



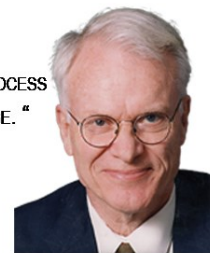
OMBUDS BULLETIN

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

OCTOBER 2024
VOLUME № 13

"CHANGE IS AN EVENT, BUT A TRANSITION IS THE PROCESS THAT YOU GO THROUGH IN RESPONSE TO THE CHANGE."

— WILLIAM BRIDGES —



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

A NOTE FROM THE STATE LTCO OFFICE

TRANSITIONS

SEASONS:

Fall ushers in the transition from the summer heat to cooler days.

TIME:

- ✓ On Sunday, November 3RD, Daylight Savings Time changes to (Central) Standard Time.
- ✓ October 2024 marks the 50TH anniversary of the Capital Area Agency on Aging which they will celebrate during their CAAA Senior Fair on October 17.

LIFE:

We respectfully acknowledge the passing of Peggy Essick, our longest-serving and deeply respected regional ombudsman coordinator. All will remember her dedication and spirit.

We share our heartfelt relief and gratitude for the successful recovery of our youngest regional ombudsman coordinator, Casandra Cesare, after her recent heart surgery.

COMMUNICATION:

This will be the last edition of the *Ombuds Bulletin*. At this time, it is unknown what form future intra-ombuds communication vehicles might take.

Thank you for your readership and continued commitment to advocacy.



Rosa Walton
STATE OMBUDSMAN

Anniversaries!

Much appreciation to the following dedicated Ombuds ...

- ✚ Tanya Hayes, New Orleans, 10/1/2007
- ✚ Beverly Jones, Shreveport, 10/1/2022
- ✚ Beverly Gianna, New Orleans, 10/23/2013
- ✚ Rose Waguespack, Alexandria, 10/28/2022
- ✚ Lucinda Thornton, Shreveport, 10/29/2020
- ✚ Glenda Teagle, Baton Rouge, 11/5/2009
- ✚ Barbara Soniat, New Orleans, 11/14/2016
- ✚ Anne Miller, Baton Rouge, 11/20/2010
- ✚ Amanda Kerner, Lafayette, 11/27/2023
- ✚ Reta Stewart, Shreveport, 12/07/2023



Did You Know?

In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Older Americans Act (OAA) into law, establishing the Aging Network.

This network is still active and growing today, helping to preserve the right of older Americans to live independently and with dignity and make everyday decisions according to their individual preferences throughout their lifespan.

1965 was also the year Medicare and Medicaid were enacted.

Residents' Rights Month ...

October is Residents' Rights Month, an annual event designated by Consumer Voice to honor residents in long-term care facilities. This year's theme, "Empowering Voices, Respecting Choices," highlights the importance of listening to and valuing residents' voices in long-term care facilities.

Residents in nursing homes and other long-term care settings deserve to be heard, especially in decisions that directly impact their lives. Whether they choose their daily activities, voice concerns about care, or make decisions about their personal lives, their choices must be respected and prioritized. This enhances their quality of life and affirms their dignity and independence.

"We who have means and a voice must use them to help those who have neither."

~ Jennifer Donnelly



Louisiana is one of only three state Long-Term Care Programs that train residents to advocate for themselves and their PEERS.

In 2000, Pennsylvania was the first state to train nursing home and assisted living residents in their PEER (Program for Empowering Every Resident) program. In 2020, Colorado trained their CO-PEERS.

And in 2022 Louisiana graduated its first LA PEER. Two nursing homes in New Orleans and one in Shreveport now boast LA PEERS in their facility. For More Information on LA PEER, contact Vickie Castay at phone number [504.261.2505](tel:504.261.2505) OR e-mail at v.castay@capitalaaa.org



WHAT'S THE ANSWER?...

One ...

The nursing home bans Sonny's son, Tom, from visiting because the staff thinks it is too much trouble for them when he visits in the evenings. He is not disruptive, and residents have no complaints. Sonny says he enjoys his son's visits. Tom works odd hours and can only visit late in the evenings.

Is this a violation of Sonny's rights?

YES!

It is a violation of Sonny's rights to visitors.

Federal regulations state that the resident has the right to, and the facility must promote and facilitate resident self-determination through support of resident choice, including but not limited to, the right to receive visitors of their choosing at the time of their choosing.

Two ...

Frank lives in a nursing facility. The housekeeper found a bottle of whiskey under Frank's bed, and the facility told him he had 15 days to find a new place.

