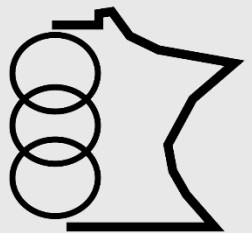




# Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care



Office of  
Ombudsman for  
Long-Term Care

Maisie Blaine, Policy Specialist  
&  
Julia Lerner, Regional Ombudsman

# Mission & Vision Statement

## **Mission:**

- To empower, educate, and advocate alongside Minnesotans who are receiving long-term care services and supports to ensure their rights are upheld.

## **Vision:**

- All Minnesotans seeking or receiving long-term care services and supports have a high quality of life and high quality of care with a person-centered focus.
- The OOLTC empowers and advocates alongside residents in individual cases to help them achieve their best life.
- The OOLTC is a leading voice influencing public policy to systemically improve long-term care in Minnesota.

# Who Do We Serve?

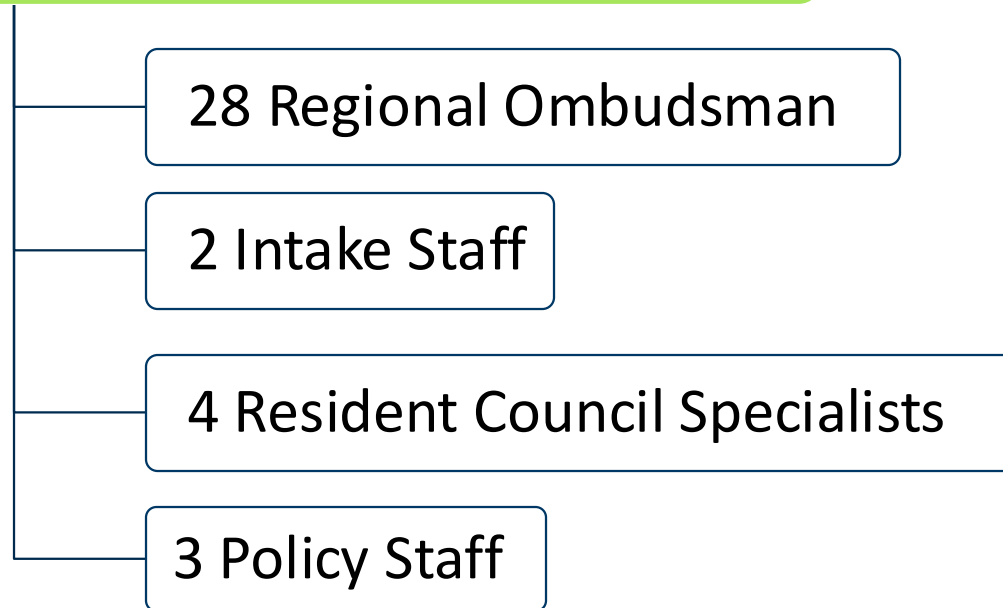
**Our program's services are free of charge. We support:**

- Any Minnesotan seeking information about licensed long-term care services for adults.
- Individuals 18+ who are a current, prospective, or former resident of a long-term care facility.
- Individuals receiving home care services.
- Medicare beneficiaries with hospital discharge concerns.
- Long-term care facility staff members and administrators with resident-related concerns.

