



# Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman

## *Certified Ombudsman Volunteer Position Description*

**Certified Ombudsman are resident advocates who identify, investigate and resolve complaints in order to protect the rights, dignity, and safety of residents of nursing homes, residential care facilities, adult care homes and assisted living facilities. Certified Ombudsman volunteers are appointed by the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman and report to the Deputy Ombudsman of their assigned district.**

### **Duties:**

- Visit with residents, identifying complaints and concerns.
- Monitor resident care, staffing and building condition.
- Investigate complaints.
- Work with facility staff to correct problems, using a continuum of problem resolution and advocacy skills.
- Report all apparent cases of abuse as required by program policy and procedure.
- Submit reports monthly.
- Maintain communication with the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman.
- Promote respect and rapport between residents, facility staff and Ombudsman program.
- Inform residents, families, and facility staff about resident rights.
- Maintain confidentiality as required by law.

### **Qualifications and Skills:**

- 21 years of age and pass a criminal background check.
- Strong observation, communication and problem solving skills.
- Dependable and reliable.
- Adequate transportation to visit facilities.

### **Training:**

- 48 hours of initial training including classroom, homework and facility visit.
- 10 hours of continuing education annually to maintain certification.

### **Time Commitment:**

- Flexible schedule that includes 16 hours per month, including facility visits, monthly volunteer support and training meetings, and completing paperwork.
- Certified Ombudsman volunteers are appointed by the State Ombudsman and are renewable annually.
- Nursing homes, residential care facilities, and assisted living facilities are visited every one to two weeks. Adult care homes visited every two to four weeks.

### **Benefits:**

- Improve the quality of care for residents in long-term care in your community.
- Ability to make a personal, direct, immediate positive impact for others.
- Develop knowledge on navigating long-term care systems.
- Free training, support, and background check.
- Gain valuable work or career experience.
- Increase or develop public speaking, advocacy, and conflict resolution skills.
- Limited mileage reimbursements for those who qualify.
- Working with a spouse or partner opportunities available.
- Annual recognition and training events, monthly continuing education opportunities.

Rev 4/2010

## OMBUDSMAN MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

The mission of the Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman is to enhance the quality of life; improve the level of care; protect the individual rights and promote dignity of each Oregon citizen housed in a long term care facility.

Each Certified Ombudsman has legislative authority to enter into a long term care facility and approach staff and residents without restriction to fulfill the Program mission. Ombudsmen are lawfully obligated to “investigate” all complaints referred by residents or on their behalf [ORS 441.109 (i)], “monitor” all government policies and actions that affect residents; protect and promote patients’ rights [ORS 441.127 (e)], and keep residents and providers informed of the Program’s objectives and concerns [ORS 441.127 (d)], as well as undertake any other legal action that promotes resident welfare “as specified” [ORS 441.127 (f)].

Whenever possible, Certified Ombudsmen try to solve problems informally with the appropriate, lowest level of facility management, while higher levels of management are involved if necessary. In general, the provider’s inability or unwillingness to solve the problem at the facility level will result in a direct Ombudsman request for corrective action or a referral to outside agencies for investigation and follow-up enforcement action if necessary.

Though Ombudsmen must be professional, impartial, and fair in pursuit of their mission, they are first and foremost patient advocates and will approach every problem from this essential perspective.

Ombudsmen strive to become the eyes, ears and voices for the institutionalized elderly; they seek to encourage self direction and autonomy among long term care residents. They strive to remove barriers to quality care and stand as implacable foes of institutional repression wherever it exists and in whatever form it takes.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Oregon Administrative Rules: Chapter 114, Division 2 - Long Term Care Ombudsman

**114-02-101 (4)** “Conflict of interest with the Ombudsman Program” means that a situation exists where an individual’s personal interests may adversely influence the individual’s decisions relating to the Ombudsman Program, except that a person presently residing in a long term care facility shall not have a conflict of interest with the Ombudsman Program. A conflict of interest with the Ombudsman Program exists when:

- a. A person or a member of the person’s immediate family has any financial or ownership interests in a long term care facility or is employed by a long term care facility;
- b. A person is an employee, agent, or officer of an Area Agency on Aging, type B, or the local State office of the Senior Services Division;
- c. A person has been employed by a long term care facility within the last two years.