



Office of the
Independent Ombudsman
for State Supported Living Centers



2021 Biannual Report

January — June



Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) provides specialized assessment, treatment, support, and medical services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities at thirteen state supported living centers (SSLC).

The Office of the Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Centers was established for the purpose of investigating, evaluating, and securing the rights of residents of state supported living centers. The duties and powers of the Independent Ombudsman are mandated by Texas Health and Safety Code, Title 7, §555.

The mission of the Office of the Independent Ombudsman is to serve as an independent, impartial and confidential resource.



OIO staff members in February 2020. Left to right, front row: Jessica Rosa, Horacio Flores, Candace Jennings, George Bithos, Carrie Martin, Talya Hines, Brian Morton, Brenda Frausto, Isabel Ponce. Left to right, back row: Kenn Purcell, Deatrice Potlow, Adam Parks, Gevona Hicks, Susan Aguilar, Jill Antilley, Edward Leal.

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Executive Summary

Texas legislators passed Senate Bill 643 during the 81st legislative session in 2009 to establish the Office of the Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Centers. It was established for the purpose of protecting the rights and welfare of residents of the 13 state-operated facilities. The independent ombudsman is appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate. The independent ombudsman advocates for the residents of the SSLCs and acts independently of the Texas Health and Human Services, reporting to the state's executive and legislative branches. Dr. Bithos was appointed the position of Independent Ombudsman for SSLCs in February 2010 by Governor Perry. He retired from the position on May 31, 2021.



George P. Bithos, DDS PhD
Independent Ombudsman, 2010-2021

Raised in Dallas, Dr. Bithos attended The University of Texas and graduated from Southern Methodist University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Anthropology. After practicing reconstructive dentistry for 28 years, Dr. 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 returned to the states to work in academia in Boston. In 2004, he returned to Texas to become the Executive Director of the Texas Conference of Churches.

Dr. Bithos's first biannual report was submitted to Governor Perry on July 7, 2010. He established the office's mission to serve as an independent, impartial and confidential resource, assisting residents, their families and the public with services and related complaints and issues, which deal with the state supported living centers. By the end of the year, Dr. Bithos had staffed the office with an ombudsman at each SSLC and a central office.

There are five staff members hired in 2010 that still work with the OIO. Jill Antilley, Susan Aguilar and Isabel Ponce were hired by Dr. Bithos to serve as the Abilene, Brenham, and El Paso SSLC ombudsmen, respectively, and all continue to serve as the ombudsman at their respective centers. Carrie Martin began her service as an administrative assistant in 2010, and now leads as the Operations Manager. Also, in 2010, Candace Jennings was hired as the ombudsman at the San Antonio SSLC and soon after as the Deputy Independent Ombudsman. Upon Dr. Bithos' retirement, Governor Abbot appointed Ms. Jennings as the Independent Ombudsman for SSCLs on June 9, 2021. She was confirmed by the Senate on July 16, 2021.

Dr. Bithos strived to hire ombudsmen and personnel that had a heart for others. The residents of the SSLCs and their family members were at the center of every decision Dr. Bithos made. In 2015, Dr. Bithos became certified as a Person-Centered Thinking trainer and coach by The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices. The office embarked on a venture enabling nine of the ombudsmen to become certified trainers as well. In doing this, the OIO has been a resource for HHS by teaching the Person-Centered Thinking curriculum to hundreds of staff members statewide. Most importantly, the person-centered practices modeled by the ombudsmen continue to influence staff and services at the SSLCs.

Dr. Bithos treats every person he meets with a caring demeanor and a heart for humanity. Similarly, his legacy as the independent ombudsman from 2010 to 2021 has built a foundation of respect and empowerment. The

office will continue his legacy in advocating for residents and family members on the foundation of integrity he created. We are extremely grateful for his leadership.

Information in this report represents the activity of the office from January to June 2021 and demographical data about the residents of the SSLCs, including the census of the population. In the previous decade, the office has seen a 37% decrease in the number of individuals we serve at the SSLCs. The value of the ombudsman at each SSLC, however, remains evident. I would like to thank every staff member of the office for their dedication and perseverance. I am also thankful to the Executive Commissioner and her staff at the Health and Human Services for providing the resources necessary for this office to operate effectively. Lastly, my gratitude to Governor Abbott and the Texas legislature for their confidence in my appointment.

Sincerely,

Candace Jennings
Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Center

Central Office

Candace Jennings Independent Ombudsman



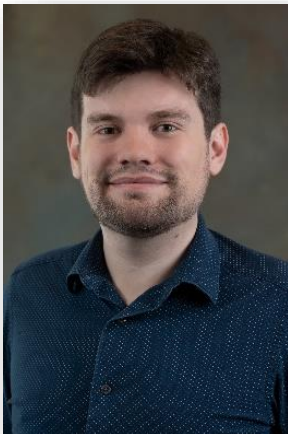
In June 2021, Ms. Jennings was appointed by Governor Abbott to lead the OIO. She joined the office as Deputy Independent Ombudsman in 2010, working alongside Dr. Bithos to establish the newly appointed office. Ms. Jennings began serving people with developmental disabilities in direct care as a college student in San Marcos, Texas. Her professional experience includes serving the San Antonio community as a Child Protective Services investigator, Local Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Authority service coordinator and manager, and Rights Protection Officer at the San Antonio SSLC. She received her undergraduate education in Social Work at Southwest Texas State University and earned a Master of Public Administration degree at University of Texas at San Antonio. She is certified by The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices as a Person Centered Thinking trainer and is currently pursuing a PhD in Applied Demography from University of Texas at San Antonio.

