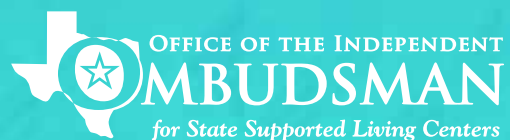


Office of the Independent  
Ombudsman for State  
Supported Living Centers



# 2016 Biannual Report

*January to June*





## Office of the Independent Ombudsman

**Back row, left to right:** Robin Seale-Gutierrez (Lubbock), Isabel Ponce (El Paso), Carrie Martin (Central Office), Aletrice Jones (Central Office), Marvin Stewart (Lufkin), Jerome Young (Denton), Adam Parks (Mexia), Phyllis Matthews (Austin), Deatrice Potlow (Richmond)

**Front row, left to right:** Susan Aguilar (Brenham), Kristin Priddy (San Angelo), Gevona Hicks (San Antonio), Candace Jennings (Central Office), George Bithos (Central Office), Sharon Nielsen (Central Office), Angela Leach (Corpus Christi), James Arnold (Rio Grande Center).

**Not pictured:** Jill Antilley (Abilene).



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## Executive Summary

**T**he establishment of the Office of the Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Centers (OIO), created under the 81st Texas Legislature, delineated an entirely new approach to ensuring rights and protection of the residents of the state supported living centers (SSLCs). In addition to defining the duties and responsibilities of the office, the legislation mandated that the OIO issue a biannual report on the scope and activities of the office. This report reflects that charge from Jan. 1 to June 30, 2016. Much of the the data for the report can be found in the appendix.

The changing climate under which SSLCs serve residents creates seminal realities that influence the lives of each resident. These realities include the increased momentum to transition qualified residents to community living situations; the difficult task of recruiting staff and providing adequate training for competent employees; the aging of the centers' populations, which has associated with it the challenges of a geriatric and frail population; and the continued effect of infrastructure issues at various facilities. Furthermore, the transition to electronic records at the centers is a significant change in the documentation of service delivery.

All these situations, and many more, affect the ombudsman's work. The primary task of the ombudsman is monitoring and oversight so each resident is afforded protections, resident rights are assured and the quality of residents' lives is improved. One of the recurrent findings of our reports is the extent to which staff and families utilize the office, as well as the large number of ombudsman-initiated investigations throughout the system. These findings underline the significant effect of the independent nature of the office. I urge the administration to ensure full transparency so that the legislatively mandated oversight and monitoring responsibilities of our office are assured and facilitated.

The ombudsman's office is, as we have continually emphasized, a resource for positive change at the centers and for the entire system. The process by which we investigate issues and concerns, the identification of emerging systemic issues, and the discovery of pertinent information depends on our free access to information as provided in the statute. We provide the leadership of the centers or state office with conclusions and recommendations formulated from our independent investigations. As the new system of record keeping is being implemented, we look forward to working with the administration to ensure that our access to information is continued without interruption.

My thanks to Gov. Gregg Abbott and his staff for their support and confidence. I look forward to working with Texas Health and Human Services Executive Commissioner Charles Smith as the critical transformation of the Texas Health and Human Services System unfolds.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. George P. Bithos

*Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Centers*

## Recommendations

The statute calls for the OIO to make recommendations for improving our impact at the centers. In my opinion, to improve the lives of SSLC residents, these recommendations should reflect cooperation between the office, the legislature and agency leadership. Considering this interim charge in preparation for the 84th Legislative session (emphasis added):

**“Long-Term Care Settings Quality and Oversight:** Examine and recommend ways to improve quality and oversight in long-term care settings, including nursing homes, **Intermediate Care Facilities and the Home and Community-based Services program.** Monitor the implementation of legislation related to the revocation of nursing home licenses for repeated serious violations.”

**Recommendation 1:** *The legislature must provide additional and necessary protections for residents living in community settings to demonstrate to residents and families the state’s commitment to provide safe environments, regardless of placement.*

Successful outcomes depend on addressing the concerns of families of residents transitioning to community settings. The families’ apprehensions and reluctance are real and demonstrable; they must be recognized and acknowledged. Transitioning SSLC residents to community-based services requires preparation and planning. First, we determine the resident’s wishes and needs, then gain approval from the resident’s Interdisciplinary Team, which includes the resident and their guardian. The primary concern of many families is that community-based care lacks the multi-layered protections present at SSLCs. The perception that group homes are not as safe as SSLCs is real for families and presents a barrier to community living. Until this issue is addressed, strong opposition to the community option will continue. Protections at SSLCs include: 24-hour video monitoring of common areas, mandatory reporting of incidents, immediate on-site investigations, access to nursing services, the availability of rights officers and the presence of the Office of the Independent Ombudsman. This safety net of protections is comforting to families. The concerns brought to our office state that they do not see equal and comparable protections in the community.

**Recommendation 2:** *The system of protections in community settings must include independent oversight with confidentiality and authorization to investigate all critical issues of service delivery, health and safety. The experience of the OIO can be a valuable model in the design of these protections.*

The OIO has profoundly improved the lives of SSLC residents and their families. Confidence and trust in the fairness, confidentiality and independence of the ombudsman fosters this success as confirmed by the high number of concerns brought to our office by SSLC staff and other stakeholders. Protections at the community level must include independent oversight, open access to records and full investigative powers for the OIO to be effective. The experience of the OIO at the SSLCs provides an excellent model and resource for additional protections at the community level.

### SSLC Residents Transitioning to the Community

Fiscal Year	Transitions
2010	330
2011	204
2012	207
2013	287
2014	261
2015	233





## Mission and Principles

**T**he mission of the Office of the Independent Ombudsman (OIO) is to serve as an independent, impartial and confidential resource, assisting our clients, their families and the public with services and related complaints and issues, which deal with the state supported living centers (SSLCs).

The office serves by these principles as standard practice for the function of ombudsman at the state supported living centers and the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS).

### Independence

The office is impartial and independent in structure, function and appearance to the highest degree possible. The office is not part of the DADS or the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). The office reports directly to the state's elected leaders in the executive and legislative branches.

The employees of the office do not act as agents of DADS and do not hold positions within the agency that present a conflict of interest. The office exercises sole discretion over whether or how to respond to a concern, except as directed by state law. It may also initiate action on a concern identified through the ombudsman's direct observation.

### Flexibility

The ombudsmen demonstrate flexibility to meet the needs and requests for assistance in serving SSLC residents. These measures may include advocating with an agency, provider or other person in the best interest of the resident. As the ombudsmen act according to standardized procedures, the office exercises a flexible approach to meet the needs of its clients.

### Accessibility

The office is accessible to residents, family members, staff members or other interested parties. An assistant ombudsman has an office at each facility and can be contacted via email, fax, telephone, mail or in person at each state supported living center. The office maintains a toll-free number and a comprehensive web presence and pledges to maintain optimum accessibility by continually seeking innovative avenues to increase awareness and approachability.

### Confidentiality

The ombudsmen acknowledge their responsibility to respect the confidentiality of the resident, the family, the SSLC staff or other involved parties, as well as associated records and documents. Employees of the office understand that their work will involve access to confidential information.



The office is not required to notify DADS or the SSLC administration of communications made to the office. The names and roles of parties that raise a concern will be kept confidential, as permitted by law. The office staff pledge to protect privacy and to act responsibly in all correspondence and preparation of reports, whether written or oral.

## **Integrity**

The ombudsmen will maintain the highest level of professionalism in demeanor as evidenced by consistently displaying honesty, truthfulness, fairness and ethical behavior.

## **Credibility**

The office maintains a reputation that is credible among residents, family members, advocates, staff, the legislature and the general public. The office ensures all information gathered through investigations and evaluations is accurate and derived from legitimate sources.



## Duties and Activity of the Office

**T**he fundamental purpose of our work is to ensure that SSLC residents' rights are protected. The philosophy and goal that guides our work is to provide the governor, legislators, SSLCs, DADS and HHSC with information and recommendations so that we can identify opportunities for improvement at the centers and improve the lives of SSLC residents.

