

## THE DIFFERENCE . . .

*Susan wants to visit with her friend who lives in another group home. She has the right to visit with her friend, but staff in her home have not allowed her to visit. Susan needs help from an ombudsman.*

*Andrew has a serious physical illness but has not seen a doctor yet because staff thinks he is just being a whiner. Andrew needs help from an ombudsman.*

*Edith has a physical disability that makes it extremely difficult to feed herself. Staff rarely helps her eat and usually removes the meal tray before she can finish eating. Edith needs an ombudsman.*

The way in which services are delivered has a crucial influence on the lives of real people. Individuals can grow and develop or languish and deteriorate, depending on the care (or lack of care) with which services are delivered.

For more information about the Community Living Ombudsman Program (CLOP), call the appropriate number in this brochure.

Disability Rights Louisiana  
8325 Oak Street  
New Orleans, LA 70118



## Community Living Ombudsman Program

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Operating statewide:  
**Monroe and Alexandria**  
Call: 800-960-7705

**Shreveport**  
Call: 800-960-7705

**Houma, Thibodaux, Lafayette**  
Call: 800-960-7705

**Baton Rouge and Lake Charles**  
Call: 800-960-7705

**New Orleans & Jefferson**  
Call: 800-960-7705

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*Call*  
**Disability Rights LA**  
at 800-960-7705 Tollfree/TDD

## THE PROGRAM . . .

The Community Living Ombudsman Program (CLOP) is a Louisiana network of trained advocates who visit persons with developmental disabilities living in group or community homes to:

- ❖ Listen to their concerns
- ❖ Respond to their needs
- ❖ Help them enhance their quality of life
- ❖ Assist them in the exercising of their rights

Certified ombudsmen make regular visits to residents and are prepared to assist them and their families by:

- ❖ Resolving differences and misunderstandings
- ❖ Providing referral information about community resources
- ❖ Identifying instances of abuse or neglect
- ❖ Familiarizing them with their legal rights
- ❖ Training staff about the needs and rights of residents
- ❖ Initiating formal complaints when necessary
- ❖ Suggesting measures to enhance quality of life in the group home

## THE NEED . . .

Developmental disabilities are severe and chronic conditions that occur at birth or during childhood and are expected to continue throughout life.

In Louisiana, over 4,400 people with developmental disabilities live in small group or community homes, which are state licensed, but privately operated. Most homes have six to eight residents.

In 1993 the Louisiana Legislature authorized the CLOP program (R.S. 28:395-399, Act 835 of 1993) ...*"to safeguard the well-being, enhance the quality of life, and protect the rights of persons with developmental disabilities living in group and community homes."*

After a pilot project in Baton Rouge, CLOP expanded to the entire state of Louisiana. (see front of brochure for phone numbers).

CLOP is authorized by the LA Legislature and funded through the state Office of the Attorney General.

## THE LAW . . .

State law provides that individuals with developmental disabilities have the same rights as all other citizens, specifically:

- ❖ To live in the least restrictive living option appropriate to their needs and abilities
- ❖ To participate in the least restrictive services
- ❖ To have service plans
- ❖ To have periodic diagnosis and evaluation reviews.
- ❖ To receive appropriate services
- ❖ To maximize their capabilities and enhance their abilities to cope with the environment
- ❖ To withdraw from services to which they have been voluntarily admitted
- ❖ To participate in planning for their own services
- ❖ To be informed of their rights
- ❖ To receive an education, if they are of school age

Residents and family members are not always aware of these rights, nor are all staff persons of group and community homes.