

# Is It a Complaint or Information & Assistance (I&A)?



Use this decision tree to help you determine if your work counts as a complaint or information & assistance. This is based on [National Ombudsman Reporting System \(NORS\) definitions](#). Follow your state policies and procedures for additional guidance.

## NORS Definitions and Reminders

- A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern brought to, or initiated by, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program (LTCOP) which requires Ombudsman program investigation and resolution on behalf of one or more residents of a long-term care facility.
- An instance of **information & assistance (I&A)** is providing information to an individual or facility staff about issues impacting residents and/or sharing information about accessing services without opening a case and working to resolve a complaint.
- A **complainant** is an individual who requests Ombudsman program complaint investigation services regarding one or more complaints made by, or on behalf of, residents.
- A **case** is comprised of a complainant, complaint code(s), a perpetrator for A-Abuse/Neglect and Exploitation codes, a setting, verification, resolution, and information regarding whether a complaint was referred to another agency.
- **Information & assistance** may be provided in a variety of ways, including by **phone, email, or in-person**.

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