The independent ombudsman, located in Austin, is appointed by the governor's office and confirmed by the senate. The duties and powers of the independent ombudsman are mandated by Texas Health and Safety Code, Title 7, §555. This statute provides the independent ombudsman with the ability to hire assistant independent ombudsmen (AIOs) stationed at each SSLC. The AIOs will have the same duties and powers as outlined for the independent ombudsman. Additionally, there are administrative and program staff at the central office to direct operations.

### Investigations

The AIOs follow standard investigative procedures for complaints and concerns in proportion to the circumstances presented.

#### ***Investigation, recommendations and monitoring***

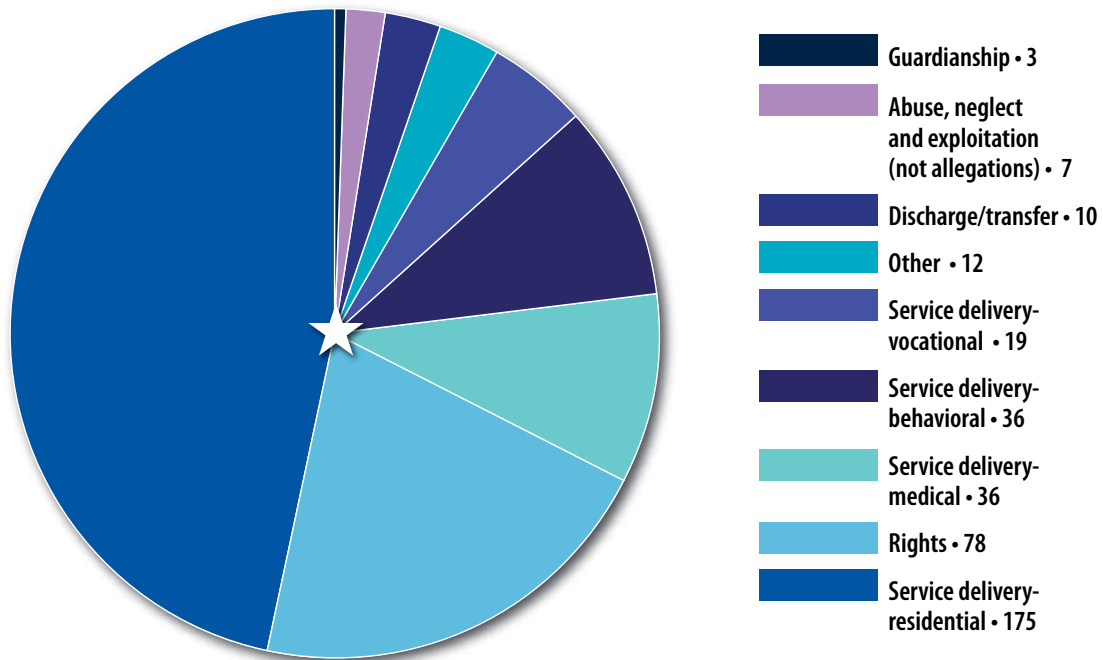
The score and extent of an investigation is determined by the AIO, which may include collecting evidence in various forms such as photos, video surveillance, interviews, inquiries, observations and documentation review. The findings are provided to the SSLC director or designee with recommendations. The AIO then monitors the facility's efforts to address the concerns noted.

#### ***Investigations in this biannual period***

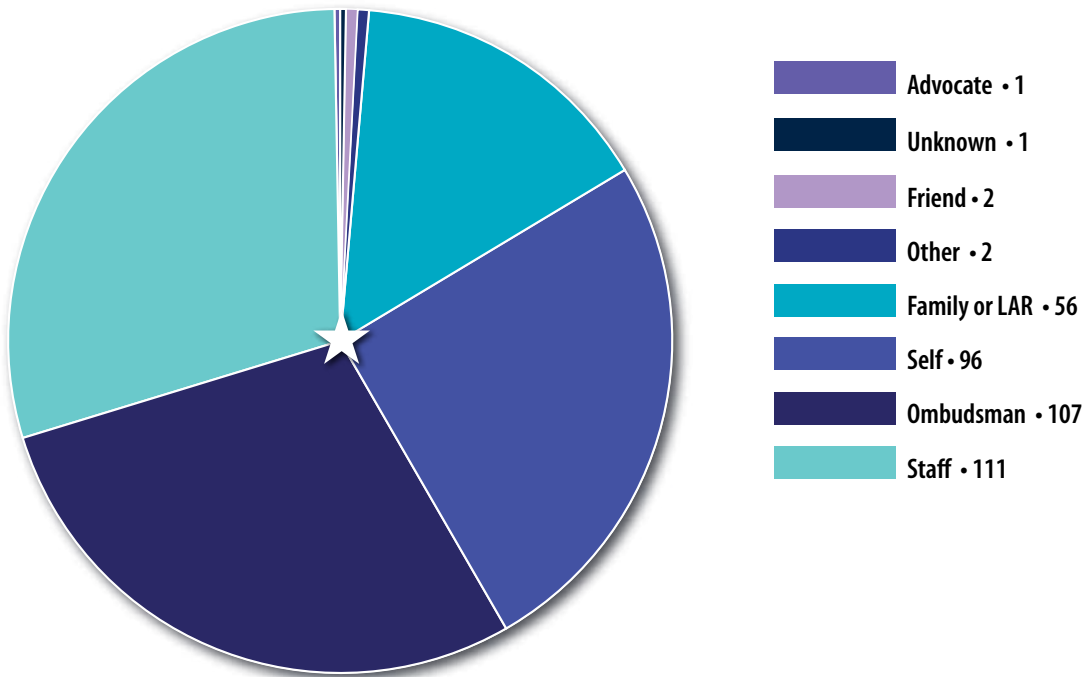
AIOs investigated 412 complaints in this biannual period. The majority of complaints were brought to the ombudsmen's attention by staff members of the SSLCs (32 percent). The ombudsmen initiated 109 of the complaints (27 percent). Residents brought 100 complaints to the ombudsmen's attention (24 percent), and family members or legally authorized representatives (LARS) made 60 complaints (15 percent). The top complaints were regarding residential service delivery (66 percent of complaints), followed by rights (19 percent).



## Investigations by Case Type • January – June 2016



## Investigations by Caller's Relationship to Client • January – June 2016





## **Advocacy**

The ombudsman takes action upon determining a resident, client, family member or LAR needs assistance, including advocating with an agency, provider or other party in the best interests of the resident. This may entail

- Making appropriate referrals.
- Attending interdisciplinary team meetings.
- Attending medical appointments.
- Providing any special intervention.
- Mediating to resolve conflicts.

### ***Providing information about residents rights***

The ombudsman provides information about the rights of SSLC residents to all interested parties, including but not limited to, residents, staff, administration, medical personnel, community

advocates and family members. A person can be referred to the OIO website and the Rights Handbook provided by DADS as further resources of information.

### ***Encouraging self-advocacy and communication***

The office encourages residents to express their concerns about services received and treatment by their SSLC. Ombudsmen will support an environment that promotes self-advocacy and encourages communication between residents, family, facility staff and administration.

### ***Monitoring activities and meetings***

The ombudsman monitors activities in homes and meetings such as planning meetings, incident management meetings, restraint reduction meetings, human rights committee meetings or other instances in which relevant issues may be discussed.

In addition to working on specific concerns, AIOs periodically attend interdisciplinary team meetings to evaluate program service planning in general. The following table shows the number of meetings each AIO attended that were not part of specific cases.

### ***Advocating for residents designated high-risk***

In Senate Bill 643, legislation required that newly admitted residents under criminal commitment be evaluated to determine whether they pose a high risk of harm to others upon admission and then on an annual basis if deemed high-risk. This high-risk determination process occurs at Mexia SSLC and San Angelo SSLC where all criminal court-committed residents are initially admitted.

A



resident who has been designated high-risk, which results in a more restrictive living environment, has the right to appeal this decision. The AIO approaches each resident to offer advocacy and guidance throughout the appeal process. Our office continues to work with DADS legal and advocate groups to be a resource to the residents. From January to June, Mexia SSLC held 20 high-risk determination reviews. Of these, three residents remained high-risk and two residents were determined to no longer be high-risk. Only one individual was newly deemed high-risk. All of those determined high-risk are currently in the appeals process and receiving advocacy from our office.



