Maryland Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Volunteer Ombudsman Representative
Position Description

TITLE: Long Term Care Volunteer Ombudsman Representative

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimum age of 21 years;
- Free of conflicts of interest as identified by the Program and the Older Americans Act;
- Sensitive to elderly and institutionalized individuals;
- Able to communicate orally and in written format;
- Good active listening skills enabling determination of hidden problems and complaints;
- Able to develop working relationships with residents, family members, facility staff and ombudsman staff;
- Open minded and not judgmental;
- Ability to utilize good problem solving skills;
- Reliability and perseverance in problem resolution;
- Access to dependable transportation;
- Physically and emotionally capable of meeting the demands of the position;
- Willingness to provide personal references and to submit to a criminal background check.

DUTIES:

- Visit with facility residents regularly, with frequency to be determined by local program (Tier I Ombudsman);
- Seek out hard-to-reach residents;
- Maintain confidentiality of all resident information;
- Establish professional relationships with the staff of the facilities where serving;
- Work closely with the Ombudsman staff to develop a strong sense of teamwork and mutual support;

- Promote understanding of Residents' Rights (under COMAR 10.07.09 or 10.07.14) by residents, family members and facility staff; ensure that Residents' Rights are posted and available to residents.
- Promote implementation of Residents' Rights;
- Encourage formation of resident and family council meetings if not already formed;
- Attend resident and family council meetings when appropriate;
- Inform, encourage and assist residents and family members to utilize facility internal grievance procedures;
- Assist residents and their family member to advocate for themselves;
- Work to resolve problems/complaints if the local program uses volunteers for this purpose (Tier II Ombudsman);
- Discuss cases and strategies with local employed Ombudsman frequently as determined by the local LTCOP;
- Notify local employed Ombudsman of unresolved problems or complaints;
- Promptly inform local employed Ombudsman of critical events, e.g., abuse, neglect, ethical issues, etc.;
- Provide education and information on long term care issues to individuals and the public in partnership with the local program; Submit a monthly summary of activities, hours, and case notes as determined by the local program;
- Seek permission from the Ombudsman staff prior to making public statements, giving an interview to the media, testifying before legislative or administrative hearings, or at any public forum that concerns the Program.

TRAINING AND SUPERVISION:

- Become certified as an Ombudsman through the completion of an initial orientation and standardized training program approved by the Maryland Department of Aging;
- Complete Tier II Ombudsman training and be approved by the LTCOP prior to addressing problems/complaints;
- Attend and participate in training meetings in the local ombudsman program to enhance basic skills and discuss issues of concern;
- Attend additional training when required by local program or State Long Term Care Ombudsman;
- Participate in ongoing supervision, support and continuing education when provided by staff professionals in the Ombudsman Program.

TIME COMMITMENT TO PROGRAM:

- At least one year commitment to program;
  Specific number of weekly/monthly hours to be determined by local program.