



Guidance to Ohio Ombudsman Staff & Volunteers for Quality Advocacy Visits

Before the visit

Be informed before your visit to help identify areas of focus, particularly if the home is not visited regularly.

When possible, review the following information:

- ODH survey report (Long-Term Care Consumer Guide or at home)
- Resident and family satisfaction scores (Consumer Guide)
- Recent complaints about home (ODIS/program staff)
- Volunteer reports (ODIS or on file at RP)
- Other activity such as in-service education, information & assistance to provider (ODIS/program staff)

Upon arrival:

- Sign in as an ombudsman there to visit “residents.”
- Ask social services or administrator about new consumers living in the home.
- Request resident council meeting minutes, as appropriate.

During most visits:

Some steps will be a part of every visit, depending on the frequency. As you are visiting, these are some things to observe and discuss with residents:

- Sensory observations – what you see, smell, hear
- Staff-to-resident interactions – use their name, look them in eye, touch & reassure, converse with them
- Resident comfort – chair, in & out of bed as desired, access to water for hydration
- Privacy in a homelike environment – hallways clear, noise level, person-centered and individualized
- Call lights answered and appropriate response to consumer requests
- Introduce them to the ombudsman program and their rights
- Time with consumers who may not have capacity
- Resident engagement
- Discussion and distribution of information - ombudsman program, consumer rights

Be relaxed and help consumers relax. Communicate with consumers at eye level, take your time, develop rapport, and clearly explain your role. Ask open-ended questions so the consumer will share with you. Be a good listener.

- Talk with the council president about pending issues, response from home, and any assistance the council needs from you including advice, follow-up on pending issues, and a presentation to the council on rights or other topics.
- If you visit during mealtime, observe the meal; do the meal and menu match, is assistance provided to those who need it, are substitutes offered and provided in a timely manner, are the consumers enjoying the food, is it an enjoyable dining experience for residents? If residents are eating in their rooms, are they doing so by choice? Are snacks available and accessible?
- Observe group activity; does the activity match the calendar, is the activity appropriate for the participants, are consumers engaged and interested, what are the consumers who are not at the activity doing and were they given the option to participate?

During some visits:

Some activities can occur less often but are still valuable:

- Required postings visible, accurate, and easy to access and read for all consumers
- License posted and ODIS provider information is accurate – beds, owner, home name
- In RCFs, blank resident agreement requested so the Regional Program has current one on file
- In NHs, admission agreement requested

After every visit:

It's important to report all of your activity after each visit:

- Most important, include the consumer's voice – what they told you and asked you.
- What information did you provide and to whom? Name the residents.
- Enter new cases and complaints in ODIS or call them in to the assigned staff ombudsman.
- Report a summary of the visit in ODIS or submit your report to the Regional Program.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call the State Office at 1-800-282-1206

Get to know staff so you'll learn who will be helpful in resolving problems.

A quality visit generally takes an hour or more.

Help consumers EXPECT EXCELLENCE.

Be an Effective Advocate

Look for ways to help consumers by helping to improve their quality of care and quality of life.

Let consumers know that you care and that you want to help.