



Meet Our Volunteer

Meet Shirley

Shirley is a Volunteer Long-Term Care Ombudsman who has served residents of nursing and assisted living facilities for seven years. Shirley volunteers for the North Central Texas Ombudsman Program in Denton County.

How did you first hear about the Ombudsman Program?



Prior to volunteering, I first heard about the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program while working in a hospital as a patient advocate.

Shirley, Volunteer Ombudsman

What do you do as a volunteer ombudsman?

I visit with residents. I get to know them and learn about their families, interests and life history, like their past career. I let them know I'm here for them and regularly check in with them to see if they have any questions, concerns, or need my help to problem solve.

Who inspires you to volunteer?

I'm inspired by the time I spent with my grandfather, residents' stories, and seeing the joy in residents. I get a lot of continued support from staff ombudsmen plus I know I can reach out to other volunteer ombudsmen if I need to.



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

Tell us about a time you helped a resident.

Some problems are easily resolved, while others are more complex; for example, an involuntary discharge from a nursing home. A resident called and asked me to help him because his nursing home was trying to discharge him from the facility to a motel. I was able to help the resident resolve this to his satisfaction.

As an ombudsman, of what are you most proud?

I know that the time I spend with residents gives them joy. Seeing the smile on a resident's face when they see me or hear my voice makes for a better day for both the resident and me.

What would you tell someone considering volunteering as an ombudsman?

There are no words for the rewards you get from volunteering as an ombudsman. I get back more than I can give most times. Individuals who live in long-term care homes are people that have helped form the world. On my worst day when I visit with residents, I come out blessed.

What else do you like to do?

I spend time with my family and friends, walk by the water, and pray.

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 or (512) 438-2545.