

For Immediate Release:

January 18, 2005

Contact:

Carol Scott
State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
1-800-309-3282

Long-Term Care Ombudsmen Volunteers Offer a Helping Hand

The Missouri Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is currently recruiting for Volunteer Ombudsmen statewide. If you live in a nursing home or other long-term care facility, or know someone who does, there may be times when you need help solving problems or addressing concerns. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) is ready and willing to assist you. Volunteer Ombudsmen perform invaluable work with residents and their families to resolve complaints or provide information and other assistance.

“Our focus on residents’ rights provides a vital link to quality of life and care for over 55,000 residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities in Missouri,” said Carol Scott, Missouri State Long-Term Care Ombudsman. “By our regular presence, trust develops between the residents and the Ombudsman. The residents know someone is there to speak up for them.”

Some of the key functions of Volunteer Ombudsmen are:

- Identify, investigate and resolve complaints made by or on behalf of residents;
- Provide information to residents about long-term care services and their rights;
- Advocate for changes to improve residents’ quality of life and care.

Volunteer Ombudsmen visit residents weekly at a local nursing home or other long-term care facility. They listen to residents’ needs and concerns, help resolve their problems and complaints, and supply information on resident rights and other long-term care resources.

Volunteer Ombudsmen receive an initial 18 hours of professional training in areas relating to long-term care and the role of the Volunteer Ombudsman, and have additional opportunities for training quarterly and annually.

“Our Volunteer Ombudsmen are in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities working pro-actively to make sure that minor complaints and concerns don’t develop into major quality of life problems for residents,” said Scott.

more

For information on becoming a Volunteer Ombudsman, additional assistance in solving a problem within the facility, or help advocating for resident rights and establishing resident and family councils, contact the Missouri State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Office at 1-800-309-3282.

There are nine regional long-term care Ombudsman offices in the state. Volunteer recruitment, training and supervision are provided at the regional level.

These regional organizations are: Council of Churches of the Ozarks LTCOP, Springfield; The Vantage Point LTCOP, Joplin; Southeast MO Area Agency on Aging LTCOP, Cape Girardeau; Care Connection for Aging Services LTCOP, Warrensburg; Central MO Area Agency on Aging LTCOP, Columbia; Northwest MO Area Agency on Aging LTCOP, Albany; Mark Twain Legal Services LTCOP, Canton; Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, Brentwood; and Mid-America Regional Council LTCOP, Kansas City.

Helpful websites for additional information on Long-Term Care Facilities:

- Information about the Missouri State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and/or how to sign up to become a Volunteer Ombudsman go to: <http://www.dhss.state.mo.us/Ombudsman/>
- Information on inspection results for long-term care facilities go to Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services www.dhss.state.mo.us/showmelongtermcare/ Show Me Long-Term Care.
- Information about long-term care go to www.medicare.gov, the Official U.S. Government Medicare Site, and click on Nursing Home Compare.

###