



The Beacon

A Newsletter for Long-Term Care Residents

January 2024

Leaping Into a New Year: Three Resolutions for 2024

New Jersey's Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO) wishes you a Happy New Year as we dedicate ourselves to making 2024 a landmark year in promoting the dignity and well-being of long-term care residents everywhere.

With that goal in mind, and in the spirit of the season, we made three New Year's resolutions for 2024. LTCO staff members will work to:



1) Support resident-led efforts to develop, lobby for, and enact legislation to increase the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) for nursing home residents on Medicaid.

Residents rely on these accounts for personal expenses, such as haircuts, clothes, snacks, or books and magazines.

The current PNA amount — \$50 per month — is inadequate, particularly in a high cost-of-living state such as New Jersey. Anyone interested in supporting this effort should contact Community Engagement at 1-609-690-4740 or community@ltco.nj.gov.

2) Continue advocating for legislation requiring nursing homes to submit consolidated financial statements covering themselves and any related entities involved in their operations.

The consolidated financial statements are needed to give regulators, as well as residents and their families, greater insight into how much nursing homes spend on resident care and whether they might be hiding profits by overpaying related entities for leases, management fees, or other costs.

3) Work with nursing home residents to start or strengthen resident councils, which are independent, resident-led groups that can be an effective voice in advocating for better care and better living conditions.

A handful of New Jersey nursing homes will be involved in a pilot project by the national *Moving Forward Nursing Home Quality Coalition* to develop resources for resident councils. The LTCO will go beyond the pilot and work with nursing home residents statewide.

Watch future editions of *The Beacon* for updates on these important issues.

Bingo! Learn About Residents' Rights the Fun Way



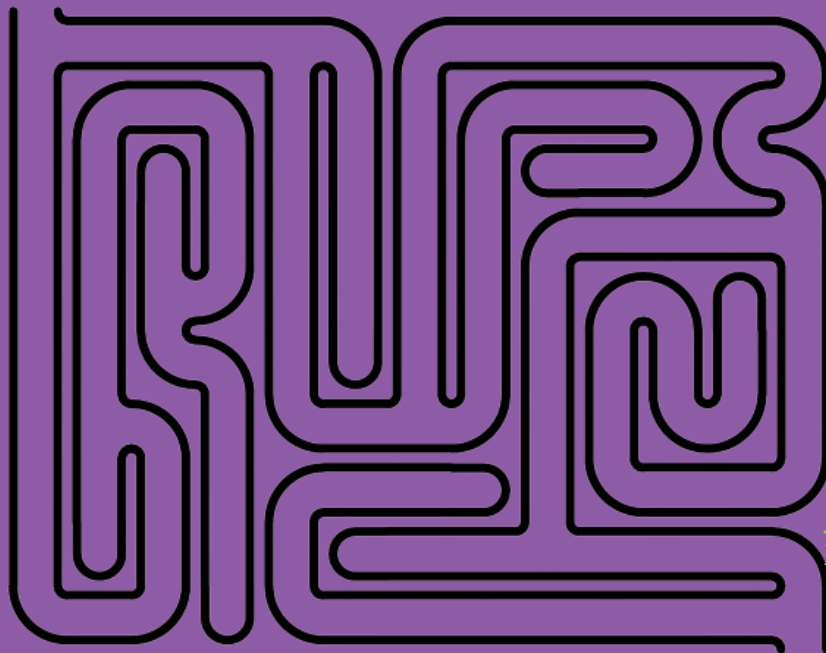
Looking for a fun activity with important lessons and prizes too? Try Residents' Rights Bingo.

LTCO staff members and volunteers are available to visit nursing homes and facilitate the friendly competition, which engages residents and shares key information about the rights that are guaranteed by state and federal law.

To bring Residents' Rights Bingo to your nursing home, contact the LTCO's Community Engagement staff at 609-690-4740 or community@ltco.nj.gov.

Did you know? You can learn all about your rights by visiting the LTCO website at <https://www.nj.gov/ooie/resident.shtml>.

Make your way through 2024



New Jersey Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

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