



Montgomery County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Department of Health & Human Services, Aging & Disability Services
3950 Ferrara Drive, 2nd Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20906
240-777-3369

POSITION DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE:

LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN REPRESENTATIVE VOLUNTEER

TIME COMMITMENT:

4-6 hours each week for at least one year; includes travel time, regular monthly meetings, and record keeping; potential to negotiate for more in-depth assignments

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ✓ Long Term care advocates must be at least 21 years of age, free from conflicts of interest as identified by the program and the Older Americans Act
- ✓ Physically and emotionally capable of meeting the demands of the position
- ✓ Provide personal references prior to acceptance into the program
- ✓ Able to communicate orally and in written format
- ✓ Sensitive to the elderly, especially those institutionalized
- ✓ Open-minded and non-judgmental with the ability to be fair and honest
- ✓ Resourceful in coping with a variety of situations objectively
- ✓ Maintain a sense of humor dealing with day-to-day concerns
- ✓ Perseverance in staying with a problem until it is resolved
- ✓ Tactful and diplomatic - developing relationships to work with residents, family members, facility staff, and ombudsman staff
- ✓ Good listening skills enabling determination of hidden problems and complaints
- ✓ Flexible - schedule to allow regular visitation during daytime hours, and possible night or weekend events
- ✓ Reliable – don't disappoint those who depend on the relationship
- ✓ Access to transportation that is dependable
- ✓ Access to a communication system where staff can leave confidential messages

DUTIES:

- Work closely with the staff of the Montgomery County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program to develop a strong sense of teamwork and mutual support
- Develop confidence in agency program and establish cooperative and trusting relationships with staff of the facility where assigned
- Ensure that the Residents' Bill of Rights is offered, posted, read, and understood by the residents, their family members, and facility staff; protect implementation within the nursing home or assisted living environment
- Encourage and assist the residents and their family members to utilize internal grievance procedure within facility

DUTIES (Continued):

- Help the residents and/or their family members to understand the laws and regulations under which the long term care facilities operate
- Assist residents and their family members to advocate for themselves
- Attend resident and family council meetings that are active in the facility; encouraging their formation in facilities where they do not exist
- Investigate and assist in resolving resident complaints within the facility
- Investigate and assist in resolving systematic complaints which originate outside of the facility environment but impact residents in long term care settings
- Maintain current written records of involvement with resident complaints and submit them to ombudsman office on a regular basis within HIPPA compliance
- Discuss cases and strategies with ombudsman staff frequently
- Notify ombudsman staff of unresolved problems or complaints
- Promptly inform ombudsman staff of critical events which occur (i.e. – abuse)
- Seek out the hard-to-reach resident
- Submit a monthly summary of activities, hours, case notes reporting problems and complaint resolution; mileage forms for reimbursement
- Participate in the survey inspection process by sharing pertinent information with the inspecting officials from the Office of Health Care Quality and their designees; attend exit conferences and share overall results with ombudsman staff
- Consult ombudsman staff for guidance prior to testifying before legislative or administrative hearings
- Seek guidance and permission from the ombudsman staff prior to making public statements or giving an interview to the media

TRAINING AND SUPERVISION:

- ❖ Mandatory completion of an initial orientation and training program to become familiar with the program goals and develop advocacy skills (30 hours)
- ❖ Participation in a scheduled follow-up training designed to develop the use of laws and regulations in complex advocacy situations (3 hours)
- ❖ Attendance and participation in monthly in-service meetings designed for volunteers to meet and share experiences, enhance basic skills, become familiar with trends in long-term care, and discuss issues of common concern
- ❖ Participation in seminars and courses of interest offered through the Montgomery County Dept of Health & Human Services Center for Continuous Learning or other appropriate resources in the community
- ❖ Ongoing supervision and support will be provided by staff professionals in the Montgomery County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program who have proficiency in the field of aging, and expertise in long term care settings