

# Resident and Family Council Toolkit

*Tools to help ombudsmen work with  
Resident and Family Councils*



*Developed by the Ohio Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman*

**1-800-282-1206**

**OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov**

**[www.ombudsman.ohio.gov](http://www.ombudsman.ohio.gov)**



## Table of Contents

Resident and Family Council Rights in Nursing Homes .....	3
Resident Councils .....	4
Effective Resident Councils .....	4
Provider Support for Resident Councils .....	6
Ombudsman Role in Resident Councils .....	6
Family Councils .....	7
Ombudsman Role in Family Councils .....	8
Key Components of Family Councils .....	9
Family Leadership in Family Councils .....	10
Family Council Structure .....	10
Provider Support for Family Council Development .....	11
Overcoming Obstacles in Family Council Development .....	11
Samples .....	13
Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resources – Resident & Family Councils .....	19

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

## Resident and Family Council Rights in Nursing Homes

The 1987 Nursing Home Reform Act guarantees nursing home residents and their families important rights that enhance the nursing home experience and improve family services and conditions. According to section 483.10(f)(5) of the Code of Federal Regulations, residents and family members have the right to hold private meetings as a group, known as Family or Resident Councils. Federal law references families of residents may participate in a Family Council, but this can also include sponsors such as close friends of residents.

### Federal Requirements

- Residents have the right to organize and participate in resident groups in the nursing home.
- A resident's family has the right to meet in the nursing home with the families of other residents.
- The nursing home must provide a resident or family group, if one exists, with private space to meet. The nursing home must also take reasonable steps, with the group's approval, to make residents and family members aware of upcoming meetings in a timely manner.
- Staff or visitors may attend meetings at the group's invitation.
- The nursing home must provide a designated staff person, who is approved by the resident or family group, responsible for providing assistance and responding to written requests that result from the group meetings.
- When a resident or family group exists, the nursing home must consider the views and act promptly upon the grievances and recommendations of resident and family groups concerning issues of resident care and life in the nursing home.

Federal regulations do not apply to Ohio's residential care facilities or those nursing homes that are not certified (i.e., those that do not accept Medicare and Medicaid). There are very few nursing homes in Ohio that are not certified. However, this guide is also applicable in non-certified nursing homes and residential care facilities that have Resident or Family Councils, or for resident of those facilities and their family members who wish to organize them. The Ohio Resident Bill of Rights provides rights and protections for residents of all of Ohio's nursing homes and residential care facilities. The most pertinent right afforded nursing home and residential care facility residents and their family members states that residents have:

*The right to voice grievances and recommend changes in policies and services to the home's staff, to employees of the department of health, or to other persons not associated with the operation of the home, of the resident's choice, free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal. This right includes access to a residents' rights advocate, and the right to be a member of, to be active in, and to associate with persons who are active in organizations of relatives and friends of nursing home residents and other organizations engaged in assisting residents.*

While this guide will focus on nursing homes specifically, all residents of Ohio's nursing homes and residential care facilities have the right to participate in Resident and Family Councils, and their loved ones in Family Councils.

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

## Resident Councils

### What is a Resident Council?

A Resident Council is an organization whose purpose is to provide residents living in a nursing home a form of consumer self-government.

### What do Resident Councils do?

Resident Councils give residents the opportunity to voice concerns, grievances, and make recommendations about the quality of care and life of the residents in the nursing home and influence changes in rules, policies, and practices under which they live.

### What are some of the benefits of a Resident Council?

#### For residents, it can:

- Promote independence and opportunities for personal growth
- Provide opportunities to express talents and wisdom
- Provide a forum for support and healthy self-expression
- Help maintain a quality environment for healthy living

#### For nursing home staff, it can:

- Provide information about concerns
- Provide creative solutions to problems
- Provide recommendations for programming or policies that would benefit residents
- Provide a forum for constructive exchange of information
- Provide opportunity to learn from residents and improve the quality of care

#### For both residents and nursing homes, it can:

- Provide two-way communication between residents and staff
- Encourage a strong and productive working relationship between residents and staff
- Help solve problems before they escalate into major issues
- Improve resident satisfaction and make a difference in resident quality of life

A nursing home resident has the right to participate in decisions that affect their life. The nursing home must listen to the views and act upon grievances and recommendations of residents concerning proposed policy and operational decisions affecting resident care and life in the nursing home.