## Referrals

When contacted, the AIO determines whether efforts to resolve concern are within the scope of the OIO duties or if a referral to another entity is appropriate. Employee matters are outside of the scope of the office, and all personnel matters are referred to Health and Human Services (HHS) Human Resources. The office is also contacted frequently regarding issues not involving an SSLC.

### ***Complaints of abuse, neglect or exploitation***

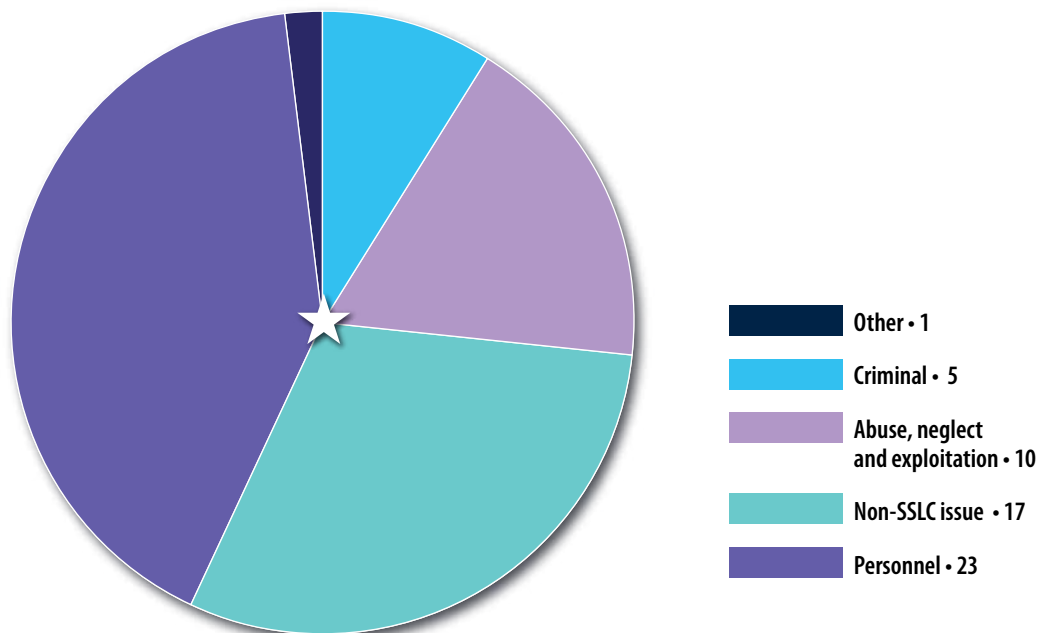
When an AIO receives a complaint of abuse, neglect or exploitation (ANE), the AIO informs the complainant that this communication must be shared with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS),

and the AIO makes a report to DFPS immediately. The AIO will then communicate to the SSLC director or designee the basic nature of the ANE, name of the alleged victim, and the name and work location of the alleged perpetrator. The AIO reviews the final report of the investigation following the DFPS referral to ensure that the complaint was given due diligence.

### ***Complaints involving employees***

If a complaint involves alleged employee misconduct or a possible violation of licensing standards, the AIO addresses it as a complaint and provides recommendations. If the AIO finds

## Referred Contacts by Case Type • January – June 2016



the facility has not addressed the issue satisfactorily, or that the potential for serious harm still exists, the AIO will refer the issue to DADS Regulatory Division.

Upon receiving notification of criminal activity, the AIO notifies the independent ombudsman or deputy independent ombudsman, who then reports the activity to the Office of the Inspector General.

### ***Referrals in this biannual period***

There have been 56 referrals in this biannual period, including complaints, consults and inquiries. The majority of concerns (27) were raised by staff. Referrals that were outside the scope of AIO duties were personnel issues (23), inquiries not regarding residents of the SSLCs (17), such as long-term care, and issues of abuse and neglect (10).

## **Incident Review**

The statute that authorizes the office to investigate complaints at SSLCs also defines the office's responsibility for reviewing incident investigations completed by the SSLC and other entities.

### ***Unusual incidents***

An unusual incident is defined by DADS as "an event or situation that seriously threatens the health, safety or life of individuals." There are 11 types of unusual incidents, ranging from choking incidents to allegations of abuse to deaths. The AIO at each SSLC reviews all final reports of unusual incidents, abuse, neglect and exploitation allegations, criminal activity, and intermediate care facility standard violations, including those investigated by the SSLC.

To evaluate the center's investigative process, the AIO reviews whether the investigation is complete, protections for residents are adequate, recommendations are addressed completely and within a reasonable timeframe, and that preventative measures are considered. The AIO also looks for any reoccurring theme or trend in incidents that may reveal a systemic issue and other concerns related to services, staff, training or rights.

### ***Concerns and recommendations***

If a concern is noted, the AIO provides a written explanation of the concern and any recommendations to the designated SSLC liaison. The AIO tracks recommendations from final reports and monitors the facility's efforts to implement them for an amount of time determined by the AIO.

The following table shows the number of unusual incidents reviewed by each AIO in this biannual reporting period.



## Number of Unusual Incidents Reviewed by Assistant Independent Ombudsmen • January – June 2016

SSLC	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	Total	Avg.
Abilene	14	13	14	25	16	15	97	16
Austin	11	5	4	10	6	4	40	7
Brenham	3	18	18	21	37	15	112	19
Corpus Christi	7	4	22	8	52	40	133	22
Denton	28	40	32	32	36	24	192	32
El Paso	8	13	6	15	11	7	60	10
Lubbock	23	29	20	35	25	17	149	25
Lufkin	22	26	33	32	9	35	157	26
Mexia	0	45	73	58	44	53	273	46
Richmond	13	14	16	27	31	17	118	20
Rio Grande State Center	2	2	2	2	14	2	24	4
San Angelo	0	52	62	56	35	5	210	35
San Antonio	13	21	23	23	23	25	128	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>1693</b>	
<b>Average</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>130</b>	

## Program Review

### On-site audits

The office conducts annual on-site audits, called program reviews, to identify isolated incidents or systemic issues in the following areas:

- Ratio of direct-care employees to residents
- Adequacy of staff training
- Ensuring that residents are encouraged to exercise their rights and are afforded due process



### ***On-going monitoring***

The office has expanded its approach by further developing the process to include on-going monitoring at each center. This will result in a more comprehensive evaluation of services delivered on a regular basis. Additionally, the program review includes reviewing center policies, procedures and residents' files.

The information collected during the 2015 program review, including both on-site and on-going monitoring was presented in the annual report published March 2016. The annual report comprises data collected during the reporting period, identifies outcomes of the review both by center and aggregately, and includes recommendations derived from the program review process.

The figures below reflect the program review activity completed across all SSLCs for on-site visits during 2015 and on-going activity (Sept. 2014 – Aug. 2015):

- 404 staffing ratio home observations
- 65 human rights committee meetings attended
- 319 family questionnaires mailed
- 330 staff in-service questionnaires reviewed
- 156 in-service observations
- 130 on-the-job training surveys
- 152 resident interviews
- 342 staff interviews
- 343 rights assessment documentation reviews



## Abilene State Supported Living Center

**A**bilene State Supported Living Center (AbSSLC), one of the largest employers in the Abilene area, houses approximately 300 people. The current population is smaller than it was six months ago due to residents transitioning to the community. AbSSLC residents function at different levels; some require 24-hour nursing assistance and total staff care, while others are more independent and need less staff assistance, but may display behavioral issues. AbSSLC also is the home to several males under the age of 18, who attend schools in the community.

The center has five residential units, each with a unit director, and an infirmary. Each unit ranges from four to seven homes with six to 24 residents in each home. Usually, homes with fewer residents house more people with significant behavioral issues. Each unit has homes that serve people with various needs, for example, both a home for people who require 24-hour nursing assistance as well as a home that serves minor males.

Abilene SSLC Demographics		
	Austin SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	300	3,126
Ages ≤21	3%	6%
Ages 22-54	53%	55%
Ages 55+	44%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	8%	17%
Moderate	17%	16%
Severe	17%	15%
Profound	57%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	42%	35%
Severe	12%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	0.5%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	7	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS

There are 19 homes at the AbSSLC campus. With the closures of Homes 5961 and 5962 Walnut Street, those buildings have been repurposed, respectively, into the Behavioral Health Department offices and a respite care area for residents who may be a danger to themselves or others, but do not need state hospital placement. Using respite requires due process and is usually in the resident's crisis intervention plan. The stay at respite is individualized for each resident.

