



FLORIDA
OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM
ADVOCATING FOR QUALITY LONG-TERM CARE

A Message from the State Ombudsman



Hi everyone –

I hope all of you have made storm preparations ahead of Idalia. We are watching the storm vigilantly and hope everyone has a plan to stay safe. We will continue to work with our partners to assist those impacted by the storm.

We are still working through our programmatic shifts, with staffing adjustments and district tweaks, so a special shout-out to the staff and volunteers impacted by the changes. We appreciate your understanding of our quest to serve more seniors! We are committed to making these changes as easy as possible for everyone involved but are also fully aware of the challenges. Change is hard and not for the faint

of heart, so it's vital that our staff know how grateful we are for their patience, flexibility, and understanding as we continue along our path. You guys have been amazing, and your efforts do not go unnoticed!

Next, I'm incredibly pleased to announce that we have finally finished our work with our policy and procedure consultant! We have spent the last year combing over every word in our LTCOP policy and procedure manual to ensure we comply entirely with federal guidelines. It has been a major undertaking, not to mention time-consuming. Completing the policies and procedures is a relief and exciting, as it is the foundation upon which our program is built.

Jamie Freschi, who has been the consultant helping with the policies and procedures, will conduct a staff training, which will be an intense few days as we dive deeply into every aspect of our program this September. We are asking staff to come with an open mind and be ready to shift their thinking because, as we all know, old habits are hard to break. We ask the same of our volunteers as the staff moves forward post-training to implement these changes with you all. It is an exciting time for LTCOP, and I hope you will embrace the process and the hard work everyone has put into making this program the best it can be!

Next up for LTCOP is our virtual State Council meeting on Thursday, September 7th, at 10 a.m. Before this meeting, our workgroups will meet, so stay tuned for a calendar invite.

We will have much more to update you on in our next State Council meeting, so I look forward to seeing you all then. In the meantime, stay safe and enjoy the rest of your summer!

Terri Cantrell
State Ombudsman

Kathleen is always willing to do whatever the program needs; Kathleen readily visits residents at some of the most challenging facilities; she champions for the most vulnerable residents; willingly and regularly assists in the district office by answering the phones, handling complaints and referrals, or helping to produce informational displays or prepare for council meetings. Kathy is a dedicated volunteer who consistently gives her time and knowledge to benefit the office staff and residents living in long-term care.



Thank you for all you do, Kathleen!

Staff Shout-Out



Lisa Dale was recently presented with an ombudsman superhero cape by her volunteers during a local Council meeting.

Lisa has been the First Coast South District Ombudsman Manager for 11 years. Her favorite part of the job is working with her ombudsmen and helping residents. She loves spending time with her family, traveling, and cooking in her spare time.

When her volunteers presented her with the cape, they said, "It's true; you are a superhero."

who just happens to be an ombudsman! You are our superhero."

Thank you, Lisa, for your commitment and dedication!

Take Time for Self-Care



Self-care means taking the time to do things that help you live well and improve your physical and mental health. When it comes to your mental health, self-care can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness, and increase your energy. Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a significant impact.

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Here are some tips to help you get started with self-care:

- Get regular exercise. Just 30 minutes of daily walking can help boost your mood and improve your health.
- Eat healthy, regular meals, and stay hydrated. A balanced diet and plenty of water can improve your energy and focus throughout the day.
- Make sleep a priority. Stick to a schedule, and make sure you're getting enough sleep.
- Try a relaxing activity. Explore meditation, muscle relaxation, or breathing exercises. Schedule regular times for these and other healthy activities you enjoy.
- Practice gratitude. Remind yourself daily of the things you are grateful for. Write them down at night or replay them in your mind.
- Focus on positivity. Identify and challenge your negative and unhelpful thoughts.
- Stay connected. Reach out to your friends or family members who can provide emotional support and practical help.

For more information: [NIMH » Caring for Your Mental Health \(nih.gov\)](https://www.nimh.nih.gov)

