

July 2025

Dear Facility Director:

The Ohio Department of Aging (AGE) is conducting Resident and Family Satisfaction Surveys across the state of long-term and short-term residents of nursing facilities and assisted living facilities. AGE has contracted with Vital Research (Vital) to conduct the resident surveys, and with Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University (Scripps) to conduct the family surveys. Long-term care facilities are required to participate pursuant to ORC 173.47 (B).

Results will be shared in two ways. Facilities that achieve a minimum number of survey responses will receive an individualized report with their survey results through email and some points of reference to compare their results to statewide results. The State will also share the survey results online through the Ohio Long-Term Care Quality Navigator ([aging.ohio.gov/navigator](https://aging.ohio.gov/navigator)).

This letter provides important information about your community's resident and family satisfaction surveys. The resident surveys are conducted through in-person interviews with a sample of residents at each facility. The family satisfaction surveys are conducted online, by mail, or by phone, and are offered to one representative for each resident. Facilities will be visited based on geographical locations for the resident interviews. Family representatives will then receive a letter in the mail from Scripps with information on how they can complete the family survey.

You are receiving this letter because facilities in your area will soon be contacted by Vital, and a response is required to ensure participation. Please start updating your records of resident and representative contact information, as you will be asked to submit this information to Vital after scheduling the resident visit. Your facility is permitted to provide Vital with your residents' and their representatives' contact information.

Enclosed please find the designated timelines and next steps for the survey. Thank you for your efforts to improve the quality of life for long-term care facility residents in Ohio.

Sincerely,



Ursel McElroy,  
Director

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## About Scheduling and Census Procedures

Vital staff will provide more information when they contact your community for scheduling. A response is required to complete the scheduling process. Please direct questions to Estri Henderson, Research Manager, at [ohrssinfo@vitalresearch.com](mailto:ohrssinfo@vitalresearch.com). You may also view resident census and resident representative contact list submission instructions, sample outreach materials you may use for your residents, families and staff, Frequently Asked Questions, sample copies of the surveys, and other resources at <https://vitalresearch.com/ohsurvey/>.

As a reminder, do not email census lists or identifying information. Sharing identifying information via email is a HIPAA violation and may result in a data breach. If your facility uses an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, please reach out to your facility's vendor for assistance exporting your resident census information into a format that can be entered into the Census List Template.

## About Resident Interviewing Procedures

At each facility, trained interviewers will invite a random sample of residents to participate in the survey. Residents will only be excluded from the selection if they are in isolation, too ill to participate in the survey, or have a documented refusal from a legal guardian.

Vital can only accept refusals on behalf of a resident from legal guardians; not from facility staff. Interviewers will only survey residents who give consent and may stop the interview at any time or skip any question the resident does not wish to answer. If a resident does not participate in the resident survey, their representative could still participate in the family survey.

Researchers designed the resident survey for nursing and residential care facility residents, including those with dementia, memory loss and cognitive impairments.

Surveys are confidential, meaning only the interviewer will know what is said unless they see or hear anything concerning a resident's safety or health. In such cases, surveyors are required to report concerns to the facility staff so they can help.

Vital requires interviewers to follow protocols to mitigate the risk of spreading communicable disease.

## Timeline

Activity	Date
Vital begins contacting communities in your area to schedule resident interviews	<b>July 2025</b>
Resident interviews begin	<b>August 2025</b>
Family satisfaction survey mailings begin	<b>September</b>
Resident interviews end	<b>March 2026</b>
Family satisfaction surveys end	<b>April 2026</b>

## Next Steps for Facilities

Action Required	Due Date
<p><b>1. Vital will call you to schedule your resident interview date(s).</b> Facilities may also contact Vital to schedule dates by calling 888-628-3681.</p>	<p><b>3 weeks</b> prior to interview</p>
<p><b>2. Inform residents of the upcoming interviews before the visit.</b> You can use the Sample Facility Notification Letter and Reminder Poster available at <a href="https://vitalresearch.com/ohsurvey/facility/documents.html">https://vitalresearch.com/ohsurvey/facility/documents.html</a>. Common ways to distribute this information are to give letters to the residents or discuss it at a resident council meeting.</p> <p><b>3. Inform family representatives about the upcoming resident interviews and family satisfaction surveys.</b> You can utilize the Sample Facility Notification Letter and Reminder Poster available at <a href="https://vitalresearch.com/ohsurvey/facility/documents.html">https://vitalresearch.com/ohsurvey/facility/documents.html</a> to help communicate this information. Common methods include email, newsletters, and family council meetings. If a resident has a legal guardian who does <b>not</b> want the resident to be interviewed, the guardian must notify the facility in advance. Vital recommends informing family representatives at least two weeks prior to the interviews to promote transparency and allow time to collect any guardian refusals. Facilities are responsible for tracking legal guardian refusals. On the day of the resident interview visit, provide interviewers with the names of any residents whose legal guardian has declined participation on their behalf (see Step 6).</p> <p><b>4. Begin updating the addresses and phone numbers of key resident representatives within the next week.</b> Only provide representative addresses and contact information you are confident is correct. Include short-term and long-term residents, as well as residents in memory care units on your census. Vital will use the resident census and resident representative contact lists you provide to create its resident interview and family mailing lists.</p> <p><b>5. Download the census list template then complete and submit through a secure, online portal.</b> Visit Vital's website to download the template. Once completed, upload it through the secure, online portal located at <a href="https://aging.ohio.gov/CensusUpload">aging.ohio.gov/CensusUpload</a>. DO NOT email the census list, as that is considered a breach of privacy.</p>	<p><b>3 weeks</b> prior to interview</p>
<p><b>6. Provide interviewer(s) with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Names of residents in <i>isolation</i></li> <li>b) Names of residents whose <i>legal guardian has refused participation</i></li> <li>c) Names of residents <i>residing in memory care</i>, if applicable</li> </ul> <p>This information must be provided to interviewers in-person. Emailing this information is considered a HIPAA violation and may result in a data breach.</p>	<p><b>Day of interviews</b></p>