## Effective Resident Councils

Residents of nursing homes have the right to be involved in making decisions that affect their lives. Staying involved creates a sense of being in control and has a positive impact on physical and mental health. One way for residents to be involved in making decisions that affect the quality of their care is to participate in the Resident Council. Resident Councils can promote person-centered care.

Resident Councils provide a forum for residents to express themselves and suggest positive changes that will benefit the quality of life for all residents. An effective Resident Council reflects and meets the needs of the residents it serves. Resident Councils are successful if they meet the needs of the residents in a particular nursing home, regardless of their organizational structure; therefore, there are several models for a Resident Council.

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

### Functions of a Resident Council:

- Meet regularly, usually at least once a month
- Participate in decision-making that affects the environment, care, and treatment of all residents
- Verbalize concerns and support one another
- Ask questions and make recommendations to the nursing home regarding collective concerns
- Obtain information from nursing home staff on issues that impact residents
- Form committees to address special interests (i.e., food committee)

### Resident Councils are not:

- A recreational activity
- A forum for the nursing home staff to determine what residents need
- A nursing home-run group without the residents' agreement

### Model types of Resident Council structure:

- Highly Structured – has bylaws, officers, committees
- Informal Structure – no bylaws, officer, committee, and can be led by a staff person who believes residents should express concerns and wishes
- Town Meeting Model – effective in smaller nursing homes where each resident is considered a member and encouraged to attend
- Representative Model – effective in larger nursing homes where representatives from various areas are elected to represent other residents
- Committee Model – six to ten residents serve on committees that function like the representative model

Resident Councils may have their own ideas about structuring a council or may pick certain parts of the above models to structure a council that meets the needs of its residents. Whatever model is used, it is important for it to be flexible enough to allow for change as the residents' needs change.

### Keys to effective Resident Councils:

- Resident Council is encouraged in a positive, enthusiastic manner to residents, families, staff, and administration
- All residents are invited to participate in the council either through their attendance at the meetings or through opportunities to express their ideas and suggestions to residents who do attend, and those who are unable to attend are offered meaningful alternatives to participate.
- Ideas, suggestions, and concerns are conveyed to administration in a positive manner
- Administration listens and acts upon ideas, suggestions, and concerns
- New residents are informed about the Resident Council, its accomplishments and successes, and are encouraged to attend council meetings

### Keys to effective Resident Council meetings:

- Meetings are scheduled at regular times and locations
- Meetings include a planned agenda or program
- Meetings are conducted in an orderly and consistent manner, giving everyone who wishes to speak an equal opportunity
- Basic parliamentary procedures can keep the meeting organized and allows all residents to participate in the decision-making process
- Staff persons and long-term care ombudsmen (ombudsmen) attend council meetings if invited
- Resident leadership is preferred, however, an interested, committed staff person or volunteer can provide leadership

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

**Nursing home role in Resident Councils:**

- Provide private space for the council to meet without interference
- Designate a staff person available for assistance and respond to requests that result from the meeting
- Communicate decisions about recommendations

## Provider Support for Resident Councils

Nursing homes have much to gain from supporting the Resident Councils within their facilities. Resident Councils promote open lines of communication between residents, staff, and administration and provide opportunities for the provider to make improvements for all residents.

Resident Councils can offer creative solutions to problems before they come to the regulatory agency's attention. Supporting Resident Council operations can create a sense of community between the residents and staff.

