

Part 2K. North Carolina Certified Retirement Community Program.

§ 143B-437.100. North Carolina Certified Retirement Community Program – creation; powers and duties.

(a) Program. – There is established the North Carolina Certified Retirement Community Program as part of the North Carolina Department of Commerce. The Department shall coordinate the development and planning of the North Carolina Certified Retirement Community Program with other State and local groups interested in participating in and promoting the North Carolina Certified Retirement Community Program. The Department shall adopt administrative rules to implement the provisions of this Part. For purposes of this Part, "Department" means the North Carolina Department of Commerce, and "Program" means the North Carolina Certified Retirement Community Program.

(b) Purpose. – The purpose of the Program is to encourage retirees and those planning to retire to make their homes in North Carolina. In order to further this purpose, the Department shall engage in the following activities:

- (1) Promote the State as a retirement destination to retirees and those persons and families who are planning retirement both in and outside of North Carolina.
- (2) Assist North Carolina communities in their efforts to market themselves as retirement locations and to develop communities that retirees would find attractive for a retirement lifestyle.
- (3) Assist in the development of retirement communities and continuing care facilities under Article 64 of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes in order to promote economic development and a potential workforce to enrich North Carolina communities.
- (4) Encourage mature market travel and tourism to North Carolina to evaluate future retirement desirability and to visit those who have chosen to retire in North Carolina.

(c) Factors. – The Department shall identify factors that are of interest to retirees or potential retirees in order to inform them of the benefits of living in North Carolina. These factors shall be used to develop a scoring system to determine whether an applicant will qualify as a North Carolina certified retirement community and may include the following:

- (1) North Carolina's State and local tax structure.
- (2) Housing opportunities and cost.
- (3) Climate.
- (4) Personal safety.
- (5) Working opportunities.
- (6) Health care and continuing care services.
- (7) Transportation.
- (8) Continuing education.
- (9) Leisure living.
- (10) Recreation.
- (11) The performing arts.
- (12) Festivals and events.
- (13) Sports.
- (14) Other services and facilities necessary to enable persons to age in the community with a minimum of restrictions.

(d) Certification. – The Department shall establish criteria for qualifying as a North Carolina certified retirement community. To be eligible to obtain certification as a North Carolina certified retirement community, the community shall meet each of the following requirements:

- (1) Be located within 50 miles of a hospital and of emergency medical services.

- (2) Take steps to gain the support of churches, clubs, businesses, media, and other entities whose participation will increase the Program's success in attracting retirees or potential retirees.
- (3) Establish a retiree attraction committee. The retiree attraction committee shall fulfill or create subcommittees to fulfill each of the following:
 - a. Conduct a retiree desirability assessment analyzing the community with respect to each of the factors identified by the Department and submit a report of the analysis to the Department.
 - b. Send a representative of the retirement attraction committee to attend State training meetings conducted by the Department during the certification process.
 - c. Raise funds necessary to run the Program, organize special events, and promote and coordinate the Program with local entities.
 - d. Establish a community image, evaluate target markets, and develop a marketing and public relations plan designed to accomplish the purpose of the Program.
 - e. Develop a system that identifies and makes contact with existing and prospective retirees, that provides tour guides when prospects visit the community, and that responds to inquiries, logs contacts made, invites prospects to special community events, and maintains continual contact with prospects until the prospect makes a retirement location decision.
- (4) Remit an annual fee to the Department, or the nonprofit corporation with which the Department contracts pursuant to G.S. 143B-431.01, equal to the lesser of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) or the product of fifty cents (50¢) multiplied by the population of the community, as determined by the most recent census.
- (5) Submit the completed marketing and public relations plan designed to accomplish the purpose of the Program to the Department.
- (6) Submit a long-term plan outlining the steps the community will undertake to maintain or improve its desirability as a destination for retirees, including corrections to any services or facilities identified in the retiree desirability assessment. (2008-188, s. 1; 2011-145, s. 14.3C; 2018-5, s. 15.7(a).)