

# Know Your Rights

A facility should care for its residents in a manner and in an environment that promotes maintenance or enhancement of each resident's quality of life. A resident should have a safe, clean, comfortable, and homelike environment. Residents rights in a long-term care facility are, in brief:

- **To be informed** of your rights, the rules and policies of the facility, and to be told of all services available and all costs, including those charges covered or not included in the basic rate.
- **To be informed** of your health condition to participate in planning care and treatment or refuse any treatment, and to have your personal and medical records treated as confidential.
- **To be transferred** or discharged only after written notice is given and only for increased medical needs, safety or non-payment.
- **To be encouraged** to exercise your rights as a resident and citizen, to complain and suggest without fear of coercion or retaliation.
- **To manage** your financial affairs, or if this is delegated, to receive regular accounting.
- **To be free** of mental and physical abuse and of chemical and physical restraints.
- **To participate** in social, religious and community activities, as possible.
- **To have your own** clothing and possessions and be allowed to use them as space permits.
- **To have privacy** for visits and telephone calls, and to send and receive personal mail unopened.

# Become a Volunteer

Certified Long-Term Care Ombudsmen volunteers visit with residents, take and resolve complaints, and advocate for residents in long-term care facilities. Volunteers find that they benefit from joining the program because they know that they make a difference in the lives of residents.

Comprehensive Certification Training in advocacy, resident rights and long-term care is provided.

# Who to Contact

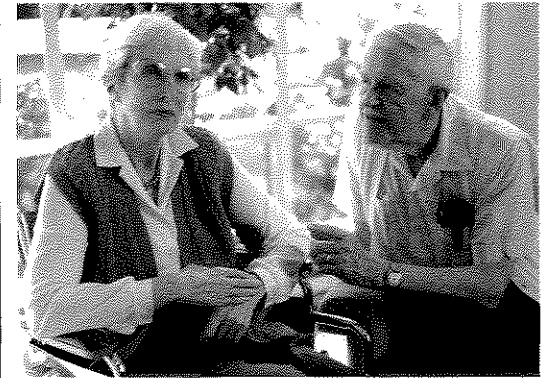
SW SWAAD Long Term Care  
Ombudsman Program  
201 NE 73rd St. Ste #201  
Vancouver, WA 98665  
(360) 694-9007

or

**You may call the State  
Long-Term Care  
Ombudsman directly at  
1-800-562-6028**

"No person shall, on the grounds of race, creed, color, religion, gender, handicap, national origin, age, citizenship, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief, be denied employment or benefits, or discriminated against as a client, administrator, staff person or volunteer under this program."

# Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program



**"Because  
dignity  
and quality  
of life are  
a right,  
not a  
privilege."**

# What is a Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program?

The Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, as mandated by the Federal Older Americans Act, is intended to improve the quality of life for people who live in licensed long-term care facilities.

Residents in long-term care facilities are guaranteed certain rights by federal and state laws and regulations.

The purpose of the program is to protect and promote these rights in long-term care facilities and assist in empowering residents to become self-advocates.



## ōm' bŭds-man

### What Does An Ombudsman Do?

An ombudsman is a trained and certified volunteer who listens to concerns and questions and works with residents, families, staff, local and state agencies and other organizations to resolve problems or answer questions.

#### Your Ombudsman Will:

- Advocate for the rights of residents in long-term care facilities,
- Provide an effective means for the resolution of concerns about the quality of life in long-term care facilities,
- Work with residents, families, friends, operators and staff of facilities to meet the needs and concerns of those who live there,
- Monitor laws, regulations and policies which affect those who live in long-term care facilities,
- Provide public education to promote a better understanding about the use of long-term care facilities,
- Help residents, family, staff and operators of facilities establish a resident or family council.

### Who Can Use the Ombudsman Program?

- Residents of Nursing Homes, Boarding Homes, Adult Family Homes and Veteran's Homes,
- Relatives and friends of residents in long-term care facilities,
- Administrators and employees of Nursing Homes, Residential Care Facilities, Adult Family Homes and Veteran's Homes,
- Any group or individual concerned about the welfare of residents of long-term care facilities,
- The community-at-large.

### Why Do Residents and Their Families Need An Ombudsman?

- Many frail and vulnerable residents cannot speak up for their needs and desires.
- Some residents are alone and have no close relatives or regular visitors.
- Long-distance caregivers appreciate knowing someone is looking out for their loved ones.