

# LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN



The Long Term Care Ombudsmen are a neutral third party who work with residents of licensed long-term care facilities with a goal of improving care and quality for residents and advocating for the resident's wishes. Ombudsmen advocate on behalf of residents of licensed long-term care facilities such as nursing homes (NH), home for the aged (HFA), and adult foster care (AFC) homes. Ombudsmen promote high quality of care and quality of life, explain resident rights to residents and families, empower residents to communicate concerns, assist residents in resolving their concerns, provide education on long term care issues, promote use of best practices, advocate for residents and their families, and inform systemic change through state and federal advocacy.

There are only 20 designated ombudsmen in Michigan who are responsible for serving all facility residents. Michigan is ranked 50th out of 53 in the ratio of staff-to-bed with a ratio of **1:5,177** whereas nationally, the recommended minimum ombudsman-staff-to-bed ratio is **1:2,000** and the national average is **1:2,236**. In order to achieve the minimum staff to bed ratio, Michigan needs to add **33** more full-time Ombudsman which would increase our ranking to 29th. Along with the needed increase in the number of Ombudsman, the funding formula used to distribute Ombudsman funding has not been updated since 1987. This funding formula should be updated to include current data.

With ombudsmen in Michigan serving more than double the national average, residents in this state are receiving less attention from ombudsmen leading to fewer complaints being addressed, fewer preventative measures to facilities, and greater escalation of issues. Michigan's older adults in long-term care facilities deserve increased support from the Ombudsman Program

## Michigan's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (FY23)

# Paid Program Staff	# Facilities	# Resident Beds	# Complaints Investigated	Staff to Bed Ratio
<b>20</b>	<b>4,610</b>	<b>103,549</b>	<b>3,401</b>	<b>1:5,177</b>

**ACTION:** Adequately staff Michigan's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program by adding 33 new Ombudsman at an estimated total cost of \$3 million.

**ACTION:** Direct the Commission on Services to the Aging to update the Ombudsman Funding Formula to distribute increased funds more adequately.

AgeWays Nonprofit Senior Services is a nonprofit agency serving and advocating on behalf of older adults and adults with disabilities residing in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw Counties. The agency helps these individuals and their family caregivers maintain their health and independence by administering home and community based services

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