



**The National Long-Term Care
Ombudsman Resource Center**

COVID-19 Recovery and Reentry: TA Open Dialogue Webinar Series

Successful Communication During COVID-19

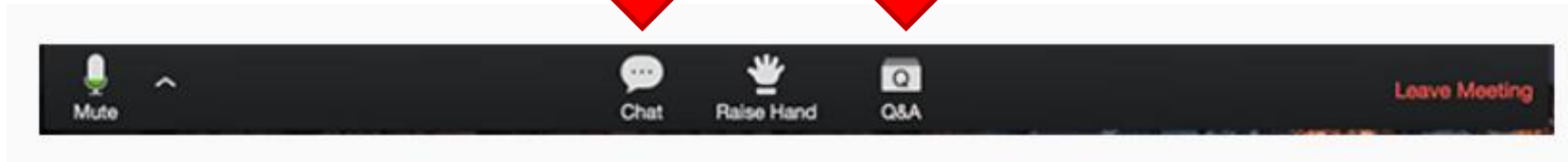
May 11, 2021

Welcome!



- Use the Q&A feature for questions for the speakers.
- Use the chat feature to submit comments or respond to questions from speakers or other attendees.
- Please complete the evaluation questionnaire when the webinar is over.

Have a question? Use the Q&A or Chat box.



Question & Answer

The Q&A window allows you to ask questions to the host and panelists. They can either reply back to you via text in the Q&A window or answer your question live.

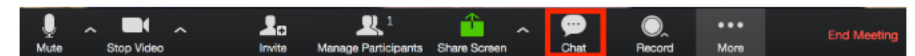
1. Click Q&A to open the Q&A window.
2. Type your question into the Q&A box. Click **Send**.

A screenshot of the Zoom Q&A window. The title bar says 'Q&A'. The main area contains the text 'You have no question.' Below this is a text input field with the placeholder text 'What happens when I raise my hand?'. At the bottom left, there is a checkbox labeled 'Send Anonymously'. At the bottom right, there is a blue 'Send' button.

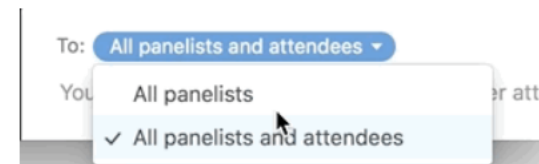
Chat

The in-meeting chat allows you to send chat messages to and send a message to the host, panelists, and attendees (if permitted).

1. Click **Chat** to open the in-meeting chat.



2. The chat will appear on the right side of your Zoom window if you are not in full screen. If you are in full screen, it will appear in a window that you can move around your screen as needed.
3. To change who you are chatting with, click the drop down beside **To:**.



4. Type your message and press **Enter**.

Speakers

Patty Ducayet is the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman for Texas. She has served in the position since 2007 and previously served as an ombudsman in Dallas County. She has a Bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Texas and a Master's degree in social work from the University of Denver. She loves to travel and eagerly awaits the chance to travel outside of the U.S. again soon.

Shazia Sultan is Managing Local Ombudsman in Brazos Valley region which includes Bryan/College Station area, the home of the Texas Aggies. Shazia received her MPH degree from Texas A&M, School of Public Health in 2015. She started her career as a volunteer with Brazos Valley Council of Governments that same year, became a Certified Marketplace Navigator, Benefits Counselor, Staff Ombudsman and has been the Managing Local Ombudsman since 2018. She is mom of two teenagers, 18 and 14, enjoys reading poetry and watching craft videos.

Heidi L'Esperance is Regional LTC Ombuds for Snohomish County, north of Seattle. After moving to the beautiful Pacific Northwest in 2017, Heidi became a Certified LTCO Volunteer. Heidi was offered the position of Snohomish-King County Long-Term Care Staff Ombuds February 2018. In October 2018, Snohomish County and King County became two separate regions; she became the Regional for Snohomish County.

Facilitator: Carol Scott, Ombudsman Specialist, National Ombudsman Resource Center

Poll Question 1

Which of the following have you done during the COVID-19 pandemic (select all that apply)?

- Window visit
- Outdoor visit
- Wrote a letter or email to a resident
- Spoke with a resident by phone or video call
- Spoke with a family member by phone or video call
- Participated in a Family Council meeting (virtually)
- Participated in a Resident Council meeting (virtually)
- Provided community education outreach virtually (e.g., Facebook live, Zoom)
- Participated in a car parade

Communication Tips

- **Communication with Residents**
 - Contact residents and family members that were complainants in recent cases (prior to the visitation restrictions)
- **Long-Term Care Facility Staff**
 - Coordinate with the facility to identify a staff person for you to contact on a regular basis.
- **Resident Representatives, Families, and the Public**
 - Ensure your website has current information.
 - Create a poster or flyer with information about the program, post it on the front entrance of the facility.

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/communication

Tips for Ombudsman Program Communication

with Residents, Long-Term Care Facilities, Families, and the Public During COVID-19

Purpose

In-person visitation restrictions¹ imposed to reduce the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) required Ombudsman programs to adapt quickly to ensure residents continue to have access to program services. In-person visits with residents are a core part of Ombudsman program outreach and advocacy and there is no substitute; however, during this crisis programs must use other means to connect with residents. This resource provides tips and examples to promote effective communication between the Ombudsman program and residents, families, providers, and the public when in-person visitation is limited.

Communication with Residents

General Outreach

Help residents understand why the Ombudsman program cannot visit while in-person visitation is restricted. Explain that the program is still available to assist them and tell them how to contact the program. You can share this information in a variety of ways:

- Mail letters to facilities and ask staff to distribute them to residents.
- Create a resident newsletter with advocacy tips, list of rights, and other pertinent information.
- Email Resident Council leadership and other residents.
- Email a letter to facilities and ask staff to print and share the letter with residents.
- Email or mail Ombudsman posters and/or flyers and ask facility staff to post them throughout the facility and on the outside of the facility's front door.
- Share via social media and on your program's website. Ensure information shared is current. Make content engaging (e.g., highlight one resident right a week with examples and articles related to that right).
- Create a brief video and share it on your website, social media, and send to state and local news broadcasts. Ask long-term care facilities to air the video on their internal channel, if available.

Connect with Residents

- Routinely request contact information for residents and resident representatives, including contact information for Resident and Family Council leadership. Establish regular contact with Resident and Family Council leadership and call/email other residents and resident representatives as often as possible.

