one-year rule: If you haven't worn it in a year, donate it!)
- Nightstand & reading lamp

✗ Donate/Discard:

- Extra or unused furniture (dressers, chairs, bedside tables)
- Excess linens, blankets, and throw pillows
- Old or unused clothing, shoes, and accessories
- Bulky or duplicate items (like extra lamps or nightstands)

KITCHEN – STREAMLINE TO EVERYDAY ESSENTIALS

✓ Keep:

- A small set of dishes (2-4 plates, bowls, mugs, and glasses)
- Basic cookware (1-2 pots, 1-2 pans, baking sheet)
- Everyday utensils (silverware, a few serving spoons)
- 1-2 appliances used daily (e.g., coffee maker, microwave)

✗ Donate/Discard:

- Specialty kitchen gadgets rarely used (waffle makers, bread machines, etc.)
- Excess cookware, plates, and glassware
- Expired pantry items and spices
- Large or duplicate appliances
- Excess Tupperware with missing lids

LIVING ROOM – KEEP IT FUNCTIONAL & COZY

✓ Keep:

- Comfortable seating (downsized sofa or favorite armchair)
- A few sentimental decor pieces (framed photos, heirlooms)
- A small bookshelf or storage unit for organization
- TV or entertainment system (if used regularly)

✗ Donate/Discard:

- Large, heavy furniture that won't fit in the new space (china cabinets, oversized coffee tables)
- Excess decorative items (vases, figurines, artwork)
- Extra furniture that won't serve a purpose in the new home
- Outdated media (DVDs, CDs, VHS tapes)

BATHROOM – DECLUTTER & ORGANIZE FOR EFFICIENCY

✓ Keep:

- Everyday toiletries (limit to one of each item)
- Essential towels (2-4 bath towels, 2 hand towels, 2 washcloths)
- Small first-aid kit
- A few storage bins for organization

🚫 Donate/Discard:

- Expired medications and skincare products
- Old or unused makeup and beauty supplies
- Worn-out or mismatched towels and washcloths
- Excess travel-size toiletries from hotels

HALLWAY / ENTRYWAY – REDUCE CLUTTER & IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

✓ Keep:

- A small console table or key holder
- Coat rack or hooks for outerwear
- A daily use bag or purse
- Walking cane, mobility aids (if needed)

🚫 Donate/Discard:

- Old or unworn coats, hats, and shoes
- Stacks of unread mail and paperwork
- Decorative clutter (extra vases, small furniture)

LAUNDRY ROOM – ONLY KEEP THE ESSENTIALS

✓ Keep:

- Laundry detergent, fabric softener, and stain removers
- 1-2 laundry baskets
- An iron and ironing board (if regularly used)

🚫 Donate/Discard:

- Old, worn-out cleaning rags
- Expired cleaning supplies
- Extra or broken hangers

STORAGE SPACES (GARAGE, ATTIC, BASEMENT, CLOSETS) – DECLUTTER DEEP STORAGE

✓ Keep:

- Important paperwork (store in labeled folders)
- Essential tools (hammer, screwdriver, flashlight)
- Sentimental items (limit to one small box or digitize)

🚫 Donate/Discard:

- Old holiday decorations that aren't used
- Extra tools, sports equipment, and duplicate hardware
- Boxes of "someday" items that haven't been touched in years
- Old furniture, broken appliances, outdated electronics

30-Day Senior-Specific Moving Checklist

A senior-specific timeline for when the move needs to happen now

When time is short, clarity matters most. This checklist is built specifically for senior transitions — not general moving advice, but the tasks that actually matter when a parent is moving to a senior living community within 30 days.

This is a summary list designed for quick reference. The following page contains a day-by-day detailed checklist with additional steps that may or may not apply to your specific situation. Use both together — this page to see the full picture at a glance, the next page when you need more detail on a specific task.

Not every item will apply to every family. Use what fits. Skip what doesn't.

