

# The Benefits of a Family Council

- Seeks to improve the lives of residents of nursing homes;
- Allows families to give each other support and encouragement;
- Provides a forum for education and information; and
- Provides an opportunity to express ideas and concerns.



**For more information**

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**Call Toll-Free**  
**1-888-831-0404**

**Visit Online**

[ombudsman.myflorida.com](http://ombudsman.myflorida.com)

With 13 district offices throughout the state, our toll-free number and website can connect you to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program office in your community.



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**Educate,  
Empower,  
Support**



**Join a  
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## **What Is a Family Council?**

A family council is an independent, self-led, and self-determining group of families and friends of residents who work together to do the following:

- Act as a catalyst for positive change;
- Provide support;
- Give families a voice in decisions that affect their loved ones;
- Seek solutions to common problems;
- Allow members to share experiences; and
- Enhance community living.

## **Family Councils and the Law**

State and federal laws guarantee the families of nursing home residents the right to organize and meet together at the facility.

Facilities should support family councils by doing the following:

- Providing space within the facility for a family council to meet;
- Designating a staff person to provide assistance, if needed (facility staff can only attend meetings if invited); and
- Listening to and responding to the grievances and recommendations of residents and families concerning life and care in the facility.

## **How Can You Get Involved?**

- Ask the facility staff if there is a family council already in existence.
- Find out when the meetings are held and attend.
- At the meeting, look for and suggest ways to improve the quality of life in the community.
- Place your name on the mailing list.
- If there isn't a council, talk with other visitors/family members to see if there is an interest in starting one.
- For assistance in starting a family council or for ombudsman attendance at your next meeting, please contact the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program toll-free at 1-888-831-0404 or email [ltcopinformer@elderaffairs.org](mailto:ltcopinformer@elderaffairs.org).

## **About the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program**

Florida's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is a statewide volunteer-based organization that seeks to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of long-term care facility residents. To learn more about the program, visit us online at [ombudsman.myflorida.com](http://ombudsman.myflorida.com) or call us toll-free at 1-888-831-0404.



It's important to note that sometimes concerns presented by a group have more impact than concerns presented individually.