

RCW 18.51.095 Resident contact information—Department requirements and duties. (1) The department shall require each nursing home to:

(a) Create and regularly maintain a current resident roster containing the name and room number of each resident and provide a written copy immediately upon an in-person request from any long-term care ombuds;

(b) Create and regularly maintain current, accurate, and aggregated contact information for all residents, including contact information for the resident representative, if any, of each resident. The contact information for each resident must include the resident's name, room number, and, if available, telephone number and email address. The contact information for each resident representative must include the resident representative's name, relationship to the resident, phone number, and, if available, email and mailing address;

(c) Record and update the aggregated contact information required by this section, upon receipt of new or updated contact information from the resident or resident representative; and

(d) Upon the written request of any long-term care ombuds that includes reference to this section and the relevant legal functions and duties of long-term care ombuds, provide a copy of the aggregated contact information required by this section within 48 hours, or within a reasonable time if agreed to by the requesting long-term care ombuds, by electronic copy to the secure email address or facsimile number provided in the written request.

(2) In accordance with the federal older Americans act, federal regulations, and state laws that govern the state long-term care ombuds program, the department shall inform nursing homes that:

(a) Any long-term care ombuds is authorized to request and obtain from nursing homes the information required by this section in order to perform the functions and duties of long-term care ombuds as set forth in federal and state laws;

(b) The state long-term care ombuds program and all long-term care ombuds are considered a "health oversight agency," so that the federal health insurance portability and accountability act and chapter 70.02 RCW do not preclude nursing homes from providing the information required by this section when requested by any long-term care ombuds, and pursuant to these laws, the federal older Americans act, federal regulations, and state laws that govern the state long-term care ombuds program, nursing homes are not required to seek or obtain consent from residents or resident representatives prior to providing the information required by this section in accordance with the requirements of this section;

(c) The information required by this section, when provided by a nursing home to a requesting long-term care ombuds, becomes property of the state long-term care ombuds program and is subject to all state and federal laws governing the confidentiality and disclosure of the files, records, and information maintained by the state long-term care ombuds program or any local long-term care ombuds entity; and

(d) The nursing home may not refuse to provide or unreasonably delay providing the resident roster, the contact information for a resident or resident representative, or the aggregated contact information required by this section, on any basis, including on the basis that the nursing home must first seek or obtain consent from one or more of the residents or resident representatives.

(3) Nothing in this section shall interfere with or diminish the authority of any long-term care ombuds to access nursing homes, residents, and resident records as otherwise authorized by law.

(4) For the purposes of this section, "resident representative" has the same meaning as in RCW 70.129.010. [2021 c 159 s 8.]

Findings—2021 c 159: See note following RCW 18.20.520.