



# Meet Our Volunteer

## Meet Linda

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Linda is a Volunteer Long-Term Care Ombudsman who has served residents of nursing and assisted living facilities almost 18 years. Linda volunteers for the Ark-Tex Ombudsman Program in Lamar County.

### **How did you first hear about the Ombudsman Program?**



Before I volunteered with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, my mother lived in a long-term care home. The home went bankrupt and shut down. A volunteer ombudsman helped us, and other families, work through the facility closure and relocation of residents to other homes. I saw the need for an advocate for residents who could not advocate for themselves.

*Linda, Volunteer Ombudsman*

### **What do you do as a volunteer ombudsman?**

I visit with residents and encourage them to tell their story. I listen. I advocate for residents in many ways and try to prevent little problems from becoming big problems. I reinforce how important it is for residents to participate in planning their care and the importance of care and service plans (the living documents that serve as guides to an individual's care). I also listen to residents' family members, answer their questions, and help guide them in pursuing solutions to problems.



*The Office of the State Long-term Care Ombudsman is independent within the Texas Health and Human Services system.*

## **What motivates you to keep volunteering?**

I feel blessed that I was able to retire earlier than many and that this is a way that I can give back to the community. I spent a quarter of a century as a social worker with the state and my experience there helped prepare me to serve and endure as a volunteer.

## **Tell us about a time you helped a resident.**

While visiting with a resident, she shared that she had nothing to wear other than hospital gowns and that she had no family. With her consent, I spoke with staff and connected them with someone in our community who provided some special clothing for her. The resident's pleasure at being able to leave her room wearing something other than a hospital gown still brings a smile to my face.

## **What would you tell someone considering volunteering as an ombudsman?**

Residents appreciate any time you can give them. Please think about volunteering, you are needed. You will receive good training and get good support from staff.

## **What else do you like to do?**

I garden, cook, (especially new recipes), help my partner, Bob, take care of the cats, dogs, chickens, goats, donkey, and horse. I stay in contact with my seven children and 17 grandchildren, read three daily newspapers, and enjoy crossword puzzles. I also do the church newsletter and I am updating two multi-generation family histories.

## **For More Information About Volunteering**

Email or call Pat Borgfeldt, Ombudsman Developer, Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, [Pat.Borgfeldt@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:Pat.Borgfeldt@hhs.texas.gov) or (512) 438-2545.