**Providers can assist Resident Councils by:**

- Assigning a staff liaison to communicate with the council
- Encouraging and assisting residents to attend the council
- Displaying postings or fliers about council meeting times and location
- Offering assistance when needed
- Providing private space
- Educating residents and staff about the benefits of councils

**Providers can offer ongoing support to the Resident Council by:**

- Keeping an open-door policy and listening to concerns
- Attending meetings when invited
- Viewing the council as helpful, not adversarial
- Following up immediately on concerns and recommendations
- Providing feedback on improvements being made
- Accepting constructive criticism and suggestions from residents
- Proactively reviewing policies with the Resident Council

## Ombudsman Role in Resident Councils

The Older Americans Act tasks long-term care ombudsmen (ombudsmen) to promote, provide technical support for the development of, and provide ongoing support as requested by Resident and Family Councils to protect the well-being and rights of residents. In promoting Resident Councils, ombudsmen should lead by example furthering the intent that Resident Council is for residents. Therefore, the Resident Council should operate to further the interest of residents. *Find your Long-Term Care Ombudsman Regional Program: [click here](#)*

**Ombudsman approach in developing Resident Councils:**

- Learn how the council in your assigned facilities are structured and function
- Educate residents and nursing home staff about resident rights and benefits of councils
- Offer assistance in a supportive role with organization and procedures
- Meet with the Resident Council President to discuss what goes well and areas for development
- Obtain permission from residents before attending a Resident Council Meeting
- Promote Resident Council as a problem-solving tool

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

## Family Councils

### What is a Family Council?

A Family Council is an organized, self-led, self-determining, democratic group composed of family and friends of the residents of a nursing home. The main purposes of a Family Council are to improve the quality of life of nursing home residents and to give families and friends a forum for sharing their experiences, learning, and exchanging information. Family Councils may also work with the ombudsman to resolve problems and concerns. A resident's family has the right to meet in the nursing home with the families of other residents. The nursing home must listen to the views and act upon grievances and recommendations of residents and families concerning proposed policy and operational decisions affecting resident care and life.

### What is the role of a Family Council?

A Family Council acts on concerns and complaints affecting residents, supports families, communicates with nursing home administration, advocates for positive change, and educates families about issues relating to residents.

### What are the benefits of a Family Council?

#### For family members, it can:

- Provide support, encouragement, and information
- Provide an avenue to constructively channel concerns
- Reduce the sense of isolation, helplessness, and frustration
- Give a greater sense of control
- Improve the care of residents

#### For nursing home staff, it can:

- Provide the administration and staff with information about concerns that families have about resident care so that problems can be responded to appropriately
- Give the nursing home the opportunity to learn about and fix problems so families don't feel the need to turn to outside agencies such as the survey agency or the ombudsman
- Provide creative solutions to problems
- Give honest feedback to use for ongoing quality improvement efforts
- Provide an avenue for requesting changes through boards and management companies when nursing home leadership needs support for approval
- Keep nursing home staff from being overwhelmed by a barrage of individual complaints
- Provide recommendations for programs or policies that would benefit residents
- Increase the likelihood that new nursing home policies will be implemented smoothly and successfully and positively impact residents
- Identify outside resources to enhance the lives of residents and nursing home functionality
- Increase family willingness to contribute time and energy toward increasing quality
- Result in better care for residents

#### For both families and facilities, it can:

- Promote open lines of communication
- Build trusting and accountable relationships
- Create a sense of community
- Provide opportunities to make improvements for all residents

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

- Improve the quality of life and quality of care for residents and promote a person-centered care philosophy

**A Family Council is not:**

- a support group
- a social gathering
- a volunteer group

## Ombudsman Role in Family Councils

The ombudsman can assist families and providers in developing new Family Councils. In facilities where councils have not been active, they can promote the benefits of the councils and help to revive enthusiasm and interest. The ombudsman can assist active Family Councils by attending meetings, if requested by families, and showing ongoing support for the work accomplished by the council. *Find your Long-Term Care Ombudsman Regional Program: [click here](#)*

