



Susana Martinez, Governor
Retta Ward, Secretary
Gino Rinaldi, Deputy Secretary

Press Release

NM Aging & Long-term Services Department
Retta Ward, Cabinet Secretary

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GOVERNOR SUSANA MARTINEZ DECLARES OCTOBER "LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENT RIGHTS MONTH"

Santa Fe, NM — Governor Susana Martinez declared the month of October to be "Long-Term Care Resident Rights Month", in support of the National Theme, "My Voice, My Vote, My Right."

Across the country, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities along with family members, long-term care ombudsmen, citizen advocates, facility staff and others will honor the individual rights of long-term care residents by celebrating National Residents' Rights Month. Residents' Rights Month is celebrated annually in October to honor residents living in all long-term care facilities, including nursing homes, assisted living, board and care and retirement communities. It is a time for celebration and recognition offering an opportunity for every facility and community to focus on and celebrate awareness of dignity, respect and the value of each individual resident. The theme for Residents' Rights Month 2012 is, "My Voice, My Vote, My Right" with the goal of encouraging residents' right to vote and participation in the political process.

State and Federal laws and regulations guarantee that residents who make their home in all types of long-term care facilities maintain their rights as U.S. Citizens, and gain additional rights as residents. These include, but are not limited to: individualized care, respect, dignity, the right to visitation, the right to privacy, the right to complain, and the right to make independent choices, and the right to VOTE.

Residents' Rights Month is also an opportunity to recognize Ombudsman volunteers who work to promote residents' rights, assist residents with complaints, and provide a voice to elders and adults with disabilities who would otherwise go unheard.

In New Mexico, there are 130 volunteer Ombudsmen who dedicate their time to serve more than 12,000 long-term care residents in 340 licensed and unlicensed facilities statewide. Ombudsmen resolve more than 4,000 complaints, offer more than 11,000 hours of service each year and ensure that our most vulnerable citizens never lose their voice. The Ombudsman program is housed in the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department and may be reached via the following numbers:

- Santa Fe & Northeastern New Mexico 1-866-451-2901
- Albuquerque & Northwestern New Mexico 1-866-842-9230
- Las Cruces & Southern New Mexico 1-800-762-8690

If you have a loved one in a long-term care facility who needs the assistance of an Ombudsman, or would like to learn more about Ombudsman services, please contact our toll-free number, 1-800-451-2901, or visit www.nmaging.state.nm.us.

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