

OMBUDS BULLETIN

July 2023

Volume 8

“Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter.”

-Mark Twain

I’m a bud, you’re a bud, we’re Ombuds!

A QUARTERLY BULLETIN PUBLISHED THROUGH THE LOUISIANA LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

A NOTE FROM THE STATE LTCOP OFFICE

With great pleasure, we take a moment to recognize and celebrate the dedicated individuals who have reached significant milestones in their service as ombuds. This quarter, we are honored to acknowledge the following LTCOP ombudsmen for their exceptional commitment:

SPECIAL MILESTONE RECOGNIZED – 39 YEARS!

Peggy Essick, LTCOP’s longest-serving ombudsman, has an incredible 39 years of dedicated service. Peggy has been a pillar of support for the long-term care community. Her unwavering commitment to advocating for residents’ rights has made a lasting impact on countless lives. We are immensely grateful for Peggy’s leadership.

SHOUT OUTS!

30-PLUS YEARS

Alrina Ponville
Years of Service | 33
Baton Rouge

Mavis Lee
Years of Service | 33
Baton Rouge

Carolyn Smith
Years of Service | 33
Alexandria

20-PLUS YEARS

Charles Campbell
Years of Service | 21
Lake Charles

Lockie Chisley
Years of Service | 21
Monroe

10 YEARS & UNDER

Anna Horne
Years of Service | 10
Monroe

Dana Adams
Years of Service | 4
Lafayette

Cecile Gordon (Vol.)
Years of Service | 4
New Orleans

Casandra Cesare
Years of Service | 2
Shreveport

Beverly Jones
Years of Service | 1
Shreveport

To all our ombuds, your dedication and hard work are truly commendable. You play an essential role in improving the lives of those in long-term care, and we are grateful for your tireless efforts.



Thank you all.

Rosa Walton
State Ombudsman

KUDOS!

Welcome to our new volunteer ombuds!

Briana Smith – New Orleans

Peggy Morris – New Orleans

Sandy Bourgeois – Shreveport



Hello, and thanks to our new volunteer ombuds-in-training:

Debbie Delahoussaye – New Orleans

Willietta Brown – New Orleans

Ollie Gaskin – Shreveport

WHAT’S IN A NAME?



An Om what? Bud who?

When introducing ourselves, haven’t we heard that often from residents, staff, and the community? Ombudsman, Ombudsperson, Ombud? The term varies in states and organizations. Steadily the word “ombudsman” is being supplanted with ombudsperson or now more frequently with ombud. This term seems friendly, easy to say, and easier to remember. The Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program will always be as titled; however, it is up to each individual to use the most comfortable term. It is each individual’s choice.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

The Resident Assessment Instrument Minimum Data Set (MDS) is the required assessment tool used in nursing facilities. It is designed to collect the minimum amount of data to guide care planning and monitoring for residents. This assessment is the basis for care plans.

How often are residents assessed?

- ▶ At the time of admission
- ▶ When readmitted following hospitalizations
- ▶ Annually
- ▶ After a significant change in condition
- ▶ When a substantial change to a prior assessment needs to be made
- ▶ At the time of discharge

What is the ombudsman's role in an assessment?

- ▶ Suggests residents prepare
- ▶ Remind residents that they can make requests
- ▶ Help residents resolve any issues related to the assessment interview procedures

BEING PREPARED FOR HURRICANE SEASON

Peggy Essick, Regional Coordinator of the Baton Rouge area and a 39-year experienced ombudsman, and **Shirnell Jackson**, LTCOP's go-to OLAP Attorney, teamed up to give advice and tips to ombudsmen about preparedness for hurricane season.



Contact facilities to inquire about their emergency/evacuation plans—the site location(s).



Contact information – cell phone numbers and email addresses – for all key personnel (Admin., DON, ADON, Social Worker, Activities Director, corporate emergency contact, more...) and particularly contact info for all key staff evacuating with residents, Admin, or DON.



Make sure the facility staff has the ombud's contact information. Shirnell suggests ombuds encourage residents to have their contact information up to date, including POAs and other legal documents.

Whether it is while you are visiting the facility, phoning, or emailing the administrators of the facilities, this is the time to get your Nursing Home Preparedness Plans updated and ready.

LOL

What did one wall say to the other?

Meet you at the corner.

What did the dirt say to the rain?

If you keep this up, my name will be mud.

What kind of candy do astronauts like?

Mars bars.

Laughter truly is a powerful medicine with numerous health benefits. Not only does it strengthen the immune system, but it also acts as a natural mood booster. In addition, laughter can diminish pain and serves as a preventive measure against depression and the harmful effects of stress. Incorporating laughter into your life can lead to improved overall well-being.

