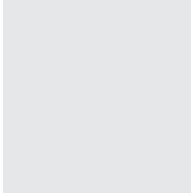
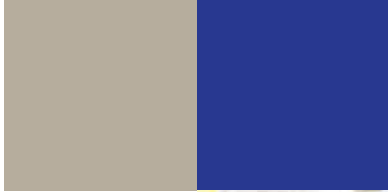


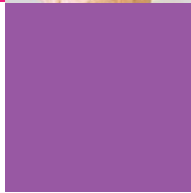


# FLORIDA OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

ADVOCATING FOR QUALITY LONG-TERM CARE



Annual Report  
2014-2015





# Our Mission...

“ The mission of the Florida Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is to improve the quality of life for all Florida long-term care residents by advocating for and protecting their health, safety, welfare, and rights. ”



## A Message From the Secretary

It has been a wonderful year at the Department of Elder Affairs, where we are tasked with the immense responsibility of caring for Florida's more than 4.9 million elders. Working together, we have accomplished a great deal through strengthened partnerships and the creation of new ones. I am excited for where we are and where we will be in the new year. It is our mission to serve elders as they live, contribute, and build legacies in Florida. We simply could not accomplish this without the dedication of volunteers who make a difference every day in the lives of elder Floridians. We are grateful for those who graciously give their time in service to benefit others, meeting their needs and improving the communities in which they live.



In a fast moving world, it can be easy for us to get tunnel vision and remain focused on the things going on immediately around us. In that noise, it is easy to forget that we are a part of something bigger. That is not true of the volunteers of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP). Their noble work is critical to accomplishing our goals to protect Florida seniors. LTCOP is made up of dedicated staff and volunteers whose mission it is to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of those residing in long-term care facilities through a collaborative resident-centered advocacy program.

Each year, ombudsmen and staff visit more than 4,000 assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and adult family care homes to spend time with residents and families, discuss their experiences, and hear any concerns. Oftentimes, ombudsmen become the voices of the residents who may not have family or friends to assist them. Our latest numbers show that volunteer ombudsmen donated 86,000 hours for the 2014-2015 Federal Fiscal Year. We are proud of their contributions to long-term care residents, and we are always seeking to increase the volunteer corps. With more volunteers, the program will have an even higher frequency of visitations, which ensures even better outcomes for long-term care residents in Florida.

There is a saying that “there is nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer”. Volunteer ombudsmen with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program prove this to be true. I could not be more proud to stand with the staff and volunteers of this program. Their commitment and dedication is inspiring, and I thank them on behalf of the Department of Elder Affairs.

Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Samuel P. Verghese

## A Message From the State Ombudsman



The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program consistently empowers long-term care residents to know their rights and often provides a voice for those who may not be able to speak up for themselves. Each year, hundreds of volunteers advocate for residents' rights by devoting their time and energy to successfully resolve the concerns of residents and their loved ones in addition to performing annual assessments in all of Florida's long-term care facilities.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program's State Council is comprised solely of volunteers and serves as an advisory body to assist the State Ombudsman in reaching a consensus among local councils on issues affecting residents and impacting the optimal operation of the program. The recommendations from the State Council for 2015-2016 FFY are as follows:

- Additional spending to allow the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to focus on recruiting, retention, and recognition issues;
- Increasing the dollar amount for the Optional State Supplementation Allowance, which is provided to assisted living facility residents;
- Implementing an appeals process for residents discharged from assisted living facilities to ensure that residents are not discharged in retaliation;
- Updating the technology available to ombudsmen to operate during the course of their complaint investigations and training the ombudsmen and staff to be able to properly utilize that technology; and
- Updating the current complaint form to make it accessible to ombudsmen that utilize Macs.

We are proud to be a unique program whose success depends on the commitment, courage, and compassion of volunteers. Ombudsmen are the cornerstone of our program, and I am humbled to work alongside these amazing individuals as we serve Florida's most vulnerable seniors.

