



## 2Life Communities Descriptions

**Shortest/Boilerplate:** 2Life Communities, a nonprofit organization founded in 1965, operates on the belief that all seniors should have the opportunity to live a full life of connection and purpose in a dynamic, supportive environment – a model called *aging in community*, which directly combats the growing public health crisis of social isolation and loneliness among older adults. At 2Life Communities, residents can step out the doors of their own apartments and find friendship, community, physical and intellectual stimulation, and a helping hand day or night. Serving a diverse population of over 1,530 older adults, 2Life creates communities with a laser sharp focus on affordability – a tremendous concern in Massachusetts, the state with the 2nd largest gap in the U.S. between seniors’ median income and the cost of living. 2Life was named one of the top medium-size employers in Massachusetts in The Boston Globe’s annual Top Places to Work survey.

**Short:** Founded in 1965, 2Life Communities enables aging in communities of engagement, connection, and purpose for seniors of all backgrounds. We provide superior affordable housing and a vast array of life-enhancing support services that meet the needs of our diverse residents as they age. Today over 1500 low-income older adults live on our campuses in Newton, Boston, Framingham, and Brookline. Their average age is 80 with one-third over 85, and 85% of our residents are immigrants speaking 20 primary languages. The 94% of our residents in subsidized apartments have a median household income of under \$12,000 per year. 2Life was also named one of the top medium-size employers in Massachusetts in The Boston Globe’s annual Top Places to Work survey.

In the absence of affordable housing and supportive services, millions of low-income older adults scrimp on food and other necessities, undermining their health and well-being. Massachusetts has one of the largest gaps between our seniors’ median income and the cost of a basic standard of living. 2Life addresses this challenge directly, providing low-income older adults an affordable home and services to promote aging well.

**Long:** Inspired by Jewish values and open and welcoming to the broader community, 2Life Communities has been developing and managing supportive affordable housing for low-income older adults for more than 50 years. With communities located in Brighton, Newton, and Framingham Massachusetts, 2Life provides 1,560 low-income older adults with the opportunity to age in community–

**Defiantly joyous aging.**

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to live a full life of connection and purpose in a dynamic, supportive environment. We accomplish this by:

- providing superior affordable, independent housing;
- providing support services that meet the needs of diverse residents as they age;
- building connection and community within our walls and in our surrounding neighborhoods; and
- promoting aging in community as a preferred choice for healthy aging.

2Life is the ultimate safety net for older adults in our community. Massachusetts has the highest gap in the United States between seniors' median income and the amount of money needed for a basic standard of living, with fully 61% of single older adults not having sufficient resources for basic necessities.

The 94% of our residents in subsidized apartments have a median annual household income of under \$12,000, which the US Department of Housing and Urban Development calls extremely- low or very-low income. These 2Life residents can afford to pay \$430/month rent, yet the average rent in the Boston area is well over \$2000/month. Seniors who are housing-cost burdened (paying >30% of income for housing costs) spend 40% less on food and 59% less on healthcare than their counterparts in affordable housing, creating long term health problems and a significantly reduced quality of life. They also are at risk of premature institutionalization, sacrificing the attention we can provide on individual needs. 2Life was also named one of the top medium-size employers in Massachusetts in The Boston Globe's annual Top Places to Work survey.

## **History**

2Life Communities was founded in 1965 to address the housing dislocation and chronic loneliness that were threatening to devastate the final chapter in the lives of Boston's low-income Jews. Today we are recognized as the premier developer and provider of affordable, supportive, independent senior housing in Massachusetts. Inspired by Jewish values and open to the broader community, we believe all older adults deserve to age in communities of dignity, connection, and purpose. A full array of programs, supports, and services builds connection and community and meets the needs of our over 1500 residents as they age. We currently house communities in Brighton, Newton, Framingham, and Brookline, and more expansion is underway to help address the growing shortages of affordable senior housing.



## Frequently Asked Questions

2Life Communities, a nonprofit organization founded in 1965, operates on the belief that all seniors should have the opportunity to live a life full of connection and purpose in a dynamic, supportive environment – a model we call *aging in community*, which directly combats the growing public health crisis of social isolation and loneliness among older adults. At 2Life Communities, residents can step out the doors of their own apartments and find friendship, community, physical and intellectual stimulation, and a helping hand day or night. Serving a diverse population of nearly 1,600 older adults, 2Life creates communities with a laser-sharp focus on affordability – a tremendous concern given that Massachusetts has the 2nd largest gap in the U.S. between seniors’ median income and the cost of living.

### Who lives at 2Life Communities?

- Across our four campuses, nearly 1,600 residents live in our 1,368 apartments. The median household income is only under \$12,000, of the 94% of residents living in subsidized apartments.
- Our residents are 67% female, 33% male. Their average age is 80, and they come from 43 countries and speak 22 languages.
- Only 1.1% of 2Life residents move to nursing homes each year. On average, they do so at 87 years old versus a national average of 79.