Summary 30-Day Checklist

- Days 1–3: Confirm move-in date with community / Confirm room assignment and get room dimensions / Review community's move-in policy and allowed items list / Notify primary care physician of upcoming move and request records transfer
- Days 4–7: Complete community admission paperwork / Gather legal documents (POA, healthcare proxy, advance directive) / Contact Medicare, Social Security, and VA (if applicable) with new address
- Days 8–11: Coordinate medication transfer to community pharmacy (or confirm family will manage) / Arrange transportation for moving day / Begin packing essentials using the Assisted Living Essentials List
- Days 12–16: Forward mail / Notify bank and financial institutions of address change / Arrange a family member or Senior Move Manager to be the senior's designated support person on moving day
- Days 17–21: Bring familiar items to the room in advance if the community allows early setup / Confirm moving day logistics with all family members helping
- Days 22–26: Complete packing of essentials / Confirm medication supply is sufficient through the transition period / Prepare first-night bag: medications, comfort items, toiletries
- Days 27–29: Confirm all logistics / Rest / Prepare emotionally — review pages 5–6 of this guide
- Day 30 — Moving Day: Essentials bag travels with the senior, not the moving truck / Designate one family member whose only job is to stay with your parent / Let the community's move-in team lead the setup

Days 31 and Beyond

The move is complete — but the transition isn't. The weeks that follow moving day are often the most emotionally demanding part of the entire process. A few things to stay on top of:

Continue visiting frequently — short visits matter more than long ones in the first few weeks

Stay in contact with the community's Resident Services team — they are your early warning system if something isn't right

Monitor the adjustment — return to pages 8 and 9 of this guide for what's normal and when to be concerned

Turn your attention to the home — when you're ready, pages 13 through 15 walk you through the decisions ahead

Give yourself grace — the logistics are behind you. The emotional work continues for a while longer. That's normal too.

NOTE: The pages noted may be in part one of this guide you can find at www.seniormoveroadmap.com

Senior Living Essentials List

Use this checklist to help prepare for the transition to senior living. Customize it to fit your unique situation, preferences, and community.

****Once the community is selected, ask the admissions coordinator for their specific list of allowed items — policies vary.**

Personal Clothing & Accessories

- Comfortable everyday clothes (pants, shirts, sweaters)
- Sleepwear and robe
- Undergarments and socks
- Non-slip shoes and slippers
- Seasonal outerwear (coat, hat, gloves)
- Special occasion outfit
- Favorite blanket or shawl
- Lightweight sweaters or cardigans for layering
- Extra pairs of prescription glasses (backup set)
- Jewelry for daily wear (costume, not valuables)
- Belts or suspenders if needed for comfort

Personal Care Items

- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Body wash or soap
- Deodorant
- Razor and shaving cream
- Hairbrush or comb
- Skincare products
- Makeup (if used)
- Eyeglasses and case
- Hearing aids and batteries
- Denture care supplies (cleaner, adhesive, storage cup)
- Incontinence products (pads, briefs)
- Nail care kit (clippers, file)
- Lip balm and lotion for dry skin

Household & Comfort Items

- Bedspread or comforter from home
- Pillow(s) & Extra Blankets
- Towels and washcloths
- Favorite small furniture piece
- Favorite Framed Photos

Medications & Health Supplies

- All current prescriptions (clearly labeled)
- Over-the-counter medications (permitted by the community)
- Medical equipment (walker, cane, wheelchair)
- Blood pressure monitor (if needed)
- Extra hearing aid batteries
- List of all medications with dosages
- Pill organizer or dispenser
- Oxygen equipment
- CPAP machine (if applicable)
- Copies of prescriptions in case of pharmacy transfers
- Thermometer

Legal & Medical Documents

- Copy of Financial Power of Attorney
- Copy of Healthcare Proxy
- Advance directive / DNR order, if applicable
- Medicare and/or Medicaid card
- Supplemental insurance card
- List of all physicians with phone numbers /
- Emergency contact list

Important: Most senior living communities do not insure residents' personal belongings. Before the move, check with your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy to understand coverage during the transition. Consider leaving high-value jewelry and irreplaceable items with a trusted family member.