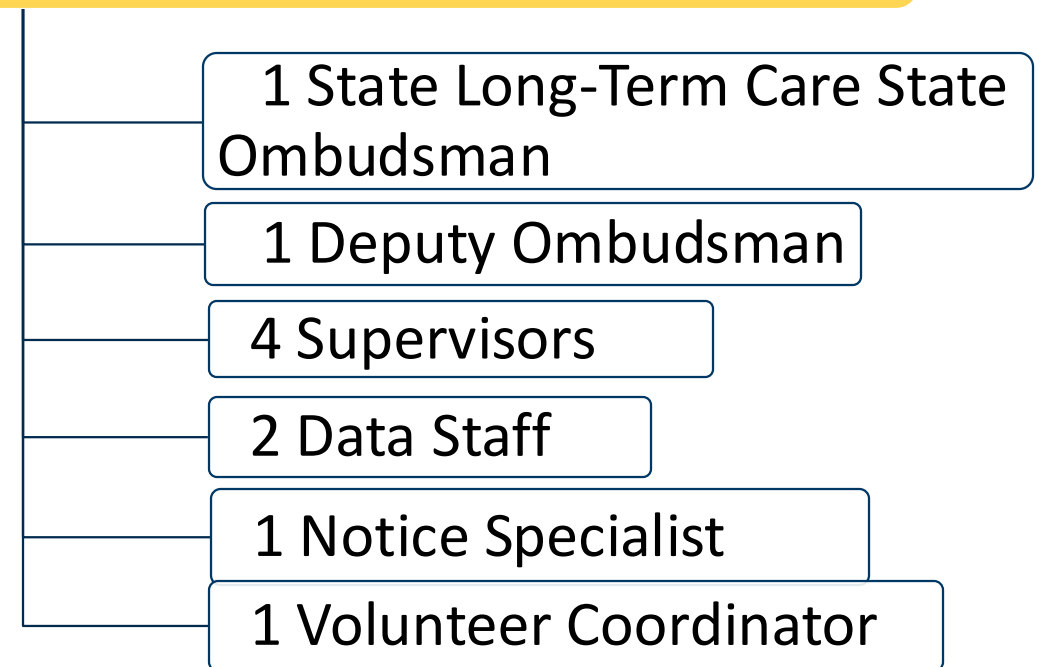


# Current Office Structure

## 37 Staff Working with Clients

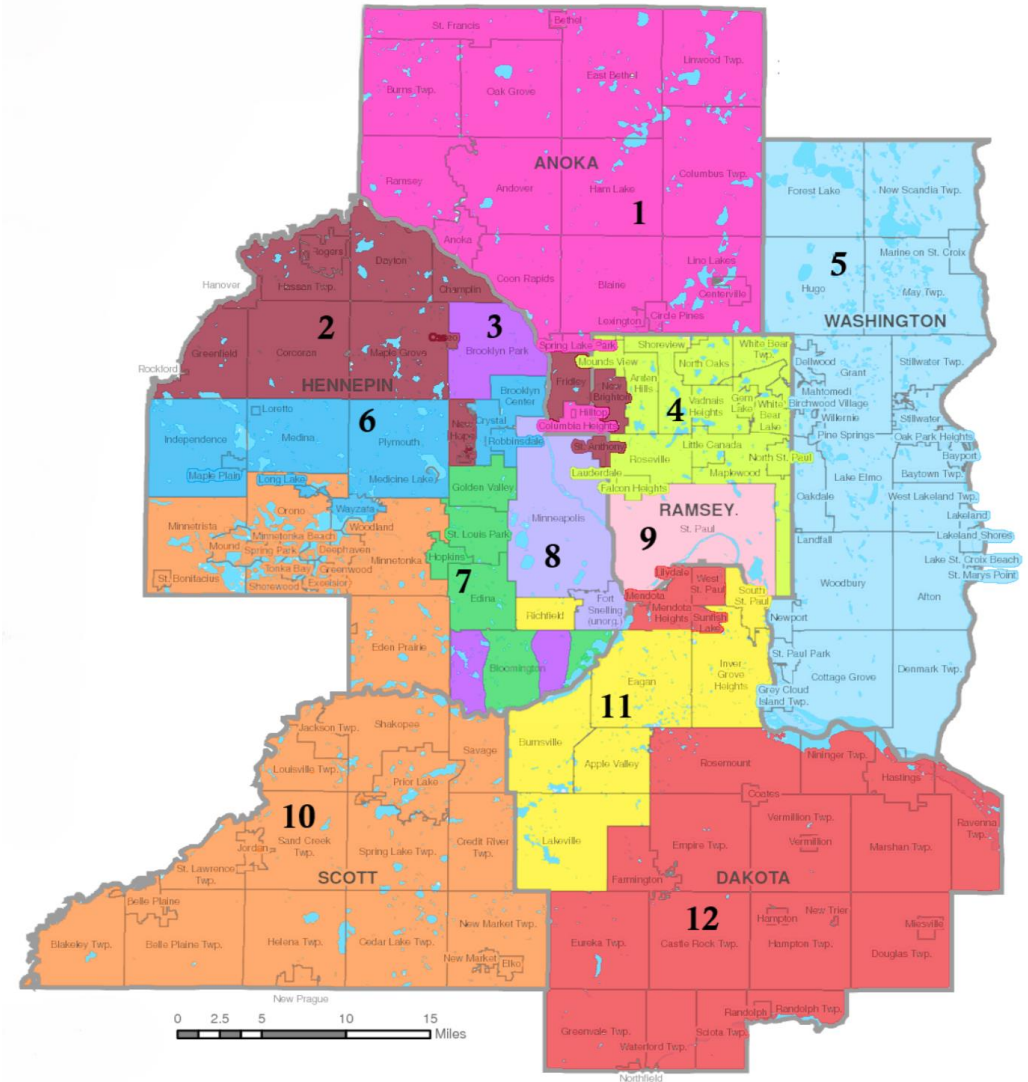
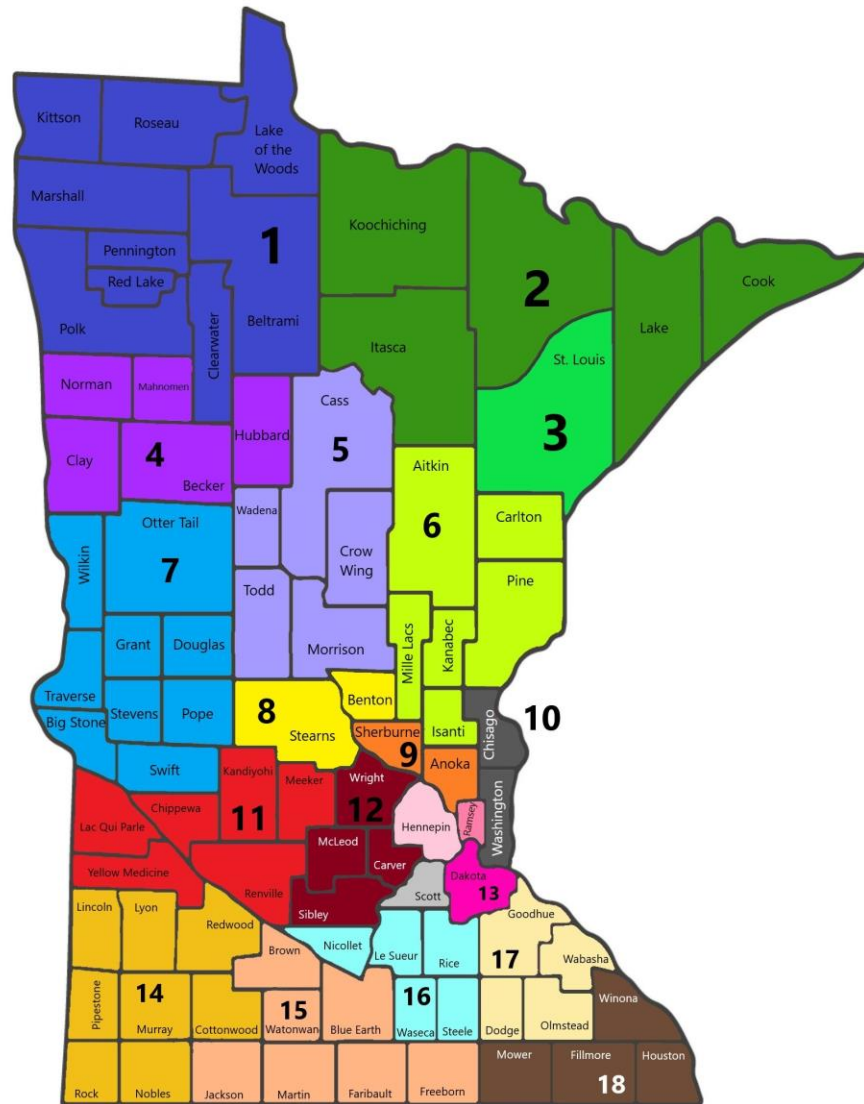


