

What is the Office of the State Long-term Care Ombudsman?

- Mandated by the federal Older Americans Act and Ohio law, the state ombudsman advocates for the rights of home care consumers and residents of long-term care facilities, and seeks resolution of problems, with the goal of enhancing their quality of life and care.

Who may call the Ombudsman?

- Anyone may call the Ombudsman to voice a concern or obtain information about long-term care. However, the Ombudsman acts only with the consent of the consumer or, in some cases, the consumer’s legal representative.

Who does the Ombudsman serve?

- The Ombudsman addresses the concerns of consumers in a variety of long-term care settings, such as nursing homes, residential care facilities (commonly known as “assisted living”) and adult care facilities.
- The Ombudsman also serves consumers of home- and community-based care, such as meals and transportation services.

How does the Ombudsman work with consumers?

- The Ombudsman works to uphold the legal rights of residents of facility-based homes and consumers of home care services; assists consumers of any age denied admission or threatened with transfer or discharge; and assists in resolving concerns about all aspects of long-term care.
- The Ombudsman may also advocate on behalf of older adults with the agencies that administer Medicare, Medicaid and other long-term care programs and services.

How does the Ombudsman handle complaints?

- The Ombudsman works closely with the older adult to address complaints and the older adult decides to what extent the Ombudsman is involved in resolving the complaint.
- The Ombudsman first investigates and documents the complaint. Options for resolution are then presented to the consumer and the Ombudsman works with him or her to resolve the problem. The Ombudsman will then follow up to ensure resolution of the problem.

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How does the Ombudsman help consumers learn about the quality of care available in a nursing home or assisted living facility?

- Regional Long-term Care Ombudsmen consult with older adults and their families to help them examine their long-term care options and know their rights as consumers.
- The **Ohio Consumer Guide** (www.ltcoho.org) assists older adults in identifying an appropriate nursing or assisted living facility by providing a variety of information about nursing homes, assisted living facilities and home care providers.

What else does the Ombudsman do?

- The Ombudsman advocates for systemic changes to problems. The Ombudsman participates in meetings to revise regulations and provides testimony on state and federal legislation.
- Ombudsman staff educate caregivers and staff of long-term care providers to promote individualized care and services aimed at the consumer's preferences and needs.
- The Ombudsman acts to prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation.

How are Ombudsman services administered in Ohio?

- The Office of the State Long-term Care Ombudsman designates twelve regional programs to serve local consumers. Staff and volunteers are certified after extensive training and examination.

How is the program funded?

- The Office of the State Long-term Care Ombudsman is funded by the federal government through the Older Americans Act, as well as by state sources including the General Revenue Fund and a fee paid by care providers on a per-bed, per-year basis.

Who do families contact for Ombudsman services?

- Contact the State Long-term Care Ombudsman toll-free at **1-800-282-1206**.

Where can I learn more about the Long-term Care Ombudsman?

- Visit the following Ohio Department of Aging Web page for more information about the Long-term Care Ombudsman.
www.aging.ohio.gov/services/ombudsman/

Last Updated: January 2011