



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE RESIDENTS RIGHTS CAMERA LAW

Rhode Island's Resident Rights Camera Law goes into effect 1/30/25. This law gives residents of nursing homes and assisted living residences the right to have a security-type camera in their room if they choose, with a number of qualifications. Some of the key points are outlined below.

1. **Before installing a camera in your or a loved one's room, you must fill out a Department of Health notification/consent form that will be supplied by the facility/residence.** As of 1/1/25, RI Department of Health has not yet released these forms. If the forms have not been released by 1/30/25, The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program will make an alternative form available that you may use instead. (The law states "The department shall prescribe the notification and consent form required in this chapter no later than sixty (60) days after the effective date. If the department has not prescribed such a form by that date, a resident may use a form that substantially complies with this chapter until such time as a prescribed form is available.")
2. **The resident is responsible for buying, installing, and maintaining the camera.** The text of the law says that "the resident shall be responsible for contracting with an Internet service provider," and it is our understanding that if the facility includes internet access in its residence agreement, the facility is therefore the resident's internet service provider.
3. **If you want to install a camera in a loved one's room and they "lack the ability to understand and appreciate the nature and consequences of electronic monitoring,"** you may only consent on their behalf if you are the **resident's healthcare power of attorney, court-appointed guardian, spouse, or parent.**
4. **If there is a roommate in the room where you want to install a camera, you will need that roommate's consent before installing the camera.** (or their representative's consent, in the case of a resident who "lacks the ability to understand and appreciate the nature and consequences of electronic monitoring.") If the roommate does not consent, the residence/facility must "make a reasonable attempt to accommodate the resident who wants to conduct electronic monitoring."
5. **The law requires signage stating that the room is being electronically monitored.** The facility is responsible for installing and maintaining signage.
6. **The resident/representative may opt to have the camera active at all times, or disabled under certain circumstances.** The notification/consent form will provide space for delineating resident/representative preferences.
7. The LTCOP recommends product review sites like [Wirecutter](#) and [Cnet](#) for camera recommendations.

Further thoughts on using a camera in your/your loved one's room in a long-term care residence:

Consider reaching out to your loved one's roommate's family/representative to discuss installing a camera before starting the conversation with facility administrators. Consider having conversations with care staff about the camera to reassure them that it doesn't indicate you mistrust them, but that you know they can't have eyes on your loved one at all times, and it can help you support the work they do. Remember to express your appreciation to staff sincerely, specifically, and often. There can be a bit of a learning curve with any new technology. Though this type of camera is relatively simple to set up and use, there are settings and choices to be made (e.g. using a micro SD card or saving to the cloud) that may take some time to understand.