



General Assembly

February Session, 2022

Raised Bill No. 5227

LCO No. 1459



Referred to Committee on HUMAN SERVICES

Introduced by:
(HS)

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE COMMUNITY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM FOR HOME CARE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) (a) As used in this section, (1)
2 "home care" means long-term services and supports provided to adults
3 in a home or community-based program administered by the
4 Department of Social Services, (2) "home care provider" means a person
5 or organization, including, but not limited to, (A) a home health agency
6 or hospice agency, as defined in section 19a-490 of the general statutes,
7 or (B) a homemaker-companion agency, as defined in section 20-670 of
8 the general statutes, and (3) "long-term services and supports" means
9 (A) health, health-related, personal care and social services provided to
10 persons with physical, cognitive or mental health conditions or
11 disabilities to facilitate optimal functioning and quality of life, or (B)
12 hospice care provided to persons who may be nearing the end of their
13 lives.

14 (b) There is established a Community Ombudsman program within

15 the independent Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman established
16 pursuant to section 17a-405 of the general statutes. Not later than
17 October 1, 2022, the State Ombudsman appointed pursuant to said
18 section shall (1) appoint a Community Ombudsman supervisor and not
19 more than twelve regional community ombudsmen, and (2) hire not
20 more than two administrative support staff members, all of whom shall
21 report to the State Ombudsman. The Community Ombudsman
22 supervisor and the regional community ombudsmen shall:

23 (A) Have access to data pertaining to long-term services and supports
24 provided by a home care provider to a client, provided such client
25 provides written consent to such access;

26 (B) Identify, investigate, refer and resolve complaints about home
27 care services;

28 (C) Raise public awareness about home care and the Community
29 Ombudsman program;

30 (D) Promote access to home care services;

31 (E) Advocate for long-term care options;

32 (F) Coach individuals in self advocacy; and

33 (G) Provide referrals to home care clients for legal, housing and social
34 services.

35 (c) The Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman shall oversee the
36 Community Ombudsman program and provide administrative and
37 organizational support by:

38 (1) Developing and implementing a public awareness strategy about
39 the Community Ombudsman program;

40 (2) Applying for, or working in collaboration with other state
41 agencies to apply for, available federal funding for Community
42 Ombudsman services;

43 (3) Collaborating with persons administering other state programs
44 and services to design and implement an agenda to promote the rights
45 of elderly persons and persons with disabilities;

46 (4) Providing information to public and private agencies, legislators,
47 the media and other persons regarding the problems and concerns of
48 older adults and people with disabilities receiving home care;

49 (5) Advocating for improvements in the home and community-based
50 long-term services and supports system; and

51 (6) Recommending changes in federal, state and local laws,
52 regulations, policies and actions pertaining to the health, safety, welfare
53 and rights of people receiving home care.

54 (d) Not later than December 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, the State
55 Ombudsman shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of
56 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of
57 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging,
58 human services and public health on (1) implementation of the public
59 awareness strategy relating to the Community Ombudsman program,
60 (2) the number of persons served in the program, (3) the number of
61 complaints regarding home care filed with the program, (4) the
62 disposition of such complaints, and (5) any gaps in services and
63 resources needed to address such gaps.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2022	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To establish a Community Ombudsman program to respond to complaints regarding home and community-based long-term services and supports in programs administered by the Department of Social Services.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]

