

# Ask an Ombudsman

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Jo-Ann Quiles

STUART — Jo-Ann Quiles, District Ombudsman Manager for Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, Okeechobee, and Palm Beach counties, answers questions about long-term care.

Q: It may be time for our father to move into an assisted living facility. However, there are so many around, we're not sure where to even begin searching for the best facility that will meet his needs. Can an ombudsman assist us?

A: Ombudsmen cannot assist in actually placing a resident into a long-term care facility. However, the ombudsman is able to direct potential residents and family members to information that can assist them in the process of choosing the proper long-term care facility.

The Agency for Health Care Administration has a website ([www.ahca.myflorida.com](http://www.ahca.myflorida.com)) that allows users to search long-term care providers and gather information about recent surveys and complaint investigations at facilities. Ombudsman assessments and visits at facilities are also public record and can be requested by calling your local district office. For more information, contact your local ombudsman at 1-888-831-0404.

Q: I suspect that a resident of an adult family care home is being financially exploited. Can the ombudsman help this resident?

A: Your first step should be to call the Elder Abuse Hotline at 1-800-962-2873 and report the suspected financial exploitation to the Department of Children and Families. You may also call the ombudsman and file a complaint on behalf of the resident, or on behalf of all the residents living at the facility, at one of the numbers listed below.

Jo-Ann Quiles is the District Ombudsman Manager for Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, Okeechobee, and Palm Beach counties. To ask for an ombudsman's assistance, learn more about the program or to become a volunteer ombudsman, call 561-837-5038 or toll-free at 1-888-831-0404.

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