## 10 Leadership & Support

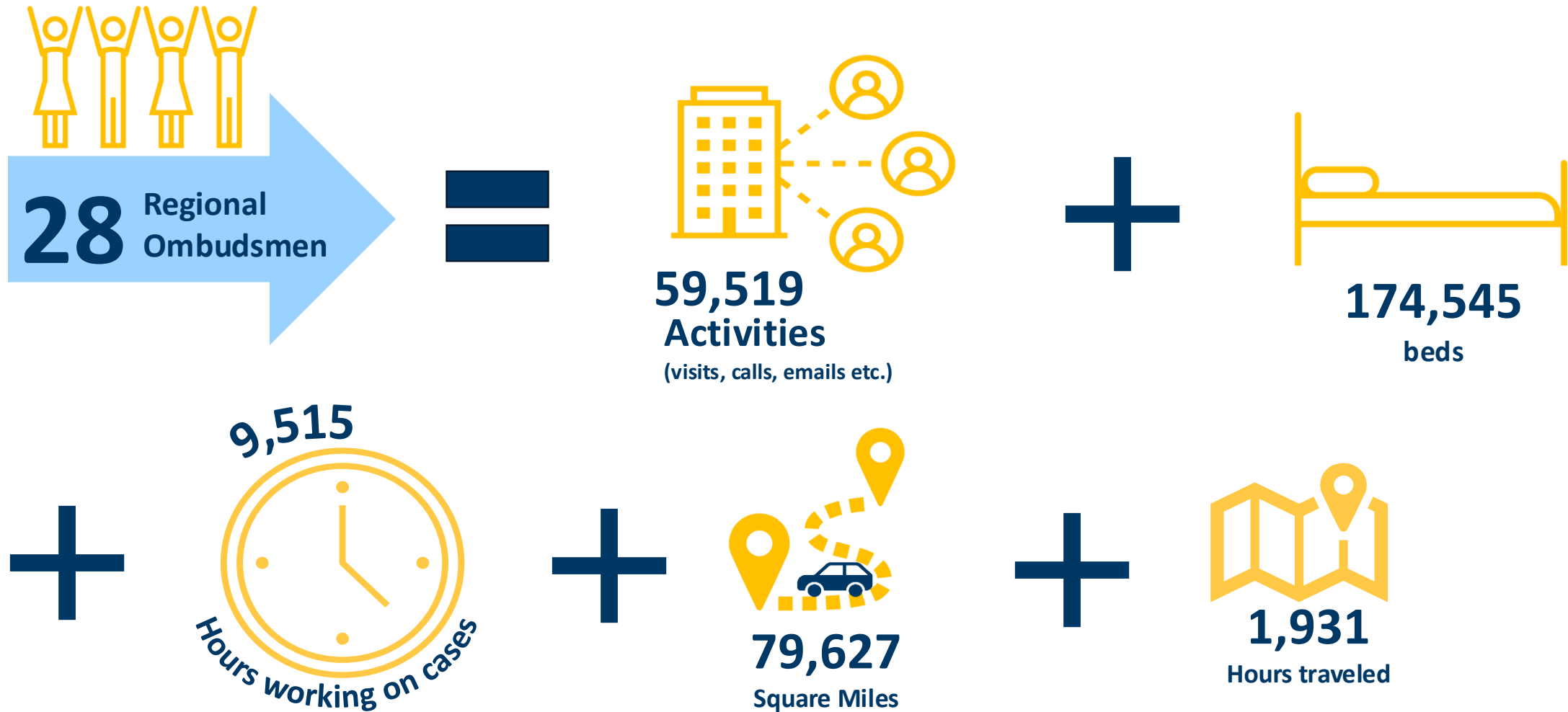




# Regional Ombudsman Coverage Areas



# By the Numbers



# Certified Ombudsman Volunteers (COVs)

## In Their Words

“I like to believe that my actions as a COV in supporting residents will someday be paid forward when I or a loved one need a strong advocate.”

*Certified Ombudsman Volunteer,  
Hennepin County*

Certified Ombudsman Volunteers provide support, advocacy and other important services to residents.

