



The National **Long-Term Care**
Ombudsman Resource Center

NATIONAL OMBUDSMAN REPORTING SYSTEM (NORS) TRAINING PART I:

*CASE, COMPLAINT, COMPLAINANT, INFORMATION AND
ASSISTANCE*

Agenda

- Brief National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS) Overview
- Part I Training Materials
 - Basic Principles
 - Quiz
 - Quiz Answer Sheet
- Resource - Table 1 – NORS Parts A, B, and C – Case and complaint codes, values and definitions
- Quiz
- Questions and Answers
- Resources

What is NORs?



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](#)

National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS)

Implemented in federal fiscal year 1995.

NORS fulfills the Older American's Act requirements to:

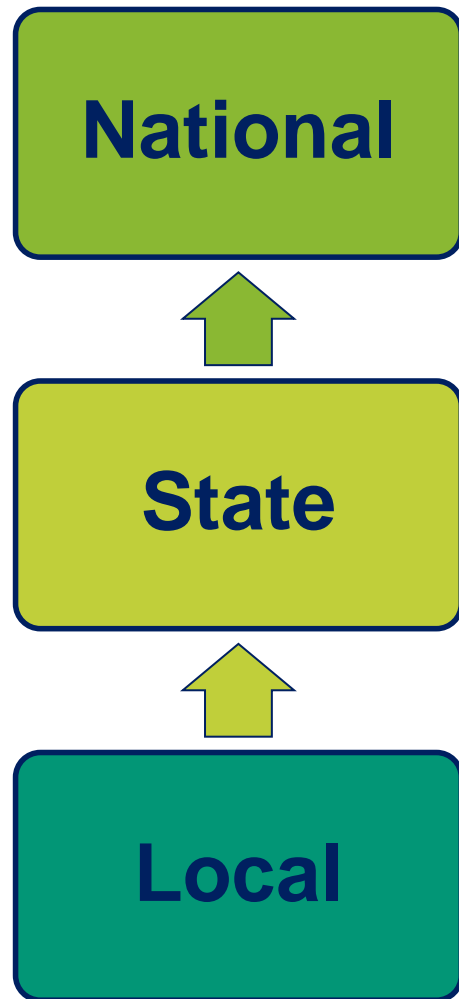
- ✓ collect and analyze data relating to complaints and conditions in long-term care facilities and
- ✓ requires Ombudsman programs to submit the data, on a regular basis, to ACL and other entities.

Purpose of NORS Data

Enhances ACL's ability to understand and report on:

- LTCO program operations,
- experience of long-term care facility residents, and
- changes in long-term supports and services policies, research, and practices.

How is NORS Data Used?



5 Steps for Choosing the Right Assisted Living Community

Here's how to navigate rising prices and caregiving shortfalls

**SICK, DYING AND
RAPED IN AMERICA'S
NURSING HOMES**

POLICY-ISH

Nursing Home Evictions Strand The Disabled In Costly Hospitals

February 25, 2016 · 4:46 AM ET

Heard on Morning Edition

[Consumer Reports](#) - Ombudsman program data show complaints about assisted living have risen 10 percent in recent years (10/2018)

[CNN](#) – sexual assaults in nursing homes cited NORS data (2/2017)

[NPR](#) on inappropriate transfers and evictions (2/2016)

It's Not Just Data...It Is Someone's Story



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-ND](#)



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

NORS Training Part 1: Case, Complaint, Complainant, and Information and Assistance

The three documents for Part I NORS training materials are:

- Basic Principles
- Quiz
- Quiz Answer Sheet

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/nors/nors-training

Basic Principles

- Basic Principles document includes important explanations and reminders.
- In these materials, “Ombudsman” is used as a generic term that may mean the state Ombudsman, a representative of the Office, or the Ombudsman program.

NATIONAL OMBUDSMAN REPORTING SYSTEM (NORS) TRAINING PART I

Case, Complaint, Complainant *AND* Information and Assistance

REMINDER: Throughout these training materials “Ombudsman” is used as a generic term that may mean the state Ombudsman, a representative of the Office, or the Ombudsman program. Additionally, NORS tables developed by the Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging are to be used with these training materials when indicated (Table 1: NORS Case and complaint codes, values and definitions; Table 2: NORS Complaint codes and definitions; and Table 3 State Program Information, OMB Control Number 0985-0005).