Poll Question 2

Have you resumed indoor visits with residents?

- Yes
- No

Tips for Facility Visits During an Infectious Disease Outbreak


Updated April 2021

- Preparing and Arriving for a Visit
- Cleaning and Sanitizing During and Between Visits
- Protecting Yourself and Others

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/recovery-and-reentry

COVID-19

Recovery and Reentry Resources
For Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs



Tips for Facility Visits During an Infectious Disease Outbreak

Preparing & Arriving for a Visit	
What to Bring <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring only items necessary for the visit such as your ID badge, laptop, and required paperwork.• Store personal items (e.g., phone, purse, backpack) securely in your vehicle, if possible.• Sanitary Kit In a sealable bag, include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Hand soap– Hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol)– Paper towels (entire roll may not be necessary)– Disinfectant wipes (do not take spray into facility)– Bag for disposal of used items• Masks Wear a cloth mask with multiple layers of fabric or a disposable mask under a cloth mask. Do not use two disposable masks. Do not combine a KN95 mask with another mask. In addition, it may be necessary to have available face shields, gowns, and disposable gloves.	Arrival and Greeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine ahead of time where you will meet residents, (e.g., outdoors, window visits, or in a specific room).• Greet residents and staff verbally.• Avoid physical contact, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Handshakes– Hugs– Fist bumps• Avoid placing belongings on tabletops, floors, or chairs that might have high levels of germs.• If possible, maintain the recommended six feet distance between people.• Avoid touching surfaces, especially:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Doorknobs– Bed rails– Handles– Wheelchairs– Light switches
Cleaning and Sanitizing During & Between Visits	
Cleaning and Sanitizing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash hands at a sink for at least 20 seconds at the time of arrival, between visits in a resident's room, at departure, and as needed.• It is okay to use the supplies provided by the facility for washing hands. However, take your sanitary kit in with you in case adequate supplies are not available.• Use hand sanitizer in situations when hand washing not readily available.• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.• Avoid eating and drinking while at facility.	Supplies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean and sanitize the following items between facility visits and/or as needed.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Mobile phone– Eyeglasses– Pen, clipboard, and outside of laptop– Car keys– Name badge– Any additional items• Properly dispose of PPE after use. If PPE is not disposable, wash, spray, or wipe with disinfectant between visits.
Protecting Yourself and Others	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone is encouraged to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Fully vaccinated is defined as two weeks after completion of the vaccination process (either 1 or 2 shots).• For information about finding a vaccine visit the CDC website, or contact your local health department, medical provider, or pharmacist.• Scientists have not yet determined whether vaccinated people may still unknowingly spread the COVID-19 virus. Once you have been vaccinated, continue to wear a mask, maintain a physical distance of six feet, and wash hands frequently.	

REMINDERS: Follow public health guidance regarding infection control and protection and federal ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), [acl.gov](https://www.acl.gov)) and state guidance regarding visits to facilities.

Follow guidance for handwashing, self-care, and physical distancing. **DO NOT** conduct facility visits if you have any sickness (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.) or been exposed to someone with infectious disease symptoms in the last 14 days. Reschedule visits or if necessary, arrange for another representative to visit. Seek further guidance from the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 800MRC0001-01-03, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.

Revised April 2021 with updated information obtained from CDC.gov

Visit Checklist During the COVID-19 Pandemic

(updated May 2021 and available as a PDF, fillable PDF, and word document)

Task #12

Be prepared that residents will feel different emotions in reaction to the pandemic, isolation, and loss.

Description

Emotions displayed may include sadness, grief, anxiety, posttraumatic stress, great excitement for having visitors, etc.

Example

Spend time listening to the residents. Be an attentive empathetic listener.

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/recovery-and-reentry


COVID-19

ombudsman

The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center

Recovery and Reentry Resources

For Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs



Visit Checklist During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Date _____ Name _____

Facility _____ Location _____

#	Task	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Call facility in advance to learn of their visitation protocols.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Confirm with public health, the state survey agency, or with the facility about status of positive COVID-19 cases.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Guarantee that you are feeling well, have no temperature or other symptoms of illness, and have been following handwashing and physical distancing guidance. Complete COVID-19 Self-Screening and Verification form.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Review training in the use of face coverings, other personal protective equipment (PPE), and basic infection control practices. Review current program policies and procedures regarding safety and visits.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Ensure Sanitizer Kit is complete and includes adequate number of supplies.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Review and follow Ombudsman Program guidance regarding COVID-19 testing.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Protecting yourself and others. Everyone is encouraged to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Review NORC's Tips for Facility Visits information.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 9	If possible, plan to speak with more than one resident, especially if in response to a complaint to help maintain confidentiality of those that you visit.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Depending upon the reopening phase protocols, visit with residents throughout the facility, if allowed.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Document a resident's verbal communication of informed consent to investigate the complaint and/or access records related to the complaint.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Be prepared that residents may feel different emotions in reaction to the pandemic, isolation, and loss.	
<input type="checkbox"/> 13	If you develop COVID-19 symptoms and/or test positive, for contact tracing be prepared to provide public health with a list of facilities you visited and follow additional infection control protocol.	

Understanding Trauma and Ensuring Person-Centered Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Webinar Series for Ombudsman Programs

- COVID-19 and Ombudsman Programs: Understanding How Trauma Impacts You, Residents, and Your Advocacy
 - Person-Centered, Trauma-Informed Care
 - Compassion Fatigue
 - Anxiety
 - Grief and Mourning

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/webinars#four

Webinars and Free Online Training for Administrators, Direct Care Staff, and Family Members

- Person-Centered Care
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Compassion Fatigue
- Anxiety and Grief
 - Webinars and Materials:
https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/training-series
 - Online Courses and Quizzes:
<https://consumervoice.mrooms.net/course/index.php?categoryid=10>

COVID-19



The National **Long-Term Care**
Ombudsman Resource Center

Recovery and Reentry Resources

For Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs



[Tips for Ombudsman Program Communication with Residents, Long-Term Care Facilities, Families, and the Public During COVID-19](#)

[Tips for Facility Visits During an Infectious Disease Outbreak](#) - *Updated April 2021*

[Visit Checklist During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) - *Updated May 2021*

[Tips for Communicating While Wearing a Mask](#)

[Taking Care of You](#)

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/recovery-and-reentry

Free Cell Phones

Lifeline Assistance is an FCC-mandated (Federal Communications Commission), government-sponsored program that helps the financially disadvantaged receive a cell phone at no cost to them.