State Ombudsman Leigh Davis

## A Message From the Office of the Deputy State Ombudsman for Legal Affairs

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is charged with recommending policy and regulatory changes designed to improve the quality of life of residents of long-term care facilities. As part of this function, the LTCOP is pleased to announce the passage of CS/SB 7018 at the conclusion of the 2015 legislative session. This bill revises part I of chapter 400, Florida Statutes, to:

- Provide the State Ombudsman with final authority to appoint district ombudsmen;
- Revise the duties of and the appointment process for at-large positions to the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Council;
- Revise and clarify the application and training requirements for appointment as an ombudsman, including a level 2 background screening;
- Expand the duties of ombudsmen in the local districts to comply with the Older Americans Act, to include the authority to establish resident and family councils within long-term care facilities;
- Clarify that the complaint investigation process and the administrative assessment process are separate processes;
- Conform the complaint investigation and resolution processes with the requirements of the Older Americans Act; and
- Require information to be provided to a resident of a long-term care facility upon first entering the facility to confirm that retaliatory action against a resident for filing a grievance or exercising a resident's rights is prohibited.



The passage of this bill furthers the mission of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and offers continued improvements for the health, safety, welfare, and rights of Florida's long-term care residents. It is an honor to serve on behalf of our residents, and I look forward to continued successes on their behalf in the upcoming year.

Deputy State Ombudsman for Legal Affairs Eric Neiberger



## Year In Review

Florida's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program achieved new milestones in success during the past year. Listed here are some of the highlights and accomplishments that our dedicated staff and volunteers achieved in FFY 2014-2015.

## Complaint Resolution

When a complaint is closed, a disposition code is assigned based on the resident's perspective, e.g., resolved, partially resolved, no action needed, withdrawn, not resolved, or referred. Although complaint investigations may result in any one of these codes, the ombudsman strives to advocate for the resident to resolve each complaint to the resident's satisfaction by working with facility staff members, family members, or other agencies on the resident's behalf. However, some complaints require a referral to another agency.

### Fiscal Year Results

No action needed - 35%	Not resolved - 3%
Resolved - 33%	Referred - 2%
Withdrawn - 17%	Other - 1%
Partially resolved - 9%	

### Ombudsman Program in Numbers

	7,738 Facility Assessments and Visitations Statewide
	305 Volunteers
	86,000 Estimated Unpaid Hours Worked
	388,531 Miles Traveled by Staff & Volunteers
	\$1,941,919 Estimated Average of Savings

### Top 5 Complaints in Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs) and Adult Family-Care Homes

1. Menu
2. Medication - administration, organization
3. Dignity, respect - staff attitudes
4. Cleanliness, pests, general housekeeping
5. Equipment/buildings

### Top 5 Complaints in Nursing Homes

1. Dignity, respect - staff attitudes
2. Failure to respond to requests for assistance
3. Personal hygiene
4. Medication - administration, organization
5. Discharge/eviction

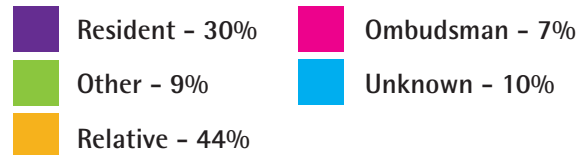
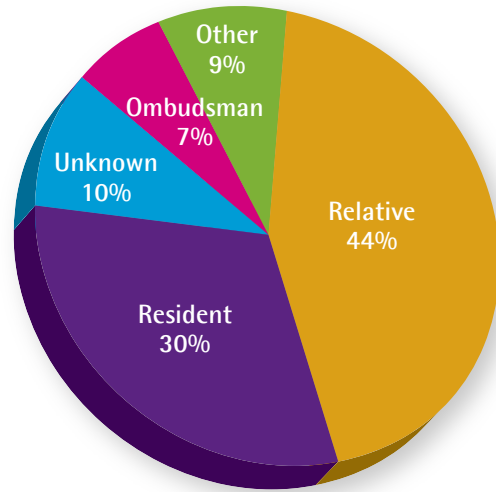
### Quarterly Ombudsman Program Data - Fiscal Year 2014-2015