AbSSLC has seven activity centers across campus, its own habilitation department, a dental office, a desensitization dental office, a wheelchair shop, several workshops, an eatery called The Diner, and its own laundry system that does laundry for Big Spring State Hospital as well as the Abilene, Lubbock, and San Angelo state supported living centers. The accounting department

for the AbSSLC also provides the accounting services for San Angelo, Lubbock, and El Paso state supported living centers.

The center has had the same director, assistant director of programs, and assistant director of administration for several years. All three are strong and very knowledgeable. The administrative staff and the assistant independent ombudsman for the facility have a good relationship.



**Jill Antilley ♦ Assistant Independent Ombudsman**

Jill Antilley has worked for the Abilene State Supported Living Center for over ten years. Her career began in the Recreation Department as a direct-care professional in 2000 while attending college at Hardin Simmons University (HSU). Ms. Antilley graduated from HSU in 2000 with a bachelor's degree in police administration and worked for a juvenile correctional facility as a case manager and as a juvenile probation officer.

Antilley returned to the Abilene SSLC in 2002 to serve as a qualified developmental disability professional and as the human rights officer, before accepting the position as the assistant independent ombudsman in 2010.



## Austin State Supported Living Center

Austin State Supported Living Center (AuSSLC) serves 186 residents with varying degrees of intellectual disabilities, a number of whom also have physical disabilities. AuSSLC comprises four residential units. Residents of the first unit, Castner Estates, require extensive nursing and personal care supports. All of these residents use wheelchairs, and many receive nutrition via enteral feeding. The second unit serves women and the third unit serves men, all of whom require behavioral supports. The fourth unit comprises four homes providing specialty services for people who are medically fragile with behavioral challenges, men and women requiring more extensive behavioral supports, and people needing supports associated with autism spectrum disorder.

The level of support needed to perform functional living activities varies greatly among residents. The center has on-site vocational and day programming areas. In addition, the facility oversees a workshop at the Austin State Hospital that serves Austin SSLC residents and people living in the community.

Austin SSLC Demographics		
	Austin SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	186	3,126
Ages ≤21	0%	6%
Ages 22-54	31%	55%
Ages 55+	69%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	5%	17%
Moderate	12%	16%
Severe	22%	15%
Profound	61%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	40%	35%
Severe	15%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	0.5%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	1	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS

The Castner Estates unit is undergoing renovations, which will be completed one home at a time to minimize disruption. Successful completion of this expansive long-term project requires the reallocation of resources and additional tasks for staff across the center. An acting assistant director of administration was assigned during this process and will be responsible for the oversight and coordination of this project.

Official approval was obtained and the Habilitation Therapies department implemented the Music for the Soul program based on the internationally recognized Music & Memory Program. The Music & Memory Program has been implemented in long-term care facilities in seven countries and all 50 states. AuSSLC is the first to provide this treatment in a facility supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The structured pilot program showed a 73 percent



improvement in mood and a 52 percent increase in cognitive and social engagement. The Music for the Soul program was recently expanded for residents to receive programming in Mathews Park, which borders center grounds.

A new aquatic therapy program was implemented in which an integrated team of physical therapists, occupational therapists, and orientation and mobility specialists join residents in the pool and collaborate to provide aquatic therapy. A newfound enjoyment of water and water skills, increased engagement and tolerance of personal interaction, and maintenance and increase in functioning are a few of the benefits derived from aquatic therapy that improved quality of life for residents.



**Phyllis Matthews ♦ Assistant Independent Ombudsman**

Phyllis Matthews has a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from St. Edwards University and has many years of experience serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. As a contract oversight and performance manager for the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Division for Early Childhood Intervention Services, she monitored contracted programs and provided technical assistance to programs that deliver services to children with developmental delays and disabilities. As a program specialist and later as a program compliance coordinator at the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, she engaged in improvement efforts for state facilities serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities during the negotiations and finalization of a U.S. Department of Justice settlement agreement. She accepted the assistant independent ombudsman position in May 2012.



## Brenham State Supported Living Center

**B**renham State Supported Living Center (BSSLC) provides services to people with intellectual disabilities that range from mild to profound. Many require residents behavioral supports and some also require psychiatric services. The BSSLC serves 266 residents and composes three residential units.

Unit 1 comprises two systems buildings: One serves people with medical or physical management needs, and the other serves older people who have health conditions and physical management needs. The second unit comprises a systems building, and serves residents who have physical management needs or require assistance with most activities of daily living. The third unit comprises seven cottages and a systems building that is made up of three separate homes. Unit 3 residents vary widely in ages; many are employed in some capacity, although the majority of them do require some level of assistance with activities of daily living. More residents are employed in supported employment during this reporting period, and one person

is competitively employed at a local business. The center provides a variety of on- and off-campus work opportunities for adults, as well as a variety of day programming activities.

During this reporting period, the previous director took a position in state office and Laura Cazabon-Braly is serving as interim director. The assistant director of programs position is vacant. Staff turnover in the Behavioral Services department and frequent caseload changes have affected continuity of services. This has been remarked upon by some family members and related concerns have been brought to the attention of the AIO.

A new testing protocol this year revealed elevated levels of lead at BSSLC, among other facilities. Staff and families were informed of these results and of actions the center would be taking, such as providing bottled

Brenham SSLC Demographics		
	Brenham SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	266	3,126
Ages ≤21	10%	6%
Ages 22-54	62%	55%
Ages 55+	28%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	5%	17%
Moderate	20%	16%
Severe	15%	15%
Profound	59%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	30%	35%
Severe	2%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	0.0%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	8	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS

water for drinking, cooking, medication administration and toothbrushing. Bottled water and ice have been available for residents and staff in all buildings. All residents were recently tested for lead levels and it was reported that one resident had a blood lead level that warranted retesting in three months.

The OIO, in conjunction with the Learning Community for Person Centered Practices, co-sponsored a one-day person-centered thinking workshop for family members of BSSLC residents. This workshop was a pilot, and there are plans to conduct more workshops for family members at other SSLCs. The feedback from families was positive.

Concerns regarding haircuts provided by the contract beautician led to recommendations on increasing staff awareness on several issues: Residents can use community resources for haircuts, residents should have input regarding hairstyles, and residents should get haircuts at the hair center instead of at the home. To that end, leadership has directed that the hair center be redecorated and updated in order to provide a more pleasant salon-like atmosphere.

There is a pressing need to open another home for women in order to expand on-campus options. Contributing factors include new admissions, accommodating female residents aging out of the child and adolescent home but not ready to move to the community, and other younger, active women who require behavioral supports. The AIO and interdisciplinary team members have advocated for this and leadership is evaluating this need. Family members have also expressed concern about women who require little or no behavioral support living with women who have intense behavioral needs.



**Susan Aguilar ♦ Assistant Independent Ombudsman**

Susan Aguilar earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from Texas Lutheran University. She worked in the field of early childhood intervention before obtaining the position of qualified developmentally disabled professional at the Brenham State Supported Living Center. While at the center, Aguilar has also served as program facilitator, person-directed planning coordinator, level of need coordinator and interim rights protection officer. She has held the position of assistant independent ombudsman since 2010. Aguilar recently became certified as a person-centered thinking trainer.



## Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center

Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center (CCSSLC) serves 223 residents whose cognitive disabilities range from mild to profound. There are three specialized units: one for residents that are medically fragile with profound IDD, another for residents with severe and profound IDD and some medical needs, and a third for residents with mild to moderate IDD with co-occurring mental illness or behavioral needs.

Residents have access to classes, active treatment sites, employment opportunities, an on-campus computer lab, a gymnasium and swimming pool, and other supports to promote independence and growth. CCSSLC residents are active in Special Olympics and Miracle League sports. Many are employed during the week and take part in recreational opportunities both on and off campus.

The new medical director began in June 2016. The position of director of residential services is vacant.