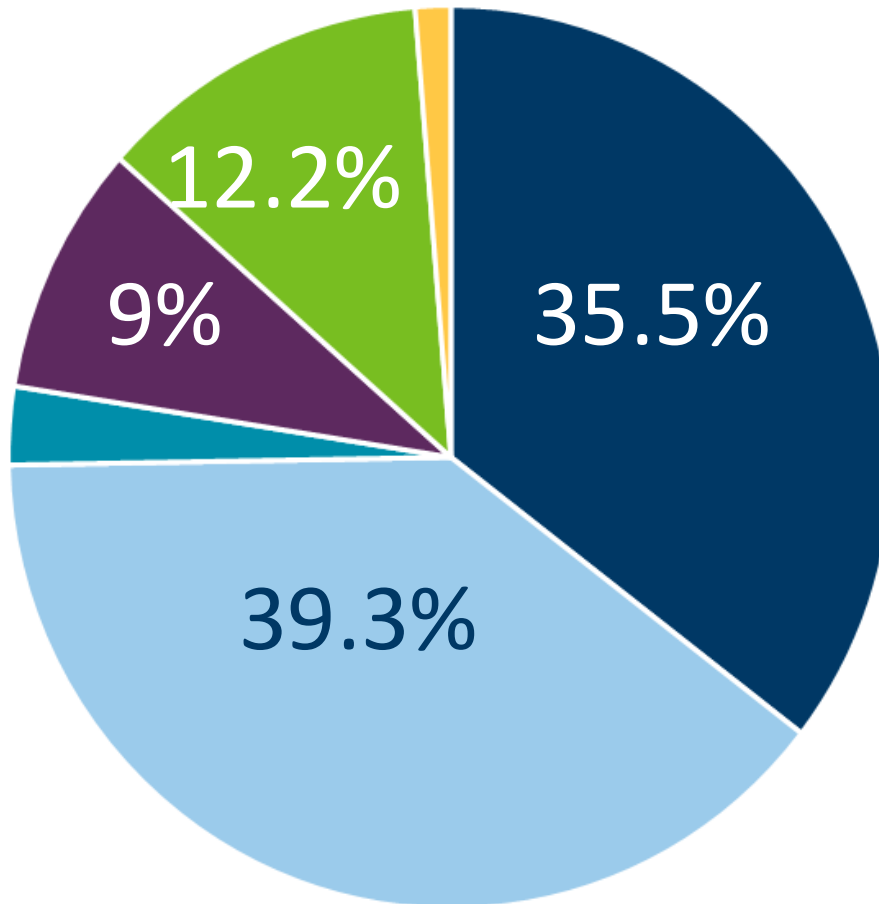
## Services

28 Certified Ombudsman Volunteers provided 3,277 hours of service to residents of long-term care facilities in Fiscal Year 2024. That time includes visiting residents, providing advocacy, assisting with complaints, and education on resident rights at resident and family councils.

Contact COV Coordinator Marie Kessler if you want to volunteer. [Marie.L.Kessler@state.mn.us](mailto:Marie.L.Kessler@state.mn.us)

