



**FLORIDA'S OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM**  
Advocating for Long-Term Care Residents



## **Florida's Ombudsman Program & Residents' Rights Month**

### **About Florida's Ombudsman Program:**

A Long-term Care Ombudsman is a volunteer who helps to improve the lives of Floridians who live in long-term care settings including nursing homes, assisted living facilities and adult family care homes. Currently there are over 4,000 long-term care facilities and 170,000 long-term care residents in the state of Florida.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is supported by more than 350 volunteers ombudsmen who are passionate about improving the quality of life for residents. It takes a special kind of person to commit to such a mission. This is a unique program whose success depends on the energy, compassion and skills of trained volunteers. These special individuals dedicate thousands of unpaid hours each year to ensuring that the voices of Florida's long-term care facility residents are heard.

### **About Long-term Care Residents' Rights Month:**

Residents' Rights Month is an annual event celebrated nationally each October to honor residents living in all long-term care facilities, including nursing homes, assisted living facilities and adult family care homes. It is a time to focus on and promote the dignity, respect and the value of each individual resident. The theme for Residents' Rights Month 2013 is "Speak Out Against Elder Abuse!" The goal is to educate and encourage residents and others to speak out against all types of abuse.

### **About Long-term Care Residents' Rights:**

Residents' Rights are guaranteed by federal and state legislation. These laws requires nursing homes, assisted living facilities and adult family care homes to "promote and protect the rights of each resident" and place a strong emphasis on individual dignity and self-determination. A person living in a long-term care facility maintains the same rights as an individual in the larger community, but often faces special challenges due to chronic conditions and limitations to activities of daily living. The larger community owes all of our long-term care residents another voice speaking out to protect their rights. The Florida Ombudsman Program is proud to contribute to that effort.

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