

Recovery and Reentry Resources

For Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs



Introduction and Contents

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has significantly impacted residents of long-term care facilities, staff, families, and Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs.

In-person visitation restrictions¹ imposed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 required Ombudsman programs to adapt quickly to ensure residents continue to have access to program services. In-person visits with residents are a core part of Ombudsman program outreach and advocacy and there is no substitute; however, during this crisis programs often need to use other means to connect with residents and investigate and resolve complaints.

In anticipation of resuming in-person visits, the National Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC) convened a workgroup to discuss issues regarding Ombudsman program services during the pandemic and to provide input on [COVID-19 Recovery and Reentry Resources](#). Workgroup members included representatives of the National Association of State Ombudsman Programs (NASOP) and the National Association of Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs (NALLTCO).

The resources are divided into two primary groups. One set of resources provide program management considerations and templates for State Ombudsmen to assist with developing program policies and procedures and practices during the pandemic. The other resources are intended to support representatives in performing duties during COVID-19 such as conducting visits safely, responding to and documenting complaints, and communicating with residents while wearing a face covering. The resources are available as PDFs and Word documents so programs can add state specific information. This information is current as of August 2020 and will be updated as we learn more about COVID-19 and practices may need to adapt accordingly.

Contents

State Long-Term Care Ombudsmen (State Ombudsmen):

1. Safety Considerations for Representatives when Visiting Residents ([PDF](#), [Word](#))
2. Program Management Considerations for Policies and Procedures Regarding In-Person Visits ([PDF](#), [Word](#))
3. Responding to Complaints During COVID-19 Pandemic ([PDF](#), [Word](#))
4. Supply Purchasing Template ([Excel](#))
5. Ombudsman Program Requirements Regarding COVID-19 Acknowledgment Form ([PDF](#), [Fillable PDF](#), [Word](#))
6. COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Form ([PDF](#), [Fillable PDF](#), [Word](#))

Representatives of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (representatives²):

1. Tips for Facility Visits During an Infectious Disease Outbreak ([PDF](#), [Word](#))
2. Visit Checklist During the COVID-19 Pandemic ([PDF](#), [Fillable PDF](#), [Word](#))
3. Tips for Communicating While Wearing a Mask ([PDF](#), [Word](#))
4. Complaint Investigation and Resolution During COVID-19: Complaint Scenarios and Documentation ([PDF](#), [Word](#))

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 900MRC0001-01-00, 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.

¹ CMS Ref: QSO-20-14-NH <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/3-13-2020-nursing-home-guidance-covid-19.pdf>

² In this resource the term "representative" means paid or volunteer "representatives of the Office of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman" as defined in the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Final Rule, Section 1324.1 Definitions.