



A Guide to Resident Rights

"Resident Rights entitle you to direct all aspects of your stay in a long-term care facility"

You have more Rights in a Long-Term Care Facility

It is a major misconception that you lose your basic civil rights when you move into a Long Term Care Facility, like a Nursing Home. In fact, you actually keep those rights with several more added. The following information explains a few of Washington State's laws and regulations that protect the rights of Residents in Nursing Homes, Adult Family Homes, and Assisted Living Facilities.

LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENT RIGHTS

As a Resident . . .

The Exercise of Rights

You have a right to a dignified existence, self-determination, and communication with and access to persons and services inside and outside the facility. A facility must protect and promote the rights of each resident and assist the residents.

Intent/Basic Rights

You should have a safe, clean, comfortable, homelike environment to live in and be encouraged to exercise your rights as a resident and citizen. The facility is responsible for creating this environment.

Notice of rights and services

You should be informed orally and in writing of your rights, the rules and policies of the facility, and be told of all services available and all costs before being admitted. This includes your right to notice of Medicaid acceptance and bed hold policies.

Disclosure of fees and notice requirements

You should be informed orally and in writing about any charges covered or not included in the basic rate and any changes that occur during your stay at the facility.

Quality of Life/Preferences

You should be informed of your health condition and participate in planning care and treatment. You can participate in social, religious and community activities, as much as possible.

Privacy and confidentiality of personal and medical records

You can refuse any treatment and have your personal and medical records treated as confidential.

Essential Support Person

You have the right to choose a friend or family member to visit and support you, as long as they follow the facility's safety and care policies during times when a state or national health emergency has been declared and visitations are officially restricted.



Disclosure, transfers, and discharge requirements

You can be transferred or discharged only after written notice is given and only for increased medical needs, safety, non-payment or facility closure.

Examination of survey or inspection results – Contact with client advocates

You have the right to view and examine the facility's inspection, investigation and enforcement records, meet with individuals and agencies that have oversight responsibilities, and reach out or contact oversight entities. You have the right to meet with client advocates.

Grievances

You may complain and the facility must make efforts to resolve your grievances.

Funds/financial affairs

You can manage your financial affairs, or you can request that the facility hold, safeguard, and account for your funds.

Abuse/Restraints You must be free of mental and physical abuse and of chemical and physical restraints.

Personal Property/Storage Space

You can have your own clothing and possessions and be allowed to use them as space permits.

Mail and Telephone Privacy

You should have privacy for telephone calls and can send and receive personal mail unopened.

Advocacy, access, and visitation rights

You must have privacy for visits from family, friends, Ombuds, State representatives, and your individual physician.

Waiver of liability and resident rights

You do not have to sign waivers that release the facility of liability for losses of personal property or injury.

Where to find specific Resident Rights laws and regulations:
RCW 70.129 Adult Family Homes and Assisted Living Facilities.
WAC 388-97 Nursing Homes <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wac/> (Title 388)

**"Ombudsman" is a Swedish word that means
"One who speaks on behalf of another."**

Long-Term Care Ombuds are professionally trained staff and volunteers from the community who advocate for and protect the rights of residents living in Nursing Homes, Adult Family Homes, and Assisted Living Facilities.



Ombuds visit residents regularly to:

Provide information about resident rights

Listen to problems concerning quality of care and quality of life

Clarify and respond to questions raised by residents, families, staff and the community

Resolve problems between residents and service providers

Help people work together to assure satisfactory service