### Where does 2Life Communities have buildings?

- Nine-four percent of households live in income-qualified apartments. All 2Life Communities housing is available on an equal opportunity basis.
- Our Brighton campus with four connected buildings—Ulin, Leventhal, Kurlat, and The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Houses—serves nearly 950 people in 762 apartments. In addition, a new 142-unit J.J. Carroll House will open in 2023.
- Our two campuses in Newton—Golda Meir and Coleman Houses—serve 375 people in 345 apartments.
- Our Brookline campus, Brown Family House, serves 72 people in 60 apartments.
- Our community in Framingham—Shillman House—serves 159 people in 150 apartments.
- Our Devens Campus, Shirley Meadows, has 57 residents in 58 apartments.

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- We maintain our properties to the highest standards with on-site maintenance and emergency response in each building 24/7, 365 days per year.

### **What kind of Programs and Services does 2Life offer?**

- Resident Services Coordinators (RSCs) know each of our residents and work to ensure that everyone has access to the services and benefits they need. RSCs are culturally competent and fluent in the main languages spoken by our residents. They promote resident-led activities such as book groups and current events discussions.
- Each 2Life Communities campus has a staffed Fitness Center or/and access to equipment and fitness classes that provide residents with skills to prevent falls; mitigate arthritis, osteoporosis, and other diseases; remain active, and have social connection.
- Intergenerational programs include extensive volunteer opportunities with local schools and community members, including computer tech support, conversation classes, and tutoring.
- Lifelong learning is a key element of 2Life Communities. Communities often host classes, lectures, and discussions featuring professors from local colleges, authors, thought leaders, and experts from around the globe.
- Art, music and other cultural appreciation events are part of one's daily life at 2Life Communities.
- We host holiday celebrations throughout the year honoring our diverse residents' traditions.
- Volunteers make meaningful contributions to our residents' lives and to our campuses. 2Life Communities hosted numerous volunteers throughout the year.

### **Does 2Life offer Mental Health and Memory Care assistance?**

- 2Life is keenly focused on the well-being of older adults living in its communities, with the goal of supporting all residents to stay healthy, and live as independently and engaged in community for as long as possible. This includes supporting residents with memory loss, and those coping with mental health challenges.

#### Mental Health

- Address gaps in mental health services and systems and unmet behavioral health needs of older adults. We do this by 1) Expanding access to mental health services and supports, and 2) Providing training and education to

residents and staff to raise awareness and reduce the stigma associated with utilizing behavioral health services

*Mental health wellness is synonymous with physical wellness and our shared goal is to provide the support and services to help residents age as successfully as possible.*

### Memory Care

- We employ a broad, multi-pronged approach that aligns with the Alzheimer's Association Habilitation model to support residents living in our community with dementia by promoting positive emotions and a sense of well-being.
- At the centerpiece of our efforts is *Joyful Connections*, an afternoon drop-in program for residents on the memory loss spectrum. *Joyful Connections* relies on the power of expressive arts therapy to engage residents regardless of where they fall on the memory loss spectrum.
- Other components of our memory care strategy include adult day health, care coordination, assistance with activities of daily living, fitness, spiritual care and wellness nursing.

### **How is 2Life funded?**

- The majority (~94 percent) of our 1,368 fully-equipped apartments are subsidized to be affordable to seniors in need; the other 6% are offered at reasonable market rates.
- While government resources fund building operations, 2Life Communities relies on private donations, philanthropy, and public funding to support the programs and services that transform our properties into engaging and caring communities.



“Words have energy and power with the ability to help, to heal, to hinder, to hurt, to harm, to humiliate and to humble.”

— Yehuda Berg

Please use our words that more accurately describe 2Life Communities.

They Say	We Say
<b>Tenants</b> —refers to half of a typical landlord-tenant relationship. 2Life is much more than that.	<b>Residents</b> —refers to the engaged people who live in our communities.
<b>Facility</b> —sounds like an institution like a nursing home, where people are taken care of.	<b>Community or Campus</b> —sounds like a place where residents are involved and make their own choices.
<b>Unit</b> —implies impersonal uniformity. No one wants to live in a "unit".	<b>Apartment</b> —implies a home.
<b>Demented/Dementia</b> — are labels that define a person and don't reflect that their behaviors are symptoms of a sickness.	<b>Memory Loss and confusion</b> —are not labels, they are descriptive of the symptoms.
<b>Activities</b> — reflect busy-work or play sessions designed to keep children occupied.	<b>Programs, events or classes</b> reflect specific opportunities residents have to engage with the community and each other.
<b>Aged</b> —connotes a state of decline	<b>Experienced</b> —connectes having lived full lives, rich with unique stories and lessons learned.