

## RVA Standards & Accreditation

### Setting the benchmark for excellence in retirement living

The Retirement Villages Association (RVA) sets and upholds standards that go beyond the minimum requirements of legislation.

These standards ensure RVA member villages are trusted, well-managed, and committed to resident wellbeing.

Accreditation through the RVA is your village's badge of quality – demonstrating that you meet the industry's best-practice benchmarks and operate with professionalism, transparency, and care.

### What the RVA Standards cover

The **RVA Standards of the Association** outline the principles and expectations all RVA member villages must meet.

They cover four key areas:

1. **Compliance** – Meeting the requirements of the *Retirement Villages Act 2003*, the *Retirement Villages Code of Practice*, and all related regulations.
2. **Resident care & wellbeing** – Ensuring residents are treated with respect and have clear communication channels, fair contracts, and safe living environments.
3. **Governance & management** – Maintaining clear policies, responsible leadership, and sound financial and operational management.
4. **Transparency & accountability** – Providing residents and prospective residents with accurate information and access to key documents, including the *Summary of Key Terms*.

By maintaining these standards, RVA members demonstrate effective self-regulation and commitment to the long-term success and reputation of New Zealand's retirement living sector.

## About accreditation

Accreditation is the process by which an RVA member village's performance and compliance are independently verified against the RVA Standards and the *Code of Practice*.

It is not a one-time certification – it's an **ongoing commitment to quality**.

- **New or developing villages** become *Provisional Members* until their first audit.
- **Operational villages** must complete an RVA Accreditation Audit within six months of joining.
- **Accredited Members** renew their accreditation every three years through a new audit cycle.

## How the audit works

Audits are carried out by **RVA-approved independent agencies**, ensuring impartiality and professionalism.

Approved agencies currently include **BSI Group**, **DAA Group**, and **Health New Zealand (Te Whatu Ora)**.

The audit includes:

- **Desktop review** – Policies, procedures, and documentation are checked for compliance with the Code of Practice and RVA Standards.
- **On-site visit** – Auditors meet with management, staff, and a selection of residents to verify standards are being met in daily operations.
- **Reporting & follow-up** – The auditor provides a written report with findings and recommendations. Once approved by the RVA Executive Committee, a new **Certificate of Accreditation** is issued.

Accreditation is valid for **three years**, after which the audit cycle repeats.

## Benefits of accreditation

- **Trust and credibility** – Accreditation signals to residents, families, and regulators that your village meets high operational standards.
- **Competitive advantage** – RVA-accredited villages stand out in the market for professionalism and transparency.



- **Continuous improvement** – Regular audits help identify opportunities to strengthen management, safety, and resident satisfaction.
- **Collective reputation** – Every accredited village contributes to the strong, trusted reputation of New Zealand’s retirement living industry.

## Maintaining accreditation

To maintain RVA Accreditation, member villages must:

- Continue to comply with all legislation, the Code of Practice, and RVA Standards.
- Notify the RVA of any significant operational or ownership changes.
- Complete the next audit prior to the expiry date on their current Certificate of Accreditation.

Villages with an attached care facility can often combine their RVA audit with their aged-care audit to save time and cost, provided the auditor is approved for both.

## Need help or have questions?

If you’re preparing for your first accreditation audit or have questions about compliance, our team can guide you through the process.

Phone: 04 499 7090

Email: [info@retirementvillages.org.nz](mailto:info@retirementvillages.org.nz)

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