**Ombudsmen can help initiate Family Councils by:**

- Presenting the idea positively as not adversarial but as positive for facilities to resolve concerns collaboratively
- Providing general information and guidance as a resource to the council
- Educating the families and providers about the regulations applying to Family Councils
- Having a presence at each phase of council development
- Being a liaison between families and nursing home administration
- Encouraging family members to attend council
- Providing models of success and names of support people at other facilities
- Helping identify common concerns that are institutional and widespread

**Ombudsmen can help revive dormant councils by:**

- Sharing enthusiasm about the role families can play in promoting improvements and excellence
- Communicating the support for Family Councils from the Office Advising families about the support for excellence in nursing homes from public officials, national organizations, and providers
- Helping families feel comfortable and confident about meeting even if it requires having the first meeting off site
- Attending meetings when requested

**Ombudsmen can assist active councils by:**

- Assist the council with leadership development
- Encouraging families to be involved
- Attending meetings when requested

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*



## Key Components of Family Councils

Family Councils face many challenges. Frequent changes in residents and, therefore, family members can have an impact on the stability and continuity of a Family Council. The following key components are essential for maintaining the existence and quality of a Family Council.

### Development

Family Councils begin when family members connect. The ombudsman can assist family members build working relationships with the nursing home's administrator, activities director, and/or social worker. These staff members can help with the establishment of relationships among families. After establishing a relationship with staff, they will begin to tell new families about the Family Council and increase membership through word of mouth. Another way families can connect is to establish a relationship with the Resident Council. Much of this correspondence can be done via phone, email, or video conference. Creating and distributing print materials at the nursing home so staff can distribute them in resident rooms and during visits with family members can also help.

### Recruitment

It is important for a Family Council to conduct continual recruitment using a variety of methods. Some methods and tools that can help them to be successful include:

- Including information about the council in resident admission packets.
- Establishing a "buddy system" in which Family Council members are assigned to new family members to welcome, answer questions, and invite them to participate in council.
- Producing a brochure or flyers that can be distributed to other family members.
- Creating a poster that can be displayed during indoor/outdoor visits to the nursing home.
- Creating a digital and print announcement that can be included in the nursing home's newsletter or e-newsletter.
- Greeting visitors to the nursing home by asking council members to be "on duty" in the lobby once a month to share information about Family Council.
- Providing a sign-in sheet at meetings for names, telephone numbers, and addresses of family members who attend in order to make future contacts and share reminders of meetings.

### Leadership- Family Councils should:

- Plan for long-term stability of the council by putting structure into place including by-laws.
- Work on leadership development so the group will continue when key members stop participating
- Invite family members of residents who die to continue to participate.
- Offer a variety of opportunities for family involvement in improving quality in residents' lives.

### Relationships – Family Councils should:

- Include time for socializing as part of each meeting so families can get know each other.
- Communicate continually with staff and administration to advise of any common concerns and suggestions, follow-up on actions to be taken, discuss Family Council activities.
- When raising concerns, brainstorm for ideas about how the concern can be addressed; be a part of the solution not the problem
- Establish contact with the ombudsman and utilize them as a resource

### Improvement – Family Councils should:

- Briefly evaluate the meetings afterwards to see if the meeting accomplished its purpose and make notes of things that could be improved.
- Recognize strengths and weaknesses.

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

## Family Leadership in Family Councils

Family leadership provides the opportunity for Family Councils to be a self-led and self-determining. A Family Council is a consumer group of relatives and friends of residents; therefore, having families lead the group is important and critical to the effective operation of Family Councils. A united voice for mutual goals and concerns creates a confidence among family members that they can address problems that affect all residents without the fear of retaliation.

### Models of leadership

- **Traditional Model:** Chairperson/President, Vice-Chairperson/Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer. The Chairperson presides over the Family Council, the vice-chairperson fills in for the chairperson along with other delegated duties, the secretary records the meeting minutes, and the treasurer handles any funds and financial records.
- **Co-Chair Model:** Two family members share the responsibility of facilitating meetings and communicating with the administration. Having co-chairs or alternating leadership can help family members build leadership skills.
- **Committee Model:** Several family members share responsibilities in creative ways and distribute work more widely. This model helps to overcome the obstacle of recruiting officers because family members fear too much work will be involved, allows several people to build leadership skills and share the time commitment, and provides for continuity if a leader must leave the council.

