

Dear DDA Service Provider:

The [Office of the Developmental Disabilities \(DD\) Ombuds](#) investigates, monitors, reviews and reports on state services provided to persons with developmental disabilities. The DD Ombuds meets with people with developmental disabilities to resolve concerns and provide information about their rights and services.

Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) clients have the right to access advocates. Clients retain the right to decline a visitor to their home. DD Ombuds staff are fully vaccinated and follow [Washington's Safe Start Plan for Long-Term Care](#).

Your responsibility, as a DSHS service provider, is to not interfere with access to the DD Ombuds under this statute:

[RCW 71A.26.030 \(9\)](#) The client has the right to access advocates. The client has the right to receive information from agencies acting as client advocates, and be afforded the opportunity to contact these agencies. The provider must not interfere with the client's access to any of the following:

- (a) Any representative of the state;
- (b) The resident's individual physician;
- (c) The developmental disabilities ombuds; or
- (d) Any representative of the organization designated to implement the protection and advocacy program pursuant to RCW [71A.10.080](#).

The DD Ombuds may also request information from the DSHS or the Department of Health under this statute:

[RCW 43.382.090 \(3\)](#) Upon the ombuds' request, grant the ombuds or the ombuds' designee the right to access, inspect, and copy all relevant information, records, or documents in the possession or control of the department or the department of health that the ombuds considers necessary in an investigation.

Anyone can report concerns to the DD Ombuds by calling 833-727-8900 or online at <https://ddombuds.org/complaint-form/>. No discriminatory, disciplinary, or retaliatory action may be taken against people who provide information to the DD Ombuds.

More information about the DD Ombuds office:

DD Ombuds Website: www.ddombuds.org

DDO video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2F8sPeHMFsu&feature=emb_imp_woyt

DD Ombuds RCW: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=43.382>

Client rights RCW: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=71A.26>

You are expected to be familiar with your obligations around sharing and maintaining confidential information. If you are unsure about these obligations, you are encouraged to consult your own legal counsel. If you have questions about this letter, please contact the DDA DD Ombuds Liaison, Heather.Lum@dshs.wa.gov



Beth Krehbiel /Director, Division of Field Services
DDA - HQ - Lacey / Developmental Disabilities Administration
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
(O) 360.407.1556 / (C) 360.480.4158
Email: beth.krehbiel@dshs.wa.gov OR KrehbB@dshs.wa.gov

Transforming Lives

Stay connected with DDA

