





# FLORIDA OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

ADVOCATING FOR QUALITY LONG-TERM CARE

Michael Phillips  
State Ombudsman

- o Motion to approve minutes for August 26-27, 2021 made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

## Q&A / Open Discussion

- Mike Phillips welcomed everyone and thanked them for the feedback about the training conference. He wanted to have the volunteers come together because they encourage each other. He appreciates the program from the bottom of his heart.
- Concern regarding lack of feedback on AHCA referrals – Mike stated we have a recently updated MOU with AHCA which we will circulate. If there is a concern about how AHCA handled certain cases, we can discuss with them during our quarterly meetings—send the request through the DOM and ROM.
- It was clarified that individual ombudsmen should not be contacting AHCA directly – all communications with AHCA should go through the DOM (supervised by the ROM) in order to help build the relationship.
- It was clarified that individual volunteers can attend the workgroup meetings. However, they can only comment during the public comment portion of the meeting.
- It was suggested that if a statewide training conference is conducted in the future, that an evening meet and greet be included on the schedule.
- Central office will be preparing evaluation forms for the statewide training conference and distributing to attendees.
- It was requested that a standard form be provided for communications with outside groups which could then be forwarded to the central office to track these communications.
- It was suggested that memo pads be printed with the ombudsman logo for use by ombudsmen
- It was requested that resident rights posters and program brochures be printed in Creole. The program brochures, volunteer brochures and activity books have been printed in Creole and will be distributed to the district offices as soon as they have room to receive them.
- It was requested that copies of the minutes from these meetings be distributed as soon as possible.

Breakout for workgroup meetings – 1:40 PM

Reconvened – 4:19 PM



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- Pictures of the council were taken.
- There was discussion regarding the questions from districts that are presented at the state council meeting. A motion was made for all such questions to be distributed to all state council members before the meeting. This motion was seconded, but upon a vote it failed to achieve support of a majority of the council. A second motion was made that the Chair, on a trial basis, distribute the questions to the workgroups or central office as appropriate, and to all state council members in advance of the next meeting. The efficacy of this process is to be reviewed and revised, if desired, based upon the council members' feedback at the next meeting.

**Adjournment** – The state council adjourned at 4:39 PM.

## **OCTOBER 29, 2021**

**Meeting called to order:** Chair Brand called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM.

### **Public Comments**

- Alma from South Miami said thank you for the training, she learned a lot.
- Bob from North Central said thank you for allowing us to attend the State Council. He learned a lot about the workgroups.
- Kathy from North Central said thank you for allowing us to attend the meetings.
- Terry from the West Coast said attending the meeting has been humbling and it is great to see everyone working toward one goal.

### **State Ombudsman Report – Michael Phillips**

- It's been a good state council meeting, thank you.
- Lynn Hearn has left for Tallahassee to attend the rule workshop on the draft rule by AHCA regarding Personal Care Attendants. This law was passed as a work force development bill; it was not proposed by AHCA. We are trying to make the rule as good as possible.
- Districts are doing very well getting assessments done. This is good for the numbers, and even better for the residents.
- The Essential Caregiver bill is moving through Congress.

### **Old Business** – None



### New Business

- It was requested that all staff be introduced and their roles described. Michael Phillips introduced the following staff members:
  - Betsy McAllister – Deputy State Ombudsman for Education & Training and Central Office Operations
  - York Shuler – Data Analyst
  - Alice Terry – Budget Analyst
  - Casey Avellone – Public Relations Coordinator
  - Joe Considine – State Council Liaison/Legal Assistant
  - District Ombudsman Managers
- It was requested that the training workgroup prepare an orientation sheet for new State Council members, explaining the members' duties, staff information, and meeting information. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to this effect.
- Michael Phillips reported that revisions to the Operations Manual are underway
- Casey Avellone conducted a demonstration of the current LTCOP website, including how to find meeting notices and minutes
- Annette McComas distributed Resident Council Chair pins for which she added ribbons, as examples for other regions/districts to use

Meeting break: 9:05 a.m.

Meeting reconvened: 9:27 a.m.

### Advocacy Workgroup Report

Cristina Clark, Chair

- Discussion regarding identification of staff positions in ALFs – suggested ombudsmen advocate for facilities to adopt designation system for staff positions and discuss best practices with local associations to provide their members
- Workgroup discussed concerns regarding staffing in ALFs – especially small ALFs with only one staff on duty with other responsibilities. Discussed advocating for residents to obtain Emergency Life Alerts.
- Discussed situations where guardian is not acting in best interest of resident. Per Michael Phillips, ask these questions:
  1. Would it not be in the best interest of the ward, for us to investigate and find nothing? Then the matter would be resolved.
  2. Would it not also be in the best interest of the ward, if we investigate and find something that needs correction that can be addressed?



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3. Explain to me why are you refusing, and allowing me to believe that you are indeed acting in the best interest of the ward?

- Per Michael Phillips: If cannot obtain consent from guardian, seek consent of State Ombudsman

## Training & Education Workgroup Report

Margaret Riccardi, Chair

- The Educational conference held in Orlando from Oct 26 -28<sup>th</sup> is worth 16 hours of continuing education (CE).
- The State Council held on Oct 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> is worth 6.5 hours of CE.
- Log CE hours and get them to your District Ombudsman Manager (DOM).
- We want to start the Ombudsman Corner (webinars) up again in January – discussed suggested topics.

## Legislative Workgroup Report

Sharon Lauter, Chair

- Louis Grossman was elected co-chair of the workgroup
- Discussion regarding SMMC/LTC training
- Discussion regarding draft PCA rule and comments LTCOP will make at AHCA rule development workshop
- Plan to discuss ALF staffing rule at next meeting

## Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Workgroup Report

Choice Edwards, Chair

- Discussed recommendations received from District 7-will be sent to all ombudsmen for review. State council reps will be asked to bring suggestions to RRR workgroup during next state council meeting
- Billboard advertisements will hopefully occur in November – currently with DFS
- Magnetic signs are in use – discussed possibly ordering smaller size
- Discussed recruiting from monthly report of state retirees
- Activity books with mail-in cards have been shipped
- Ombudsman Presentation – created by central office and available to all district offices; work with DOMs to schedule and use this presentation
- Encourage recognition of ombudsman anniversaries; present pin at district meetings
- Also encourage “atta boy/girl” recognition at district meetings



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- Elevate recognition of ombudsmen of the year: shirts, plaques, patch; already sent to newspapers – investigate possible cruise tickets
- Workgroup member reports of things done in their area: advertise in apartment complexes, recruit college students, pamphlets in religious centers
- Recruiter positions? Michael Phillips reported these were not approved for 2022-23 budget.
- Request demonstration of website to show where minutes are posted.
- Request Training & Education workgroup to clarify training for new State Council members
- Suggest outreach via television/radio, e.g. PBS, to recruit volunteers

**Adjournment** – A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved at 10:22 a.m.