

National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS)

Training: Part 4

Ombudsman Program Activities¹ Basic Principles

REMINDER: Use the [NORS tables](#) developed by the Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging with these training materials when indicated. The NORS codes and definitions used in these materials are taken from ACL tables 1-3 and are not to be modified.

NOTE: Most of the data elements for the State Program Information in the *ACL Table 3: State Program Information* is compiled and written by the Office of the State Ombudsman. Part 4 Basic Principles, Quiz, and Quiz Answers are focused on Part H of the Table 3 as those Ombudsman Program Activities are the most applicable to representatives of the Office.

NORS does not capture all program activities and states may choose to collect additional data on training, facility visits, survey participation, participation in resident and family councils, and community education. However, states will need to determine how to document all activities to ensure there isn't duplication and overcounting.

Ombudsman programs conduct a range of important activities and report these activities in NORS. ACL/AoA uses this data to describe and promote the work of the Ombudsman program. It is important that Ombudsman programs are accurate in their activity reporting (e.g., not over counting activities when two representatives participate in the same activity).

Training

Training for Facility Staff

For training sessions provided by Ombudsmen representatives to facility staff report:

- the number of sessions conducted, and
- the type of facility (nursing facility or residential care community) based on the facility affiliation of most of the participants for each session.

NORS does not collect the number of participants.

In-Person Training

Report each training instance as a separate session even if repeated at the same facility, such as at different shifts, or when repeated at a conference.

¹ ACL Table 3: State Program Information Part H

Examples:

- The program provided an abuse prevention training to the morning and evening shift at the same nursing facility. This counts as two sessions.
- The program provided morning and afternoon residents' rights training at a residential care community provider conference over two days. This counts as four sessions.

Virtual Learning (Webinar, Online Courses)

- To report virtual learning, such as webinars, conference calls, or an on-demand course, as a session in NORS, there must be a way to track participants that completed the training and their facility affiliation. In other words, a state needs to be able to verify that at least one person attended and completed the virtual learning to report the training session.
- Regardless of the number of attendees, a virtual learning training program that tracks completion numbers and facility affiliation counts as one session. If an Ombudsman program offers virtual learning on a variety of topics, each training topic at least one person completes counts as one session.

Example: There are two online training programs on residents' rights, one is for nursing facilities and the other is for residential care communities. The content of each is specific to the facility type. Therefore, the state will report two sessions in NORS, one under each facility type, provided at least one person completed each online training program.