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/free-government-phones-by-state>

FREE GOVERNMENT CELL PHONES

Lifeline phone service provides free cell phones to America's financially disadvantaged

HOME DO YOU QUALIFY? HOW TO GET ONE? STATES PROVIDERS MINUTES FAQ NEWS CHEAP PLANS EARN MONEY

States Providing Cell Phones from the Government to Low-Income Residents

You can find a Lifeline cell phone service provider in 49 states, plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico.

Forty-nine states, the District of Columbia and Puerto offer programs that offer free phones and free service to Americans on government assistance, or simply those who are below certain income thresholds. The programs and eligibility vary in each state. In some states you might get unlimited calling and texting, and even some data allowance; and other states offer lesser, but still very good plans.

To check on your own state's providers and specific qualification criteria, just click on your state below. Some states have all of the major Lifeline cell phone companies and often quite a few smaller players. Some states have one or two companies, and sadly if you are the one state that is not on the list, your state does not yet have service. But it could very well soon, in fact, it's very likely.

CLICK ON YOUR STATE BELOW TO GET STARTED:

[Alabama](#) | [Alaska](#) | [Arizona](#) | [Arkansas](#) | [California](#) | [Colorado](#) | [Connecticut](#) | [District of Columbia](#) | [Delaware](#) | [Florida](#) | [Georgia](#) | [Hawaii](#) | [Idaho](#) | [Illinois](#) | [Indiana](#) | [Iowa](#) | [Kansas](#) | [Kentucky](#) | [Louisiana](#) | [Maine](#) | [Maryland](#) | [Massachusetts](#) | [Michigan](#) | [Minnesota](#) | [Mississippi](#) | [Missouri](#) | [Nebraska](#) | [Nevada](#) | [New Hampshire](#) | [New Jersey](#) | [New York](#) | [New Mexico](#) | [North Carolina](#) | [North Dakota](#) | [Ohio](#) | [Oklahoma](#) | [Oregon](#) | [Pennsylvania](#) | [Puerto Rico](#) | [Rhode Island](#) | [South Carolina](#) | [South Dakota](#) | [Tennessee](#) | [Texas](#) | [Utah](#) | [Vermont](#) | [Virginia](#) | [Washington](#) | [West Virginia](#) | [Wisconsin](#) | [Wyoming](#)

← Ads by Google

Stop seeing this ad

Why this ad? ▸

Just tell me how to get a Phone!

Confused? Getting a phone is actually very simple. [Click here](#) to begin, read every word, and then simply follow the instructions.

Sign up for our Free Newsletter

Enter email address

[Click to learn more...](#)

Search this site

Search this website

Popular Free Phone Service Providers

- Access Wireless
- Assist Wireless
- Assurance Wireless
- Life Wireless
- Safelink Wireless

More Information

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Readers' Questions
- Help
- Contact
- About Us

Recent Articles

This page has links for all states to find out who is eligible and where the phones can be accessed:

<https://www.freegovernmentcellphones.net/states>

Successful Communication During COVID-19



Patty Ducayet, Texas State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Texas



- 1,210 nursing facilities
- 2,029 assisted living facilities
- 100 staff ombudsmen
- ~200 volunteer ombudsmen reporting in 2021

COVID-19 State Office Activities

PPE Procurement

Policy Development and Training

Weekly Communications

- All staff calls, Tuesdays
- All manager call, Thursdays
- 30 minute weekly oral and written briefings
- State survey agency ALF and NF webinars
- Facebook Live Q&A



Volunteer Activity

If they are not visiting a facility



An Effort by the Texas Ombudsman Program to Connect with Residents

Virtual Contact-- it's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. Collect resident contact information.
2. Find out how and when a resident wants to visit with you.
3. Call residents on that schedule!



Preparing for a Call

- Dress for success, if a video call.
- Make sure your device is ready.
- Choose a quiet, confidential place.
- Silence any device that may go off during your meeting.
- Position your camera:
 - Eye level
 - Proper lighting
 - Background





Making the First Call

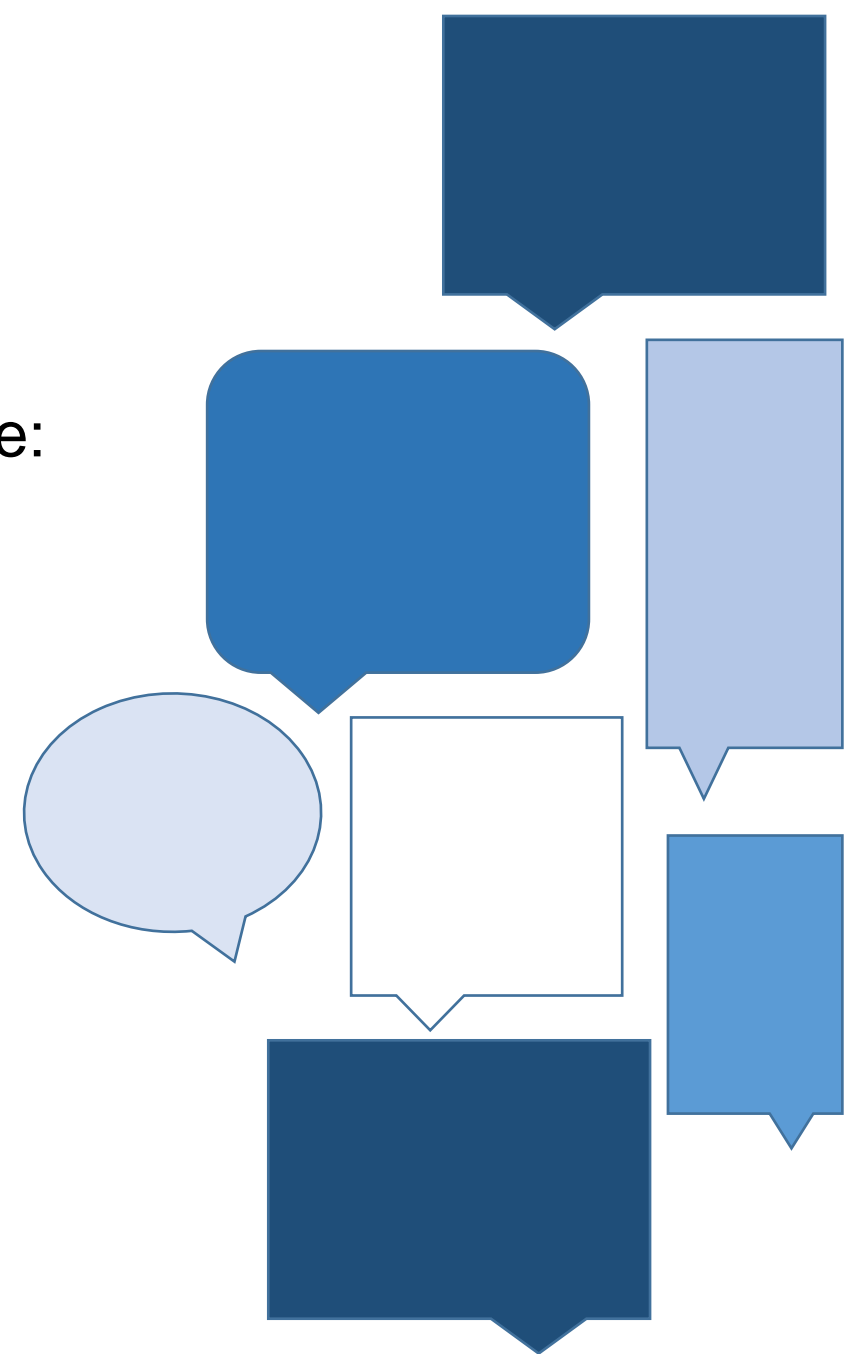
- Start slowly.
- Introduce yourself in simple terms.
- Listening is your primary goal.
- Establish trust.
- Don't immediately ask if they have complaints.