# Where Complaints Originate

2024 Complaints by Complainant Type

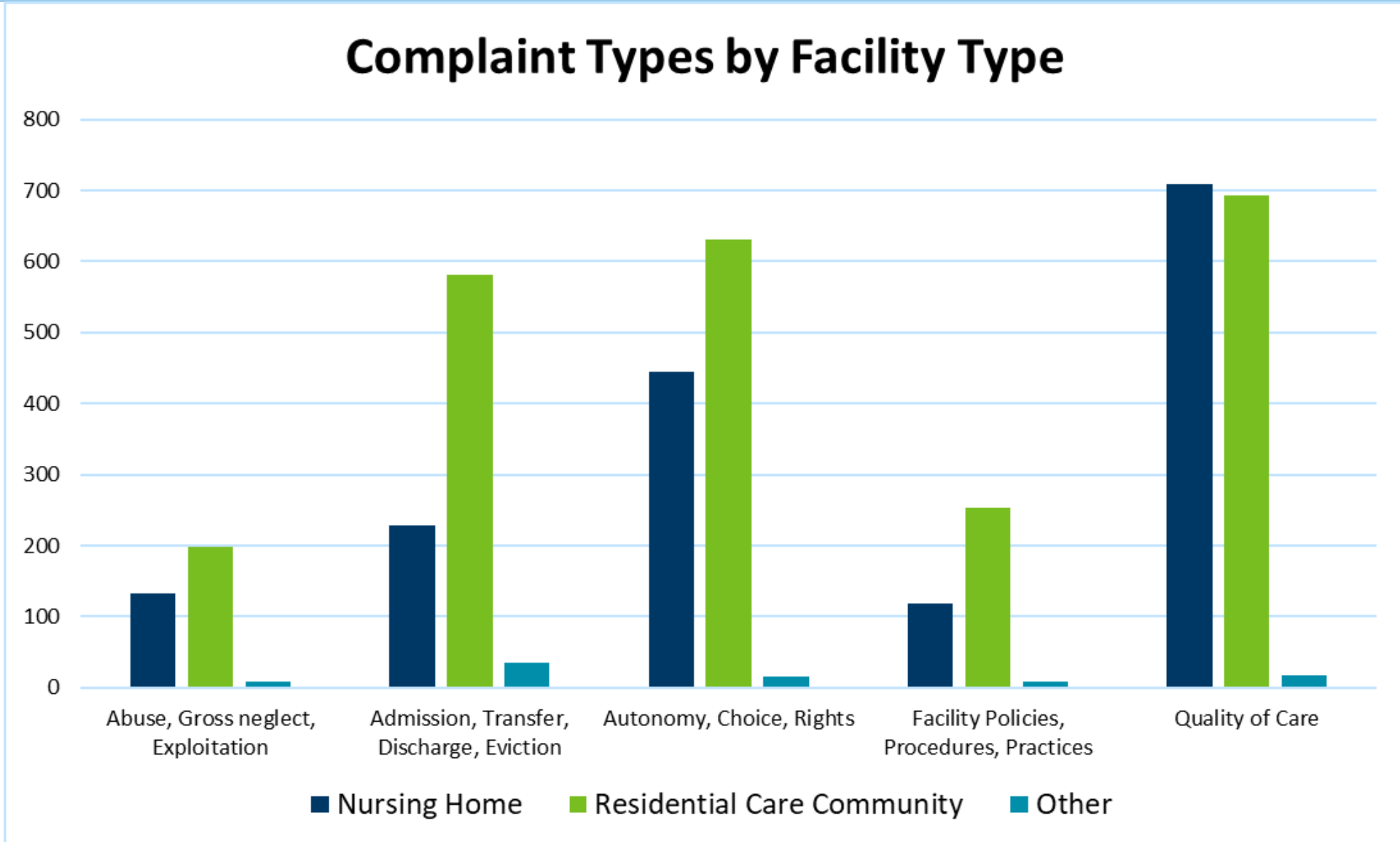


■ Resident Representative ■ Resident ■ Ombudsman ■ Other Agency ■ Facility Staff ■ Other

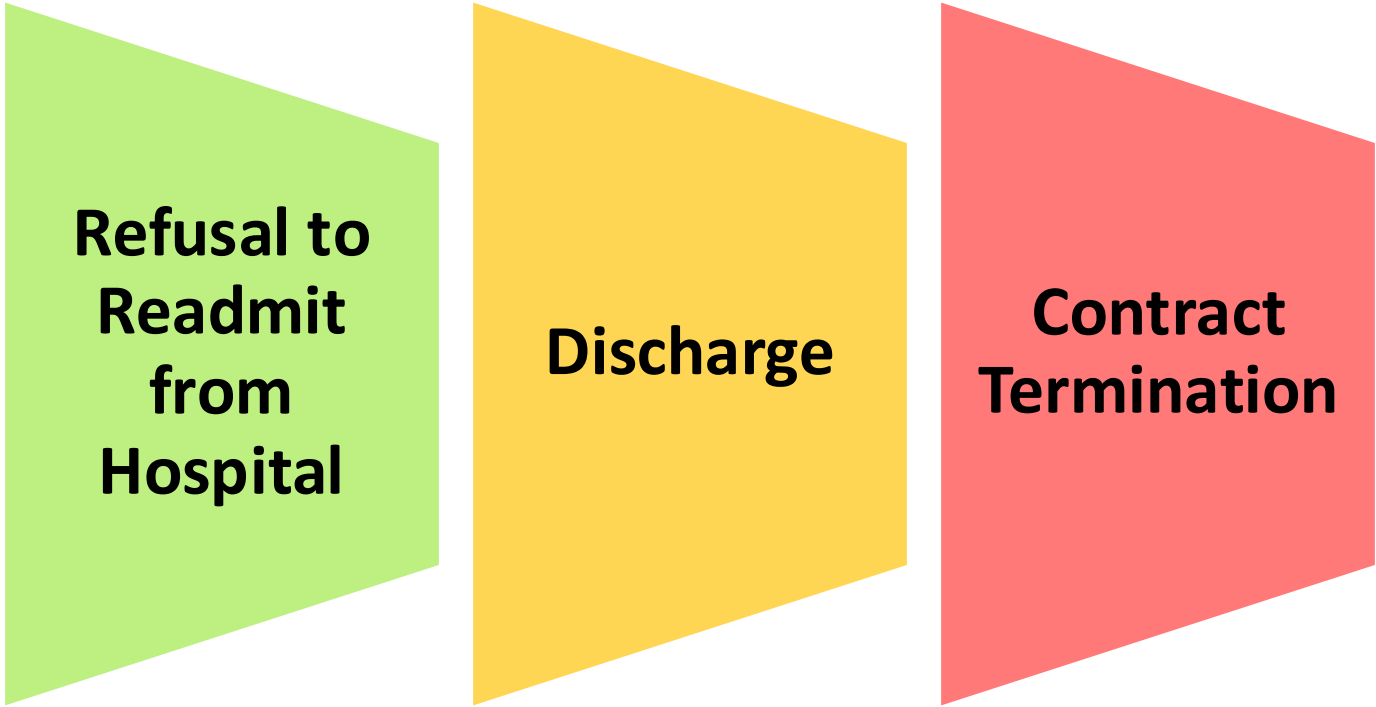
Main phone number:  
651-431-2555 or toll free  
1-800-657-3591  
  