	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep
<b>Number of Beds</b>	172,829	172,994	173,620	174,508
<b>Number of Volunteers</b>	306	306	327	305
<b>Facility Visitations</b>	392	820	815	906
<b>Facility Assessments</b>	951	789	655	878
<b>Complaint Investigations</b>	1,623	1,687	2,091	2,153

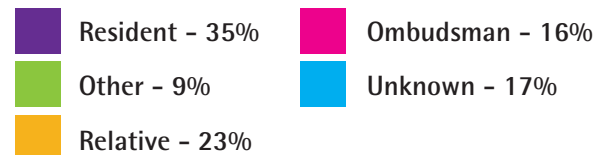
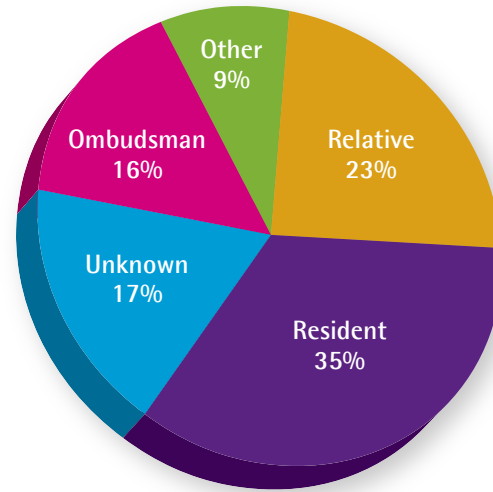
\*Reflects both initiation and closure dates that may overlap quarterly reporting periods.

## Origin of Complaints

Nursing Homes



Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs)/  
Adult Family-Care Homes