Reminder: Ombudsman consent and confidentiality policies apply!

Conversation Starters

Engage residents and build rapport with questions like:

- How are you?
- What's a typical day like for you?
- What is something that made you smile this week?
- What activities do you like to do?
- What do you do to keep busy?
- What did you used to do for work?
- Tell me about where you grew up and what it was like.
- Do you have a big family?



COVID-19 Ombudsman Timeline

Late July – cases in Texas facilities surge in first wave

Aug 2020 Reentry Plan Release, Outdoor Visits *Allowed*

Sept 2020 Indoor Visits *Allowed*, Volunteer Ombudsmen permitted

Late Dec – resident vaccinations began as cases in Texas facilities surge in a second wave

Apr 2021 Ombudsman Visit *Required* – 1 per facility by Jun 30



Texas Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

@texasltcombudsman · Government Organization



Texas Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program's Video

a year ago · 786 Views



Patty Ducayet Is Live on Facebook Now

36 weeks ago · 1.1K Views



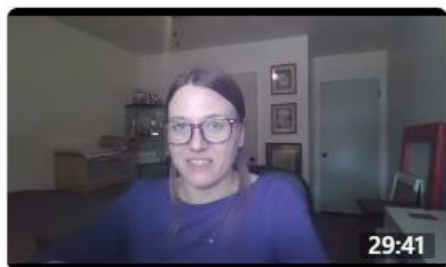
Q&A with the Texas Ombudsman Program

4 days ago · 454 Views



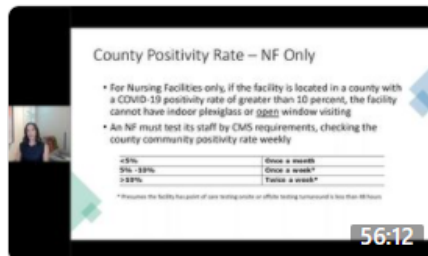
Facebook Presence

- Weekly 30 minute Q&A began May 2020
- COVID-19 resources aimed at providers
- Content for residents and family members/friends
- Changing to once every two weeks
- Will pivot to council support and education



