

## The Rewards

- Bring joy and happiness to someone
- Advocate for the rights of older persons
- Enjoy flexible hours
- Bring compassion and common sense we provide the training and supervision

You provide the caring, watchful eye.

Call or write now for a free informational packet.



The Maine Long-Term Care  
**OMBUDSMAN**  
Program

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## Become a Volunteer Ombudsman

Visit residents in  
nursing homes  
and other long-term  
care facilities



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# Who We Are

## What is a Volunteer Ombudsman Representative?

“Ombudsman” (pronounced om-budz-man) is a Swedish word that means citizen representative. In Maine, volunteers represent the Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program when they visit residents in long-term care facilities. Volunteers are the eyes and ears of the Ombudsman Program, and they are truly the heart of the program.

## What does a Volunteer Ombudsman do?

- Visits residents on a regular basis about once every week or two
- Listen to residents’ concerns and problems while having a friendly visit
- Reports to the Ombudsman Volunteer Program Manager who will supervise and guide volunteers while they try to respond to the needs of the residents

## What training does a volunteer receive?

All volunteers receive initial and ongoing training from experts in various areas of elder rights, laws and advocacy. (Mileage is reimbursed for travel to training sites.)



# What We Do

## What do I do when I visit a resident?

When initial training is complete, an Ombudsman staff member accompanies the volunteer on the first visit to the long-term care facility. The volunteer is given a guided tour of the facility and is introduced to the facility staff. This gives the volunteer an opportunity to become familiar with the facility and to ask the staff any questions. After the first visit, the volunteer visits residents regularly. These friendly visits help build a bond between you and the residents who will know you are ready to advocate for their rights.

## What is the commitment and how often do I visit?

We ask for a one year commitment. This enables the volunteer and resident to get to know each other, and the volunteer gains valuable experience as an Ombudsman. Volunteers will usually visit residents in one or two facilities near their home on a regular basis, about once every week or two. By law, volunteer Ombudsman can enter a facility any time of day or night, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This is key to the effectiveness of the Volunteer Ombudsman Program.

## What experience and skills to volunteers need?

The most important requirements are compassion, respect for older persons, and common sense. We provide the training and supervision needed to enable volunteers to help residents know their rights.

# Your Consumer Rights entitle you to:

1. Voice grievances without fear of retaliation.
2. Exercise all your rights as a home care consumer.
3. Exercise all your rights as a resident in a long-term care facility.
4. Be free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
5. Be free from physical and chemical restraints.
6. Communicate privately with persons of your choice.
7. Be discharged or transferred according to law.
8. Participate in the planning of your care and treatment.
9. Look at your medical records.
10. Exercise other rights too numerous to list here. Call the Ombudsman if you have any questions about your rights.