

OASIS · AT A GLANCE

Long Term Care Ombudsman for Adult Foster Care (AFC) residents

An adult in AFC has an independent advocate whose entire job is investigating exactly the complaints families are afraid to make out loud. Most families spend years not knowing this program exists.

BY JIM PALASTY · 9 MIN READ · AN ADVOCATE INDEPENDENT OF THE FACILITY AND THE STATE

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CATEGORIES OF AFC COMPLAINTS THE OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATES

Inadequate care, rights violations, financial exploitation, medication errors, improper discharge, and inadequate staffing all fall within the Ombudsman's mandate. Free, independent, and statewide.

How it works

THREE STEPS

STEP 1

Something feels wrong at the AFC home

A missed medication, an unexplained bruise, or a sudden discharge notice raises concern with no clear path forward.



STEP 2

The Ombudsman exists for exactly this

A federally mandated, independent advocacy program investigates complaints at AFC homes across Michigan, at no cost.



STEP 3

Independence is the whole point

The Ombudsman answers to neither the facility nor the state licensing agency, which changes what kind of complaint actually gets a real look.

What the Ombudsman can investigate

Inadequate care or supervision	Missed medications, hygiene neglect, unsafe conditions
Rights violations	Restriction of communication, visitation, or personal choice
Financial exploitation	Misuse of a resident's funds or benefits
Improper discharge or transfer	Being moved or discharged without proper process
Inadequate staffing	Chronic understaffing affecting resident care

THE BRUISE NOBODY COULD EXPLAIN

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Wanda noticed an unexplained bruise on her brother's arm during a visit to his AFC home and got vague, shifting answers from staff over several weeks. A friend mentioned the Long Term Care Ombudsman almost in passing. Wanda called the statewide line the same afternoon. An independent investigator visited within two weeks, and the facility's staffing and incident reporting practices changed within a month of that visit.

SHE DIDN'T HAVE PROOF OF ANYTHING. SHE HAD A BRUISE AND VAGUE ANSWERS. THAT WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE THE CALL.

What matters, at a glance

MICHIGAN SPECIFIC

Independent of the facility

The Ombudsman investigates without answering to the AFC provider or the agency that licenses it.

Covers Adult Foster Care specifically

AFC homes fall squarely within the program's mandate, alongside nursing homes and other long-term care settings.

Most families never call

Years can pass with a nagging concern about care quality before a family learns this free resource exists at all.

Six complaint categories

Inadequate care, rights violations, financial exploitation, medication errors, improper discharge, and inadequate staffing.

No cost, ever

The Ombudsman program is free to use, funded through federal and state mandate, not billed to families in any way.

Complaints can be filed online

The statewide toll-free line and an online complaint form both exist for reporting a concern, whichever is easier for you.

BRING THESE · CHECK AS YOU GO

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| ☐ Dates and descriptions of whatever concerned you | ☐ Names of staff involved, if known |
| ☐ The AFC facility's name and address | ☐ The statewide Ombudsman number: 1-866-485-9393 |
| ☐ A notebook or log for tracking future observations | |

YOUR MOVE

When you're concerned about care at an AFC home, here is what to do

- 1 Call the statewide Ombudsman line: 1-866-485-9393.
- 2 Describe specifically what you noticed and when.
- 3 Ask whether a formal investigation or informal inquiry fits your situation.
- 4 Request a copy of any findings once the investigation concludes.
- 5 Keep your own written record of the concern and the response.
- 6 Follow up if the facility's practices don't change afterward.

You don't need proof to make the call. You need a specific concern and a phone.

RESOURCES NAMED IN THIS POST

mpas.org · <https://www.mpas.org>

Informational only. Not legal or medical advice. Verify current program rules before acting.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Jim Palasty

Jim Palasty is the founder of OASIS for Autism and a single father of an adult autistic daughter in Michigan.