Q&A with LTC Ombudsman

3 weeks ago · 550 Views



Ombudsman Overview of Expanded Visitation - ALFs and NFs

32 weeks ago · 1.2K Views





**For a copy of the Resident Contact
presentation, email us at
lrc.ombudsman@hhs.texas.gov**

Successful Communication During COVID-19

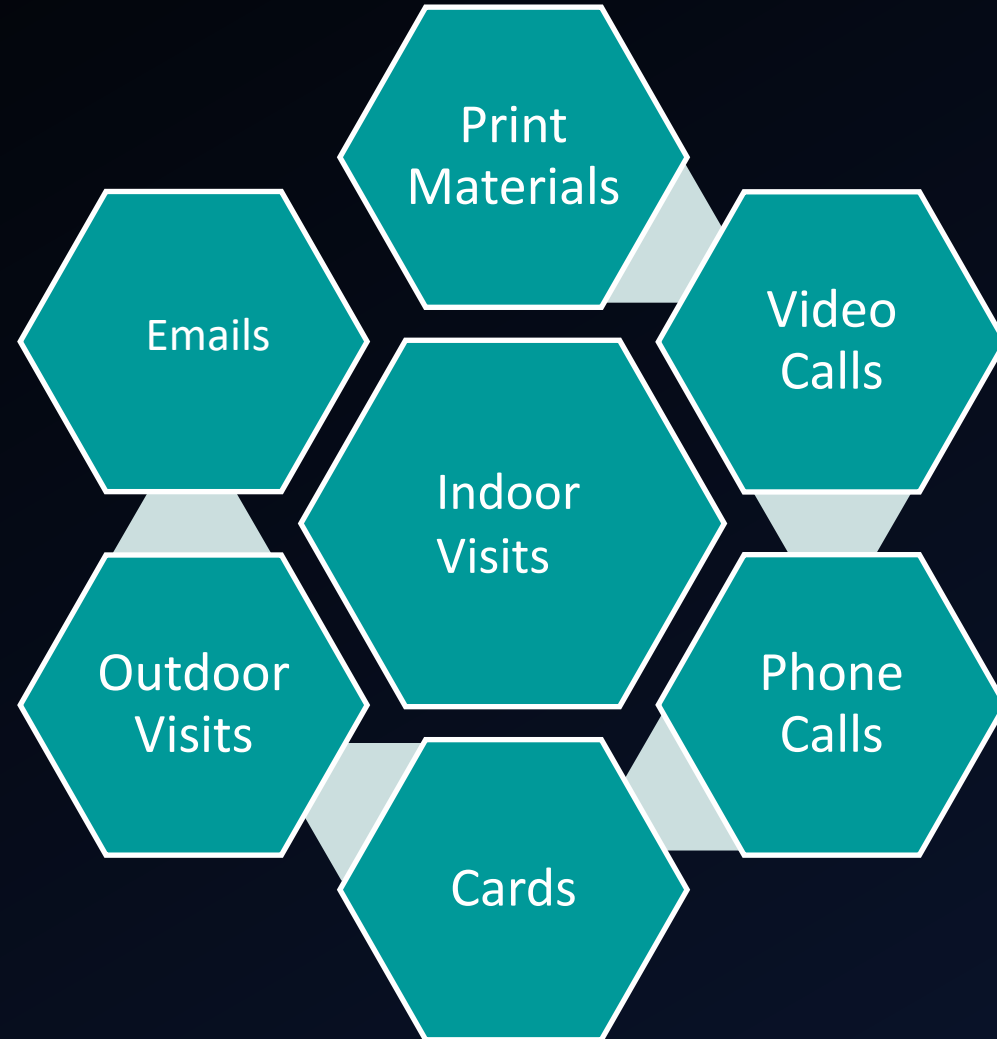
SHAZIA SULTAN
MANAGING LOCAL OMBUDSMAN
BRAZOS VALLEY AREA AGENCY
ON AGING




Purpose

- **In-person visitation restrictions**
 - No on-site facility visits from March 2020 to August 2020
 - **Ensure Ombudsman Access**
 - Used other means to connect with residents, family members, and facilities
-

Communication Methods



Contact Us



Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program

Do You Have A Concern? Ask Your Ombudsman.

A long-term care ombudsman advocates for residents' rights. We help protect the quality of life and quality of care of anyone who lives in a nursing facility or an assisted living facility. Services are free and confidential.

What Does an LTC Ombudsman Do?

Some ways ombudsmen can help residents when they have concerns or issues.


- Telling residents about their rights.
- Protecting resident health, safety, welfare, and rights.
- Helping families learn about nursing facilities and assisted living facilities and how to pay for care.
- Working to solve problems for residents.
- Making sure facility staff follow state regulations and laws that protect residents.
- Video chatting with residents on FaceTime, Duo, or Zoom.

Contact Your Ombudsmen:

Shazia Sultan & George (Hank) Roraback

Phone Number: 979-595-2801 Ex. 2025 & 2026
Email: shazia.sultan@bvcog.org & George.roraback@bvcog.org

Read more about the Ombudsman Program
https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/news_info/ombudsman/



Do You Have a Concern?

If you have a concern or question, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program can help.

An ombudsman helps residents, family members, friends or facility staff members on behalf of a resident.

An ombudsman will:


- Listen.
- Protect your rights.
- Offer ideas and options.
- Help resolve concerns.
- Support resident and family councils.

Contact an ombudsman:

Locally
Area Agency on Aging of Brazos Valley
800-994-4000, option 4

Statewide
800-252-2412

Online
apps.hhs.texas.gov/news_info/ombudsman



TIPS for Getting Good Care

Residents and families can:

- Get to know staff – their names and duties.
- Educate staff about the resident's likes and dislikes, daily routines and interests.
- Attend care plan or service plan meetings.
- Talk to staff about concerns.
- Keep a log of concerns and actions taken.
- Join or organize a resident or family council.
- Seek help from the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

For help, contact a long-term care ombudsman:
800-252-2412

Area Agency on Aging of Brazos Valley
3991 E. 29th St.
Bryan, Texas 77872
800-994-4000, option 4



Protecting Residents' Rights

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

An ombudsman advocates for quality of life and care for people living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.



Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is independent within the Texas Health and Human Services system.
P. O. Box 149030 • MC-W250
Austin, TX 78714-9030
apps.hhs.texas.gov/news_info/ombudsman

THIS CEI/MH PROJECT - July 2019

Information & Assistance

FACT SHEET

Balancing Privacy & Protection: Surveillance Cameras in Nursing Home Residents' Rooms

You and your family members might have considered installing a surveillance camera in your room to help determine that you are receiving appropriate care and being treated with dignity and respect, or to be a deterrent to abuse. Surveillance cameras can record video only, audio only, or both video and audio. **While surveillance cameras and other devices can offer information about the type of care you are receiving and how you are being treated by nursing home staff, other residents, and visitors, they can be invasive and may violate your or your roommate's right to privacy.** They are also no substitute for personal involvement and monitoring.

Right to Dignity, Respect, and Privacy

Federal regulations give nursing home residents the right to be treated with dignity and respect. This includes while receiving care and during any interactions with nursing home staff, other residents, and visitors. In addition to showing good care being provided, surveillance cameras may record incidents of poor care, neglect, aggression or abuse. Residents are also guaranteed the right to privacy. This right to privacy includes the right to privacy in your resident rooms, personal care, and in any communication during visits. A surveillance camera would be recording you and your roommate (if you have one) all the time when you are in your own room. It would be video recording you while you are receiving help getting dressed, during your visit with family members and friends, and even recording when you may want to talk to your physician to discuss confidential health issues. Some surveillance cameras may even record audio, which means that your conversations may no longer be private.

State Laws & Guidelines on Surveillance Cameras in Resident Rooms

Many high-profile news articles where abuse has been captured on video cameras in nursing homes states to propose the use of surveillance cameras in nursing homes. As of 2020, **Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington** have laws that permit the installation of cameras in residents' rooms. **If the resident and roommate have consented.** Each state law addresses issues including who must be notified of the camera in use and placement of notices, assumption of costs associated with the cameras, penalties for obstruction or tampering with a law in place, Maryland has issued guidelines for the use of cameras in nursing home residents' rooms; and New Jersey's Office of Attorney General will loan camera equipment to families who want to monitor. **If your state does not have a law or rules on this issue, or if you have a before installing any type of recording device, you should consult an attorney.**

142 C.F.R. 483.10(f)
142 C.F.R. 483.10(h)
142 C.F.R. 483.10(i)(1)

Long-term care residents'

Medicaid and stimulus checks 2020

For Medicaid-eligible residents of a nursing or assisted living facility and their family members

Will a stimulus check affect a resident's Medicaid eligibility?