Is this a violation of Frank's rights?

YES!

This is a violation of Frank's rights.

Federal regulations state six reasons for discharge, and possessing alcohol is not one of them. In addition, residents have the right to receive a 30-day written notice of a facility-initiated transfer or discharge.

Three ...

Jake has a private room and wants to smoke in his room, but the facility has a policy that smoking is only allowed outside, in a designated area.

Is this a violation of Jake's rights?

NO!

This is **NOT** a violation of Jake's rights.

The facility is allowed to have policies on smoking that include having an outside designated area.

NOTE: The facility must comply with any smoking restrictions the Fire Marshal places.

THE VOICE OF VIOLET



Violet had always been a quiet woman. At 82, she had spent most of her life putting others first—raising her children, supporting her late husband through his illness, and caring for her grandchildren. When the time came for her to move into Merry Manor Nursing Home, she accepted it without question and with grace.

Merry Manor had a residents' council, as required by law, but Violet had never attended the meetings. That changed when she overheard a conversation in the activities room. Several residents were talking about the upcoming menu changes, expressing their frustration about the lack of variety and the absence of familiar foods. The more Violet listened, the more she realized how much these small things mattered.

Violet had never been one to speak up. But as she looked around the room at her fellow residents—many of whom had spent their lives working hard, raising families, and contributing to society—she felt a spark of determination. These people deserved a say in their lives, no matter where they lived.

The next residents' council meeting was scheduled for the following week. Violet attended for the first time. As she walked into the meeting room, she was nervous but resolved.

During the Meal of the Month discussion, Violet stood up, "I'd like to talk about the menu in general," she said ...

"I think it's important that we have a say in what we eat every day, every meal. We've lived long lives, and we know what we like. I've heard a lot of people say they miss the foods they're used to, and I think we should be able to choose what makes us happy."

The room was silent for a moment before heads began to nod, and murmurs of agreement became louder, spreading all around the room. The council's president, Sarah, was amazed but smiled and said ...

"Thank you, Violet. Your input is exactly what this council is for—to ensure everyone's voice is heard and respected. Let's talk about how we can bring more choices into our menus."

Violet's suggestion sparked a lively discussion, with other residents chiming in about their preferences. Fresh fruit, favorite childhood dishes, and even requests for seasonal specialties were all added to the list. The meeting concluded with a plan to work with the kitchen and administrative staff to bring these ideas to life.

In the following weeks, changes began to take shape. The dining experience improved, with more variety and options that reflected the residents' tastes and traditions. Violet's courage to speak up improved her life and impacted the nursing home community. (Even administrative staff were seen taking some of their meals in the dining room.)

Violet continued to attend the residents' council meetings regularly, and her confidence grew with each one. She became a quiet leader, encouraging others to share their thoughts and ensuring everyone's voice was heard. Not only did she gain confidence, but she now had purpose: helping others speak up.



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.

Ombuds attending each monthly Coffee & Cases receive 1½ hours of in-service training credit. By participating in all Coffee & Cases, ombuds can receive their 18 hours of credit needed annually.

Be sure to add 1½ 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 advocates 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

- ✚ Ombuds: Alrina Ponville, Anne Miller, Glenda Teagle, Mavis Lee

LAFAYETTE REGION, Cajun AAA

- ✚ Coordinator: Dana Adams
- ✚ Ombud: Amanda Kerner

LAKE CHARLES REGION, Calcasieu COA

- ✚ Coordinator: Charles Campbell

MONROE REGION, Cenla AAA

- ✚ Coordinator: Anna Horne
- ✚ Ombud: La'Trachelle "Lockie" Chisley

NEW ORLEANS REGION, Capital AAA

- ✚ Coordinator: Tanya Hayes
- ✚ Ombuds: Barbara Soniat, Beverly Gianna
- ✚ Volunteer Ombuds: Cecile Gordon, Laurie Holland, Gary Boye, Vickie Castay, Debbie De La Houssaye, Gaby Serpas, Dana Cinnater

SHREVEPORT REGION, Caddo COA

- ✚ Coordinator: Casandra Cesare
- ✚ Ombuds: Beverly Parker, Lucinda Thornton, Beverly Jones, Reta Stewart, Faye "Ollie" Gaskin
- ✚ Volunteer Ombud: Sandy Bourgeois

HAVE A QUESTION OR COMMENT?

What's happening in your region?

Share tips, information, and success stories in your region.

E-Mail: StateOmbudsman@LA.Gov

Call: 504.782.6640

Web: [Louisiana Ombudsman Program](#)

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!

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.