

# **JOB DESCRIPTION: CERTIFIED LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN (VOLUNTEER)**

## **DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE:**

A certified volunteer in the Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program serves persons who reside in long-term care by providing them with information about their rights and available resources. Ombudsmen also obtain factual information about resident's complaints and assist with protection of their rights, and otherwise assure that they receive fair treatment from service providers.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:**

1. At least weekly, visit with residents living in the assigned long-term care facility. More frequent visits are desirable and important.
2. Provide individual information to residents living in the assigned long-term care facility about their rights, community services available to them, laws, regulations and standards that govern long-term care facilities, and good health and safety practice.
3. When a resident living in the assigned long-term care facility complains, or otherwise discusses a violation of their rights, a law, regulation or standard:
  - a. Obtain the resident's consent to discuss the complaint with the service provider, review records, etc. if needed to investigate the complaint.
  - b. Determine the facts of the alleged violation.
  - c. Make a determination that the complaint was/was not founded.
  - d. When the complaint is verified, work with the resident and service provider to resolve the complaint.
  - e. When the complaint is not resolved, refer the complaint, together with all documentation, to the Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman under whose direction you work and, with the resident's consent, refer the complaint to the appropriate regulatory agency if necessary.
4. Assist residents living in the assigned long-term care facility and their families and friends to become more actively involved in their care and treatment by assisting to develop and participating in resident councils and family support groups.
5. Attend monthly in-service training sessions.
6. Submit monthly activity reports.

**AUTHORITY:**

Upon successful completion of a 36-hour training program, the Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman certifies volunteer ombudsmen.

**SUPERVISION:**

Routine activities and responsibilities of the volunteer ombudsman are supervised by the Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman who has delegated authority from the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman to operate the regional program. Final authority over the program rests with the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

**Evaluation:**

Volunteer ombudsmen are evaluated on job performance by the Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman three months after their first day of work with residents of their assigned long-term care facility and annually thereafter. Annual re-certification will be based on satisfactory performance reports.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

- A sincere interest in promoting the well-being and protecting the rights of people in long-term care.
- An ability to work cooperatively with the people who live in long-term care facilities, the Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman, and long-term care providers.
- Ability to discover facts that result in complaints and impartially and objectively determine whether complaints are verified or unverified.
- Acceptance of, and adherence to, the Volunteer Ombudsman Code of Ethics and Standards.
- Successful completion of the Long-Term Care Volunteer Ombudsman Training Program and State Ombudsman's Certification as a Volunteer.
- Commitment to provide at least four hours per week of Volunteer Ombudsman service per year, and commitment to follow through on specific complaints once begun, even when the time demands are greater.
- Free of conflicts of interest as outlined in WAC 365-18-040

## **RESTRICTIONS:**

### **All Ombudsmen must be free from the following conflicts of interest:**

- Ombudsman cannot be employed by, manage, or work as a paid consultant or independent contractor for a long-term care facility, currently or within the last year.
- Ombudsman or a member of his/her immediate family cannot have a significant ownership or investment interest in a long-term care facility or service, currently or within the last year.
- Ombudsman cannot have a direct involvement in the licensing or regulation of a long-term care facility or long-term care service, while certified as an ombudsman or within the last year.
- Ombudsman cannot solicit or receive gifts, money or estate property from a resident, unless the resident is a relative.
- Ombudsman cannot be assigned to a long-term care facility in which the Ombudsman or a member of his/her immediate family is a resident.
- A Volunteer Ombudsman shall not use this position for any financial benefit, direct, indirect or implied.
- A Volunteer Ombudsman shall not conduct or engage in political or religious activities at the long-term care facility to which s/he is assigned.
- Ombudsman cannot have direct personal involvement in the provision of involuntary services or involuntary commitment of a resident.