

WAC 365-18-070 Duties—Regional and regional staff long-term care ombudsmen. Regional and regional staff long-term care ombudsmen shall, in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the state office, have the following duties:

(1) Inform residents, their representatives, and others about their rights, and offer and provide services to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of residents;

(2) Ensure that residents and their representatives in the service area have regular, timely access to representatives of the ombudsman program and timely responses to complaints and requests for assistance. Provision shall be made by facilities and ombudsmen to secure privacy for the purpose of the ombudsman carrying out his or her duties, including, but not limited to, building relationships with and providing information to residents;

(3) Identify, investigate, and resolve complaints that:

(a) Relate to actions, inactions, or decisions, that may adversely affect the health, safety, welfare, or rights of residents;

(b) Are made by:

(i) A resident, a resident's relatives, friends, or associates;

(ii) Providers, or representatives of providers, of long-term care or health care services;

(iii) Public agencies;

(iv) Health and social service agencies; or

(v) Guardians, representative payees, holders of powers of attorney, or other resident representatives;

(4) Recruit, train, place and supervise volunteer and staff ombudsmen who have been certified by the state ombudsman;

(5) Represent the interests of residents before government agencies and seek administrative, legal, and other remedies to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of the residents;

(6) Review, and if necessary, comment on any existing and proposed laws, regulations, and other governmental policies and actions, that pertain to the rights and well-being of residents; and facilitate the ability of the public to comment on the laws, regulations, policies, and actions;

(7) Assure that regional stakeholder advisory councils are established and maintained for the regional ombudsman programs. Efforts should be made to include representation on the councils from a broad spectrum of interests served by the program, including, but not limited to, mental illness, dementia, and developmental and physical disabilities. All vacancies to councils should be filled where possible within six months of the vacancy;

(8) Promote the development of resident councils, family councils, and citizen advocacy groups; and

(9) Carry out other activities that the state long-term care ombudsman determines to be appropriate.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 43.190 RCW and Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C., 3001 et seq., as amended). WSR 00-09-060, § 365-18-070, filed 4/17/00, effective 5/18/00.]