

# The Advocate - October 2020



October 2020



## Note from the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

October is Residents' Rights Month. The COVID-19 impact in 2020 has impinged on everyone's rights in one way or another, at one time or another. One could argue that residents and tenants of long-term care have been impacted more than most. In fact, the residents and tenants of long-term care are continuing to feel the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions.

Recent guidance by CMS and the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals changes visitation restrictions that resulted in the strict lock down to which residents and tenants of long-term have been subjected. The new [guidance](#) can be found on our [website](#). The right to visits is protected under the 1987 Nursing Home Reform Law. It is important that as restrictions are lifted changes are implemented quickly so residents' rights are restored as closely as possible to pre-COVID-19 status.

Residents' Rights Month is the perfect time to measure a facility's performance against the standards of the Residents' Bill of Rights. Are residents being fully informed of facility rules and regulations? Do residents have the address of the State Ombudsman and survey agency? Do residents feel safe in presenting grievances without fear of retaliation? Do residents understand they have the right to participate in their own care, including the right to refuse medication or treatment and to review their own medical records? Are residents' privacy and confidentiality respected? Are residents afforded all rights during a transfer or discharge? Are residents afforded dignity, respect freedom and the right to make their own choices?

As stated in last month's Advocate, the right to vote is one of the most precious rights Americans have. Please make sure that you are ready to afford the residents that live in long-term care the opportunity to have their voice heard this election. The local [county auditor](#) can be of assistance with questions you may have about voting in long-term care.



## News & Resources

A moment of silence will be observed on Thursday, October 8 at 2:30 pm CST in remembrance of all of the residents and caregivers who lost their lives due to COVID-19. View this [article](#) for additional details.

COVID Recovery Iowa has a variety of services to aid Iowans during this pandemic. This [sheet](#) contains information about the organization. Iowans may contact COVID Recovery Iowa via telephone 1-844-775-WARM (9276) or [online](#).



## Resident/Tenant Rights

Connection Matters is the theme for this year's Residents' Rights Month. This year especially showcases what it means to connect with one another. Residents and tenants, families and friends now have more options to keep in contact with those that they love through technology, which has become mainstreamed in facilities. Zoom, Skype, Amazon Show, Google Duo, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Grandpads, and all of the other technologies created on tablets, computers or mobile telephones are more common place in long-term care facilities than ever before to assist in keeping people connected to one another. Even with these technology options, residents and tenants still like to see those that they love in person. Many different options have been created too such as the chatterboxes, gloved windows and one grandmother was seen wearing a t-rex costume to be able to hug her grandkids safely. Hats off to the all of the staff who continue to assist

residents and tenants to keep connected safely to those that the residents and tenants love and would like to communicate.

As required by federal guidance and any guidance set out by the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals and Iowa Department of Public Health, the facility must have written policies and procedures regarding the visitation rights of residents. Additionally, the facility needs to ensure that all visitors enjoy full and equal visitation privileges consistent with resident preferences. [§ 483.10 Residents Rights \(f\), Self-Determination \(v\) and \(vi\)\(D\)](#).

## Resident/Tenant Health, Safety & Welfare

One resident still was able to celebrate her 100th birthday with a party outside of her window at Oakland Manor in Council Bluffs in this [article](#). Party participants were able to approach Evelyn Stortenbecker's window to pass their birthday wishes and congratulations.

Residents at Trinity Place Albemarle, in Albemarle, North Carolina had an opportunity to go on a fishing trip in the facility when the "Hall Hoppin' Heroes" traveled room to room with an aquarium in this [article](#).

One musician still performs for those living in long-term care facilities across Michigan during the pandemic. Michael Krieger began performing 20 years ago and now is performing by electronic means to Detroit area communities in this [article](#).

This [blog](#) captures a variety of ideas on how to connect people living in long-term care communities with community members. Once thought of as grim locations but are now just the opposite, long-term care facilities can facilitate an exchange of the vibrant stories residents and tenants have with community members.

Social distancing has become one of the newest catchphrases in everyday lingo, but there is one that is beginning to make waves *Touch Starvation* also known as *Skin Hunger* or *Hug Deprivation*. The following [blog](#) explains how touch starvation is an actual phenomenon and how positive, physical touch is necessary for people especially those living in long-term care facilities.