### Role of the family leader

- A leader must be a good facilitator. The leader's task is to see that all members get a fair chance to provide input on issues, to move meeting business along efficiently, and to see that wishes of the council majority are respected.
- A leader must be able to move a family discussion towards a plan for action.
- This takes sensitivity and skill to assure that no important point is missed and that discussion topics move from discussion to action.
- A leader must be able to present the concerns and ideas of the council formally to the nursing home staff and administration in a reasonable way.
- Cooperation between the council and administration can increase effective results and affect the quality of residents' lives.
- A leader must focus on the common concerns of the members of the council.

## Family Council Structure

One of the challenges in starting a Family Council is promoting participation in the council. To combat this, Family Councils should develop a structure for the council. They should also develop a purpose through a mission statement, develop by-laws and use a consistent, efficient manner of conducting meetings.

### Mission Statement

The mission statement is a written set of intentions used to guide and direct the organization as they choose activities and plan their efforts. This statement is usually done in the early stages of development; however, it can be periodically assessed and amended.

### Bylaws

Bylaws deal with how the organization will proceed. They are the basic operating procedures of an organization. Bylaws help eliminate conflicts that can arise over procedures. Like the mission statement, they can be periodically assessed and amended.

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

### Tips for making meetings meaningful and successful:

- An agenda should be used whenever possible, even if it contains just a few simple items.
- Assigned time limits to agenda items will keep the meeting moving and give participants an idea of what to expect next.
- Limiting the meeting time to no more than 1 - 1.5 hours is important. Family members' time is limited, and they may hesitate to attend if too lengthy.
- Setting regular meeting times, for example, every third Thursday of each month, will allow family members to plan ahead of time if they do not receive announcements.
- An agreed upon structure should be used to keep the meeting moving in an orderly and efficient manner.
- Time should be made for structured input. The use of flip charts to compile shared concerns can also be helping. In large groups, assigning a time-keeper to move on if discussions get stuck on an agenda item.
- Family Councils should consider using index cards for people to prioritize concerns or ask each person to verbally list three areas of concern.
- Focusing on action and efficiency is important. A Family Council should review action items and delegate tasks to be completed before the next meeting.
- Rotating responsibilities among members for refreshments and allow time for socializing can help keep members more engaged.
- Family Councils should brainstorm on ideas for solutions to concerns raised and formulate a specific request for how a concern should be addressed.

## Provider Support for Family Council Development

Nursing homes have much to gain from supporting the development of Family Councils within their facilities. Family Councils promote open lines of communication and provides opportunities for the provider to make improvements for all residents. Family Councils can offer creative solutions to fixing problems before they come to the attention of the regulatory agency. Supporting a Family Council in a nursing home can create a sense of community among residents, families, and staff.

### Providers can assist in developing the Family Council by:

- Assigning a staff liaison to communicate with the council;
- Encouraging families to attend the council upon admission;
- Displaying postings of fliers about the council;
- Offering assistance when needed;
- Providing space and educational materials;
- Educating families and staff about the benefits of councils.

### Providers can offer ongoing support to the Family Council by:

- Keeping an open-door policy and listening to concerns;
- Attending meetings when invited;
- Viewing the council as helpful, not adversarial;
- Following up immediately on concerns and recommendations;
- Providing feedback on improvements being made;
- Giving and accepting constructive criticism.

## Overcoming Obstacles in Family Council Development

There are many reasons that Family Councils do not develop. One reason is that family members and friends have limited time and may not be able to both visit their loved one and attend a meeting. Some families may feel they

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

are “causing trouble” if they bring forward a complaint. Some families feel isolated and believe that they are the only ones experiencing problems. Family Councils can be a vehicle for breaking the isolation of residents and family members. It is true that there is “strength in numbers.”

