

Dear Administrators and Operators,

I want to share with you information about how the ombudsman program is working to provide services and support to your residents during this national emergency. Our role is to support residents within the context of the pandemic. The Ombudsman program will continue to respond to and investigate complaints brought to us by residents, families, and others. However, in some cases, we may need your help to facilitate communication with residents by phone or video.

Over the upcoming days, our network will be reaching out to you to check-in and see how things are going and understand what concerns you may have. As a part of that call, we will be asking for some information that will help us facilitate communication with residents and family members. The person calling may or may not be the regional ombudsman or volunteer ombudsman assigned to your facility. For security purposes, in no case are we asking you to send this information directly to a volunteer ombudsman, but to the regional ombudsman or to the state office. The information we are gathering includes:

1. Identifying a key contact person for us to use for general information, sharing of resources, best practices that we become aware of from other Kansas facilities but also our national network, etc. This would include their phone and email contact information
2. A resident roster including payer source and a phone number if the resident has one.
3. Resident representative contact information, phone numbers, but also email address if you have them.
4. Contact information for the leadership of the resident council, such as the president.
5. If you have a family council, the contact information for the leadership of that council.

If it is easier for you to provide face sheets, for numbers 2 & 3, that is fine but not necessary.

Our office has developed a letter on COVID-19 and our program for your resident and family. You can find it on our website at <https://ombudsman.ks.gov/resources/covid-19>. Please download it and post it in your facility and on your front door, and also share it with your residents and in your communications with resident representatives.

The rights, safety, and wellbeing of the residents is always at the forefront of our decision making. This is an incredibly trying time, and we are asking for your assistance in keeping residents' wellbeing as the priority. If you have any questions, please reach out to me at barbara.hickert@ks.gov or 785-296-3017.

Thank you,

Barbara Hickert

State Long-Term Care Ombudsman