Corpus Christi SSLC Demographics		
	Corpus Christi SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	223	3,126
Ages ≤21	1%	6%
Ages 22-54	56%	55%
Ages 55+	43%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	21%	17%
Moderate	12%	16%
Severe	11%	15%
Profound	56%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	47%	35%
Severe	7%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	3.6%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	1	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS

CCSSLC received first place in the Buccaneer Parade Float Category. The facility's Star Wars themed float, The Force, received first place in the non-profit category for the Buccaneer Parade. Residents and volunteers participated in the annual event.

CCSSLC has been selected to participate in the Community Transition Pilot to provide community services, including dental services and wheelchair fabrication services. CSSLC piloted the Developing Influence program, which is designed to mentor leadership at different levels of the facility. Participants completed a five-month mentoring program and the first class graduated successfully.



**Angela Leach** ♦ *Assistant Independent Ombudsman*

Angela Leach earned a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology with a minor in biology from Angelo State University. While completing her degree she worked as a direct support professional, serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. After graduating, she continued her career over the next 12 years at the Behavioral Health Center of Nueces County, in the local authority area, providing services in case management and later managing the IDD service area. Individualized and exceptional treatment of people needing assistance in state supported areas has always been of primary importance to Leach. She joined the OIO as the assistant independent ombudsman of the Corpus Christi SSLC in December 2014.





## Denton State Supported Living Center

**D**enton State Supported Living Center (DSSLC) provides services to people with cognitive and physical disabilities ranging from mild to profound. The campus consists of six units. Two units serve residents who are medically fragile and require 24-hour nursing care. Although the majority of these residents have physical limitations, they are provided with resources to be as independent as possible. Some need assistance with propelling their wheelchairs, while others have motorized wheelchairs and move independently. The other units are home to people who need less physical assistance and receive more intense behavioral services. Although most

residents are older adults, two of the residents attend public school.

There are several programming and life skills areas, including a senior activities center, throughout the campus. Residents also have the opportunity to work with a job coach through campus employment. Several residents hold competitive employment at companies such as Exxon, Chili's and Sonic Drive-In.

Denton Demographics		
	Denton SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	458	3,126
Ages ≤21	2%	6%
Ages 22-54	46%	55%
Ages 55+	52%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	11%	17%
Moderate	14%	16%
Severe	17%	15%
Profound	57%	51%
Unspecified	1%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	35%	35%
Severe	20%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	1.1%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	3	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS



**Jerome Young** ♦ *Assistant Independent Ombudsman*

Jerome Young earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Texas Tech University. He began his career at Lubbock State School in 1993 as an active treatment provider. After several years in Lubbock, he served at the Denton SSLC, holding the positions of direct support professional, building coordinator, residential supervisor and job requisition coordinator. His reputation for client advocacy, fairness and compassion attested that he would be a valuable member of the office of the Independent Ombudsman. He joined the OIO as the assistant independent ombudsman for the Denton SSLC in February 2013.



## El Paso State Supported Living Center

**E**l Paso State Supported Living Center (ESSLC) campus is divided into two sections that serve a total of 104 residents. The west residential area consists of one large building where people with greater medical needs live in three dormitories identified as A, B and C. These residents also typically require physical assistance and many use wheelchairs to move around their homes. This same building also houses habilitation therapies, dental, psychiatric and the medical clinicw, along with other offices and a medical infirmary room. A small number of residents attend group activities or workshops outside their homes during the day while most engage in similar activities in the common areas of their respective homes.

The smaller homes on the east side of campus are home to eight to 12 residents who require less extensive medical attention, allowing most to attend group activities and work programs outside the homes. Some residents work in food service, housekeeping and maintenance.

El Paso SSLC Demographics		
	El Paso SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	104	3,126
Ages ≤21	3%	6%
Ages 22-54	64%	55%
Ages 55+	33%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	5%	17%
Moderate	17%	16%
Severe	12%	15%
Profound	64%	51%
Unspecified	1%	0%
Not Indicated	1%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	33%	35%
Severe	7%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	1.9%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	3	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS

Assistant Commissioner for State Supported Living Centers Scott Schalchlin introduced Jane Purcell as the new SSLC director at a town hall meeting in February. A new director of behavioral services has been selected and will begin in early July.

In March, DADS approved camera installation in the patios of all homes as patios were determined to qualify as common areas which residents and staff frequent.

Lead testing indicated elevated levels in several areas on campus. Staff and families were informed of these results and of actions that the center would be taking, such as providing bottled water for drinking, cooking, medication administration and toothbrushing. Bottled water and ice have been available for residents and staff in all buildings, and ESSLC has already initiated a plan of correction.



**Isabel Ponce** ♦ *Assistant Independent Ombudsman*

Born and raised in El Paso, Isabel Ponce went from serving the aging population to working with children. She later came to serve adults with developmental disabilities as a residential director in the private sector. She became a certified internal investigator and began working as a case manager for a home and community service program. After seven years with the program, Ponce accepted the assistant independent ombudsman position in December 2010.



## Lubbock State Supported Living Center

Lubbock State Supported Living Center (LbSSLC) serves 196 residents (as of June 22, 2016) who range from age 19 to 79 in 15 homes. Three homes serve women, including one for people with a dual diagnosis (IDD with psychiatric disorders). Four homes house residents who are medically fragile, with 24-hour nursing at two of them. The remaining seven homes serve men, including four for people with a dual diagnosis and significant behavioral challenges.

The home at 523 Violet, which had previously been closed, was reopened in March. The population consists of older men with some behavioral concerns and varying medical issues. This home was reopened to depopulate three of the homes that serve residents with challenging behavioral issues and also as a protective measure because some of the men who moved were frequent victims of aggressive acts committed by their peers.

Lubbock SSLC Demographics		
	Lubbock SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	196	3,126
Ages ≤21	2%	6%
Ages 22-54	69%	55%
Ages 55+	29%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	13%	17%
Moderate	16%	16%
Severe	14%	15%
Profound	56%	51%
Unspecified	1%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	44%	35%
Severe	19%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	2%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	3	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS

In April, several residents began working at the facility's central kitchen and in the maintenance department. There are 17 residents working in supported employment at local businesses.

The facility is replacing all generators which should resolve some of the issues faced in late December 2015 when Lubbock received more than 11 inches of snow.

A variety of recommendations have been made over the past few months, many of which dealt with rights-related issues and due process. Recommendations include ensuring staff are retrained on the differences between restrictive practices and supportive practices; restrictive practices such as body checks and restricting access to personal



belongings are reviewed by the interdisciplinary team; consent is obtained and reviewed by the human rights committee; and that Emergency Restriction forms and referrals to HRC are completed in a timely manner. The facility has addressed particular circumstances for individual residents and has attempted to address some underlying systemic issues which has lead to significant improvement.



**Robin Seale-Gutierrez ♦ Assistant Independent Ombudsman**

Robin Seale-Gutierrez earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Texas Tech University in 2004 and plans to complete her master's degree in the near future. Seale-Gutierrez has worked at Lubbock State Supported Living Center for over 10 years in several roles, including psychological assistant, qualified intellectual disability professional (QIDP), QIDP coordinator and assistant director of programs. Seale-Gutierrez is a graduate of the 2009 Building the Bench program, where she earned her certified management professional certificate. Before working at Lubbock State Supported Living Center, Seale-Gutierrez served as a parent advocate for those receiving special education services by serving on multiple committees and advisory boards for two school districts. Seale-Gutierrez joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman in June 2014.



## Lufkin State Supported Living Center

Lufkin State Supported Living Center (LfSSLC) provides support services for 296 people with profound to mild intellectual and physical disabilities, including 17 adolescent residents. Two residences, one for men and one for women, are located in the Oak Hill Unit. Public school services are provided by the Central Independent School District (CISD) both on the LfSSLC campus and the CISD campus. LfSSLC's population includes several people who require intense behavioral health services due to extreme challenging behavior and several people who are medically fragile. Of four designated units for residents, three provide 24-hour nursing services to support people with physical and medical challenges.

LfSSLC seeks community placement for people ready for transition, when needed services can be met in the community. Four smaller residences at the center serve as transition homes to prepare people for community living. There are 18 active referrals. Over the past six months,

the center has placed nine residents into a community setting, transferred two people to another SSLC, and admitted six people. These totals included admission of one adolescent and placement of one adolescent. Over the past six months, no one has been returned to the facility due to failed community placement.