**Strategies for overcoming obstacles to Family Councils:**

- Conduct constant recruitment to try to reach the families that feel isolated;
- Identify the advantages of a Family Council with families at admission;
- Develop a buddy system between new and old families;
- Create a method to relay information about Family Council meetings;
- Don’t be adversarial - conduct productive, educational programs;
- Use an agenda, and stay focused during meetings;
- Explain to family members that they are important advocates for all residents;
- Support group goals, be honest, open, and fair;
- Be persistent with family members;
- Encourage new ideas and maintain open communication with each other and administrator;
- Don’t spend meetings hashing over personal situations;
- Maintain strong and objective leadership;
- Call on outside resources for ideas;
- Join with family members from another nursing home if there are too few members from just one nursing home;
- Try different strategies to recruit new members and to resolve problems and concerns;
- Recognize strengths and weaknesses.

## Samples

Name of Nursing Home \_\_\_\_\_

### Family Council Bylaws

#### I. Applicability

These Bylaws provide for the governance and operation of the Name of Nursing Home (hereinafter referred to as "Council"). Name of Nursing Home at Location is located in City/State. The Council is an organization of family members and other individuals associated with residents of Name of Nursing Home. The right to form and hold a Family Council independent of the management and staff of a nursing home is provided by the federal Nursing Home Reform Law of 1987.

#### II. Purpose

The purpose of the council is to provide a structure for families, as a consumer group, to (a) discuss and take actions related to improving the care, well-being, and happiness of all residents of Name of Nursing Home and (b) provide a forum for families to learn more about Name of Nursing Home, the long- term care health care system, and concerns of other families.

#### III. Membership

Council membership shall be restricted to qualified individuals. Qualified individuals include: (a) relatives of a resident; (b) the legal guardian of a resident; and (c) individuals appointed by a resident, or if the individual is incapable of appointing an individual, individuals appointed by a relative or a resident. A qualified individual shall immediately become a member of the council (hereinafter referred to as "member") by submitting a membership application. Membership shall remain in force until terminated by the Member.

#### IV. Officers

There shall be number officers of the Council. They are: (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_.  
Each officer shall be a member and service without compensation.

Officers shall be nominated and elected during month for a term of one year. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by election for the remainder of the term. Newly-elected officers shall take office immediately upon election. An elected officer may be removed from the office by the council.

Unless there is only one candidate for an office the election of officers shall be by ballot vote. If no candidate gets a majority on the first ballot, the candidate getting the least number of votes shall be eliminated. The voting shall continue until one candidate gets a majority.

## **V. Meetings**

Council meetings shall be held in location of meetings at time of meeting on day of month. Notice shall be given to each member by electronic or regular mail at least seven days prior to a council meeting. The notice shall include an agenda.

Council meetings shall be open to (a) members and (b) non-members who have been invited by the chair. The presence of ten or more residents shall constitute a quorum. A quorum shall be required to conduct business.

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary procedure at council meetings. The votes of a simple majority of the Members present and voting in person, subject to the limitation that only one indivisible vote may be cast with respect to each resident, shall decide any question.

## **VI. Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended by the council, subject to the requirement that the text of a proposed amendment shall be (a) introduced by a member at the previous council meeting and (b) included with the agenda of the council meeting during which the amendment is to be considered.

\*Adapted from the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR) for Ohio's Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)  
*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

## Family Council Interest Survey

1. Have you attended Family Council Meetings before?
   
 No       Once       Occasionally       Regularly
  
2. If you have not attended or do not attend regularly, why?
   
 Inconvenient meeting day or time       Not interested
   
 No information on the council       Too busy
  
3. If there is not Family Council currently, would you be interested in forming a council?     Yes     No
  
4. What is your preferred meeting time?
   
 Weekday     Weekend     Day
   
 Morning     Afternoon     Evening
  
5. Would you be willing to be an officer of the Family Council if asked or nominate?     Yes     No
   
 If yes, what role most interests you (check all that apply)?
   