## Office Locations

### Northwest

1101 Gulf Breeze Parkway  
Building 3, Suite 5  
Gulf Breeze, FL 32561  
(850) 916-6720

### Panhandle

4040 Esplanade Way  
Suite 380  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 921-4703

### North Central

1515 E. Silver Springs Boulevard  
Suite 203  
Ocala, FL 34470  
(352) 620-3088

### First Coast

210 N. Palmetto Ave.  
Suite 403  
Daytona Beach, FL 32114  
(386) 226-7846

### West Coast

11351 Ulmerton Road  
Suite 303  
Largo, FL 33778  
(727) 588-6912

### West Central

701 W. Fletcher Avenue  
Suite C  
Tampa, FL 33612  
(813) 558-5591

### East Central

400 West Robinson Street  
Suite S709  
Orlando, FL 32801  
(407) 245-0651

### Southwest

2295 Victoria Avenue  
Room 152  
Ft. Myers, FL 33901  
(239) 338-2563

### Palm Beach

111 S. Sapodilla Avenue  
#125 A-B-C  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
(561) 837-5038

### Broward

8333 W. McNabb Road  
Suite 231  
Tamarac, FL 33321  
(954) 597-2266

### North Dade

7270 NW 12th Street  
Bldg 100, Suite 520  
Miami, FL 33126  
(786) 336-1418



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### South Dade & the Keys

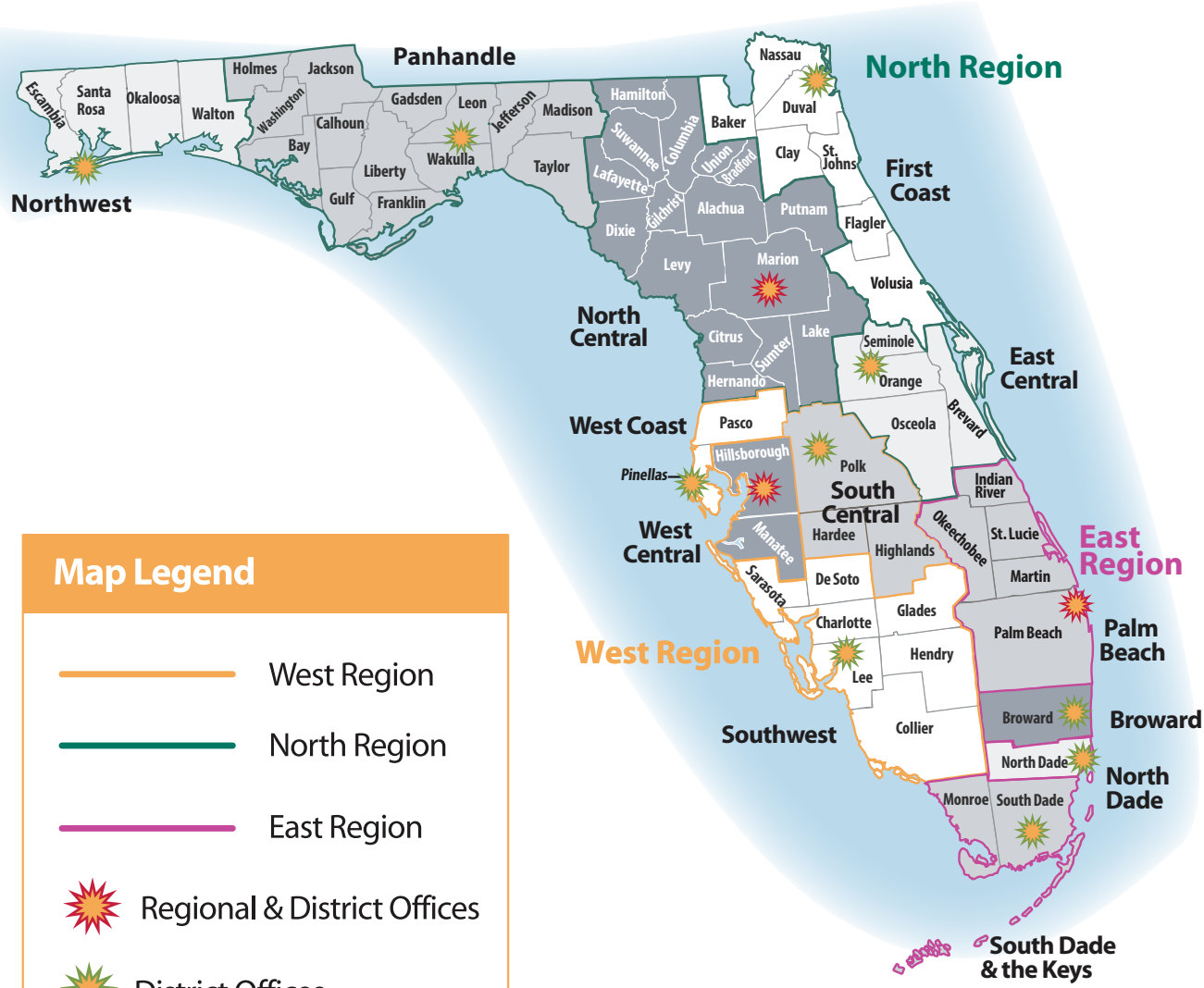
7270 NW 12th Street  
Bldg 100, Suite 520  
Miami, FL 33126  
(305) 671-7245

### South Central

200 N. Kentucky Avenue  
Suite 224  
Lakeland, FL 33801  
(863) 413-2764



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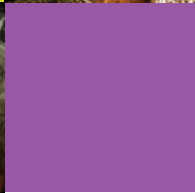
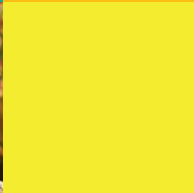
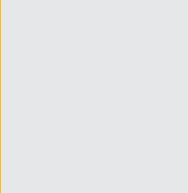
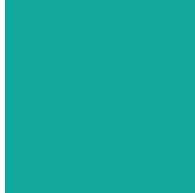


Become a volunteer today! Call (888) 831-0404.  
<http://ombudsman.myflorida.com/>



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