A medical director, Dr. Natarajan Venkatayan, began work on June 1, 2016. The center employs advanced practice registered nurses and contract physicians in addition to full time physicians. Administrative professional staff positions have changed over the past year with the center hiring a new assistant director of programs in June, a new unit director for one of the four units in January, and the addition of an incident and risk management director in January. The center is hiring a qualified intellectual disability professional coordinator.

Lufkin SSLC Demographics		
	Lufkin SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	296	3,126
Ages ≤21	11%	6%
Ages 22-54	45%	55%
Ages 55+	44%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	8%	17%
Moderate	11%	16%
Severe	19%	15%
Profound	62%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	35%	35%
Severe	7%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	3%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	8	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS



**Marvin Stewart** ♦ *Assistant Independent Ombudsman*

Marvin Stewart earned his bachelor's degree in psychology and his Master of Arts degree in community counseling from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. He has worked at the Lufkin State Supported Living Center for more than 20 years, serving in various capacities such as unit psychologist and supervising unit psychologist. Stewart transferred to the Quality Assurance Department and served as program compliance monitor, where he also served as deputy human rights officer. He accepted the assistant independent ombudsman position in August 2011.



## Mexia State Supported Living Center

**M**exia State Supported Living Center (MSSLC) provides services to residents who function with mild to profound range of intellectual disabilities. Senate Bill 643 designated MSSLC as the state's forensic facility for people deemed incompetent to stand trial for criminal charges. All new admissions come through the court system and must be eligible for admission to an SSLC. Fifty-six percent of residents are alleged offenders, 89 percent of residents are male, and 46 percent of residents are under the age of 30. Twelve percent of the residents are considered minors. Seventy percent of the residents have lived at MSSLC for 10 years or less. School-aged residents attend classes at Mexia Independent School District (ISD) at the Mexia ISD Development Center.

Of five units on campus, three are designated as forensic. Longhorn Unit houses up to 52 juvenile male alleged offenders in six homes; Longhorn 4 is locked and is set up to house four

decertified beds. Whiterock Unit houses up to 47 adult alleged offenders in six homes, with Whiterock 3 being designated the high-risk home housing people deemed high risk through the high-risk determination process. Shamrock Unit houses up to 59 adult male alleged offenders in five homes. Barnett Unit houses up to 51 men, aged 18 and older. Most are ambulatory, and some need some staff assistance with completing their self-care and daily living skills. Martin Unit houses up to 65 residents, both men and women, and provides 24-hour nursing care. The most medically fragile residents, ambulatory and non-ambulatory, live in the Martin Unit and require more staff assistance than residents on other units.

Vocational training is provided in several areas on campus, as well as in the community. There is a large workshop that does contract work and two other smaller workshops.

Mexia SSLC Demographics		
	Mexia SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	261	3,126
Ages ≤21	23%	6%
Ages 22-54	56%	55%
Ages 55+	21%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	47%	17%
Moderate	28%	16%
Severe	5%	15%
Profound	20%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	28%	35%
Severe	5%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	55.9%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	5.4%	0.4%
Community Transitions	5	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS

There is also a recycling crew that collects paper and cardboard from Mexia and neighboring cities, as well as a mowing crew. There is a greenhouse that sells plants to the public year round, with a high volume of poinsettia sales during the holiday season. The facility woodshop repairs furniture, and it also builds and sells wood outdoor furniture to the public. MSSLC has recently opened a general store in Mexia that provides a designated retail space to sell woodshop and greenhouse items while providing employment opportunities for residents.

MSSLC has 17 residents referred for community transition. MSSLC has supported five residents in transitioning to community services in the past six months and had 28 admissions in the same time frame. There are 12 residents referred to other state supported living centers.

Mexia SSLC has seen a few key position changes. The director retired May 1, 2016. An interim director has been serving in this position since that time. This position is currently posted. Also, a new director of residential services was hired.

Several construction projects on campus are underway or have been completed. Longhorn 1 and Longhorn 2 have been remodeled, and the remodel of Central 1 is nearly done. Mexia SSLC has a new fence, a gate house is being built, and there are plans for a new employee parking lot.



**Adam Parks ♦ Assistant Independent Ombudsman**

Adam Parks was raised in Mexia. He attended Stephen F. Austin State University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology. After graduation, he began his professional career as a conservatorship caseworker for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services in Angelina and Shelby County Texas. Parks then accepted the position of qualified intellectual disability professional (QIDP) at Lufkin State

Supported Living Center. He was later appointed lead QIDP for the Oak Hill Unit. He also served as a standing member of the human rights committee during his time working at Lufkin State Supported Living Center. Parks accepted the position of assistant independent ombudsman of the Mexia State Supported Living Center in February 2014.



## Richmond State Supported Living Center

**R**ichmond State Supported Living Center (RSSLC) opened in 1968. The center provides campus-based direct services and supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The 241-acre state supported living center is home to approximately 330 residents and employs approximately 1,280 staff. The center serves a 13-county area: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Hardin, Harris, Jefferson, Matagorda, Orange, Waller and Wharton counties.

RSSLC has 24 homes. Trinity, San Antonio and Leon Homes are each divided into four living areas designated A, B, C and D. Trinity D is the only co-ed home on campus.

There are three work centers on campus that residents attend from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Main Workshop has contractual work where the residents perform a variety of jobs and are paid

on a production rate. The Angelina Workshop provides for an extension of the Main Workshop. The Colorado Pica Workshop has a work program designed for residents who exhibit pica behavior. The materials used at this workshop are approved for a safe environment. RSSLC has a retirement environment for residents 55+ at the Forever Young building on campus. The program offers a slower-paced environment while still having the benefits of socialization, staff engagement and maintaining skills by way of arts, crafts, music, literature and sensory activities.

In this biannual reporting period, a nurse manager, director or day programming, nurse practitioner, medical records director and a primary care physician were hired.

Richmond SSLC Demographics		
	Richmond SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	327	3,126
Ages ≤21	5%	6%
Ages 22-54	55%	55%
Ages 55+	43%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	11%	17%
Moderate	9%	16%
Severe	18%	15%
Profound	61%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	1%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	43%	35%
Severe	4%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	0.0%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	1	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS





**Deatrice Potlow ♦ *Assistant Independent Ombudsman***

Deatrice Potlow earned a Bachelor of Science degree in office administration in 1997. Shortly after graduating, she began working at a local hospital as a medical transcriptionist. She relocated to Houston and began a career with the state. During her tenure of employment, she served as an investigator for children, adults and people with disabilities. Before to being hired in October 2012 as an assistant independent ombudsman, she worked as a facility investigator and was responsible for investigating allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation at the Richmond SSLC.



## Rio Grande State Center

**R**io Grande State Center (RGSC) is composed of three facilities that are part of the Texas Department of State Health Services state hospital system. It has a mental health clinic that includes a forensic unit, an outpatient health clinic and an intermediate care facility that provides services to 64 residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This intermediate care facility component served by the OIO comprises two homes: El Paisano and La Paloma.

Rio Grande SSLC Demographics		
	Rio Grande SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	64	3,126
Ages ≤21	8%	6%
Ages 22-54	70%	55%
Ages 55+	22%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	13%	17%
Moderate	25%	16%
Severe	30%	15%
Profound	28%	51%
Unspecified	5%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	17%	35%
Severe	2%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	1.6%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	3	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS

The residents in El Paisano are younger and require more behavioral health services. Much of the older population, found in La Paloma, requires more extensive medical services due to their age and medical conditions.

Significant recommendations made by the AIO in this reporting period involved prevention and protection regarding serious injuries



**James Arnold ♦ Assistant Independent Ombudsman**

James Arnold attended the University of Texas (UT) at Austin and Texas A&I (now Texas A&M) in Kingsville to earn his Bachelor of Arts degree in music education. While attending UT, Arnold joined the Air Force. Following his military career, Arnold earned two master's degrees, one in educational psychology from East Texas State University and the other in counseling psychology. He joined the Commerce Police Department and was promoted to sergeant. Later he accepted a psychologist's position at the Rio Grande State Center in Harlingen. He also served as human rights officer before accepting the assistant independent ombudsman position in 2010.



