



Pat Quinn, Governor
Charles D. Johnson, Director

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Department on Aging Calls Attention to the Rights of Residents in Long-term Care During Weeklong Observance

Residents' Rights Week is October 4-10

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) Director Charles D. Johnson is calling attention to the rights of more than 100,000 residents who reside in long-term care facilities, including nursing homes and assisted-living facilities, in Illinois. The call coincides with the national observance to raise awareness about residents who live in long-term care facilities. *Residents' Rights Week*, which is celebrated each year during the first full week in October, was started by the National Citizen's Coalition for Nursing Home Reform (NCCNHR) to highlight the importance of resident focused care.

"*Residents' Rights Week* serves as the perfect time to improve our policies and coordination of state programs designed to make sure residents of long-term care are safe," said Director Johnson. "This weeklong observance is also a time to thank family members, staff, advocates and other caregivers who commit themselves to help make sure residents are safe and treated with respect."

In addition to the assistance and protection residents of long-term care receive from the Illinois Department of Public Health that licenses, regulates and inspects these facilities, IDoA provides safeguards through the Ombudsman Program. The Ombudsmen serve as advocates by protecting and defending residents in long-term care facilities, supportive living facilities, and assisted living and shared housing establishments. The Ombudsmen inform residents and their families of their rights; resolve any complaints or issues; provide information on resident's needs and concerns to their families, facility staff and their community; and advocate for good individualized care.

The mission of IDoA is to help older adults live independently and remain in their homes and community; but, IDoA also works to educate families about long-term care by providing critical information to help families find the appropriate facility, if needed, for their aging loved ones. In collaboration with the Illinois Attorney General's office and long-term care professional associations and advocacy organizations, IDoA helped create the *Consumer Choice Information Report*. Per state law, long-term care facilities are now required to complete the *Consumer Choice Information Report* questionnaire each year. To learn more about the *Consumer Choice Information Report*, log on to the IDoA website at www.state.il.us/aging/ccir/index.htm.

For more information about IDoA programs and services, contact the Illinois Department on Aging Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966 or for TTY (hearing impaired use only) call 1-888-206-1327.

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