



Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) Challenges

Program Overview

The LTCOP identifies and resolves complaints made by, or on behalf of, residents of nursing facilities and board & care facilities*. In 2017, the Ombudsman program advocated on behalf of over **3 million residents** in **16,376 nursing facilities** and **58,031 board & care facilities**. The program received **201,460 complaints** and Ombudsmen resolved or partially resolved **73.5%** of claims at a satisfactory level.

Most Challenging Complaints

In nursing facilities, the most challenging complaints to resolve are:

Staffing-related



In board & care facilities, the most challenging complaints to resolve are:



Admission, transfer, discharge, and eviction

Most Time Consuming Complaints

In nursing facilities, the most time consuming complaints to resolve are:

Care-related



In board & care facilities, the most time consuming complaints to resolve are:



Admission, transfer, discharge, and eviction

Most Effective Complaints to Resolve

In both nursing facilities and board & care facilities, Ombudsmen are most effective at resolving complaints related to:



Autonomy, choice, preference, exercise of rights and privacy

LTC Ombudsmen Reported that Fewer Specialized Services are Available for:



Residents with mental illness



Residents who live in rural areas



Residents who speak a language other than English

Resource Challenges

State and Local Ombudsmen both reported the following as key resource limitations:



Insufficient funding



Difficulty recruiting and supporting volunteers

Lack of resources prevent the program from achieving regular nursing facility and board & care facility visits, and performing complaint investigations.

Example Complaints Received by Ombudsmen

"I've been waiting for someone to answer my call light for the last hour."

"No one knocks before they enter my room. They don't understand this is my home too."

"I found my dad with bed sores the last two times I visited."

"I just got a discharge notice but don't know how to appeal it."

*Board & care facilities include assisted living and similar residential settings. The data in this factsheet come from the Handling Resident Complaints Research Brief available at [ACL.GOV](https://acl.gov). To access more data from the National Ombudsman Reporting Systems (NORS) visit <https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/NORS/Year/>. For more information on NORS visit <https://acl.gov/programs/protecting-rights-and-preventing-abuse/long-term-care-ombudsman-program>. [Version September 2020]