1. A case is comprised of a complainant, complaint code(s), a perpetrator for Abuse/Neglect and Exploitation codes, a setting, verification, resolution, and information regarding whether a complaint was referred to another agency.
 - Each case must have a minimum of one complaint.
 - A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern brought to, or initiated by, the Ombudsman program which requires Ombudsman program investigation and resolution on behalf of one or more residents of a long-term care facility.
 - A **complainant** is an individual (i.e., resident, resident representative/friend/family, facility staff) who requests Ombudsman program complaint investigation services regarding one or more complaints made by, or on behalf of, residents.
2. **Information and assistance** is providing information to an individual or facility staff about issues impacting residents (e.g., resident rights, care issues, services) and/or sharing information about accessing services without opening a case and working to resolve a complaint.
 - a. Information and assistance may be provided through various means, including but not limited to telephone, by written correspondence such as e-mail, or in person.
 - b. It does not involve investigating and working to resolve complaints. The resident (or resident representative, where applicable) has not provided direction and consent to investigate a complaint.
 - c. Directing an individual to contact another agency for assistance does not constitute a case.

Basic Principles

A case is comprised of a:

- complainant,
- complaint(s),
- perpetrator for abuse/neglect/exploitation complaints (A codes),
- setting,
- verification,
- resolution, and
- information regarding whether a complaint was referred to another agency.

Basic Principles

Each case must have a minimum of one complaint.

A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern brought to, or initiated by, the Ombudsman program which requires Ombudsman program investigation and resolution on behalf of one or more residents of a long-term care facility.

Basic Principles

A **complainant** is an individual (i.e., resident, resident representative*/family/friend, facility staff) who requests Ombudsman program complaint investigation services regarding one or more complaints made by, or on behalf of, residents.

**resident representative as defined in 45 CFR 1324.1*

Basic Principles

- **Information and Assistance** is providing information to an individual or facility staff about issues impacting residents (e.g., resident rights, care issues, services) and/or sharing information about accessing services without opening a case and working to resolve a complaint.
 - Information and assistance may be provided through various means (e.g., email, letter, in-person, call).
 - **It does not involve investigating and working to resolve complaints.**
 - Directing an individual to contact another agency for assistance does not constitute a case.

Basic Principles

Case & Complaint vs Information & Assistance

Case and Complaint Versus Information and Assistance

NORS Definition- Case/Complaint	Versus	NORS Definition – Information and Assistance
<p>A case is comprised of a complainant, complaint code(s), a setting, verification, resolution, and information regarding whether a complaint was referred to another agency. Each case must have a minimum of one complaint.</p> <p>A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern brought to, or initiated by, the Ombudsman program which requires Ombudsman program <u>investigation and resolution</u> on behalf of one or more residents of a long-term care facility.</p>	<u>Definition</u>	<p>Information and assistance is providing information about issues impacting residents (e.g. resident rights, care issues, services) and/or sharing information about accessing services <u>without opening a case</u> and working to resolve a complaint.</p> <p>Information and assistance may be provided through various means including but not limited to telephone, by written correspondence such as e-mail, or in person.</p>
LTCOP Rule §1324.19 (b) Complaint Processing	Versus	Information and Assistance Practice
<p>(1) With respect to identifying, investigating and resolving complaints, and regardless of the source of the complaint (i.e. complainant), the Ombudsman and the representatives of the Office serve the resident of a long-term care facility. The Ombudsman or representative of the Office shall investigate a complaint, including but not limited to a complaint related to abuse, neglect, or exploitation, <u>for the purposes of resolving the complaint to the resident's satisfaction</u> and of protecting the health, welfare, and rights of the resident. The Ombudsman or representative of the Office may identify, investigate and resolve a complaint impacting multiple residents or all residents of a facility.</p>	<u>Purpose</u>	<p>The purpose of providing information and assistance is to inform the public, residents, facility staff, family of residents, and others. The Ombudsman program provides an answer, resources, and/or suggests other agencies or programs to contact.</p>

Basic Principles

Case & Complaint vs Information & Assistance

LTCOP Rule §1324.19 (b) Complaint Processing	Versus	Information and Assistance Practice
(2) Regardless of the source of the complaint (i.e. the complainant), including when the source is the Ombudsman or representative of the Office, the Ombudsman or representative of the Office must support and maximize resident participation in the process of resolving the complaint as follows:	<u>Resident Participation</u>	Resident participation is not required when the person making the inquiry is not a resident.
(i) The Ombudsman or representative of Office <u>shall offer privacy</u> to the resident for the purpose of confidentially providing information and hearing, investigating and resolving complaints.	<u>Privacy</u>	The content of the discussion or other form of communication is confidential and subject to Ombudsman program disclosure requirements. The discussion may be less sensitive and privacy may be less essential to offer. Many times the person making the inquiry may provide information by telephone or an in-person contact in a public area, by email, or from a resident's room.
(ii) The Ombudsman or representative of the Office shall <u>personally discuss</u> the complaint with the resident (and, if the resident is unable to communicate informed consent, the resident's representative) in order to:	<u>Discussion with Resident</u>	Discussion with the resident is not required when the person making the inquiry is not the resident.
(A) <u>Determine the perspective of the resident</u> (or resident representative, where applicable) of the complaint;	<u>Resident Perspective</u>	Obtaining the resident's perspective is not required in order to provide information and assistance.
(B) Request the resident (or resident representative, where applicable) to communicate informed consent in order to investigate the complaint;	<u>Informed Consent</u>	There is no informed consent because there is no request for further action.