So make it a point to laugh out loud often!

Do you have a joke you would like to share?

Please submit it to StateOmbudsman@la.gov and it may appear in the next Ombuds Bulletin.



NEW AND IMPROVED GOEA WEBSITE

<https://goea.la.gov>

The GOEA has a new look, including an image of a zippy happy older adult, easy navigation, and informative LTCOP content. Have a question about the LTCOP, roles and responsibilities of the ombudsman, volunteer opportunities, and application? Just click on: <https://goea.la.gov>. The site is easy to navigate, and find answers to questions. All ombudsmen must request access to the new ombudsman page. Email StateOmbudsman@la.gov for instructions, if you haven't already done so.

QUESTION?

How often must ombudsmen visit facilities at a minimum?
Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program requires ombudsmen to visit:

Nursing facilities: at least bi-monthly (once every two months)

Adult Residential Care Facilities: at least quarterly

Assisted Living: at least quarterly

SNFs: minimum of once every six months

AGING IN PLACE IS MADE EASIER WITH TECHNOLOGY

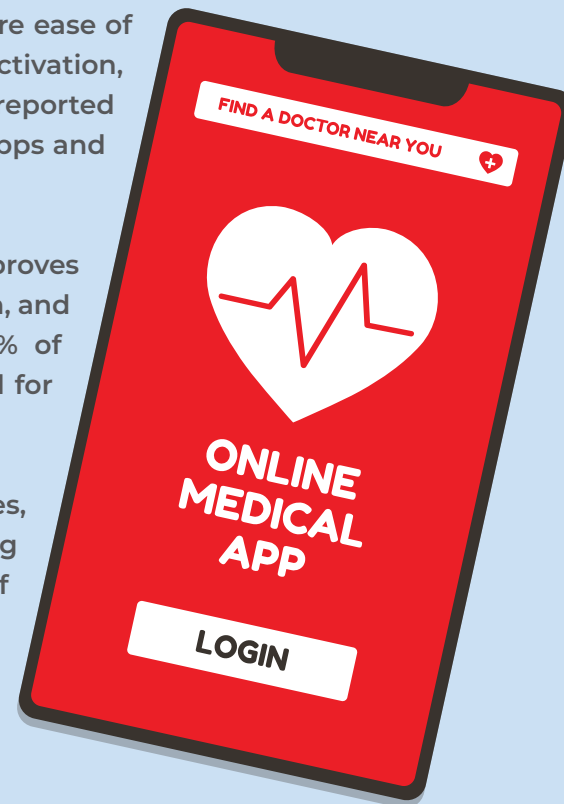
U.S. News & World Report surveyed older adults about aging in place with assistive technology. The survey included 2,000 adults aged 55 and older to explore their use and plans for utilizing assistive technologies to age in place. Most respondents (93%) expressed the importance of aging in place, which refers to living independently and comfortably regardless of age, income, or ability level.

The survey found that the top reasons adults aged 55 and up use health-related technologies are general aging, mobility impairment, hearing impairment, vision impairment, and cognitive impairment. The most popular devices facilitating aging in place include medical or health-related mobile apps, service-related apps, wearable health trackers, assistive smart home technologies, hearing assistance devices, and medical alert systems.

When using these technologies, key factors that matter to respondents are ease of use, easy setup, accessibility via mobile apps, wireless functionality, voice activation, and discreet product design. Around 53% of adults aged 55 and older reported using some form of assistive or health-related technology, with medical apps and wearable trackers being the most widely used.

The survey also revealed that using assistive technologies improves respondents' quality of life by increasing their independence, safety, health, and mobility. However, despite the importance of aging in place, only 19% of respondents felt that their current home setup was completely prepared for the future, with various lacking components.

Challenges associated with aging in place include cost-of-living increases, which affect 62% of respondents, and privacy concerns regarding collecting personal information by assistive technologies, which worry 53% of respondents. Nevertheless, as the U.S. population ages, older adults embrace technology to facilitate aging in place. They are willing to adopt assistive and health-related technologies to extend their time at home and ensure safety and convenience.



Source: Lauren Naru, U.S. News & World Report (May 10, 2023)

WHAT OMBUDSMEN CAN DO TO HELP OLDER ADULTS AGE IN PLACE

Long-term care ombudsmen are crucial in advocating for the rights and well-being of older adults residing in long-term care facilities. While their primary focus is improving care and quality of life within these facilities, they can also contribute to helping older adults age in place within their communities. Here are some steps that long-term care ombudsmen can take to support the Louisiana community of older adults in aging in place:

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION:

Ombudsmen can conduct outreach programs and educational sessions to raise awareness among older adults about available community resources and support services to help them age in place. This may include information on home healthcare, transportation assistance, meal delivery programs, home modifications, and caregiver support.