## San Angelo State Supported Living Center

San Angelo State Supported Living Center (SGSSLC), located about 15 miles north of San Angelo in Carlsbad, is home to 215 residents with profound to mild developmental and physical disabilities. There are 18 homes on campus. The majority of residents are independent in their daily living skills and ambulatory. Two homes are dedicated to geriatric residents and two to medically fragile residents. One home serves juvenile females, many of whom were referred to the SGSSLC by juvenile courts. Two homes are dedicated to serving men who have inappropriate sexual behavior, many of whom have been charged with sexual offenses. The facility employs staff specialized in treatment for this population. The facility operates a

competency restoration program for residents admitted through the courts because they have been found incompetent to stand trial for criminal offenses. A large number of the facility's population has a dual diagnosis of IDD with a mental illness.

Lead was discovered in a faucet in a residential home. Further testing has not revealed any lead in the ground water or any elevated levels in individuals.

San Angelo SSLC Demographics		
	San Angelo SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	214	3,126
Ages ≤21	9%	6%
Ages 22-54	65%	55%
Ages 55+	26%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	58%	17%
Moderate	21%	16%
Severe	8%	15%
Profound	11%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	1%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	16%	35%
Severe	5%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	11.2%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	8	55

Source: Demographics provided by DADS



**Kristin Priddy ♦ Assistant Independent Ombudsman**

Kristin Priddy graduated from Texas Tech University in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science degree in multidisciplinary studies: a dual degree in general education and special education. She began her professional career as a special education teacher for children with autism. After serving as a qualified intellectual disability professional for a private provider, she moved on to the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). At DADS, Priddy served as a guardianship specialist, an intermediate care facility surveyor and investigator, and intermediate care facilities curriculum developer and subject matter expert for policy rules and curriculum. In her role as a volunteer, Priddy has worked with Special Olympics and local women's and children's protective services. She has also done volunteer work for Hands for Hope and had an active role in the early development of the Burkhart Center for Autism Education and Research, which is known for increasing the quality of life for those with autism and their families. Priddy joined the office of the Independent Ombudsman in May 2015.



## San Antonio State Supported Living Center

San Antonio State Supported Living Center (SASSLC) opened in 1978 and serves 233 residents with cognitive disabilities ranging from mild to profound. SASSLC comprises eight residential homes. Two homes specialize in providing medical monitoring and 24-hour nursing services; two homes specialize in providing support for residents with behavioral challenges; and the other four homes provide services ranging from total care needs and physical management to minimal assistance with activities of daily living. SASSLC also provides services to residents who receive public education services.

Residents have access to a developmental center, which accommodates vocational workshops, habilitation programs, a gymnasium, a swimming pool and a computer lab. SASSLC has 120 residents with vocational employment on campus and seven residents employed and working off-site at community establishments. The campus also houses a dental clinic, volunteer pavilion, clinical services offices and administration offices. The campus is located in southwest San Antonio near several shopping centers and business that are frequently visited by residents.

San Antonio SSLC Demographics		
	San Antonio SSLC	Total SSLCs
<b>Population</b>	231	3,126
Ages ≤21	2%	6%
Ages 22-54	65%	55%
Ages 55+	33%	39%
<b>Level of ID: Mild</b>	13%	17%
Moderate	16%	16%
Severe	18%	15%
Profound	52%	51%
Unspecified	0%	0%
Not Indicated	0%	0%
<b>Health Status: Moderate</b>	21%	35%
Severe	12%	10%
<b>Alleged Offenders: At SSLC</b>	0.9%	6.2%
Deemed High Risk	0.0%	0.4%
Community Transitions	4	55

New to the campus is the construction of an on-site pharmacy. Pharmacy services are provided by San Antonio State Hospital. SASSLC received a license to establish a Class C pharmacy in April 2016. Under the direction of a newly hired pharmacy director, the pharmacy will meet the pharmaceutical needs of the residents beginning in September 2016.

Social work services return to the campus after at least 10 years without designated social workers at SASSLC. A director of social work has been hired and services will include assisting with admissions, counseling, family crises, hospice care and burial needs. Another key position change is the move of the former director of residential services from the Corpus Christi SSLC who has transferred to SASSLC as assistant director of programs.

Source: Demographics provided by DADS



**Gevona Hicks ♦ *Assistant Independent Ombudsman***

Gevona Hicks earned her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where she also earned a certificate in gerontology. She relocated to San Antonio in 2001 and worked with infants and toddlers at a local children's shelter. She began her career supporting children and adults with developmental disabilities as a team lead and then case manager, supervising multiple group homes in San Antonio for an intermediate care facility and home and community service provider. Hicks began her employment with the state in 2006 at Austin SSLC before transferring to San Antonio SSLC where she worked as a qualified intellectual disability professional. Hicks served as human rights officer for three years before joining the office of the Independent Ombudsman for the San Antonio SSLC in April 2014.





## Central Office



**George P. Bithos D.D.S., Ph.D** ♦ *Independent Ombudsman  
for State Supported Living Centers*

Dr. George Bithos attended The University of Texas and graduated from Southern Methodist University with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology and anthropology. After practicing reconstructive dentistry for 28 years, Bithos retired to change the direction of his life. He read for a PhD in theology and history at the University of Durham in Great Britain.

After earning his degrees, he worked in academia in Boston. In 2004, he returned to Texas to become the executive director of the Texas Conference of Churches. Bithos was appointed the independent ombudsman for SSLCs in February 2010 by Gov. Rick Perry.



**Candace Jennings, MPA** ♦ *Deputy Independent Ombudsman*

Candace Jennings earned her undergraduate degree in social work at Southwest Texas State University. While attending college in San Marcos, she began serving people with developmental disabilities as a direct-care specialist. She then gained professional experience in Bexar County as an investigator for child protective services and service coordinator and manager at the local authority. She most recently held the positions of rights protection officer and assistant ombudsman at the San Antonio

State Supported Living Center. In 2008, she earned a Master of Public Administration degree at University of Texas at San Antonio. Jennings is also a recent graduate of the 2011 inaugural class of the HHSC Leadership Academy. As deputy independent ombudsman, she seeks to support the OIO by leading with compassion and integrity, expecting that the lives of SSLC residents will be positively affected by the OIO.



**Carrie Martin ♦ Assistant Independent Ombudsman, Central Office**

Carrie Martin has over 10 years of experience pursuing social justice issues and over five years of experience providing advocacy, direct care and services for adults, the aging and children with disabilities. She has a consistent record of advocating for underserved populations, including providing vocational training and employment services at a residential training facility, working with special education students, ensuring due process for indigent defendants, and performing administrative operations and internal auditing for a foster care/adoption agency.

Martin has specialized education and experience in data management, training and organization development, and program management and coordination. As the central office AIO, Martin serves as the program manager for program review and provides operational support for the office. Martin completed graduate coursework in organization development at St. Edward's University, earned her Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from Texas State University and is certified in mediation and Satori Alternatives to Managing Aggression (SAMA). She accepted the position of assistant independent ombudsman for the central office in December 2014.



**Sharon Nielsen ♦ Executive Assistant to Dr. Bithos**

Sharon Nielsen brings over 20 years of administrative and office management experience to the team, having worked for the federal government in Virginia and private industry in California. In 2002 she received a TWIN award (Tribute to Women and Industry) from the San Diego County YWCA for her business accomplishments and her volunteer work as a tutor of English as a second language. She joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman in February 2011.



