

***FAMILY SERVICE LEAGUE
LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSERVICE PROGRAM OF SUFFOLK COUNTY***

**CERTIFIED VOLUNTEER LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN
JOB DESCRIPTION**

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: “Ombudsman” is a Swedish word that means “citizen representative.” A Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO) seeks to improve the quality of life of residents of long-term care facilities -- nursing homes and adult homes.

Ombudspersons make every effort to communicate with all residents of their assigned facility, and with those residents’ families. They identify problems, complaints, and violations of residents’ rights. They work closely with facility administrators and staff members to improve the quality of residents’ life, their health, and safety.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is governed by the federal Older Americans Act. Guidelines are set by the New York State Office of the Aging. Federal, state, and county funding flow through the Suffolk County Office of the Aging. The Family Service League of Suffolk administers the Ombudservice Program of Suffolk County. There is no charge for services provided by the ombudsman program.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Successfully complete a 36-hour training course established by the New York State Office of Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Attend in-service trainings offered throughout the year
- Visit assigned facility on a regular but unannounced schedule
- Receive, investigate, and try to resolve problems or complaints affecting long-term care residents
- Assist in the protection of residents’ rights
- Educate residents and their families about the facility’s responsibilities to ensure a better understanding of the services to which residents are entitled
- Establish good working relationships with the facility’s administrator and staff
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information
- Respond to referrals from the Ombudservice office
- Report any serious problems immediately to the Ombudservice office
- Ask the Ombudservice staff to make contacts with other government agencies including licensing divisions
- Refer any unresolved complaints to the attention of Ombudservice staff
- Ask Ombudservice staff for assistance when unsure of how to proceed
- Work with resident and family councils to encourage interaction among residents and between residents and the community
- Encourage and assist in developing resident and family councils where none exist
- Complete monthly reporting forms accurately and on time

SPECIAL SKILLS NEEDED:

Mature and responsible; sensitive to the elderly; empathetic; good communication skills; problem solving skills; open-minded; non-judgmental; resourceful; tactful; diplomatic; perseverance; sense of humor.

TIME COMMITMENT:

Must be able to devote four to six hours per week for a minimum of one year in assigned facility.

SUPERVISION:

A volunteer must be able to work under the supervision of the LTCO Coordinator and follow the guidelines of the program. It is essential for the success of the program, for the welfare of the residents, and for the volunteers further training and growth, that the volunteer have frequent contact with the LTCO coordinator or assigned LTCO staff person. Each volunteer should report any serious problems immediately to the office, seek assistance when unsure how to proceed, let the LTCO staff person know when additional information or supervision is needed, and attend in-service meetings held throughout the year.

TRANSPORTATION:

Volunteers are responsible for obtaining transportation to and from the assigned facility. If you are 55 years of age or older, you can register with RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) and receive some reimbursement for mileage for volunteering with the LTCO program. Unfortunately, funding for the LTCO program is very limited and we are unable to provide reimbursement for mileage and other incidental costs for volunteering.

OTHER COMMENTS:

This is a challenging and satisfying volunteer job for people looking to work, grow, and ease the lives of the most vulnerable population among us.

Ombudservice of Suffolk County, Family Service League, 790 Park Ave., Huntington, NY 11743

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