Phone answered 8am-  
4pm Monday through  
Friday



# Top Complaint Categories



# Discharge, Termination and Eviction



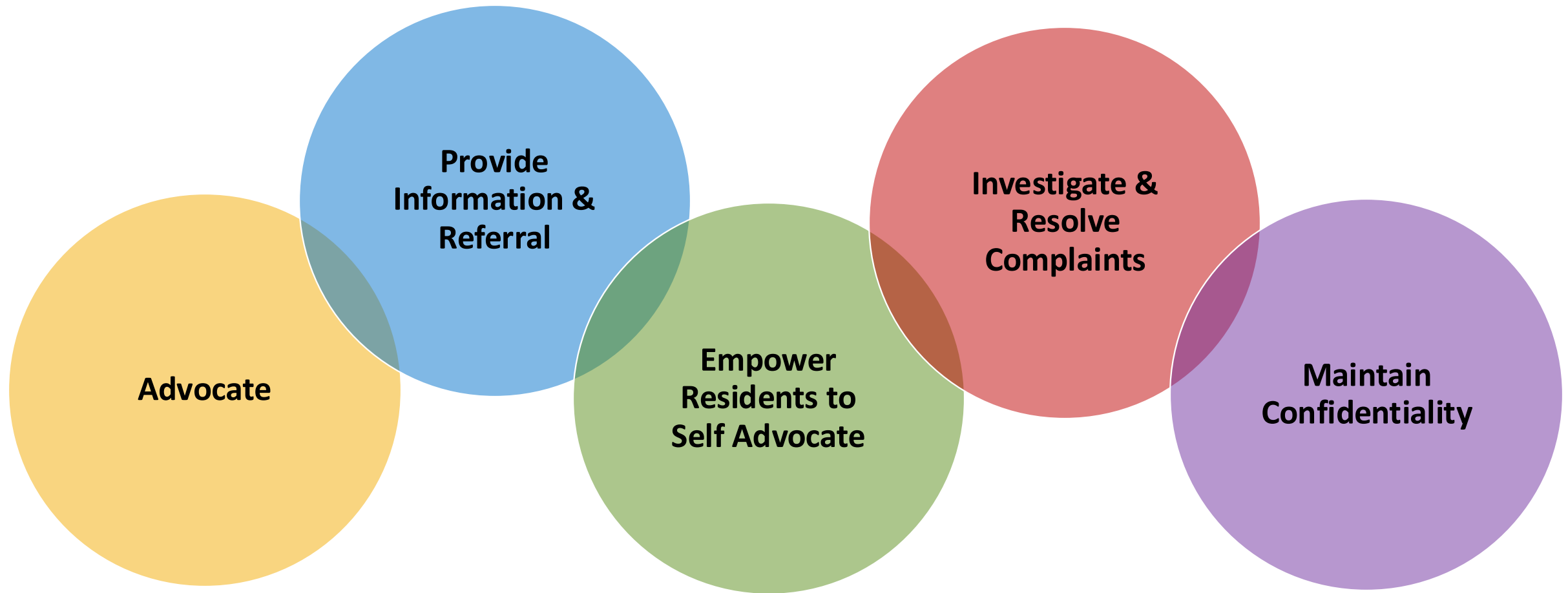
**Refusal to  
Readmit  
from  
Hospital**

**Discharge**

**Contract  
Termination**

The office assisted with than 846 complaints in Fiscal Year 2024 about discharge or eviction in assisted living facilities and nursing homes. This was the largest complaint category sub-type.

# What Do We Do?



# What is Advocacy?

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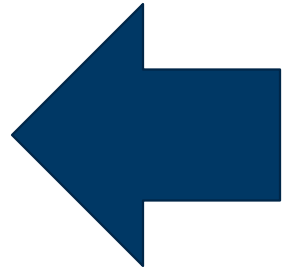
**Using your power,  
authority, influence,  
funding and knowledge  
to champion the  
resident experience.**

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- The act of supporting, defending, or arguing for a specific cause or issue.
- The process of empowering a person to use their voice and helping to have their voice heard.
- Three types of advocacy:
  - Self-Advocacy
  - Individual Advocacy (casework)
  - Systemic Advocacy (facility-wide, policy, legislative)



- Encourage resident self-advocacy and promote the resident's voice.
- Use of person-centered principles and program requirements as a basis for advocacy.
- Use of empathy, cultural competence, listening, critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills.
- Follow up to ensure resolution occurred and is lasting.
- **Use regulatory requirements, resident bill of rights, rules and statutes as foundation for rights and service expectations and in advocacy efforts.**





# What's our process?

When working with the Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care, our staff will ask some questions

