

Issue Brief – Long-term Care Ombudsman

DIVISION OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES

NUMBERDHS-08-17

LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

The Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) under the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) is requesting \$220,000 in General Funds for FY 2008 to provide prevention oriented services under the Long-term Care Ombudsman (LTCO) program.

OBJECTIVE

The LTCO program under section 62A-3-203 of the Utah Code has the responsibility of “promoting, advocating, and ensuring the adequacy of care received, and the quality of life experienced by elderly residents of long-term care facilities within the state.”

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This program provides services to seniors in long-term care facilities by receiving and resolving complaints, conducting investigations, coordinating services for elderly in long-term care facilities, and providing training for the delivery and regulations for ombudsmen volunteers, as well as operators and employees of long-term care facilities. In addition, the long-term care ombudsman is to ensure compliance with Title VII of the federal Older Americans Act, 42 U.S.C. 3058.

Long Term Care Ombudsman History of Services and Funding

Since 1993, DAAS has experienced an increase of 404.69 percent in referrals and consultations as shown in the following table:

Ombudsman Referrals & Consultations History		
FY	Referrals & Consultations	
1993	852	
1994	1,048	
1995	1,402	
1996	2,160	
1997	2,406	
1998	3,183	
1999	3,268	
2000	3,576	
2001	4,071	
2002	4,058	
2003	4,200	
2004	5,417	
2005	4,237	
2006 (Estimate)	4,300	
% Change from FY 1993 to FY 2006		404.69%

Under the Older Americans Act, the LTCO program is mandated to provide prevention-oriented programs. DAAS, funding for this program has remained flat since 1993. According to DAAS, the LTCO program is only able to provide “crisis based” services (referrals and consultations) because of now funding increases. The following table shows the funding history for the LTCO program:

Ombudsman Funding History	
FY	Funding
1993	\$160,000
1994	\$160,000
1995	\$160,000
1996	\$160,000
1997	\$160,000
1998	\$160,000
1999	\$160,000
2000	\$160,000
2001	\$160,000
2002	\$161,500
2003	\$162,500
2004	\$156,100
2005	\$161,000
2006	\$160,000
% Change from FY 1999 to FY 2006	0%

Internal Reallocation within DAAS

APS is responsible under section 62A-3-302 of the Utah Code to investigate reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable adults in all settings. In the past there has been concern of duplication of investigations and services provided by APS and the Long-term Care Ombudsman programs. In the 2006 General Session, S.B. 53, "Adult Protective Services Amendments," clarified the roles of both programs to avoid duplication. Because of passage of this bill, DAAS starting in FY 2008 will reorganize the programs by transferring 3 full time equivalent (FTE) employees and their associated expenditures of \$180,000 from APS to the LTCO program. This will bring the total funding of the LTCO program to \$340,000 (\$160,000 of the original budget plus \$180,000 from APS) which represents a 212.5 percent increase.

DAAS FY 2008 Funding Request Detail

DAAS is requesting additional funding of \$220,000 to provide preventative services such as training and education instead of just crisis based services which will bring the total budget to \$560,000. The total is based on a 350 percent increase in referrals since 1993, the last time this program received a funding increase as shown in the following table:

FY 2008 Ombudsman Funding Request	
Current Level of General Funds of \$160,000 X 350%	\$560,000
Less: Current Level of General Funds	(\$160,000)
Less: Internal Transfer of APS to LTCO	(\$180,000)
FY 2008 Funding Request	<u>\$220,000</u>

RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of the Analyst that the Long-term Care Ombudsman program not receive additional funding for FY 2008 because the increase in funding and FTEs from the transfer from APS can be used to provide preventative services since the change in referrals and consultations has only increased 5.96 percent since FY 2002.

