



September 30, 2024

Dear Administrator,

Resident Rights Month is celebrated in October of each year. This year's theme is "The Power of My Voice." The Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program encourage you and your staff to discuss how you can embrace this theme and emphasize self-empowerment looking to find ways to recognize the power of residents being vocal about their interests, personal growth, and the right to live full and enriching lives. We also encourage you to talk to the residents and their family members to discuss how you, together as a community, can work to promote these same ideals. Through these conversations we are hoping that you explore what your collective community does to enhance a culture of putting people first and challenge yourselves to find ways to do it better.

While our roles working as the regulators and advocates aren't the same nor are either the same as your role, we are all given a great task of serving the individuals living in long-term care communities. Each of us has an obligation to do our work in a way that honors the autonomy and choice of the residents.

This year's theme closely aligns with the federal self-determination regulation found in [42 CFR 483.10\(f\)](#). As you prepare for Resident Rights Month, we encourage you to review F561 in the State Operations Manual Appendix PP. Take some time to read how the expectations for self-determination through choices are clearly laid out by the feds.

Throughout the month of October, we will be continuing to celebrate resident rights. Do not hesitate to reach out to your Regional Ombudsman Program for help brainstorming ways to ensure that you are meeting the needs and rights of the individuals living in your community.

Name *Sheila A. Baker*  
Title Deputy Director, Office of  
Health Care Regulation  
Illinois Department of Public Health

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly D. Richards".

Kelly Richards  
State Long-Term Care Ombudsman  
Illinois Department on Aging