



# FY2020 Annual Report

## Case Investigations

2,312

↓ 41%  
from FY19

Complaints that were investigated, verified and resolved by Long Term Care Ombudsmen

## Ombudsman Activities



7,019 ↑54% - Information and Assistance to Individuals



4,002 ↑98% - Information and Assistance to Facility Staff



1,645 ↓ 49% - Facility Visits



169 ↓ 56% - Resident/Family Council Meetings



93 ↓ 36% - Community Education Sessions



275 ↓ 46% - Participation in Facility Surveys

## Top Common Complaints



263 - Discharge/Eviction



176 - Staff Failure to Respond to Request for Assistance



123 - Dignity, Respect and Staff Attitudes



100 - Rights and Preferences



92 - Personal Hygiene

## The Ombudsman Team



7 - State Office Staff



18 - Local Ombudsmen



25 - Volunteers

# Advocacy in Action

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 devastated daily life for those living in long term care settings through restrictions imposed on visitation, group activities, and communal dining. Nursing home residents, especially those of ethnic/racial minority, were particularly impacted by the COVID virus with cases and death rates that far exceeded any other segment of the Michigan population. Since March, LTC ombudsmen have provided ombudsman services via phone or other electronic communications as in-person ombudsman visits were suspended to mitigate the risk of spreading the COVID virus.

In addition to typical case investigations and program activities, the MLTCOP participated in many new efforts during the pandemic to represent residents' needs and concerns:

- Meeting weekly with key MDHHS staff to convey resident experiences and offer recommendations for visitation, protections, and overall COVID responses;
- Advocating at the state and national level for safe visitation for residents particularly those at end of life, those suffering a decline in physical, emotional or mental status due to the ongoing isolation, and those needing visitor assistance with activities of daily living to avoid further decline;
- Serving on the Governor's Nursing Home COVID-19 Preparedness Task Force and chairing the Quality of Life subcommittee resulting in recommendations to address resident isolation and avoidable decline;
- Meeting weekly with local ombudsmen to offer case consultation and provide updates from state and federal agencies to ensure the highest-quality ombudsman advocacy services while in-person visitation was suspended;
- Hosting weekly resident and family calls to address COVID-19 questions and provide updates on the ever-changing orders and guidance; and
- Participating in over 40 interviews with the media and providing legislative testimony to provide the resident's perspective on the impacts of COVID-19.

We will continue in FY21 to advocate for safe visitation and a return to normalcy for residents in long term care settings. The negative impact of isolation from visitors and confinement to a small room for nearly a year must be weighted heavily when determining safe ways to allow residents to return to meaningful activities including receiving visitors that support quality of life and quality of care.

**Free and Confidential Help**

**1-866-485-9393**

**Email: [MLTCOP@meji.org](mailto:MLTCOP@meji.org)**

**Website: [MLTCOP.org](http://MLTCOP.org)**