

Our Mission

The Beaver County Office on Aging Ombudsman Program works to protect the rights of all long-term care facility residents, so that they can live their lives with dignity and feel free to voice complaints without fear of retaliation.

The Ombudsman strives to be a trusted advocate for all residents by educating them regarding their rights, investigation and resolution of complaints, and empowering residents to speak for themselves. The Ombudsman provides support for those who feel they do not have a voice.

We have wonderful Volunteer Ombudsmen and are looking for more. Please consider becoming a Volunteer Ombudsman because

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE !

Call the Ombudsman at 724-480-8589

The Starfish Story

Original Story by: Loren Easley

One day a man was walking along the beach, when he noticed a boy hurriedly picking up and gently throwing things into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, "Young man, what are you doing?"

The boy replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die."

The man laughed to himself and said, "Don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can't make any difference!"

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said,

"I made a difference to that one."



Have a question or problem in a nursing home or personal care home?



Your Ombudsman can help!

Call the confidential Ombudman
phone line **724-480-8589**

or

Email Ombudsman@bcoa.us

Beaver County Office on Aging Ombudsman Program

1020 Eighth Ave. Beaver Falls, PA 15010

"Advocate for those who can't, support those who can and ensure all long-term care consumers live with dignity and respect."

OMBUDSMAN

is a Swedish term that means “citizen advocate”.

WHAT DOES AN OMBUDSMAN DO?

An Ombudsman is specially trained and has authority under Pennsylvania law to IDENTIFY, INVESTIGATE, and RESOLVE Resident directed complaints made by, or on behalf of, long-term care residents. They ensure that residents receive fair treatment and appropriate care by:

- Identifying, investigating, and resolving complaints
- Ensuring residents are receiving services to which they are entitled
- Educating residents, families and staff about RESIDENTS’ RIGHTS
- Helping to establish resident and family councils
- Working to change laws, regulations, and policies affecting residents

WHAT KINDS OF COMPLAINTS CAN BE INVESTIGATED ?

Complaints may be made about persons or facilities that are in a position to threaten or interfere with the rights, health, safety and/or welfare of one or more long-term care facility residents. Issues range anywhere from medication administration, quality of food, to basic matters of dignity and respect.

HOW DO I FILE A COMPLAINT ?

You may file a complaint in writing, by phone, online, or in person. Call the CONFIDENTIAL Ombudsman line at [724-480-8589](tel:724-480-8589), or email Ombudsman@bcoa.us. An Ombudsman will be assigned to your case for further investigation. This is a RESIDENT-DIRECTED process, where we assist the resident, with their consent, to address concerns and take appropriate action to help resolve the problem to the satisfaction of the resident.

DO I HAVE TO GIVE MY NAME ?

No, however it is helpful if an Ombudsman may contact you for more information. The names of the resident and person making the complaint are kept confidential unless the complainant or resident gives consent to disclose the information.

RESIDENTS’ RIGHTS:

- The RIGHT to be informed
- The RIGHT to privacy and to be treated with dignity and respect
- The RIGHT to know about services and charges
- The RIGHT to know about your medical condition
- The RIGHT to participate in your plan of care, including the RIGHT to refuse treatment
- The RIGHT to choose your own physician and to use the pharmacy of your choice
- The RIGHT to have your personal and medical records treated as confidential
- The RIGHT to manage your own personal finances
- The RIGHT to privacy and to be treated with dignity and respect
- The RIGHT to use your own clothing and possessions
- The RIGHT to be free from mental, physical, sexual abuse, exploitation, neglect, and involuntary seclusion
- The RIGHT to be free from restraints
- The RIGHT to voice a grievance without retaliation
- The RIGHT not to be transferred or discharged, except for medical reasons, non-payment, or if the home ceases to operate
- The RIGHT to accept or deny visitors
- The RIGHT to immediate access by family and reasonable access by others with your consent
- The RIGHT to communicate confidentially with others

[Beaver County Office on Aging Ombudsman Program](#)

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