

## **LTC Ombudsman Services of Santa Barbara County** **GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The volunteer Ombudsman will serve under the direction of the Program Manager as a representative of the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

The function of the Ombudsman is to:

- 1) Investigate and resolve complaints made by or on behalf of older person(s) in long-term care facilities relating to administrative actions that may adversely affect health, safety, welfare and rights of such residents.
- 2) Provide facility coverage.
- 3) Assist in the development and implementation of resident and family councils in LTC facilities.
- 4) Establish educational programs for facility residents and staff or with community groups and agencies to encourage their involvement in long term care.
- 5) Witness Advance Health Care Directives (AHCD) and transfer of property.
- 6) Investigate allegations of abuse in long term care facilities.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

Valid California driver's license and proof of vehicle insurance required.

Must pass a criminal background check and fingerprinting using live scan.

- 1) Ability to be objective, independent, assertive, investigative, and fair-minded.
- 2) Ability to listen accurately.
- 3) Possess good communication skills.
- 4) Possess good organizational skills.
- 5) Ability to work with supervision.
- 6) Possess a practical aptitude for problem solving.

### **LENGTH OF COMMITTEMENT**

2 flexible hours per week (8 hours per month) are the minimum required hours. The total commitment is one year.

### **DUTIES**

- 1) Monitoring Program: Develop a visitation plan to make regular (unscheduled) visits to assigned facility(ies).
  - a. Develop a position of trust with the residents.
  - b. Listen accurately.
  - c. Be an alert observer.
  - d. Develop a cooperative relationship with facility staff.
  
- 2) Handle Investigations: Seek to resolve complaints and concerns received from resident(s) and/or community-at-large within the facility.

The investigation process will include:

- a. Interview with complainant(s).
- b. Obtain consent, gather information and check facts through visit(s) to the facility, and various interviews.
- c. Consider possible solutions, identify issues, obstacles and choose an approach (keeping alternate strategies in mind).

**LTC Ombudsman Services of Santa Barbara County**  
**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

- d. A written statement of findings (case report) including steps taken to reach a conclusion.
- 3) Work towards resolution of complaint(s) and assist in team efforts when necessary.
  - a. Investigator may recommend action to resolve complaint and make follow-up recommendations.
  - b. If complaint is not resolved, or unresolvable, consult with Staff Ombudsman or Program Manager.
- 4) Record keeping and documentation: Keeping accurate records and documentation is a mandatory requirement (documentation will include complaint statements, investigation report, interview summary, letters and complaint party's statement and witness statements).
- 5) Record and report complaint information on appropriate form(s) provided by the office.
  - a. Always include: name(s), date, time and location of event(s).
  - b. Report in a logical and dated sequence.
  - c. Substantiate or document your opinions with as much information as possible.
  - d. Attention will be given for complaint categories and definitions i.e. physical abuse, quality of care, staffing, resident's rights, dietary, financial, activities program, physical plant, facility administration, regulatory agencies, medical care, transfer problem(s), legal, pharmacy, placement problem(s), and social services.
- 6) Confidentiality: The resident's right to confidentiality is absolutely upheld (unless otherwise indicated by obtaining appropriate releases).
  - a. Resident's case records, personal or medical records or the resident's identity will be maintained in the strictest of confidence unless the resident or his/her legal representative has consented to such disclosure or a court orders the disclosure.
  - b. Complaint confidentiality protection is to be assured to any complainant who makes such a request.
- 7) Personal Assistance: Refrain from taking on any task of a nursing or care nature, i.e. lifting or otherwise physically assisting residents.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- 1) Complete 36 hours of mandated training.
- 2) Attend monthly in-service meetings. Complete a minimum of 12 hours continuing education per year. Meetings are held last Tuesday of the month at 1:30 p.m.
  - a. Failure to attend three (3) consecutive monthly meetings without prior notice, certification will be reviewed for possible decertification.
- 3) Report immediately to the Program Manager any changes in schedule or work availability and any conflict you may have with staff, etc.

**LTC Ombudsman Services of Santa Barbara County**  
**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

- 4) Call the Long Term Care Ombudsman Office when:
  - a. A problem appears serious.
  - b. The problem may require referral to outside agencies.
  - c. The problem cannot be resolved within the facility.
  - d. You have questions and/or need advice.
  - e. You don't have time to adequately deal with the problem.
  - f. You receive a report of abuse.
  
- 5) Submit a monthly report to the Program Manager:
  - a. Document hours worked each week, activities performed and steps taken to reach resolution of complaints and concerns.
  - b. Request reimbursement of mileage expenses if desired.
  
- 6) Keep the focus on the resident:
  - a. What does the resident want? and,
  - b. Is the facility/family acting in the best interest of the resident?
  
- 7) Respect absolutely the resident's right to confidentiality; obtain the necessary authorization for release of information.
  
- 8) Keep complete and accurate notes and documentation.
  
- 9) Have fun – this is a great volunteer experience and a chance to really make a difference in the life of a frail, elderly facility resident.