Basic Principles

Case & Complaint vs Information & Assistance

LTCOP Rule §1324.19 (b) Complaint Processing	Versus	Information and Assistance Practice
(D) Advise the resident (and resident representative, where applicable) of the resident's rights;	<u>Rights</u>	Provide information on applicable rights, laws, etc. if appropriate.
(E) Work with the resident (or resident representative, where applicable) <u>to develop a plan of action for resolution of the complaint</u> ;	<u>Plan of Action</u>	No action for complaint resolution is requested. Therefore, the Ombudsman program does not develop a plan of action.
(F) <u>Investigate</u> the complaint to determine whether the complaint can be verified; and	<u>Investigation</u>	No investigation occurs by the Ombudsman program.
(G) <u>Determine whether the complaint is resolved</u> to the satisfaction of the resident (or resident representative, where applicable).	<u>Follow-up</u>	Follow-up may not be required, depending on the nature of the inquiry, and there is no requirement to determine level of satisfaction.
Case notes are documented within the case, not as an information and assistance activity. If information and assistance is offered related to the complaint during the complaint process, these actions are documented in the case notes.	<u>Documentation</u>	Information and assistance are documented as Ombudsman program activities. Document each instance according to the type of person who made the request (individual or facility staff — nursing facility or residential care community). Note: NORS no longer requires an information and assistance topic.

Table 1 – Case Data Components

Parts A, B, and C – Case and Complaint Codes, Values and Definitions

Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging- Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs

National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS)

Table 1: NORS Parts A, B and C - Case and complaint codes, values and definitions

OMB Control Number 0985-0005

Expiration Date: 10/31/2024

Table 1: Part A-Case Data Components

Each case must contain a complainant, complaint code (s), a setting, verification, resolution, and information regarding whether a complaint was referred to another agency **or if no referral was made**. Case and complaint data reported is only for those cases and complaints that were closed within the fiscal year.

Element Number	Data Element	Definition	Quantifier	Type	Codes and Values	Examples and Reporting Tips
CA-01	Case Number	The unique identifier used for each case.	Single	Alpha-numeric	Not Applicable (NA) (not a coded element)	This is auto-created by the state software program.
CA-02	Date Case Opened	Month, day, and year that the case was opened.	Single	Date	NA (not a coded element)	Each case must have a minimum of one complaint. Each case must have only one case open date. The case opened date must be on or before the case closed date.
CA-03	Date Case Closed	Month, day, and year that the case was closed.	Single	Date	NA (not a coded element)	The year of case closure must be in the associated reporting period. Each case must have only one case closed date. The case closed date must be on or after the case open date.

Table 1 Highlights

- Case Data Components:
 - Date case & complaint opened and closed
 - Facility or setting
 - Complainant
 - Complaints (one or more)
 - Perpetrator
 - Referral agency
 - Verification
 - Disposition

Part I Quiz

- A case must have one or more complaints brought to, or initiated by, the LTCOP made by or on behalf of one or more residents.
- Each complaint requires LTCOP investigation and resolution on behalf of one or more residents of a long-term care facility.
- States that have expanded their Ombudsman program services to other settings may choose to report complaints as “other setting.”

Part I Quiz Directions

For the following scenarios ask:

- Is it a *case* or an *information & assistance*?
- If it is a *case*,
 - how many complaints are there?
 - who is the complainant?

NOTE: Assume you have the consent of the resident, or the resident's representative as applicable, to take action.

Scenario 1

A woman calls asking for information on care planning and how to select a nursing facility for her mother. She discusses specific concerns regarding care. The Ombudsman spends an hour talking with the woman and sends additional follow-up information.

Scenario 1

Choose the correct answer.

a) Case

b) Information and Assistance

c) Neither

Scenario 2

You visit Mrs. Jones, who tells you they are still bringing her pureed food, even though her doctor said she could start eating regular food. You notice her call bell is broken. She indicates she would appreciate your assistance in resolving these problems. You speak to the Director of Nursing (DON) about the call bell, and she promptly fixes the bell. You attempt to talk to the dietitian about the pureed food, but she is not available until the next morning. You leave Mrs. Jones but tell her that you will check back with the dietitian and will follow-up with her on the results and to ensure that the call bell is still functional.

