

# NATIONAL OMBUDSMAN REPORTING SYSTEM (NORS) TRAINING PART II

## Complaint Coding Beyond the Basics Quiz Answer Sheet

**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. Use the NORS tables developed by the Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging 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, updated 10/1/21, expiration date 10/31/24). The NORS codes and definitions used in these materials are taken from the ACL tables 1-3 and are not to be modified.

**DIRECTIONS:** Each person taking the quiz needs to have a copy of the **NORS, Table 1: NORS Case and complaint codes, values, definitions**, and **NORS, Table 2: Complaint codes and definitions**. For each scenario below, give the number of cases, number of complaints, complainant, perpetrator if applicable, and the primary complaint code for each complaint. Use only one complainant per case and only one complaint code for each complaint. For purposes of this training, assume that the resident gives consent to investigate if not otherwise indicated.

**When reviewing each scenario below, remember:**

- a. A **case** must have a minimum of one complaint.
- b. 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.
- c. A **complainant** is an individual (i.e., resident, resident representative, family, staff) who requests Ombudsman program complaint investigation services regarding one or more complaints made by, or on behalf of, residents.

1. A nursing facility staff person tells you that Mrs. Wright’s son, who has power of attorney for his mother, is 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 nonpayment issue. Mrs. Wright tells you that she is worried that her bill is not getting paid and she hopes you can do something about it.

Number of cases:	<u>  1  </u>	
Number of complaints in each case:	Case #1: <u>  1  </u>	Case #2:
Complainant for each case:	Case #1: <b>Staff</b>	Case #2:
Complaint code for each complaint:	Case #1: <b>A04</b>	Case #2:
	Perpetrator: <b>Family</b>	

This is one case with one complaint; the facility staff is the complainant. Because the complaint is financial exploitation (A04), a code for the perpetrator must be included.

**TRAINING TIPS:** Discuss potential financial exploitation and remind trainees that although the Ombudsman program is not a bill collector, the program's role is to investigate complaints involving abuse for resolution for the resident, not to substantiate the complaint.<sup>1</sup> Since the resident shares the facility staff member's concerns and wants assistance from the Ombudsman program this is a complaint and the facility staff person is the complainant since she originally contacted the program.

2. You go to the facility in the middle of the afternoon. Mrs. Rivera tells you that she used her call light twice that morning and each time she had to wait 20 minutes before someone came to help her.

Number of cases:	___1	
Number of complaints in each case:	Case #1: ___1	Case #2:
Complainant for each case:	Case #1: <b>Resident</b>	Case #2:
Complaint code for each complaint:	Case #1: <b>F02</b>	Case #2:

This is one case with one response to requests for assistance complaint (F02). The resident is the complainant. There is no indication that this is a staffing problem or that the slow response is retaliation.

3. You visit Mrs. Brown in the morning. She tells you that she needed help getting to the toilet during the night and she kept pressing her call light button for over an hour, but no one came to help her. When an aide finally came, she told Mrs. Brown that she was sorry it took so long, but three aides had called in sick, so it was taking her longer to get to everyone who needed help. Mrs. Brown is upset that the administrator did not find extra help.

Number of cases:	___1	
Number of complaints in each case:	Case #1: ___2	Case #2:
Complainant for each case:	Case #1: <b>Resident</b>	Case #2:
Complaint code for each complaint:	Case #1: <b>J03, F02</b>	Case #2:

This is one case with two complaints. One complaint would be coded as staffing (J03). Unlike the previous case (#2), the resident gave you enough information about the problem to determine that shortage of staff is an issue. The second complaint would be coded as response to requests for assistance (F02) since staff were not responding to call lights promptly.

<sup>1</sup>Refer to the NORC Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation in Long-Term Care Facilities issue page for information regarding the role of the Ombudsman program in investigating allegations of abuse - <https://ltombudsman.org/issues/abuse-neglect-and-exploitation-in-long-term-care-facilities>.

