



**NEWS RELEASE – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.**

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## **Area Agency on Aging Recruiting Volunteers for Telephone Assistance with Nursing Home Residents**

Looking for an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of others? If so, the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. (AAA7) has an opportunity for you or someone you know who may be interested in helping provide a voice for residents in long-term care nursing facilities. At this time during the current coronavirus pandemic, there is a special and unique telephone only opportunity that will allow volunteers to continue giving back from the safety of their own homes.

The AAA7's Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (RLTCOP) helps residents at nursing homes feel less isolated and lonely. The RLTCOP is committed to protecting the rights of long-term care consumers and provides this support for nursing home residents by helping them resolve problems and advocating for their rights with the overall goal of enhancing the quality of life and care for all long-term care consumers in nursing homes or other home and community-based settings.

Volunteer Ombudsmen help to lessen the isolation and loneliness many residents experience. Volunteers also provide an essential voice for residents, providing advocacy and assistance for those who have concerns about their care. AAA7 Volunteer Ombudsmen cover the following counties in Ohio: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton.

At this current time, volunteering with the RLTCOP would consist of phone calls to a designated nursing facility and/or a resident's family contacts and no in-person visiting would be taking place. Additional volunteer assistance can also be provided over the phone to RLTCOP staff with other needs that may arise.

Some of the comments volunteers have shared about their experience volunteering include:

- "Becoming a Volunteer Ombudsman has been very fulfilling for me, to be able to help our seniors. It makes them feel secure knowing someone is there for them. Residents have confidence their problems will be resolved."
- "I've always liked to solve problems. Now to change something, even something small for a resident, can make them feel cared for and respected. That also makes me feel good to still be productive."

Those who are interested in this volunteer opportunity would just need to contact the AAA7 at 1-800-582-7277 or e-mail [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org). Volunteers should feel comfortable knowing that their safety is always a top priority and during this time, volunteering will be taking place in the safety of their own homes through use of the telephone. Those who are interested will need to complete mandatory training, which will take place through an online format. The goal of the entire process is to keep nursing home residents and volunteers safe while maintaining contact.

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. provides services on a non-discriminatory basis. These services are available to help older adults and those with disabilities live safely and independently in their own homes through services paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, other federal and state resources, as well as private pay. The AAA7's Resource Center is also available to anyone in the community looking for information or assistance with long-term care options. Available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm, the Resource Center is a valuable contact for learning more about options and what programs and services are available for assistance.

Those interested in learning more can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 (TTY: 711). Here, individuals can speak directly with a trained staff member who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency also offers an in-home consultation at no cost for those who are interested in learning more. Information is also available on [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org), or the Agency can be contacted through e-mail at [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org). The Agency also has a Facebook page located at [www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7](https://www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7).

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