

What does the Wisconsin Long Term Care Ombudsman Program do?

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program plays a critical role in addressing the **health, safety, welfare** and **rights issues** that older adults face. Ombudsmen respond to complaints lodged by or on behalf of residents and work with them to protect their rights and well-being. They also serve as consultants and educators to providers and citizens on any number of specific issues, including resident rights, preventing abuse, and the state's managed long-term care programs, Family Care and IRIS.

Our program...

✓ **investigates complaints** on behalf of long-term care consumers

✓ **provides consultations** to long-term care providers

✓ **educates** the public, family members, long-term care consumers, and long-term care providers

✓ **protects** the rights of residents in long-term care facilities

Charged to Serve

129k+ people living in long-term care facilities, managed care, and the IRIS program

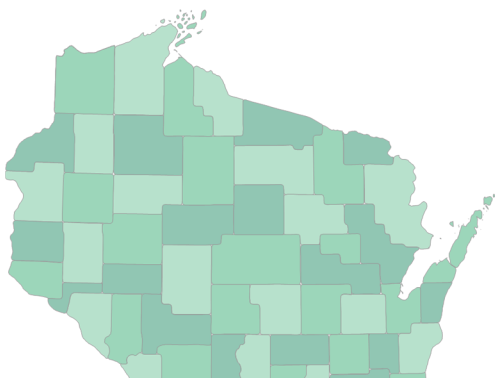
6,000+ long-term care facilities throughout the state of Wisconsin

Ombudsman-to-Consumer Ratio

1 : 5,609

National benchmark: 1 ombudsman per 2,000 beds (Institute of Medicine, 1995).

Serving
Wisconsin
residents
since 1972.



FFY 2025 Program Impact

3,431 complaints investigated (↑ 18% from FFY 2024)

74% fully or partially resolved

6,527 information and assistance contacts to individuals

2,162 information and assistance contacts to providers

106 community education opportunities

The Ombudsman Program is essential to ensure the health, safety and well-being of current and future older adults in Wisconsin. **Thank you for strengthening your commitment to supporting older adults in our state.**

The Impact of Wisconsin's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is essential in addressing the safety and well-being of older adults in Wisconsin. The following accounts highlight the impact of the Ombudsman Program, illustrating its essential function for older adults and those living in long-term care facilities within our state.



Remaining Safely at Home

A client with multiple sclerosis, living independently and enrolled in home and community-based services, requested a bathroom modification to safely bathe and use the toilet. His request was denied. Suggested alternatives increased the risk of injury and could have forced him out of his home. When he appealed, he was told to consider moving to assisted living instead. The ombudsman helped with the appeal and proved that a one-time modification would cost less than moving to assisted living. The client was able to remain safely in his home and maintain his independence, while also using the most cost-effective option.



Protecting Resident Rights

Ombudsmen continue to receive calls periodically about long-term care facilities still restricting visitors when there is a Covid or other outbreak. Ombudsmen resolve each case individually by promoting the residents' right to have visitors and educating providers about the dangers of social isolation. Ombudsmen equip residents and families with language they can use to stand up for their rights and assist in resolving resident rights violations.



Focusing on Resident Safety and Well-Being

While making an unscheduled visit to an assisted living facility, an ombudsman noticed padlocks on the outside of bedroom doors on the second floor, which is a fire and safety hazard. The padlocks were near the top of the door. Staff said the locks were used for residents who wouldn't stay in bed at night and kept them from helping themselves to food from the refrigerator, which also had a padlock on its door. The ombudsman remained in the home until the locks were removed and reported the provider to the regulatory agency.