Scenario 2

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 2

How many complaints are in this case? Choose the correct answer.

- a) One
- b) Two
- c) Three

Scenario 2

How many complaints are in this case? Choose the correct answer.

a) One

b) Two

c) Three

Scenario 3

A certified nurse assistant (CNA) approaches you about the new Director of Nursing (DON). She says that the DON does not listen to staff and is very patronizing when she gives instructions. The staff do not like working with her, several of them are looking for jobs somewhere else. She asks you to intervene with management on behalf of the staff.

Scenario 3

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 4

One morning, you receive five notices of discharge from four different nursing facilities. The homes are complying with the federal requirement to send copies of these notices to the Ombudsman program.

Scenario 4

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 4 – Training Tips

- If you follow-up with the residents who received the notices or if one of them or their representative contacts you, you may have a case or an information and assistance.
- If the resident or their representative asks you for information or suggestions on how to proceed with the discharge or with an appeal, this would be an information and assistance.
- If the resident or their representative asks you to investigate, identify options, and help them either stay in the facility or find another solution, it would be a case with one complaint.

Case and Complaint Versus Information and Assistance

NORS Definition- Case/Complaint	Versus	NORS Definition – Information and Assistance
<p>A case is comprised of a complainant, complaint code(s), a setting, verification, resolution, and information regarding whether a complaint was referred to another agency. Each case must have a minimum of one complaint.</p> <p>A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern brought to, or initiated by, the Ombudsman program which requires Ombudsman program <u>investigation and resolution</u> on behalf of one or more residents of a long-term care facility.</p>	<p><u>Definition</u></p>	<p>Information and assistance is providing information about issues impacting residents (e.g. resident rights, care issues, services) and/or sharing information about accessing services <u>without opening a case</u> and working to resolve a complaint.</p> <p>Information and assistance may be provided through various means including but not limited to telephone, by written correspondence such as e-mail, or in person.</p>
LTCOP Rule §1324.19 (b) Complaint Processing	Versus	Information and Assistance Practice
<p>(1) With respect to identifying, investigating and resolving complaints, and regardless of the source of the complaint (i.e. complainant), the Ombudsman and the representatives of the Office serve the resident of a long-term care facility. The Ombudsman or representative of the Office shall investigate a complaint, including but not limited to a complaint related to abuse, neglect, or exploitation, <u>for the purposes of resolving the complaint to the resident's satisfaction</u> and of protecting the health, welfare, and rights of the resident. The Ombudsman or representative of the Office may identify, investigate and resolve a complaint impacting multiple residents or all residents of a facility.</p>	<p><u>Purpose</u></p>	<p>The purpose of providing information and assistance is to inform the public, residents, facility staff, family of residents, and others. The Ombudsman program provides an answer, resources, and/or suggests other agencies or programs to contact.</p>

Scenario 5

Mrs. Oliver asks you to help her obtain the medical records for her mother, who lives in a nursing facility. Mrs. Oliver asked the facility for the records seven days ago and the facility has not responded. She is her mother's health care durable power of attorney and responsible party.

Scenario 5

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Depends

Scenario 6

A facility staff person tells you that Mrs. Smith's son, who has power of attorney for his mother, is verbally abusing Mrs. Smith, using her income for his own purposes, and has not paid her bill for three months. The staff person requests your involvement in resolving the non-payment issue.

Scenario 6

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 6

How many complaints are in this case? Choose the correct answer.

- a) One
- b) Two
- c) Three

Scenario 6

How many complaints are in this case? Choose the correct answer.

a) One

b) Two

c) Three

Scenario 7

Mr. Jones calls the Ombudsman program, complaining that his mother has a black eye and the facility can give no explanation for it. He asks you to check on her and cautions you that his mother has Alzheimer's and does not remember things accurately. You visit his mother and notice light bruises on her face and arms but cannot verify that she had a black eye.

Scenario 7

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 8

During a facility visit, two residents tell you that they would like to have water available, but no one brings it when they ask. They are afraid to ask again and say that it must be an oversight because staff are always rushed. They do not want to complain any more. As you continue your visit, you notice that several other residents who cannot get out of bed do not have water at their bedside tables. Some of the residents cannot communicate with you. You do not see any staff filling containers or distributing water while you are visiting.

Scenario 8

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 8

Who is the complainant? Choose the correct answer.