### Technology in Facilities

There is a non-contact device facial recognition table that takes temperatures. In this [article](#) it states to contact Medline for additional information or schedule a demo.

One device piloted in Rocky Knoll Health Care Center in Plymouth, Wisconsin assisted in reducing falls by using vibration technology to send low-intensity pulses to stimulate legs and lower back while the person sits in a wheelchair in this [article](#).

## Managed Care Ombudsman Program

The Managed Care Ombudsman Program publishes monthly and quarterly reports summarizing the program's activities. Reports may be accessed at this Office's [website](#).

The Medical Assistance Advisory Council Meeting will meet on Thursday, October 8 at 1:00 via Zoom. The [agenda](#) includes updates from the Iowa Medicaid Director and the MCOs.

## Volunteer Ombudsman Program

[lisa.vanklavem@iowa.gov](mailto:lisa.vanklavem@iowa.gov) or 515-971-6294 "We are your Voice for Choice-Iowa Volunteer Ombudsman Program"

We have worked hard to continue to grow our Volunteer Ombudsman Program during the pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued to recruit and train volunteers. The volunteers below have completed all five training modules and participated in Learning Scenarios and are certified as interim certified volunteer ombudsman. Our new volunteers await their final facility visit for certification. We are proud to announce the following volunteers who have joined our VOP.

- John Trunnel Butler County
- Mary Eagan Polk County
- Teri Phillips Black Hawk County
- Sue Taylor Linn County
- Louis Hellwig Black Hawk County
- Craig White Black Hawk County
- Kathy Ott Black Hawk County
- Dave Berkemann Polk County
- Amy Jo Durbin Wapello County
- John Fenner Wapello County
- Mary Stewart Wapello County
- Treca Hartley Van Buren County
- Yi Lu Polk County

A special "Thank You" to Volunteer Ombudsmen Andy Webb and Kay Cota for holding a zoom "Meet and Greet" with our new volunteers to discuss their experiences as Volunteer Ombudsmen.

#### VOP Statewide Conference Call

This month's statewide call will be held on Wednesday, October 14 at 2:00 pm. Ms. Jamie Freschi from Fresh Start Consulting in Tennessee will present on working with residents: tips for effective communication and strategies for challenging situations. If you do view a recording of a previously recorded statewide conference call be sure to email [volunteervop@iowa.gov](mailto:volunteervop@iowa.gov) to receive one hour of continuing education credit.



## Events & Educational Opportunities

#### When Ageism Meets the Other Isms: Recognizing and Respecting the Diversity of Older People Webinar series presented by Iowa Abuse in Later Life Coordinated Community Response Team

Oct 8: Latino Voices: Aging and Well-Being in the Latino Community

*Not eligible for VOP CEUs*

Oct 22 and Nov 5 (9 - 10:30 am) *Topics not released at time of publication*

via Zoom meeting

[More Information](#) | [Register](#)

#### Mouthcare Matters In-Services *(register for one time)*

*Eligible for VOP CEUs*

Oct 8 (8:30 or 3 pm)

via Zoom meeting

[More Information](#) | [Register](#)

#### Caregiver Wellness Series: Long-Term Care In A Nutshell

Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Pam Railsback will be presenting on long-term care on October 13 for which Volunteer Ombudsman will receive one credit of CEU if they choose to attend.

Oct 13 (1 pm)

[More Information](#) | [Register](#)

#### Strengthening Families as They Reunite in Uncertain Times: A Virtual Discussion with Dr. Susan Wehry

*Not eligible for VOP CEUs*

Oct 13 (1 pm)

[More Information](#) | [Register](#)

#### COVID-19 Update & Residents Rights Advocacy During the Pandemic

*Not eligible for VOP CEUs*

Oct 20 (12 pm)

[More Information](#) | [Register](#)

*The mission of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is to protect the health, safety, welfare and rights of individuals residing in long-term care by investigating complaints, seeking resolutions to problems and providing advocacy, with the goal of enhancing quality of life and care.*

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who may be interested.

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