The IRS defines the stimulus check as a tax rebate that will not be counted as income or resources if it is spent within 12 months from receipt. If funds remain unspent after 12 months, the unspent funds will be counted as a resource. Medicaid is automatically extended for all current Medicaid-eligible individuals. Anyone who currently has benefits will not be denied during this period.

Medicaid spending rules still apply as these funds will be calculated in a "look-back period." Keep all receipts of expenses, especially for purchases over \$200.

Will the stimulus check count as applied income?

No. As a tax rebate, the individual stimulus check will not be calculated as applied income in a nursing facility or copayment or room and board in an assisted living facility. A person's applied income or copayment amount will not be changed by the stimulus check.

Questions?

Contact the
Office of the State
Long-Term Care
Ombudsman at
800-252-2412 or
**ltc.ombudsman@
hhsc.state.tx.us.**

This information is provided by the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program who are advocates for long-term care residents.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services



Taking Care of You

TIPS FOR RESIDENTS OF LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) has caused major life disruptions. In our lifetime, we have never dealt with so many variables impacting you, our families, and staff of long-term care facilities. Restrictions have been imposed on visitation and daily activities, and there is great concern about stopping the spread of the virus. As difficult as this pandemic is, it is important for you to take care yourself.

This is such a stressful time for everyone. Know that many people are thinking of you! Know also that your caregivers are trying their best to keep you and all other residents safe.

The following information may be helpful to you.

TYPICAL REACTIONS TO STRESS MAY INCLUDE:

- Anxiety, worry, or fear
- Concern about others
- Uncertainty
- Loneliness
- Anger
- Frustration
- Sadness
- Feelings of grief and loss
- Desire to use alcohol or drugs to cope
- Symptoms of depression
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

for Self-Care

Worry, and fear about your health and well-being and those of family and friends often. If you don't have a phone, ask the facility to feel overwhelming. Consider the following ideas:

that you may stay in touch with others.

ptions. Ask friends and facility staff for help if you need it.

about options for visitation such as talking by phone while seeing through a facility window or visiting outdoors in nice weather.

ards to family, friends, and other residents. Share special pages such as Facebook, like their page and post short r. If the facility doesn't have a Facebook page, ask them ed residents can post messages on the site.



Staying Connected

Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program wishes you
Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year



May the holidays end the present year on a cheerful note
and make way for a fresh and bright new year

**The Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program
wishes you**

A Happy Valentine's Day



**Connection
Matters**
NATIONAL CONSUMER
VOICE FOR QUALITY
LONG-TERM CARE

Connection to family, to friends, to the community, and to your
Ombudsman is an essential component of good health and
quality of life for residents. Your Ombudsman is here for you.

Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program

Long-term care ombudsmen are advocates for resident rights. We help protect the quality of life and quality of care of anybody who lives in a nursing home or an assisted living facility. Services are free and confidential.

Contact Us

Brazos Valley Area Agency on Aging
3991 E 29th St., Bryan, TX 77802
1-800-994-4000



Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program

Long-term care ombudsmen are advocates for resident rights. We help protect the quality of life and quality of care of anybody who lives in a nursing home or an assisted living facility. Services are free and confidential.

Contact Us

Brazos Valley Area Agency on Aging
3991 E 29th St., Bryan, TX 77802
1-800-994-4000



