



THE SENIOR SOURCE®

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5 ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR FAMILIES WHEN A LOVED ONE IS IN A LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY

During the COVID-19 pandemic, those living in long-term care facilities are especially vulnerable. If you have a loved one living in a facility, here is some guidance from Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to consider during this challenging time.

- 1 Learn about safety measures.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued guidelines for keeping residents as safe as possible in nursing facilities and assisted living facilities.
- 2 Get answers.** Long-term care facility staff should be communicating to residents and their families about measures in place to keep residents safe during this time. Residents and their loved ones have the right to information about the safety measures a facility is taking to protect residents.
- 3 Honor restrictions on visitation.** Texas and some city or county governments have placed visitation restrictions on nursing and assisted living facilities. In many situations, family members may visit through windows or virtually (via FaceTime, Zoom meeting, etc.). The facility is required to help residents connect with loved ones through virtual visits.
- 4 Stay in touch.** While physical distancing is necessary to keep residents safe, it's also important to remember their emotional and mental health. Many are experiencing extreme social isolation during this time. Try to find creative ways to stay in touch. Mail or drop off cards, letters, family photos, small gifts, snacks, reading materials, or craft materials. If your senior loved one is tech-savvy, connect via video.
- 5 Report problems.** If you have concerns about the facility's safety measures, discuss them with the facility administration or a long-term care ombudsman. Every assisted living and nursing facility are assigned a long-term care ombudsman. An ombudsman can help you talk through any concerns and identify options for getting your concerns addressed, whether COVID-19 related or otherwise. Long-term care ombudsmen are there to guide you in getting answers and results.

In Dallas County, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is offered through The Senior Source. Call 214-823-5700 or visit TheSeniorSource.org for more information.

