



The Beacon

A Newsletter for Long-Term Care Residents

October 2023

USE YOUR VOICE! HELP US IMPROVE FEDERAL STAFFING PROPOSAL



For the first time ever, the federal government has proposed minimum staffing rules for nursing homes, and the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman urges you to submit comments before the Nov. 6, 2023 deadline.

As long-term care residents, you are the experts when it comes to your experiences. Your input is crucial in guiding policymakers toward requirements that will promote the high-quality care you deserve and help to safeguard the safety and dignity of all residents. Your loved ones and nursing home staff members are invited to comment on the rule proposal as well.

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman has reviewed the proposal. First, the good news: every nursing home would be required to have a registered nurse (RN) present 24 hours a day. Many, but not all, New Jersey nursing homes already do this, and we applaud the proposal to make it a requirement. Studies have shown that having RNs on-site at all times results in better care.

The bad news is that the rule would only require a combined total of 3 hours of nursing care per resident per day by RNs and certified nursing aides (CNAs). This is well below what is needed to meet residents' needs. A study more than 20 years ago found that nursing home residents need at least 4.1 hours of nursing care per day. More recent studies show that even more hours are needed.

What's more, facilities would have three to five years to meet the 3-hour standard, and some facilities could seek exceptions to avoid it altogether.

The federal government needs to hear from you about how insufficient staffing affects your safety, dignity, and quality of life. If you are not as affected by low staffing as other residents, please consider speaking up on their behalf. Comments need not be formal. Say what you feel, in your own words, about the proposed requirements.

Visit <https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/CMS-2023-0144-0001> to type and submit your comments directly. You may also mail written comments to:

CMS
Attention: CMS-3442-P
P.O. Box 8016
Baltimore, MD 21244-8016

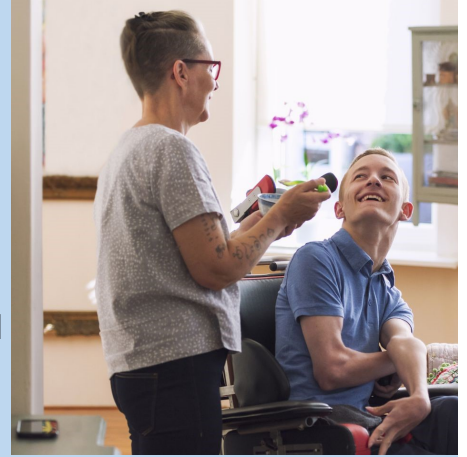
The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care website offers step-by-step instructions on how to comment. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/ycxpkpax>.

Finally, if you need help submitting comments, please contact our Director of Community Engagement at community@ltco.nj.gov or 609-690-4740.

Rare Housing Opportunity for Nursing Home Residents

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) recently opened its waitlist for Non-Elderly Disabled (NED-2) housing vouchers to 300+ younger residents of nursing homes who have disabilities. These vouchers help pay the rent for residents who otherwise would be unable to afford housing in New Jersey.

To apply for a NED-2 voucher, you must be 18 to 61 years old, live in a nursing home at the time you receive the voucher, and have some type of disability (physical, intellectual and/or mental health). The definition of disability for the program is broad. Residents can often meet the definition of disability with a physician's note.



If you think you meet the criteria, call the I Choose Home NJ hotline at 855-466-3005 or visit <https://www.nj.gov/ooie/ichoose/residing.shtml>. Please note, this is not the actual voucher application. The I Choose Home NJ Program will make sure your social worker and managed care organization are aware of your desire to apply. You can also tell your social worker and your care manager for your insurance plan that you want to apply.

Residents' Rights Month

October is Residents' Rights Month, an annual event to honor residents living in all long-term care facilities and those receiving care in their home or community. It is an opportunity to focus on and celebrate the dignity and rights of every individual receiving long-term services and supports.

In honor of Residents' Rights Month, the NJ LTCO interviewed seven residents about what it means to speak up for your rights while living in a long-term care facility. Watch the full video at <https://youtu.be/epPW1yUTTqk> or by visiting the LTCO website, www.nj.gov/lcco.

Happy Halloween



Boo
Candy
Ghost
Pumpkin

P	I	O	T	Y	N	G	J	W	U	R	P
C	M	S	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	K	R
A	C	P	B	T	F	X	G	R	G	T	A
N	B	O	O	R	W	I	T	C	H	R	L
D	S	O	O	E	K	F	V	B	O	I	W
Y	W	K	Q	A	M	F	C	Y	S	C	L
E	I	Y	P	T	R	N	V	L	T	K	E
A	J	A	G	K	H	R	N	F	M	V	M

Spooky
Treat
Trick
Witch



New Jersey Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Laurie Facciarossa Brewer, LTC Ombudsman

www.NJ.GOV/LTCO

FOLLOW US

