

# MISSOURI'S LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM



## Who are Missouri's long-term care residents?

- Many have several physical impairments, and have an almost total loss of independence.
- Many are fragile, vulnerable and dependent on staff for their care.
- Many have no close relatives or regular visitors.
- Many have difficulty voicing concerns to the facility and need someone to help them share their concerns, such as a volunteer ombudsman.

## What is an Ombudsman?

The word ombudsman(om-budz-man) is of Swedish origin, and means one who speaks on behalf of another. Volunteer Ombudsmen come from all walks of life, many are retirees, others are professionals. What they have in common is a desire to make a difference in the lives of the elderly and disabled.

The Missouri Long-Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman Program is comprised of individuals whose main responsibility is to help residents in long-term care facilities maintain or improve their quality of life by helping ensure their rights are not violated. The ombudsmen serve as advocates by carrying the wishes and complaints of the residents to the facility's management.

## Mission/Goals

The mission of the LTC Ombudsman Program is to provide ombudsman services to all residents of all long-term care facilities through advocacy and education.

### The goals of the program are:

- To **ADVOCATE** for Resident Rights.
- To provide community education on long-term care issues.
- To provide ombudsman services to all residents of all long-term care facilities in Missouri.

### Ombudsmen achieve these goals by:

- Making sure all residents are informed of their rights as established by law.
- Empowering residents and helping to resolve all complaints at the facility level through the involvement of all concerned parties.

## Do you want to be a volunteer?

Sometimes long-term care facility residents need someone to help them speak up for their rights. The long-term care ombudsman trains volunteers to advocate for these residents, providing a vital link to quality care.

## Ombudsman Volunteer Qualifications

- Likes older people
- Time to volunteer
- 21 years of age or older
- Good listening and communication skills
- Must be objective, sensitive, diplomatic, reliable
- Complete required minimum 18 hours of training
- Transportation

**Become an Ombudsman today, call:**

**1-800-309-3282**

**or mail information to:**



**State Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman  
P.O. Box 570  
Jefferson City, MO  
65102**



**Detach and mail, indicating your request(s):**

**Please send me the following booklets or brochures:**  
(indicate quantities required)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Resident Rights: For Long-Term Care in Missouri
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consumer Handbook For Resident and Family of Long-Term Care Facilities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your Guide to: Choosing a Nursing Home
- \_\_\_\_\_ A Basic Guide for Understanding Guardianship and Conservatorship in Missouri

**Yes, I would like to know more about becoming a Volunteer Ombudsman!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_



## No Problem is Too Big or Too Small for an Ombudsman

- Ombudsman can often solve problems before they become serious.
- Ombudsman work within the system to make the system work for residents.
- Ombudsman make a significant contribution to the living conditions for residents.

**1-800-309-3282**

## Resident Rights

The following rights are guaranteed to residents of Missouri long-term care facilities under the *Federal Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act* and/or the *Missouri Omnibus Nursing Home Act*.

- Be Fully Informed
- Choose Your Own Doctor
- Voice Grievances
- Be Free From Abuse and Restraint
- Have Privacy and Respect
- Participate in Activities
- Purchase Goods and Services
- Participate in Your Care
- Remain in the Facility
- Manage Your Own Finances
- Confidentiality
- Communicate Freely
- Keep Your Possessions
- Retain Marital Privileges

### Ombudsmen Assist with Resident Complaints

Complaints are received in the strictest of confidence, and an investigation/ resolution is not attempted without the resident's permission unless the problem affects a number of residents and can be approached in a generic sense without breaching confidentiality.

Having a volunteer assigned to a particular facility provides the most accessible means of complaint resolution. Missouri's long-term care facility regulations include resident access to the services of an ombudsman 19 CSR 30-88.010-2 (18).

### Organization

Missouri's ten Area Agencies on Aging administer the program on the local level by designating someone as the regional ombudsman coordinator. This coordinator may be an Area Agency on Aging staff person or may be a person who contracts with the area agency. Responsibilities of the coordinator include recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers.



Alternate forms of this publication for persons with disabilities may be obtained by contacting  
1-800-309-3282.

Hearing impaired citizens telephone  
1-800-735-2966.

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## Volunteer

## to Make a Difference! Be a Long-Term Care Ombudsman



**Advocate for  
Quality Care for  
Long-Term Care  
Residents**