

How Do I Contact An Ombudsman?

State Ombudsman
West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, WV 25305
877-987-3646 (toll-free); 304-558-3317
info@wvseniorservices.gov
www.wvseniorservices.gov

Regional Ombudsman
Legal Aid of West Virginia
922 Quarrier Street, Suite 400
Charleston, WV 25301
800-834-0598 (toll-free); 304 343-4481

It is illegal for anyone to willfully interfere with a state, regional, or volunteer ombudsman who is performing his or her duties. It is also illegal for anyone to act discriminatorily against an employee of a long-term care facility or a resident or his or her family members and/or legal representatives because they filed a complaint with or provided information in good faith to a state, regional, or volunteer ombudsman in the performance of his or her official duties.

West Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

5/08

West Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

*When You Need
Someone to
Advocate on Behalf
of a Resident of a
Long-Term
Care Facility*

What is an Ombudsman?

What does a Long-Term Care Ombudsman do?

Is the Ombudsman employed by the long-term care facility?

What about confidentiality?

Who can use an Ombudsman's services?

What kinds of issues are handled?

What are examples of problems that an Ombudsman can help with?

*All Ombudsmen services
are free of charge.
Call 800-834-0598 toll-free.*

- An Ombudsman is one who speaks on behalf of others. The name originated in Sweden and means *citizen representative*.
- - Advocates for residents' rights and quality care in nursing facilities, personal care homes, assisted living facilities, and similar long-term care facilities
- Investigates complaints on behalf of residents about long-term care and services
- Monitors the long-term care system and makes appropriate recommendations for improvements
- Makes unannounced visits to facilities
- Provides information to residents and mediates their concerns
- Provides community education
- No. In West Virginia, Ombudsmen are independent from the facilities. The State Ombudsman works for the West Virginia Bureau of Senior Services, which administers the Ombudsman Program. The Bureau contracts with Legal Aid of West Virginia to conduct the day-to-day operations of the program.
- Anyone can call the Ombudsman Program and make an anonymous complaint. You can also identify yourself but request to remain anonymous. The Ombudsman Program understands residents' and families' concerns about retaliation and works to prevent it.
- - Residents of long-term care facilities
- Families and friends of long-term care facility residents
- Staff of long-term care facilities
- Government agencies
- - Concerns about the quality of care or treatment from a long-term care service provider
- Questions about billing and charges, including residents covered by Medicare and Medicaid
- Appeals regarding transfers, discharges, discontinuances, or changes in services
- - Neglect - Problem with roommate(s) - Insufficient medical or nursing care
- Physical or verbal abuse - Desire to leave a facility - Lack of privacy
- Poor drug restraints - Poor food service - Additional or high charges for "extra" services
- Long-term care providers who fail to honor their contracts with residents
- Complaints surrounding the action, inaction, or decisions of government agencies that adversely affect residents