

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

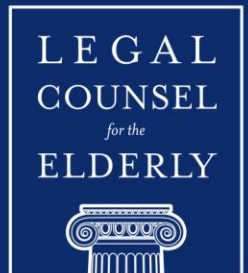
Mary Ann Parker, JD

Interim Director

D.C. Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

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CHAMPIONING THE DIGNITY AND RIGHTS
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Successful Placement of Volunteers

Placement Strategies:

Volunteers often express three concerns:

- their volunteer work will be a waste of time;
- their skills and talents will be utilized inappropriately;
- they may be placed in jobs for which they are not suited.

During the recruitment and selection process, fully inform the volunteers about the job duties, training requirements, and time commitments.

Successful Placement of Volunteers

How to Match Volunteer Ombudsmen to Facilities:

- Involve the volunteer in the placement decision
- Consider the makeup of the volunteers already assigned to the facility.
- Provide volunteer with information about selected facility.

Discuss and Promote Personal Safety:

- Assign an experienced ombudsman as mentor to new recruits.
- Develop practical measures to ensure the safety and comfort of the volunteer.
- Establish and require strict adherence to a “Safety First” policy.

Monitoring Volunteer Performance

Evaluating Volunteers:

Formal evaluations allow programs to:

- increase volunteer productivity;
- increase each volunteer's sense of value as a part of the overall team;
- document volunteers' progress and problems;
- increase the effectiveness of the volunteer component of service delivery to clients/public.

Monitoring Volunteer Performance

Best Practices:

- Maintain organized and complete files on each volunteer. Make sure each file contains:
 - ✓ accurate job descriptions;
 - ✓ the volunteer's agreement to perform specific services, i.e., a contract between volunteer and program;
 - ✓ application, training records, job description, notes on progress and problems, and awards/recognitions;
- Tell volunteers about the program's evaluation process
- Instill team spirit into volunteers
- Ask each volunteer to evaluate supervisors and the program's volunteer component

Monitoring Volunteer Performance

Evaluating The Program:

- A further step in the volunteer evaluation is to ask volunteers to evaluate their supervisor and the volunteer component of the program.
- This ensures that the volunteers know that the evaluation process is reciprocal.
- It allows volunteers to provide feedback for improving the program.

Monitoring Volunteer Performance

Challenging Volunteers:

Over the course of a volunteer's service, ombudsman coordinators report that it is common to encounter some problems. Make decisions in advance on how you will handle likely problems.

Eight R's to Handle Difficult Volunteers

- ✓ Reconnoiter to find out what is really wrong
- ✓ Reassign the volunteer to a different staff person
- ✓ Retrain the volunteer to be able to do the job efficiently
- ✓ Revitalize the volunteer through a timeout period from responsibility
- ✓ Remotivate the volunteer
- ✓ Rotate the volunteer to a new setting
- ✓ Refer the volunteer to another agency
- ✓ Retire the volunteer with honor

Monitoring Volunteer Performance

If you have exhausted all alternatives and the only alternative is to decertify the volunteer, your goal is to make the transition as smooth as possible. Here are some ideas to consider:

- DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT
- Personal counseling – discuss the *specific* problem.
- If you have to decertify, you can refer to other volunteer opportunities if appropriate.
- In writing, thank the volunteer for service to the program
- Don't allow one volunteer to undermine the program.

If your program has a Grievance Procedure, make sure all paid staff and volunteers are aware of it and understand the process.



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