



Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman

What is an OMBUDSMAN?

The Scandinavian word **OMBUDSMAN** (om-budz-man) means “advocate” or “representative of the people.” The volunteers of the NYS Long Term Care Ombudsman Program advocate for residents of nursing homes and residential care facilities.

Our stated mission: Is to serve as an advocate and resource for older adults and people who live in nursing homes, adult care facilities and assisted living communities.

Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteers are educated and certified to:

- Keenly observe and monitor the quality of residents care and quality of residents’ life.
- Advocate for the rights, safety and well-being of residents and work to preserve residents’ dignity.
- Educate and empower residents, family members and facility staff about the importance of Resident’s Rights.
- Encourage residents in self-advocacy and self- determination. Promote residents to work together with the facility staff to address and resolve issues.
- Maintain and ensure confidentiality at all times. The resident is our client.
- Develop relationships of trust and respect with residents, family members, facility administration and staff.

Qualities sought in volunteers: Compassion and sensitive to the needs of older adults. Ombudsmen should have excellent communication skills, assessment and problem solving abilities; able to be impartial; and are reliable.

Benefits and Training: Prior to acceptance into the program, volunteer Ombudsman candidates are interviewed and screened; a background check is also done. Certification is awarded following the successful completion of a comprehensive 45+ hours NYS certification training.

Time Commitment: With just few volunteer hours each week, Ombudsman have the opportunity to nurture the human spirit and preserve dignity by protecting resident’s rights. They also need to attend six in-services a year and complete a monthly report.

Your reward? The satisfaction of knowing you are making a difference in the quality of care in an older adult’s life.