

CHAPTER 10 ACCESS TO LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM SERVICES

I. Introduction

The Older Americans Act requires the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) to ensure that residents, their families, and the general public are able to access LTCOP services. To ensure appropriate access and visibility of the LTCOP, designated local LTCOPs are to comply with the guidelines in this chapter when developing their literature, including correspondence materials, public information materials, community education activities, electronic media, volunteer recruitment campaigns, and any communications issued on behalf of, or by, the local program.

II. Legal Authority

FEDERAL Title 42 United States Code section 3058g(a)(3)(C)
45 CFR Part 1324.13(a)(3)

STATE Welfare and Institutions Code section 9712.5(c)

III. Local LTCOP Coordinator Responsibility

The LTCOP Coordinator is responsible for initiating and carrying out activities to increase public awareness and visibility of the local program, and to ensure ready access to program services by residents, families, friends and other interested parties. These actions include, but are not limited to:

- A. Route all incoming telephone contacts directly to the local program office. Program representatives are advised not to give out their personal contact information, including personal telephone numbers or home addresses, and shall not include personal contact information on CRISISline posters. Program representatives are advised to use caller ID blocking if making calls from personal telephones.
- B. Ensure that the local LTCOP includes the full program name in all education or information materials and media messaging (print, radio, electronic, Internet) issued by the program. Print materials should also include a description of the program as the designated Long-Term Care Ombudsman program for the area.
- C. Provide the direct contact information, including the physical address if appropriate, for the local LTCOP office in all print materials or media messaging issued by the program.
- D. Ensure that signage identifying the local LTCOP including the description “Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program” is installed in the building housing the local LTCOP, either in the entryway lobby or on the exterior of the building.

- E. Publish the telephone number of the local LTCOP in regional telephone directories and appropriate service agency directories. Local LTCOPs may, but are not required to, provide paid telephone listings. Listings in consumer guides may not imply local LTCOP endorsement of any LTC facilities or services.
- F. Ensure that each long-term care (LTC) facility displays the required number of the current LTCOP CRISISline posters printed and distributed by the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (OSLTCO), and that each poster contains the address and telephone number for the local LTCOP.
- G. Obtain and distribute as appropriate bilingual CRISISline posters to facilities with populations of non-English-speaking or limited-English-speaking residents.
- H. Develop and implement community awareness and outreach strategies that include training Ombudsman representatives on ways to promote awareness and visibility of the LTCOP in LTC facilities and the community.

IV. Literature

The local LTCOP must include its full name, as well as a reference that it is the designated local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program in program literature including print advertisements, program websites, recruitment information, public notices, posters, brochures, newspaper articles, etc. This applies to all public information and education resources developed with LTCOP funds, from any source, including donations, grants, or other sponsorship.

In addition, the local LTCOP shall include a standard credit within the document:

“This local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is partially supported by federal and State funds to advocate for residents of long-term care facilities.”

V. Local Program Correspondence Letterhead

The local LTCOP shall use business letterhead that includes its full program name, a description that it is the designated local LTCOP, address, and direct contact information.

VI. Community Education Forums

The local LTCOP shall reference the mission of the program at all public and professional education forums and presentations for which the LTCOP provides significant in-kind services, materials or financial support.

The following mission statement is to be used:

“The mission of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is to seek resolution of problems and advocate for the rights of residents of long-term care facilities with the goal of ensuring their dignity, quality of life, and quality of care.”

Local program mission statements may be used in addition to the LTCOP mission statement.

VII. Electronic Media

The local LTCOP shall include its full name in all program messages distributed using electronic media (web, television, and radio). The local LTCOP may include the contracting agency name as a secondary sponsor.

VIII. Service Excellence

In addition to having access to the program, it is important that residents of LTC facilities, their families and friends, and other members of the public receive friendly and professional service from knowledgeable Ombudsman representatives. LTCOP Coordinators must ensure that program representatives make every effort to thoroughly assess and respond to residents' needs to the best of their ability.