RESOURCE REFERRALS:

Ombudsmen can inform older adults about local agencies, organizations, and programs offering services designed to support aging. They can establish partnerships with community service providers and maintain up-to-date lists of available resources to facilitate quick and appropriate referrals.

ADVOCACY FOR HOME-BASED CARE:

Ombudsmen can advocate for increased funding and availability of home-based care services, including home health aides, personal care attendants, and skilled nursing services. They can collaborate with policymakers, government agencies, and community organizations to promote policies that prioritize and expand home-based care options.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT:

Ombudsmen can actively participate in developing and improving policies related to aging in place. They can provide input to policymakers, contribute to discussions on healthcare reform, and advocate for changes that support the needs of older adults and their ability to age in place.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS:

Ombudsmen can collaborate with local agencies, community organizations, and advocacy groups to create a support network for older adults. By working together, they can identify gaps in services, develop innovative solutions, and promote community initiatives that facilitate aging in place.

By implementing these steps, long-term care ombudsmen can help the Louisiana community of older adults access the necessary resources, support services, and advocacy to age in place successfully.

COFFEE & CASES

Ombuds attending each monthly Coffee & Cases receive 1.5 hours of in-service training credit. By participating in all Coffee & Cases, ombuds can receive their 18 hours of credit needed annually.



Mark your calendars for the first Monday of each month

9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

On the first Monday of each month, ombuds across the state come together virtually to discuss cases and get input from each other. Some months, we have special guests.

Be sure to add 1.5 hours of State-sponsored in-service training in LORS each month.

Please send your ideas for discussion topics and suggestions for guest speakers.

LOUISIANA LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDS

Louisiana Ombuds advocate for 35,000 residents in 400 nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

ALEXANDRIA REGION, Cenla AAA

Coordinator: Carolyn Smith
Ombud: Rose Waguespack

BATON ROUGE REGION, Capital AAA

Coordinator: Peggy Essick
Ombuds: Mavis Lee, Anne Miller, Alrina Ponville, Glenda Teagle

LAFAYETTE REGION, Cajun AAA

Coordinator: Dana Adams
Ombud: Nanette Burch

LAKE CHARLES REGION, Calcasieu COA

Coordinator: Charles Campbell
Ombud: Toya Guillory

MONROE REGION, Cenla AAA

Coordinator: Anna Horne
Ombud: La'Trichelle "Lockie" Chisley

NEW ORLEANS REGION, Capital AAA

Coordinator: Tanya Hayes
Ombuds: Barbara Soniat, Beverly Gianna
Volunteer Ombuds: Christine DeCuir, Cecile Gordon, Laurie Holland, Gary Boye, Vickie Castay, Peggy Morris, Briana Smith

SHREVEPORT REGION, Caddo COA

Coordinator: Casandra Cesare
Ombuds: Beverly Parker, Lucinda Thornton, Beverly Jones, Elizabeth Moore, Reta Stewart
Volunteer Ombud: Sandy Bourgeois

RECRUIT A VOLUNTEER

Research shows that volunteering has many biological and psychosocial benefits:

- Helps stay physically and mentally active
- Reduces stress
- Make new friends and contacts
- Increases social and relationship skills
- Adds job skills
- Increases self-esteem and life-satisfaction
- Increases the level of happiness
- It's Fun!

WHERE DO I FIND VOLUNTEERS?

In nursing homes | visiting family and friends

In neighborhoods | people we know

In the community | through public speaking and media interviews

The Louisiana Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program offers many volunteer opportunities for people within the state. Volunteer-certified ombuds positions are needed, but there are other opportunities to serve, such as a photographer, contributor to this newsletter and other communication vehicles, and tech-savvy volunteers willing to teach residents how to email, text, and Zoom. Bring your ideas and talent to the table and apply to volunteer!

Click on these links for information on how residents in one Louisiana nursing home volunteer to help their fellow residents.

<https://youtu.be/1IA6fLusNFc>

To access information on volunteering with the LTCOP, follow these easy steps:

- ▶ Click on the following link: <https://goea.la.gov>.
- ▶ Once on the website, navigate to the Louisiana Ombudsman Program section.
- ▶ Scroll down the page to find the video that provides an enjoyable overview of volunteering with the LTCOP.

To apply as a volunteer, use the online application provided, which is quick and easy to complete.

HAVE A QUESTION OR COMMENT?

What's happening in your region?

Share tips, information, and success stories in your region to include in this newsletter.

Email: StateOmbudsman@la.gov

Call: (504) 782-6640

goea.la.gov/ombudsman