- a) Resident
- b) Ombudsman program
- c) Facility staff

Scenario 8

Who is the complainant? Choose the correct answer.

a) Resident

b) Ombudsman program

c) Facility staff

Scenario 9

Mr. Brown's daughter and guardian, Alice, calls the Ombudsman program, concerned that her father is eating all his meals in his room, instead of in the dining room. You visit Mr. Brown, who seems despondent and is unable to express his wishes. You speak with the Director of Nursing (DON) about Alice's concern; the DON says staff should be taking Mr. Brown to the dining room and that she will discuss the problem with two new nursing assistants and will put a note in Mr. Brown's chart. The following week you call Alice, who tells you the nursing assistants are taking her father to the dining room now and he appears much happier.

Scenario 9

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 10

Ms. Miller, a resident of Sunny Valley Assisted Living Facility, stops you in the hall and tells you she has a problem: her son, who lives at home, has just lost his Medicaid benefits and she is concerned he won't be able to pay for his medication. As she rolls away in her wheelchair, you notice that the wheelchair keeps veering to the left and hitting the wall. You ask if she would like your assistance in getting it fixed, or in getting a new chair. She replies, "Yes."

Scenario 10

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 10

Who is the complainant? Choose the correct answer.

- a) Resident
- b) Ombudsman program
- c) Facility staff

Scenario 10

Who is the complainant? Choose the correct answer.

- a) Resident
- b) Ombudsman program
- c) Facility staff

Scenario 11

A facility administrator calls you to complain that the volunteer Ombudsman assigned to his home is not doing her job. He explains that he informed her about a problem the facility was having with a resident's behavior, but she refused to address the facility's concern. Instead, she visited privately with the resident and refused to tell the administrator or the corporation's lawyer about her visit.

Scenario 11

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 12 – first part

Mrs. Lee's daughter called you to complain that her mother would like to take a bath more often than once a week. On December 15th you go to Hilltop Haven to visit Mrs. Lee. On your way to Mrs. Lee's room you notice that there is dirty laundry on the floor in the hall and that the hall is dark because several lights are not working. When you visit Mrs. Lee, she says that she wants to be bathed more often than once a week.

Scenario 12 – second part

After you visit Mrs. Lee, you drop by to see Mrs. James. She tells you that they stopped her physical therapy (PT) and she does not know why. She complains that the sliding track for the privacy curtain is broken, so it does not close all the way. You investigate both complaints. You resolve and close the PT complaint within the week. You learn that the facility has tried to order a new track, but it's on back order. You keep the complaint open until the new track is installed. You go back to visit Mrs. James in January. She tells you that they are installing the track the next day. She also tells you that she just received a notice from the facility saying that she will have to switch to the facility pharmacy even though it may cost more than the pharmacy she has been using for the past three years. You tell her you'll check into it for her.

Scenario 12

Choose the correct answer.

- a) Case
- b) Information and Assistance
- c) Neither

Scenario 12

Who is the complainant for the first case that involved a complaint about additional showers? Choose the correct answer.

- a) Resident
- b) Ombudsman program
- c) Resident's daughter

Scenario 12

Who is the complainant for the first case that involved a complaint about additional showers?
Choose the correct answer.

- a) Resident
- b) Ombudsman program
- c) Resident's daughter

QUESTIONS?



RESOURCES

NORS Instructions, Training, and Materials

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/nors

National Consumer Voice

State Ombudsman Login



Shop Our Store

Search

Home

News

About ▾


New ombudsman?

Library ▾

Events ▾

Support ▾

Issues



The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center

Specialized Information for:

Nursing Homes

Assisted Living/Board & Care

Home and Community Based Services

COVID-19

NORC Webinars

NORC Notes

National Ombudsman Reporting System - (NORS)

- ▶ NORS Data
- ▶ NORS FAQs
- ▶ NORS Training
- ▶ NORS FAQ and TA Open Dialogue Webinars

National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS)

Ombudsman programs report their activities such as facility visits, complaints received and investigated, information and assistance provided, and community education to the Administration for Community Living (ACL)/Administration on Aging (AoA) to be summarized in the National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS). NORS data is available on the ACL AGing, Independence, and Disability (AGID) Program Data Portal [here](#) and on the NORC [website](#).

NOTE: The materials with UPDATED next to them were revised in December 2021. Use these versions for training, the links have changed.

The Basics – What You Must Know

- **Table 1: NORS Parts A, B and C - Case and complaint codes, values, and definitions - UPDATED**



The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center

Connect with us:

www.ltcombudsman.org
ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org



The National LTC Ombudsman Resource Center



@LTCombudcenter



Get our app! Search for "LTC Ombudsman Resource Center" in the Apple Store or Google Play

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90OMRC0002-01-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.