July 2025

Dear Nursing Facility / Residential Care Facility:

The Ohio Department of Aging (AGE) has contracted with Vital Research (Vital) and Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University (Scripps) to conduct the mandatory **Ohio 2025-26 Resident and Family Satisfaction Surveys**. The results will be available on the **Ohio Long-Term Care Quality Navigator website**: [aging.ohio.gov/navigator](https://aging.ohio.gov/navigator)

Vital and Scripps are vendors of AGE and through a privacy agreement are required to strictly safeguard resident health information. You will be asked to upload your resident and representative census list to the project website via AGE's ShareFile account. ShareFile is a secure file transmission cloud service compliant with HIPAA and HITECH Act requirements. In addition, Vital's interviewers will ask each facility for a list of residents who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or other infectious diseases in the last five days and those residents will be excluded from the interviews. Please be assured that the protected information of your residents will be maintained in a confidential manner. Please also be aware that neither Vital nor Scripps will retain data collected for the survey. All such data will be turned over to AGE or destroyed on or before August 31, 2026.

Further questions or concerns may be directed to the Resident and Family Satisfaction Surveys project manager at AGE, Janeen Hampton.

Email: [jhampton@age.ohio.gov](mailto:jhampton@age.ohio.gov)

Phone: 614-357-2359

Sincerely,

**Matthew J.  
Lampke**

Digitally signed by  
Matthew J. Lampke  
Date: 2025.07.02  
19:21:34 -04'00'

Matt Lampke  
Chief Legal Counsel

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**<Insert Facility Logo/Letterhead>**

## **Sample Informational Letter for Resident Family Members, Representatives, and Friends**

Dear **<insert facility name>** Resident Family Members, Representatives, and Friends,

The Ohio Department of Aging (AGE) is conducting Resident and Family Satisfaction Surveys across the state. We are pleased to announce that this year's statewide surveys will begin soon! This document provides important information regarding both surveys.

### **Your Opinion is Important**

AGE will use resident and family survey results to publish scores for our facility online on the [Ohio Long-term Care Quality Navigator](#). Your survey responses will also be combined with others and a summary of these results shared with facility management to help monitor and improve quality in our community. Your individual responses will not be shared with the facility. By providing feedback, you and your resident are helping others to make informed decisions about nursing and assisted living facilities.

### **Family Satisfaction Surveys**

AGE has contracted with Vital Research (Vital), an independent research firm, and Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University (Scripps), to conduct these surveys. Our facility is permitted to provide your contact information to Vital and Scripps for this survey. The Family Satisfaction Survey will ask about your impressions of quality at our facility. Your opinion is very important, and we encourage your participation. Even if your resident is no longer at the facility, we would encourage you to share your opinions about when they were a resident. In the next few months, you should receive information about the Family Satisfaction Survey from Scripps.

### **Resident Satisfaction Surveys**

In-person surveys are the most effective mode for surveying residents, and residents have voiced appreciation for being able to share their opinions. Trained staff from Vital will invite a random sample of residents to provide their thoughts on the quality of our facility. Vital's staff have been trained to interview residents with a wide variety of disabilities and cognitive improvements. Vital's staff must obtain the resident's consent before administering the survey; if the resident is unable to consent or declines to participate, the interview would not begin and there will be no negative consequences for them. The interviews take an average of 15 minutes to complete, but residents that consent to participate can skip any questions they would like or stop the survey early. If a resident stops responding or is unable to respond, the interviewer would thank them for their time and end the interview.

If you are a legal guardian or have power of attorney (POA) and would prefer that the resident you represent does not participate in the resident survey, please call **<Insert Name of Facility Contact Person>** at **<Insert Phone Number>**.

Vital also requires interviewers to follow steps to reduce the risk of spreading infectious diseases. Vital's detailed Infectious Disease Safety plan and other helpful information can be found at <https://vitalresearch.com/ohsurvey/>.

### **Surveys are Confidential**

Only the interviewer/Vital/Scripps will know what is said during surveys unless they see or hear anything that makes them concerned about a resident's safety or health. In that case, they would have the responsibility to facility staff, or an Ombudsman know so they can help. We (the facility) will not see individual residents' or family members' survey responses. If you have any questions about the resident or family surveys, please contact Vital at 888-628-3681 or [ohrssinfo@vitalresearch.com](mailto:ohrssinfo@vitalresearch.com).

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Sincerely,

**<Insert Administrator Signature>**