

CODE OF ETHICS FOR OMBUDSMEN

Regardless of an ombudsman's level(s) of advocacy effort, or the complexity of the issue/problem which is being addressed, there is a basic set of principles which guide an ombudsman's decisions. The National Association of State Long Term Care Ombudsman Programs developed the following Code of Ethics for ombudsmen.

1. The Ombudsman provides services with respect for human dignity and the individuality of the client unrestricted by considerations of age, social or economic status, personal characteristics or lifestyle choices.
2. The Ombudsman respects and promotes the client's right to self-determination.
3. The Ombudsman makes every reasonable effort to ascertain and act in accordance with the client's wishes.
4. The Ombudsman acts to protect vulnerable individuals from abuse and neglect.
5. The Ombudsman safeguards the client's right to privacy by protecting confidential information.
6. The Ombudsman remains knowledgeable in areas relevant to the long term care system, especially regulatory and legislative information, and long term care service options.
7. The Ombudsman acts in accordance with the standards and practices of the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, and with respect for the policies of the sponsoring (contract) organization.
8. The Ombudsman will provide professional advocacy services unrestricted by his/her personal belief or opinion.
9. The Ombudsman participates in efforts to promote a quality long term care system.
10. The Ombudsman participates in efforts to maintain and promote the integrity of the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.
11. The Ombudsman supports a strict conflict of interest standard which prohibits any financial interest in the delivery or provision of nursing home, board and care services, or other long term care services which are within their scope of involvement.
12. The Ombudsman shall conduct him/herself in a manner which will strengthen the statewide and national Ombudsman network.