



Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman

What is an **OMBUDSMAN**? The Swedish word **OMBUDSMAN** (om-budz-man) means *advocate* or *representative of the people*. The staff and volunteers of the NYS Long Term Care Ombudsman Program advocate for residents of nursing homes and other long term care residential facilities. Volunteers serve as representatives of the NYS LTCOP.

Mission Statement: To serve as an advocate and resource for older adults and persons with disabilities in long term care facilities.

Values: Resident-Centered Focus, Confidentiality, Objectivity, Accessibility, Prevention, Resident Empowerment & Autonomy, Complaint Resolution

A Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteer is educated and certified to:

Visit a facility regularly, talk with residents and their legal representatives, and identify concerns, issues, suggestions and complaints. When certified volunteers are asked by residents to act on their behalf, LTCOP handle many complaints and concerns independently in discussion with facility staff.

Certified Ombudsmen Volunteer Representatives also:

- Encourage resident self-advocacy and self-determination and always respect residents' preferences.
- Ensure confidentiality by obtaining permission from residents to act on their behalf.
- Encourage residents to work together and with facility staff to resolve issues.
- Develop relationships of trust and respect with residents, their legal representatives, facility administration and staff.
- Observe and monitor the quality of resident care and quality of resident life.
- Advocate for the rights, safety and well-being of all residents, and monitor the facility's implementation of Residents' Rights.
- Educate and inform residents, family members and facility staff about Residents' Rights.
- Follow up on problem resolution efforts.
- Communicate regularly with the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program staff and submit reports monthly; attend continuing education meetings.

Qualifications: Excellent communication skills, assessment and problem solving ability, fairness, reliability, and an interest in elders with a commitment to improving life and care in long term care facilities. Conflicts of interest, as determined by the State Ombudsman, are prohibited.

Benefits and Training: Prior to acceptance into the program, volunteer Ombudsmen candidates are interviewed and screened, including a satisfactory background check. Certification is awarded following the successful completion of a comprehensive 36-hour education program. Periodic continuing education meetings are held to provide volunteer Ombudsmen with relevant information to help them carry out their assigned duties. Reimbursement for LTCOP mileage is offered to certified LTCO.

Time Commitment: Long Term Care Ombudsmen are assigned to visit one or more facilities based on community need, transportation, level of experience and desire. Certified volunteer Ombudsmen commit to providing a minimum of 2 hours per week in LTCOP activity. Group volunteer meetings are held monthly. The annual requirement for four sessions of continued education is met through attendance at continuing education sessions or workshops, or other approved opportunities.

For more information visit <http://www.ltcombudsman.ny.gov>

*For application details to serve in Chemung, Schuyler or Tompkins County call
607-274-5498 or email ltcombudsman@tompkins-co.org*