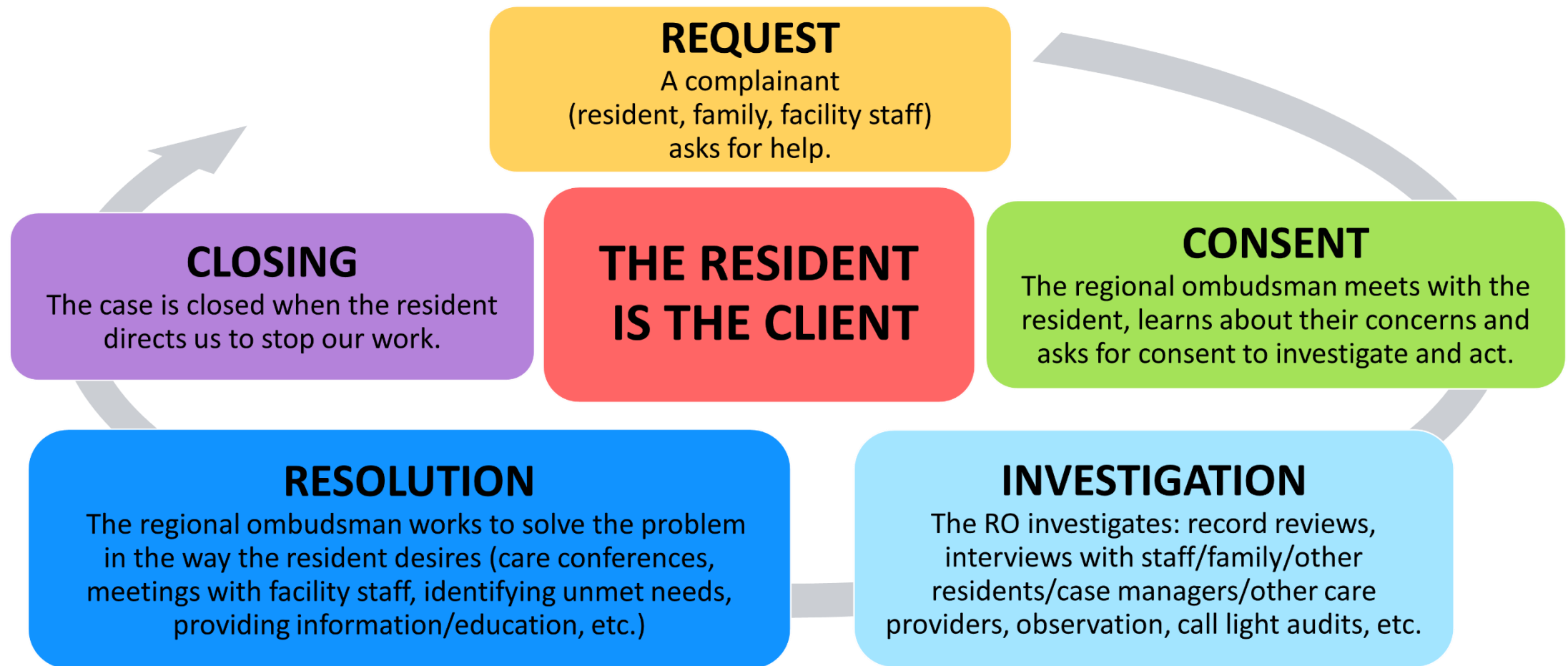
- What do you want to change?
- What have you tried already?

Regional Ombudsmen are NOT mandatory reporters. With resident consent they can make MAARC reports, reports to MDH Office of Health Facility Complaints and others.

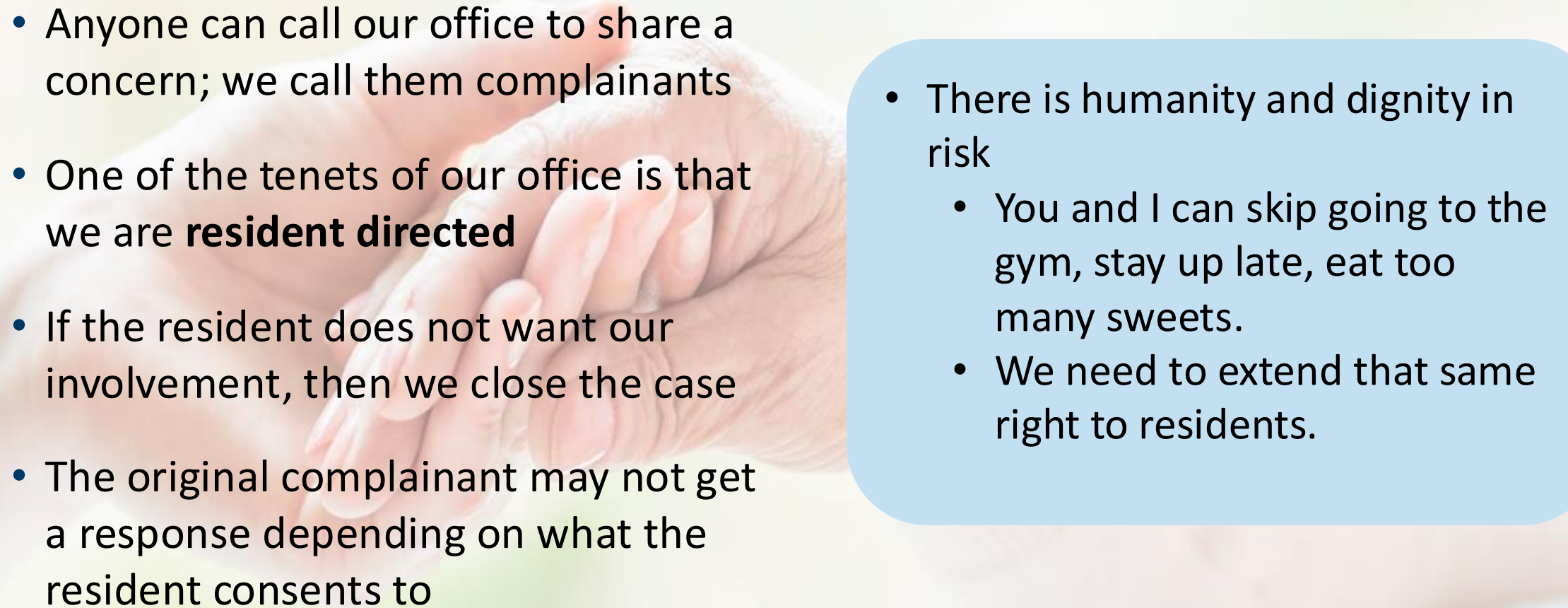
- The Bill of Rights are in addition to rights afforded to those who are residents of Minnesota and the U.S. under the constitution.
- Residents are afforded additional rights to offset the power imbalance that may occur in a facility.