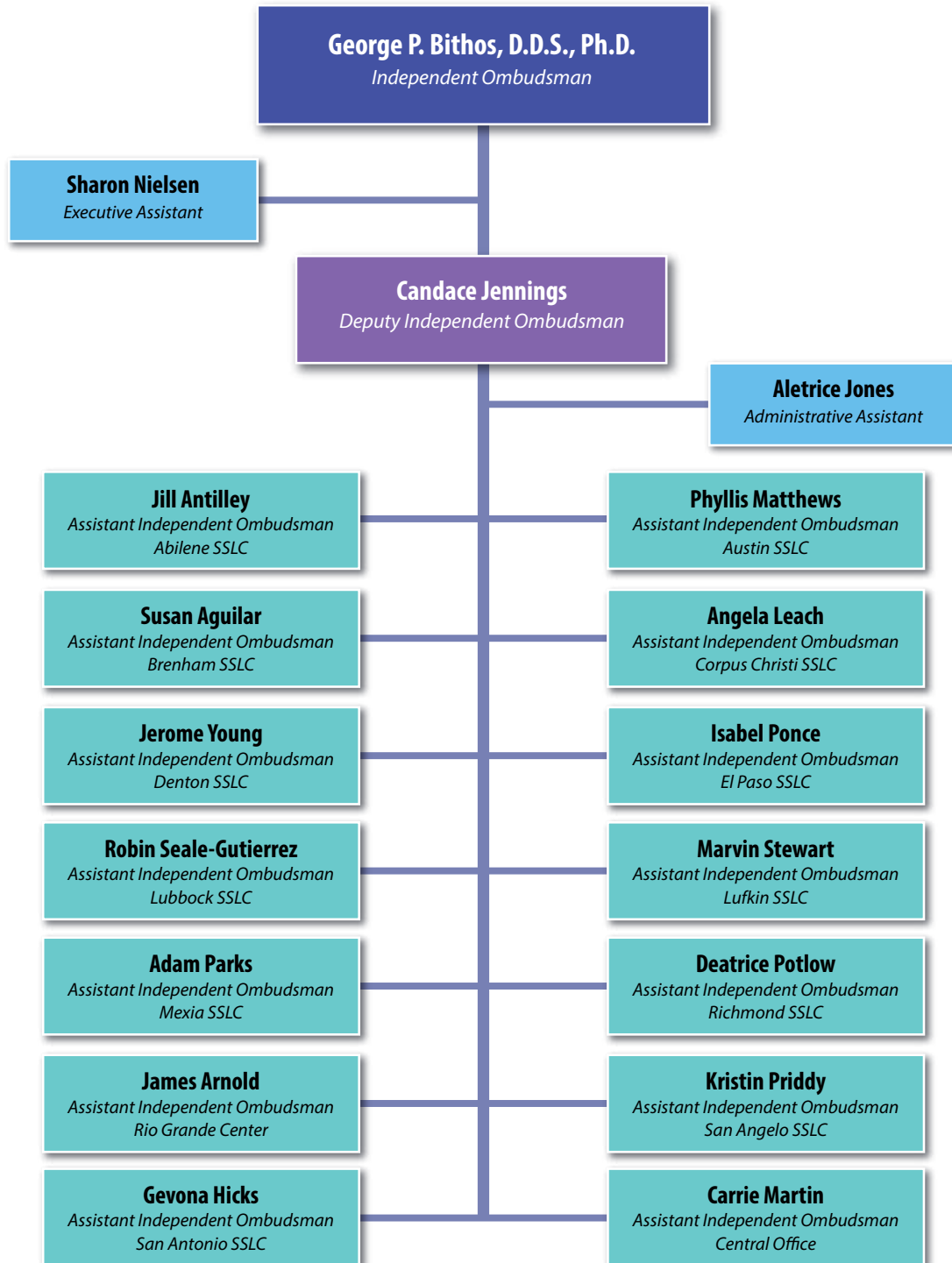
**Aletrice Jones, MBA ♦ Administrative Assistant**

Aletrice Jones was raised in Mission Viejo, California and relocated to Austin to complete her undergraduate studies. In 2011, Jones earned her Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree from Texas State University. In 2013, she earned her MBA with a concentration in human resource management from the University of Phoenix. Jones has over 15 years of administrative experience. Her previous employment includes working in public education servicing at-risk students as a data coordinator for Austin Independent School District, a records processor and office assistant for

the Department of Special Education for Round Rock Independent School District, and most recently providing executive administrative support for a nationally recognized rehabilitation hospital in central Texas. Jones joined the OIO in September 2015.



# Organizational Chart





## Appendix: Data

Contacts by Case Type  January – June, 2016  Case Type														
	Abilene SSIC	Austin SSIC	Brenham SSIC	Corpus Christi SSIC	Denton SSIC	El Paso SSIC	Lubbock SSIC	Lufkin SSIC	Mexia SSIC	Richmond SSIC	Rio Grande SSIC	San Angelo SSIC	San Antonio SSIC	Total
Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation	0	1	5	0	0	3	5	1	0	1	0	2	1	19
Criminal	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	6
Discharge/Transfer	2	1	2	1	0	0	1	2	3	1	0	1	1	15
Guardianship	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	1	0	8
High Risk Determination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
Non-SSIC Issue	3	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	7	0	0	2	17
Other	0	0	1	0	0	4	1	1	0	10	0	2	2	21
Personnel	2	1	1	0	8	1	5	0	2	2	0	0	1	23
Request for OIO Information	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Rights	6	2	2	5	2	6	42	8	17	3	3	10	9	115
Service Delivery: Behavioral	0	1	6	3	0	7	4	8	2	0	7	0	4	42
Service Delivery: Medical	0	4	1	2	4	2	10	4	1	1	2	2	13	46
Service Delivery: Residential	11	19	13	8	15	41	30	5	3	21	5	2	21	194
Service Delivery: Vocational	1	2	0	2	0	3	2	0	3	4	1	0	2	20
Total	25	33	31	22	30	70	106	30	38	50	19	22	56	532

Contacts by Relationship <i>January – June, 2016</i>														
	Abilene SSIC	Austin SSIC	Brenham SSIC	Corpus Christi SSIC	Denton SSIC	El Paso SSIC	Lubbock SSIC	Lufkin SSIC	Mexia SSIC	Richmond SSIC	Rio Grande SSIC	San Angelo SSIC	San Antonio SSIC	Total
Relationship to Resident														
Advocate	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Family	0	0	2	0	0	2	3	0	1	1	0	1	3	13
Family LAR	7	0	9	0	1	4	1	3	1	8	0	1	11	46
Friend	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Guardian LAR	2	1	3	0	5	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	16
Law enforcement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Ombudsman	2	23	3	5	3	13	21	7	3	11	10	7	6	114
Other	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	3	0	0	3	11
Self	2	0	4	13	5	18	40	0	7	9	4	5	2	109
Staff	9	8	9	4	15	32	39	20	23	10	4	6	31	210
Unknown	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	9
Total	25	33	31	22	30	70	106	30	38	50	19	22	56	532

## Contacts Per Month • January – June 2016

SSLC	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	Total
Abilene SSLC	2	1	7	3	7	5	25
Austin SSLC	0	6	9	4	10	4	33
Brenham SSLC	2	5	9	5	6	4	31
Corpus Christi SSLC	5	2	7	2	0	6	22
Denton SSLC	5	5	5	5	5	5	30
El Paso SSLC	9	14	13	11	12	11	70
Lubbock SSLC	15	11	17	20	19	24	106
Lufkin SSLC	5	5	4	7	4	5	30
Mexia SSLC	4	4	10	8	5	7	38
Richmond SSLC	11	8	9	10	7	5	50
Rio Grande Center	4	1	4	4	6	0	19
San Angelo SSLC	2	3	8	2	4	3	22
San Antonio SSLC	8	4	11	12	10	11	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>532</b>

## Contacts by Action Type

January – June, 2016

Type of Action	Abilene SSLC	Austin SSLC	Brenham SSLC	Corpus Christi SSLC	Denton SSLC	El Paso SSLC	Lubbock SSLC	Lufkin SSLC	Mexia SSLC	Richmond SSLC	Rio Grande SSLC	San Angelo SSLC	San Antonio SSLC	Total
Complaint	11	28	29	22	26	65	81	18	17	42	18	15	40	412
Consult	11	3	1	0	1	4	23	12	21	5	1	6	15	103
Inquiry	3	2	1	0	3	1	2	0	0	3	0	1	1	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>532</b>

## Glossary of Acronyms

AIO	Assistant Independent Ombudsman
ADOP	Assistant Director of Programs
BCBA	Board Certified Behavior Analyst
DADS	Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services
DCP	Direct Care Professional
DFPS	Texas Department of Family Protective Services
DOJ	Department of Justice
ICF	Intermediate Care Facility
IDD	Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team
ISP	Individual Support Plan
LAR	Legally Authorized Representative
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OIO	Office of the Independent Ombudsman
PIM	Program Improvement Manager
PSP	Personal Support Plan
QDDP	Qualified Developmental Disability Professional
QIDP	Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional
SSLC	State Supported Living Center