 Lead/Facilitator       Co-Leader       Secretary       Treasurer
  
6. What topics and/or speakers would interest you? (check all that apply)
   
 Learning more about the long-term care system such as laws & regulations, Medicare and Medicaid, residents' rights, legislative issues, nursing home inspections
   
  
 Learning more about the operations of this nursing home, including the role of administrator, nursing, physician services, pharmacy services, activities, dietary and food service, social services, care planning, resident/family participation
   
  
 Learning more about nursing home business practices such as policies and procedures, security, rates, etc.
   
  
 Learning more about providing activities for residents including planning activities for residents and families
   
  
 Opportunities to share concerns and ideas with other families
   
  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Please list, in order of importance to you, three changes you would like to see at this nursing home:
   
 \_\_\_\_\_
   
 \_\_\_\_\_
   
 \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return to:

\*Adapted from Minnesota Alliance for Healthcare Consumers for the Ohio Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)  
 The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.

## Family Council Invitation

Enter Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Regarding: Enter Facility Name Family Council

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

You are invited to attend the Enter Facility Name Family Council. By participating in this group of interested and committed family members, you will have the opportunity to voice opinions, concerns, suggestions, and ideas that can benefit all the residents of this nursing home. The council promotes open communication among family, staff and administration.

The Family Council meets Enter Meeting Date Information. If you would like more information about the council and its purpose, please feel free to contact me. We hope you will join us at the next meeting.

Sincerely,

\*Adapted from the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR) for Ohio's Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)  
*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*



## Family Council Agenda

Name of Nursing Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Read and approve previous minutes

III. Committee report (if applicable)

IV. Old Business

(Discussion of issues from previous meeting)

V. New Business

(Discussion of issues, concerns, suggestions, solutions)

VI. Guest Speaker (if applicable)

VII. Schedule next meeting and adjourn

VIII. Meet and greet

**Main:** 1(800)282-1206 **Fax:** (614) 644-5201 **Email:** [Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:Ohioombudsman@age.ohio.gov)

*The State of Ohio's Long-Term Care Ombudsman is established by 42 U.S. Code 3001, Older Americans Act and Ohio Revised Code 173.15, to advocate and resolve problems for consumers of long-term services and supports.*

## Family Council Meeting Minutes

Date/ Time of Meeting:

Attendance:

Name of meeting leader:

Announcements:

- 
- 
- 
- 

Reports submitted (if applicable):

- 
- 
- 
- 

Old Business (response to concerns from previous meeting):

- 
- 
- 
- 

New Business/Concerns:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Next Steps/assignments/next meeting:

- 
- 
- 
- 

Submitted by:

Date:

## Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resources – *Resident & Family Councils*

1. Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Tel. 800-282-1206, email [OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov), website: [www.ombudsman.ohio.gov](http://www.ombudsman.ohio.gov)
2. The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long Term Care Family Council Center: <https://theconsumervoice.org/issues/family/family-council-center>
3. Guide to Effective Family Councils by Robyn Grant: <https://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/family-member/Guide-toEffective-Family-Councils.pdf>
4. Residents' Rights, Ohio Revised Code:
  - Residents' rights definitions: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.10>
  - Director to adopt rules: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.11>
  - Duties of nursing home administrator concerning residents' rights: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.12>
  - Criminal records check: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.121>
  - Screening and accommodations for sex offenders: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.122>
  - Residents' rights: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.13>
  - Implementation of residents' rights: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.14>
  - Authorization to handle residents' financial affairs: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.15>
  - Residents' rights concerning transfer or discharge: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.16>
  - Hearing challenging proposed transfer or discharge: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.161>
  - Determining whether transfer or discharge complies: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.162>
  - Grievance procedure: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3721.17>

**Find YOUR local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program: [click here](#)**

**Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman**

**1-800-282-1206**

**OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov**

**[www.ombudsman.ohio.gov](http://www.ombudsman.ohio.gov)**