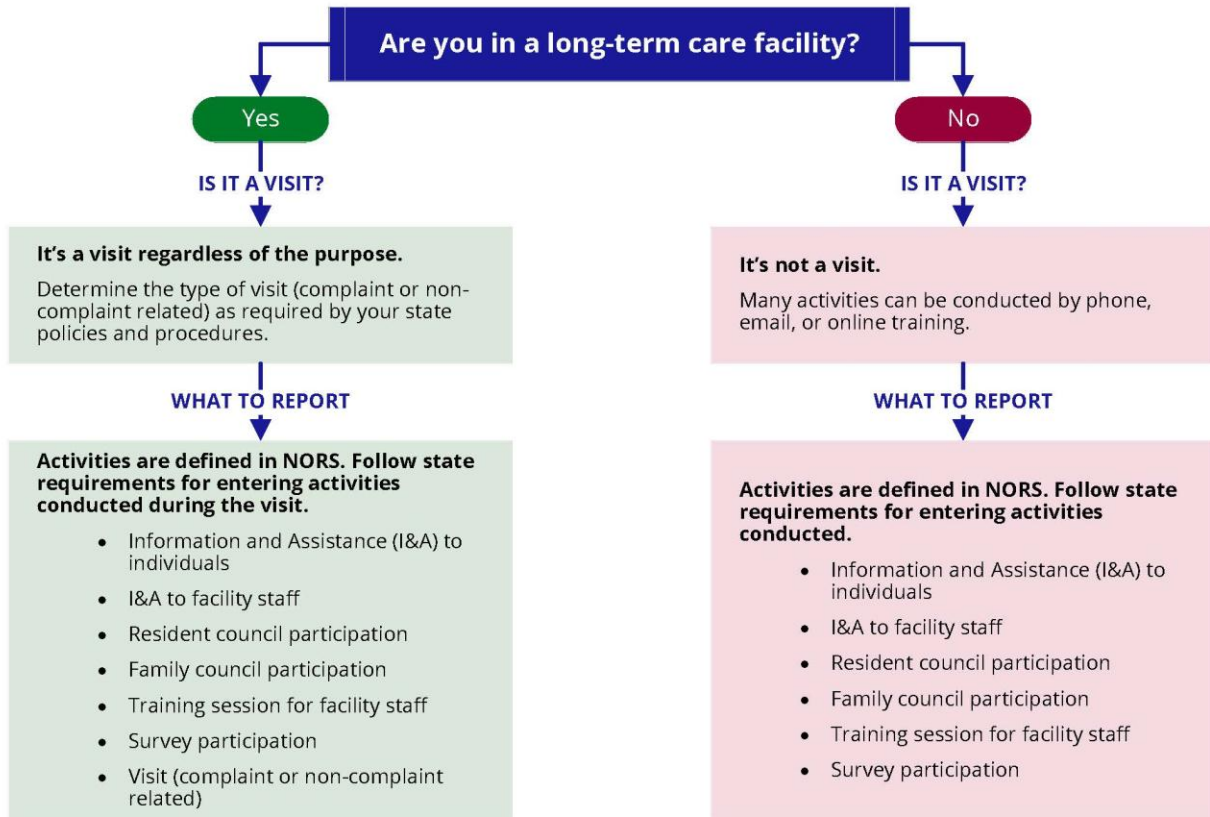
Facility Visits

NORS defines activities and describes how to count them, but states establish program practices and requirements (e.g., what is expected during a facility visit, frequency of visits). Representatives should enter all visits (regardless of the purpose), and activities conducted during visits in their data management system. The state data management system should tabulate the visit totals for the annual NORS report. States are required to report the following three types of data elements related to facility visits for each facility type.

1. Number of **facilities visited** regardless of purpose (complaint or non-complaint).
2. The total number of **visits** regardless of purpose (complaint or non-complaint).
3. Number of **facilities that had routine access** (facilities that were visited, not in response to a complaint, each quarter).

Is it a Visit?

Use this decision tree to help you determine if your work counts as a visit and how to document your activities. This is based on National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS) definitions. Follow your state policies and procedures for additional guidance for conducting and reporting visits.



This project was supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$516,407 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS or the U.S. Government.

Survey Participation

Report each distinct type of survey activity as one instance by facility type.

Definition: Report the total number of instances of survey activity by representatives of the Office.

Example: Include participation in both standard surveys and complaint surveys. Survey participation includes but is not limited to pre-survey information to surveyors, sharing complaint summary reports, participation in exit conferences and informal dispute resolution. It must be a whole number.

You may have more than one survey participation activity associated with one survey in one facility.

Example: A surveyor calls you prior to entering the building, and you provide information about your observations during your visits and the type of complaints you've handled. You also attend the exit conference. This would count as two instances of survey participation.

Resident Council and Family Council Participation

Report each distinct type of resident or family council participation as one instance by facility type. Participation includes attending a council meeting, meeting with council leadership, or training the council or resident or family group.

Tips

- If technical support, consultation, or resource information is provided to a resident council or family council outside of a council meeting, report that activity as an information and assistance activity (S-55).

If two representatives attend the same resident or family council meeting that participation should be reported as one instance of council participation. States need to determine how to document this in their system to avoid overcounting.

Community Education

Report each instance of community education outreach sessions by Ombudsmen.

Tips

- The number of individuals attending the community education event is not collected in NORS.
- Use for attendance at health fairs, community events, general presentations, etc.
- If a community education session is provided by virtual learning (such as a webinar, on-demand course, or conference call) there must be a way to track participants that completed the session to report it as a session in NORS. In other words, a state needs to be able to verify that at least one person attended and completed the virtual learning to report the community education session.
- Newsletters and other forms of media that impart information about long-term care or the Ombudsman program may be counted as community education.
- If two Ombudsmen participate in the same community education event, it counts as one instance.