Connection With Residents & Families

Video Calls

- Virtual Tours
- Resident/Family Council
- Care Plans

Phone Calls

- Discharge Fair Hearings
- Reassurance Calls
- Complaints

Emails

- Information & Assistance
- Resources
- Complaints

Facility Visits

- Window Visits
- Outdoor
- Indoor

OUTDOOR VISIT

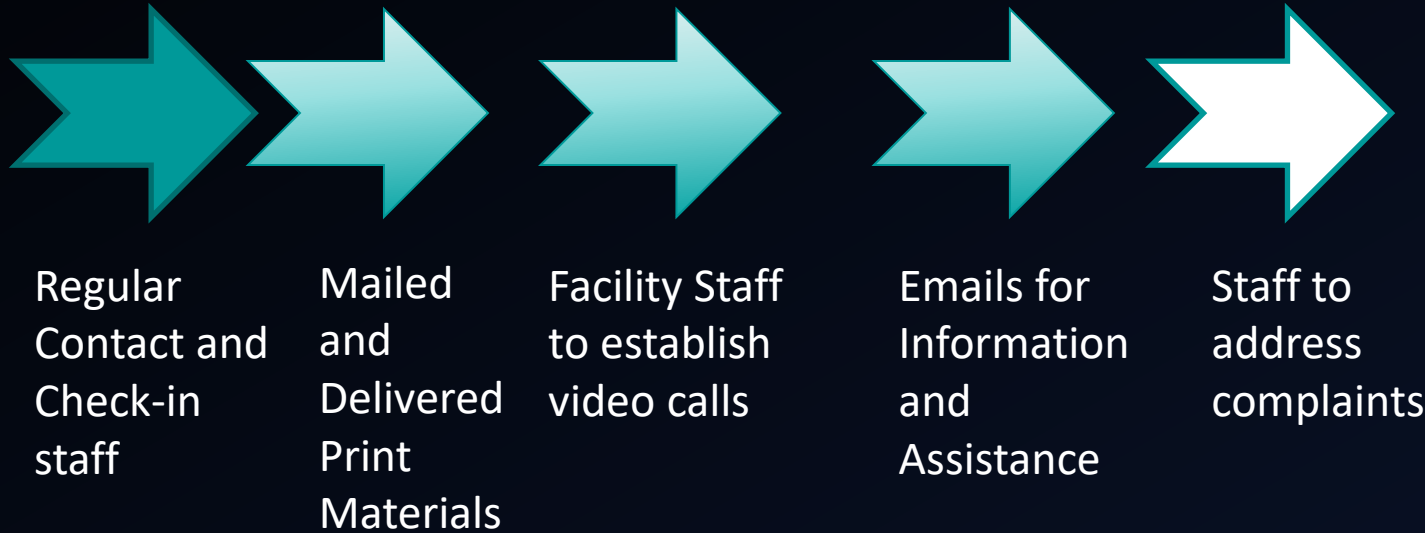
August 2020



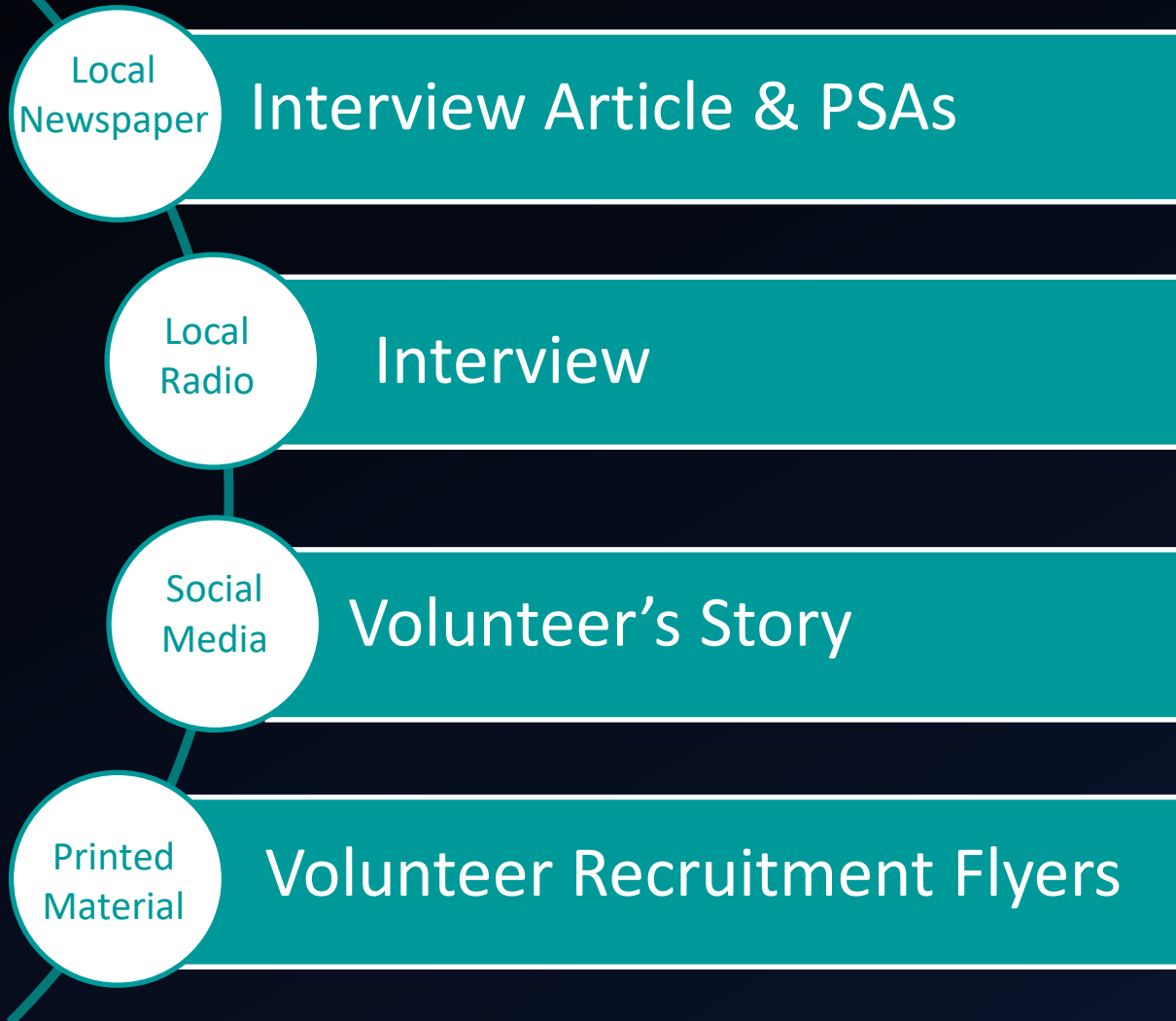
Conversation with Residents



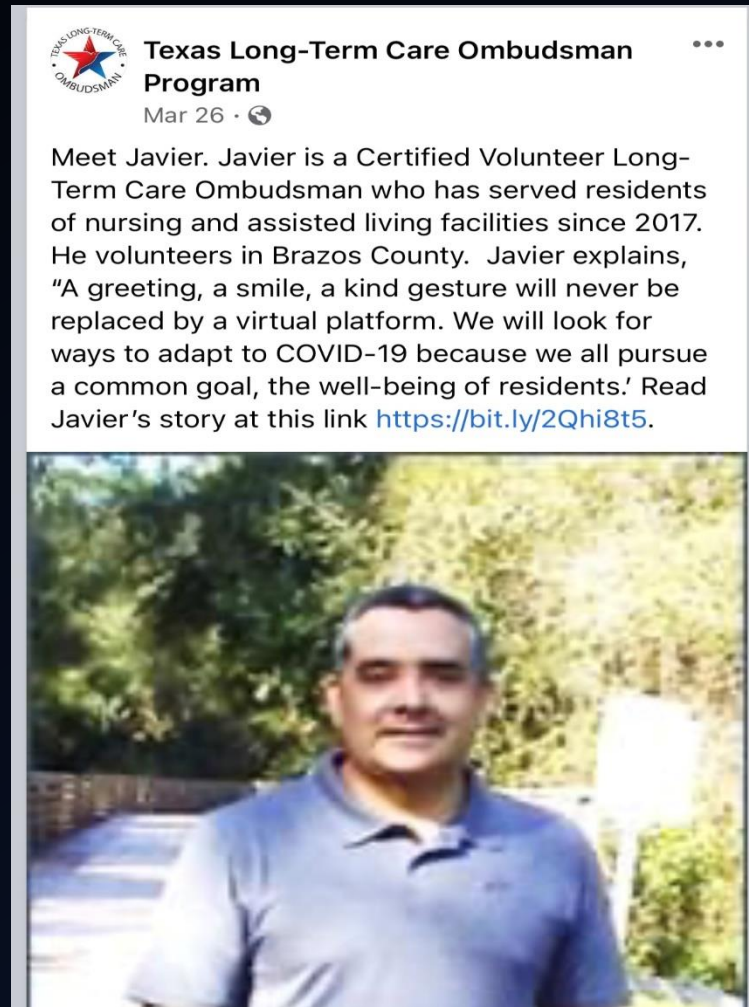
Connection with Facility Staff



Communication with Public



Volunteer Story on Facebook



Recruitment Flyer

YOU

CAN HELP PROTECT residents' rights, health and well-being.

Be an ombudsman.



Residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities can face abuse, neglect and exploitation. To make matters worse, they often have no one in their corner to stand up for them.

