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Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman: Role in Involuntary Discharges

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman serves as an advocate for residents, tenants, families and legal representatives faced with involuntary discharge, transfer, or eviction. In an effort to provide further assistance in these situations, our Office has hired a Discharge Specialist, Cindy Pederson, who may be reached at 515-393-1710 or Cynthia.Pederson@iowa.gov.

Iowa law requires that a copy of the Notice of an Involuntary Discharge action given to residents of nursing facilities or residential care facilities also be given to the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman. In addition, the law requires that a copy of the Notice of an Involuntary Transfer/Eviction action given to tenants of an elder group home or assisted living program also be given to the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

Notices must be sent to:

Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
510 E. 12th Street, Suite 2
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-9025
Phone: 866-236-1430; Fax: 515-725-3313

After receipt of the required notices, the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman offers advocacy to those residents/tenants requesting assistance during the discharge process. To assist in this role, the Discharge Specialist will contact the discharging facility to obtain information regarding the circumstances leading up to the involuntary discharge notice being issued and obtain contact information for the resident, tenant, and/or the resident's /tenant's decision maker.

The Discharge Specialist will then contact the resident/tenant or the decision maker for the resident/tenant that is the subject of the involuntary discharge notice to offer assistance. At the request of the resident/tenant or the decision maker, we will assist the resident/tenant with obtaining legal representation or assist the resident/tenant in representing themselves during the discharge process. We can also attend the appeal hearings.

This assistance can be provided to individuals residing in nursing facilities, residential care facilities, assisted living programs and elder group homes.

In addition to serving as an advocate, our Discharge Specialist is available to present information and training to facilities in matters regarding the involuntary discharge process.

Please feel free to contact Cindy Pederson with questions or to discuss situations that arise within your facility or program.

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman works to advocate for the rights and wishes of residents and tenants in long-term care, including those living in nursing facilities, residential care facilities, assisted living programs and elder group homes.