4. You are in Sunrise Nursing Home for the second time in a week. You are on your way to visit Ms. Tai. During both visits to Sunrise, you've noticed that many call lights are going unanswered. Today, you overhear an aide say that they don't have enough staff on duty. She complains that she has five additional residents to care for and she just can't answer all the call bells. When you meet with Ms. Tai, she explains that she is not getting enough physical therapy. She also tells you that no one has changed her sheets today and it is wet.

Number of cases:	<u>  2  </u>	
Number of complaints in each case:	Case #1: <u>  2  </u>	Case #2: <u>  1  </u>
Complainant for each case:	Case #1: <b><u>Resident</u></b>	Case #2: <b><u>Ombudsman</u></b>
Complaint code for each complaint:	Case #1: <b><u>F10, I05</u></b>	Case #2: <b><u>J03</u></b>

**This would be two separate cases. Ms. Tai is the complainant in one case. This case contains two complaints: a physical therapy complaint (F10) and a complaint about the soiled linen (I05). The Ombudsman may suspect that the problem with the soiled bedding is a result of understaffing, but Ms. Tai does not provide enough information to code it as a staffing complaint.**

**The second case is an Ombudsman program-initiated case with one complaint: staffing (J03), based on the unanswered call lights and the comments of the aide. The Ombudsman program is the complainant based on the observations of the Ombudsman.**

5. Ms. Green's daughter, Ann, calls you because she wants Sunrise Nursing Home to return a radio that she had given to her mother. The Sunrise staff told Ann that shortly before she died, Ms. Green had given the radio to her roommate's niece because she thought she would enjoy it. The staff documented this gifting of the radio on her list of personal items. Ms. Green signed the revised list.

Number of cases:	<u>  0  </u>	
Number of complaints in each case:	Case #1: <u>  0  </u>	Case #2:
Complainant for each case:	Case #1:	Case #2:
Complaint code for each complaint:	Case #1:	Case #2:

**This is not a case. Open a case for a resident who has died only if resolving the complaint or problem would help other residents in the facility. Resolving the problem of the radio would not benefit other residents. It might be an Information and Assistance.**

6. Mr. Brown's daughter, Ellen, calls you a month after her father died. Sunrise Nursing Home just sent the funds that were in her father's personal needs account at the home. He had been on Medicaid. He had about \$500 less in the account than she thought he had. The facility told her they had charged him 50 cents per mile whenever he took the van to church and whenever he went with them on field trips. Ellen said the facility never told her or her father about the mileage fee. She's angry with the facility. She wants them to pay her back.

Number of cases:	<u>  1  </u>	
Number of complaints in each case:	Case #1: <u>  1  </u>	Case #2:
Complainant for each case:	Case #1: <b>Family</b>	Case #2:
Complaint code for each complaint:	Case #1: <b>E01</b>	Case #2:

**This would be a case with a complaint of billing and charges (E01) because the facility’s policy affects the other residents. The fact that Ellen might recover some money does not change the fact that resolving the problem may benefit other residents as they may be charged for transportation as well.**

7. During a visit, you meet Mr. Travis and he tells you that he wants to leave the nursing facility and return to the community, but he hasn’t heard anything from the transition coordinator. He gives you permission to speak with the nursing facility social worker. The social worker tells you she contacted the local contact agency twice in the last two months, but no one has returned her call or visited Mr. Travis to discuss transitioning to the community.

Number of cases:	<u>  1  </u>	
Number of complaints in each case:	Case #1: <u>  1  </u>	Case #2:
Complainant for each case:	Case #1: <b>Resident</b>	Case #2:
Complaint code for each complaint:	Case #1: <b>L03</b>	Case #2:

**This would be a case with a complaint about barriers to transition to the community (L03). This is coded as a L03 complaint, because the complaint is about the lack of response from the local contact agency, not about the facility referral process as the facility did contact the local contact agency about transitioning per the resident’s request for relocation assistance.**

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