

**NORTHERN VIRGINIA LONG-TERM CARE  
OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM  
Position Description, 12/2002**

**POSITION TITLE:**

Volunteer Ombudsman, Foreign Language Specialist

**TIME COMMITMENT:**

a) Approximately four (4) hours each week during normal business hours for one year. Occasional (once a month) weekend or evening visits are permitted. The four hours *do not* include travel time. b) Approximately 30 minutes each month to complete activity report. c) Up to six two-hour in-service meetings per year. Allowances are made for vacations and sickness.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

The Volunteer Ombudsman must:

- be at least 21 years of age;
- provide personal references;
- have the ability to get from place to place;
- not be employed by a long-term care facility;
- not have a financial interest in a long-term care facility;
- be able to say NO when agency policy requires it;
- be non-judgmental
- be fluent both in English and a second language that will be used in this work.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Work closely with the staff of the Ombudsman Program to develop a strong sense of teamwork and mutual support.
2. Develop confidence in Ombudsman Program and establish cooperative and trusting relationships with staff of the long-term care facilities.
3. Work closely with the regular Volunteer Ombudsmen assigned to the facilities.

*Focus on visiting the residents who speak the non-English language, as follows:*

4. Promote the Residents' Bill of Rights among these residents, their families and the facility staff and monitor its implementation by the facility.
5. Encourage and assist the residents and families to utilize the internal grievance procedure within the facility.
6. Help the residents and/or their families understand the rules or regulations under which the facilities operate.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:** (continued)

7. Assist residents and families to advocate for themselves.
8. Advocate on behalf of residents who cannot speak for themselves, by observing and monitoring their welfare.
9. Attend Resident and Family Council meetings if they function in the facility and if you are invited to attend. Where they do not exist, encourage their formation.
10. Mediate and assist in resolving residents' complaints within the facility, utilizing help from the Ombudsman Program staff when necessary.
11. Notify Ombudsman staff and contact person in facility of unresolved problems/complaints at least monthly. **IMMEDIATELY INFORM OMBUDSMAN STAFF OF CRITICAL EVENTS, SUCH AS SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION.**
12. Maintain current written records of contact with residents.
13. Send to the office a monthly summary of activity using the Monthly Report Form (or format).

**TRAINING AND SUPERVISION:**

- Completion of an initial three-day training program to become familiar with program goals and to develop advocacy skills is mandatory.
- Attendance at regular in-service training programs is expected. This is an opportunity to meet and share with other volunteer ombudsmen, and enhance skills and knowledge. Current trends in long-term care and issues of concern will be discussed. Where appropriate, problems will be assessed and solutions suggested.
- Ongoing supervision and support will be provided primarily by the volunteer coordinator, but also by other Ombudsman staff. It is understood that the volunteer may not always be informed of formal investigations being conducted by Ombudsman staff at one's assigned facility.
- The Ombudsman Program reserves the right to ask a volunteer to resign for any of the following reasons: breach of confidentiality, adversarial approach, or failure to follow program guidelines.

*I understand the guidelines above and agree to abide by them.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Volunteer Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)