

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Serving residents of long term care facilities in North Dakota

Background:

- The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program's mission is to serve as an advocate for people who are elderly and people with disabilities who reside in long term care facilities.
- The office of the North Dakota State Long Term Care Ombudsman has existed for over 25 years and is under the direction of the Aging Services Division of the N.D. Department of Human Services.

Ombudsman Role:

- **Advocates** for people who are elderly or who have disabilities and who live in long term care facilities
- **Receives, investigates, mediates, and resolves** complaints affecting residents of long term care facilities
- **Answers** questions and **provides** information and referral services
- **Educates** people about long term care issues, services, and options
- **Educates** residents and their families, and facility staff about residents' rights and self advocacy
- **Coordinates** efforts with other agencies and organizations concerned about residents in long term care facilities
- **Identifies** issues and problem areas and **recommends** changes in laws, rules, policies, and procedures

Serves:

People living in:

- Skilled Nursing Facilities (nursing homes)
- Basic Care Facilities
- Swing Bed Facilities
- Sub-Acute and Transitional Settings in Hospitals
- Assisted Living Facilities

Relatives and friends of people living in long term care facilities

Employees and administrators of long term care facilities

Regulatory and certification agencies, other agencies, and the **general public**

Problems An Ombudsman Typically Handles:

- **Problems related to the rights of residents of long term care facilities**
These rights relate to freedom from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and restraints; personal privacy, dignity and respect, visitors, admission policies, cost of care information, protection of funds, involvement in health care decisions, transfers and discharges, participation in groups and activities, filing grievances and complaints, and other matters.
- **Concerns about care or treatment provided**
These usually relate to admission, health services, drugs, food, patient funds, transfers, or discharge policies.

- Requests for information

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N.D. Ombudsman Program Data	
Fiscal Year 2009	
Data relates to long term care nursing facilities, basic care facilities, and assisted living facilities	
Number of licensed nursing facilities	83
<i>Number of beds</i>	6,405
Number of swing bed units	33
<i>Approximate number of beds</i>	539
Number of basic care facilities	61
<i>Number of beds</i>	1,710
Number of assisted living facilities	69
<i>Number of units</i>	2543
Number of verified complaints received by Ombudsman Program	715
Number of complainants	513
The majority of concerns dealt with systems and issues such as guardianship, financial exploitation, resident care issues and family conflict or interference.	228

State Units On Aging Are Required To:

- Establish and operate a Long Term Care Ombudsman Program to investigate and resolve complaints on behalf of residents of long term care facilities
- Review and comment on federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies regarding long term care facilities
- Provide information to public agencies about issues and problems of people living in long term care facilities
- Establish a procedure to ensure confidentiality of information and files maintained by the Ombudsman Program



Another Resource:
ND Aging and Disability
Resource Link
1-800-451-8693
www.carechoice.nd.gov

Revised June 2010
N.D. Dept. of Human Services
Aging Services Division
 1237 West Divide Ave, Suite 6
 Bismarck, ND 58501-1208
 (701) 328-4601 / TTY (701) 328-3480
 E-mail: dhsaging@nd.gov

Contact An Ombudsman:

Joan Ehrhardt, RN

State Long Term Care Ombudsman
 1237 W. Divide Ave, Suite 6
 Bismarck, ND 58501-1208
 701-328-4617 or 1-800-451-8693
 Serves **Bismarck** and these counties: Burleigh, Emmons, Grant, Kidder, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, Sheridan, and Sioux

Bryan Fredrickson, LSW

Regional Ombudsman
 Southeast Human Service Center
 2624 9th Ave. SW, Fargo, ND 58103-2350
 701-298-4413 or 1-888-342-4900
 Serves **Fargo** and **Jamestown** and these counties: Barnes, Cass, Dickey, Foster, Griggs, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, Stutsman, Traill, and Wells

Kim Locker Helten, LSW

Regional Ombudsman
 Lake Region Human Service Center
 200 Hwy 2 SW, Devils Lake, ND 58301
 701-665-2269 or 1-888-607-8610
 Serves residents of **Devils Lake** and **Grand Forks** and these counties: Benson, Cavalier, Eddy, Grand Forks, Nelson, Pembina, Ramsey, Rolette, Towner, and Walsh

Debbie Kraft

Regional Ombudsman
 North Central Human Service Center
 400 22nd Ave. NW, Minot, ND 58703
 701-857-8582 or 1-888-470-6968
 Serves **Minot** and **Williston** and these north central and northwest region counties: Bottineau, Burke, Divide, McHenry, McKenzie, Mountrail, Pierce, Renville, Ward, and Williams

Mark Jesser, LSW

Regional Ombudsman
 Badlands Human Service Center
 300 13th Ave West, Suite 1
 701-227-7557 or 1-888-227-7525 Serves **Dickinson** and these counties: Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Hettinger, Slope, and Stark