

## Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman's Office

Investigates and resolves complaints that may affect the health, safety, welfare, or right of residents. Whether through individual contact with residents or systemic advocacy, ombudsmen make a difference in the lives of residents in long term care facilities everyday.



- Assistance with questions, problems or concerns
- Investigation to help resolve resident and family concerns
- Information and Resources – for instance, how to choose a long-term care facility or rules governing facilities

## Resident Advocate Committee Volunteers

## Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman



*For an application form, a list of advocates for a specific facility, or further information please call or write:*

## Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

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**Working Together to  
Make Things Right!**

**Resident  
Advocate  
Committee  
Volunteer  
Program**

All licensed Long-Term Care facilities are required to have a Resident Advocate Committee. Advocates volunteer for the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

## What are Resident Advocate Committee Volunteers?

Resident Advocates are state appointed volunteers serving on behalf of residents in long-term care facilities. All long-term care facilities in Iowa are required by law to have resident advocate committees. Names, addresses and telephone numbers of the advocates must be prominently posted in the facility.

## What do Resident Advocates do?

Resident Advocates visit residents to inquire about the quality of their life in the facility. Resident Advocates seek to resolve complaints or grievances at the local level; they serve as advocates for residents without being adversaries of the facility.

## May I contact a Resident Advocate directly if I have a concern?

Yes! Names and numbers must be posted in a prominent place Resident Advocates are committed to confidentiality so you may discuss issues without concerns of adverse consequences. The rights and quality of life of the residents are of primary importance to the advocates. An advocate will pass along or attempt to resolve your concerns only with your permission.

## How often does the Resident Advocate Committee meet?

The Resident Advocate Committee is required to meet at least quarterly. However, advocates are encouraged to meet as frequently as necessary to accomplish their responsibilities. Meeting more than four times a year (perhaps as frequently as once a month) helps the committee to stay current and aware of concerns and problems, and helps residents resolve their problems or suggestions in a timely manner.

The State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is also available if assistance is required regarding concerns in facilities.



## Who appoints/trains members on Resident Advocate Committees?

Any person or group may recommend potential members, but the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman appoints Resident Advocates. The State Long-Term Care Ombudsman provides technical assistance to committees as well as training, education, support and information to advocates. All advocates receive a quarterly newsletter, *The Advocate*, which contains informative articles.

## What qualifications do I need to become a Resident Advocate Committee volunteer?

To become an advocate, you must be a caring, objective and conscientious adult. You can not have financial interest in the facility, sit on the board of directors, work in the facility, or have a relative who is employed by the facility.

Advocates are asked to commit to three hours a month and to attend committee meetings.