# OOLTC Case Procedure



# Resident Declines OOLTC advocacy

- 
- Anyone can call our office to share a concern; we call them complainants
  - One of the tenets of our office is that we are **resident directed**
  - If the resident does not want our involvement, then we close the case
  - The original complainant may not get a response depending on what the resident consents to
- There is humanity and dignity in risk
    - You and I can skip going to the gym, stay up late, eat too many sweets.
    - We need to extend that same right to residents.



# Examples



# Case Example #1

Residents have the right to be engaged in their own care planning



## Transfer Status and Bathing

- Resident Trauma History
- Resident preference
- Mobility/Strength Safety Concerns
- Consent /Permission to support
- Coordination with care team
- New Complaint, Bathing



## Case Example #2

### Residents have the right to manage their own Financial Affairs

#### **Restrictive Power of Attorney**

- Resident calls to report their son is restricting their finances
- Visit to resident to learn more, obtain consent
- Discussions with staff about facility trust account
- Discussions with POA
- Meeting to seek resolution



# Case Example #3

Residents have the right to associate with those they choose

## Visitation Restrictions

- Facility calls OOLTC
- Daughter is HCA and POA and told facility that son cannot visit mom due to fears of financial exploitation
- Consent to support
- Coordination with all parties



# Grievances and Retaliation

- Residents have the right to file grievances at their nursing home or to complain to their homecare or assisted living provider.
- It is illegal, a misdemeanor, for an entity to retaliate when a resident does assert their rights to ask for help of an ombudsman. MN Statute 256.9742 subd 6
- If a resident fears retaliation or believes they are being retaliated against they can make a report to the Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center and also ask for advocacy services from the OOLTC.





# Suggested Advocacy Strategies

- Communicate as thoroughly as possible with everyone from the start
- Do your research! Check the regulations and ask pointed questions.
- Refer to Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care (or Office of Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities)
- Make a MAARC report as needed



TIPS

# Website and Gov.Delivery



State of Minnesota

Search



About Us

Resident and Family Resources

Know Your Rights

Provider Resources

Volunteer with Us

Contact Us

**Working to preserve  
individual rights for all who  
live in a long-term care  
community.**

We empower, educate, and advocate for you.



The Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care (OOLTC) is an independent state agency that serves people needing or receiving long-term care through complaint investigation, advocacy, and education.

Keep up to date with our Office

[Subscribe to our Newsletter](#) to keep up to date and learn about what our Office is up to.

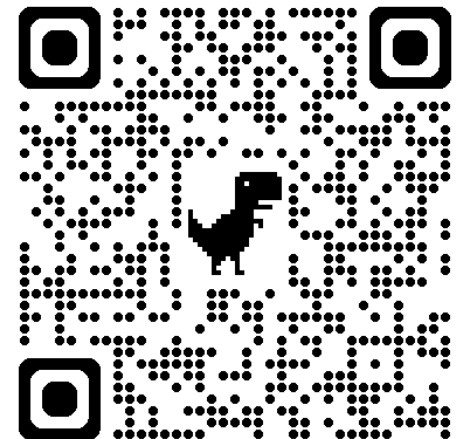
Policy and Legislation

Learn more about the [policies we've helped to develop](#)

**Learn More at:**

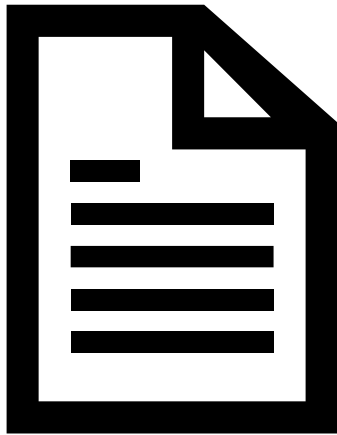
**<https://mn.gov/ooltc/>**

- Sign up to receive updates including monthly gov.delivery
- Explore long-term care resources
- Find the digital Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report





# Other Reference Materials



[Assisted Living Bill of Rights](#)

[Nursing Home Bill of Rights](#)

[Home Care Bill of Rights](#)

[MinnesotaHelp.info](#)



# Other Ombudsman Programs



Other ombudsman programs in Minnesota (separate from the Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care).

## **Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities**

Phone: 800-657-3506

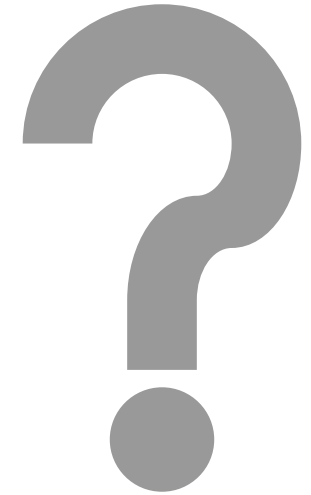
Website: [mn.gov/omhdd](https://mn.gov/omhdd)

## **Ombudsman for Public Managed Health Care Programs**

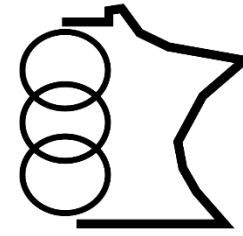
Phone: 800-657-3729

Website: [mn.gov/dhs](https://mn.gov/dhs)

# Questions and Answers



**Empower. Educate. Advocate.**



**Office of  
Ombudsman for  
Long-Term Care**

**Thank You**

**Maisie Blaine, Policy Specialist**

**[Maisie.Blaine@state.mn.us](mailto:Maisie.Blaine@state.mn.us)**

**Julia Lerner, Regional Ombudsman**

**[Julia.Lerner@state.mn.us](mailto:Julia.Lerner@state.mn.us)**