Ombudsmen advocate for residents' rights. They help protect the quality of life and quality of care of anyone who lives in these long-term care facilities.

To be a volunteer ombudsman, you must

- Be at least 18 years old
- Have no conflicts of interest
- Complete certification training
- Have transportation

Volunteer hours are flexible, and no experience is required. Volunteers receive


- Free 36-hour certification course
- Ongoing support
- On-site experience during a three-month internship
- Continuing education



For more information:
800-252-2412
ltc.ombudsman@hhs.state.tx.us
apps.hhs.texas.gov/news_info/ombudsman/

Local program contact: **Shazia Batool Sultan**
979-595-2806 | shazia.sultan@bvcog.org

1800202



BRAZOS VALLEY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM



The Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program serves Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Robertson, and Washington counties. We provide free and confidential ombudsman services to 20 nursing homes and 22 assisted living facilities.

A strong volunteer force helps us ensure that every resident has a voice. We need passionate and committed people in all seven counties, who can help us achieve our goal of high quality of life and care for residents in the nursing and assisted living facilities we serve.

We provide on-site and virtual training to complete Initial Certification Training and continuing education. Certified Ombudsman Volunteers are assigned to a facility, make a direct contact with residents, family members, and facility staff, and work independently on a flexible schedule.

Volunteers receive support from local staff Ombudsmen and the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

Contact Us:
Brazos valley Area Agency on Aging
Brazos Valley Council of Governments
3991 E 29th St.
Bryan, TX 77802
1-800-994-4000
www.bvcog.org





Washington State LTCOP

Snohomish County LTCOP

Heidi L'Esperance, Regional Ombuds

*Ensuring the dignity, rights and well being of individuals living in
long-term care, today and tomorrow.*



Washington State LTCOP

- Washington State (7.6+ million pop.)
 - 4,229 Facilities
 - Over 75,063 licensed beds
- 14 Regions
- 159 Volunteer Certified Ombuds
(50 percent decrease due to COVID)
- 24 FTE Staff
(56% of National Average, as recommended by the Institute Of Medicine study of 1 FTE to 2000 residents)
- 1 State Office (4 FTEs)



Snohomish County, WA

With an estimated population of 822,083 as of 2019, it is the third-most populous county in Washington, after nearby King and Pierce counties, and the 75th-most populous in the United States.





Snohomish County LTCOP

Snohomish County currently has:

- **686 Facilities**
- **8310 licensed beds**
 - **SNF: 18 facilities/1635 beds**
 - **ALF: 45 facilities/3161 beds**
 - **AFH: 623 facilities/3514 beds**
- **7 Certified Volunteers**
- **5 additional volunteers currently in certification training**
- **2 Full-Time Staff (includes RLTCO)**
 - **1 Part-Time Staff Ombuds (29- hours week)**

Remote Advocacy Due to Covid-19

- Phone Calls
- Mailings
- Zoom Meetings
- Conference Calls





Advocacy By Phone

- **Program Initiation:**
 - **Requested Facility Census**
 - Resident and Residents' Representative name and contact information
 - Called residents and families
- **Complaint/Case Resolution**
 - Facilities/staff (phone, zoom, conference call, email)
 - Supporting/Regulatory Agencies (RCS, APS, HCS) etc.



Phone Advocacy Barriers

- **Barriers:**
 - Obtaining the census timely from the facility
 - Facility not answering the phone.
 - Inability to reach the resident
 - “Cold Calls”
 - Unsure of resident or family reception
 - Residents ability to communicate
 - Unsuccessful reply to VM messages
 - Trusting the efficacy of remote advocacy



Barrier Resolution Strategies

- At least 2 meeting monthly.
- Zoom Meetings
- Used the “merge-call” feature for training purposes.
- Developed a “Calling Best Practices” script
- Webinars
- Mailings
- Communication of State Regulations related to COVID and LTC.
- Variety of guest speakers
- Role Played case scenarios
- Shared remote advocacy success stories



Advocacy By Mail

- **Summer 2020: Postcard Project**
 - **Volunteers helped put packets together**
 - Postcards (Consumer Voice Template)
 - Letter from RLCO introducing program
 - Letter from State Ombuds
 - WAC 365-18-100 (Access) and WAC 365-18-120 (Interference)
 - ***AFH Census***
 - **Mailed over 630 packets (7,000+ cards)**
- **Ongoing Mailing Project**
 - **Handwritten cards/notes**
 - **Brochures/Business cards**



Remote Advocacy Makes A Difference

The Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program has been busy during the pandemic reaching out to long-term care residents by letter, phone, and postcard. Hear from three committed ombuds who share what it's been like during the state emergency.

<https://www.waombudsman.org/>

Q&A

USING THE CMS GUIDANCE TO OPEN NURSING HOME DOORS

Listen on
Apple Podcasts



<https://apple.co/38iVRlw>
theconsumervoice.org/pursuingquality

**A Conversation with
Robyn Grant &
Jocelyn Bogdan**
Consumer Voice



Description

In this conversation with Robyn Grant and Jocelyn Bogdan of Consumer Voice, learn about how residents, families, and advocates can use guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to facilitate in-person visitation. While the new guidance expands visitation, many residents and families still have questions and concerns. After providing a brief overview of the CMS guidance, we discuss several of the most common issues, including strategies and tips for applying the guidance to help open nursing home doors. This conversation also covers the recent guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that limits when residents should be quarantined.

Listen on Apple Podcasts!

Subscribe to the *Pursuing Quality Long-Term Care* podcast in [Apple Podcasts](#).

Don't have an iPhone? Listen on [SoundCloud](#), [Facebook](#), or our [website](#).

Listen to Previous Episodes

Listen to past episodes on [Apple Podcasts](#), [SoundCloud](#), [Facebook](#), or our [website](#).

Share Your Story

This [page](#) includes the stories shared with us of good care without drugs as shared by long-term care residents, family members, and friends advocating to prevent the misuse of antipsychotic drugs in their nursing home and ensuring they receive quality long-term care

Tell us about your, or your loved one's, experiences of good care without drugs in a long-term care facility. [Share your story](#).

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/pursuing-quality-long-term-care/id1522955998>



The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center

Connect with us:

www.ltcombudsman.org

ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org



The National LTC Ombudsman Resource Center



@LTCombudcenter



Get our app! Search for "LTC Ombudsman Resource Center" in the Apple Store or Google Play

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90OMRC0001-01-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.