

Holiday Home Safety and Planning Checklist

Home Safety:

- Ensure handrails are installed on stairways and in the bathroom.
- Confirm that smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are in working order.
- Ensure adequate lighting throughout the house.
- Install safety knobs and shut-off switches in the kitchen.
- Clear the home of dangerous chemicals.
- Organize and properly store medications.
- Remove locks from interior doors to prevent accidental lock-ins.
- Remove portable space heaters and other devices that can cause fires.
- Clear clutter to reduce fire hazards.
- Clear out furniture and other objects from walkways to prevent falls-like rugs.

Emergency Planning:

- Put together a list of who to call in case of an emergency.
- Post a list of local emergency phone numbers near your parent's landline phone.
- Consider programming emergency numbers and your phone number into your parent's phone.

Here are sample questions you can ask:

- What will you do if one, or both of you, become ill or have an accident?
- What will you do if you need to move to a senior living community?
- What will you do with your house, or your belongings, if you move to a senior living community?
- Who will represent you and be responsible for your finances and legal documents if you can no longer do so (i.e., a power of attorney)?

Finances and Future Planning:

- Take inventory of their financial and legal documents.
- Ask for permission to become a signer on their bank accounts and help manage their bills.
- Sit down and talk with your aging parents about their financial situation.
- Can they pay their mortgage/rent and taxes?
- Can they cover their utility bills?
- Can they afford their medications?
- Is their savings account/retirement fund sufficient for their expenses?
- Discuss plans in case of illness or accidents.
- Consider discussing options for senior living communities.
- Plan for the future of their house and belongings.
- Identify a power of attorney for financial and legal matters.

Discuss Future Planning:

- What are their preferences for medical care?
- Are there legal documents, such as a will or living will, POA-HC, or POA-F that need updating?
- Explore their wishes for end-of-life care.
- Address any concerns or questions they may have about their future.

By considering this checklist, you can help ensure the safety and well-being of your aging parents during your holiday visit and plan for their future needs.