Carrie Martin Operations Program Manager



Mrs. Martin has 15+ years' experience pursuing social justice issues and over 10+ years' 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 for people living with disabilities at a residential training facility; working with special education students in the public school system; ensuring due process for indigent defendants; and performing administrative operations and internal auditing for a foster care/adoption agency. Mrs. Martin has specialized education and experience in data management, training and development, organizational development, and program management. Ms. Martin completed graduate coursework in Organization Development at St. Edward's University, earned her B.S. in Criminal Justice from Texas State University and is trained and in Mediation and SAMA (Satori Alternatives to Managing Aggression). She has been with the office since November 2014.

Brian Morton Program Review Coordinator



Brian Morton joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman in January 2020. As Program Review Coordinator, he is heavily involved in the creation of the office's legislatively mandated annual report to the legislature. He strives every day to help ensure that the Texas Legislature and people of Texas are provided with accurate and useful data regarding the rights and living conditions of residents at state supported living centers. He is passionate about human rights, using data to illuminate and solve problems, writing, and the implementation of public policy. Prior to joining the office of the Independent Ombudsman, Brian was a Bill Analyst at the Texas Legislative Council, and before that he interned in the Colorado Governor's Office and the Colorado General Assembly. He earned a bachelor's degree with a double major in philosophy and mathematics from the University of Colorado Boulder.

Jessica Rosa Administrative Assistant



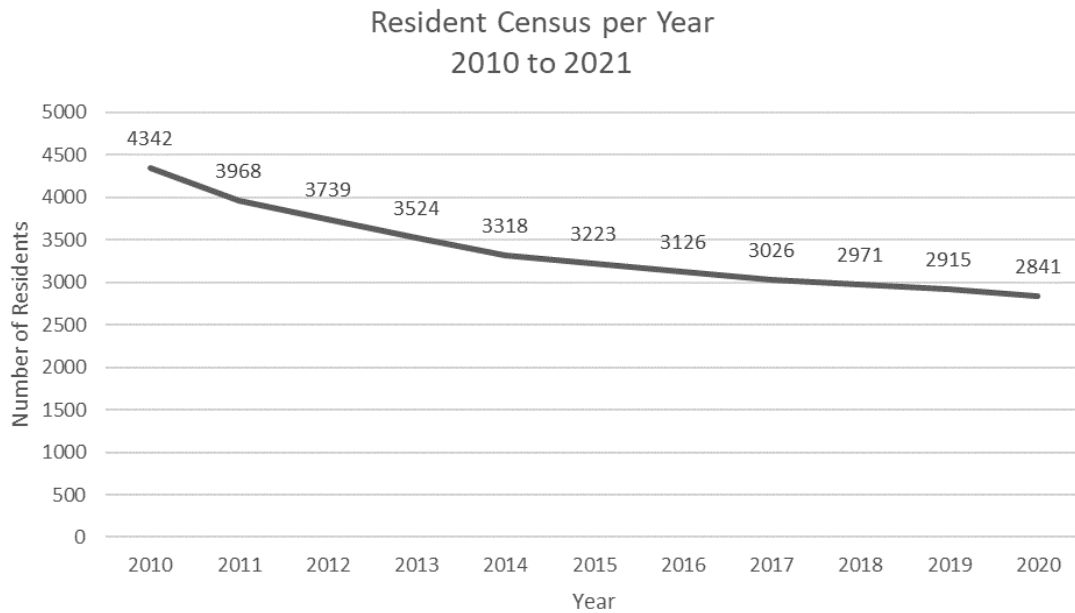
Jessica Rosa was born and raised in Austin, TX. She attended Austin Community College and Concordia University where she studied Finance. She began her professional career working for several financial institutions providing banking services for the community. She eventually moved on to work for D&S Community Services, a leading provider of residential services and supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Jessica worked to provide billing and money management assistance and it was there that she experienced how rewarding it was to help others in need. She then transitioned into to an Administrative Assistant role at Excel Finance Company where her results driven personality led her to effectively streamline processes and provide administrative and accounting support for over 30 offices across Texas, New Mexico, and Louisiana. Ms. Rosa has experience in report development, data management, and administrative operations. After years of tenure and much experience gained, she joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman central office team in December 2019. In her free time Jessica enjoys spending time with her friends and family, cooking, and conquering her fitness journey.

SSLC Resident Population



Thirteen state supported living centers across Texas are home to 2,736 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Each of the SSLCs provides 24-hour residential services, comprehensive behavioral treatment services and healthcare services, including physician, nursing and dental services. Other services include skills training, occupational, physical and speech therapies. Children, adolescents, and adults up to age 22 receive public education through the local school districts. Many residents are employed by businesses in their communities. Demographic data provided in this report were obtained July 1, 2021 and are according to the Health and Specialty Care System division of Texas Health and Human Services,

which manages the centers. There is a total of 2,736 individuals living at the SSLCs. When the office of the Independent Ombudsman for SSLC's started in 2010, the population was 4,342. Since 2010, there have been 1,606 residents that have moved or passed away. The resident population experienced the greatest decline from 2010 to 2011. There were 304 fewer residents in 2011. Every year there are fewer residents living at the SSLC's. Austin SSLC has had the greatest decrease in census since 2010.



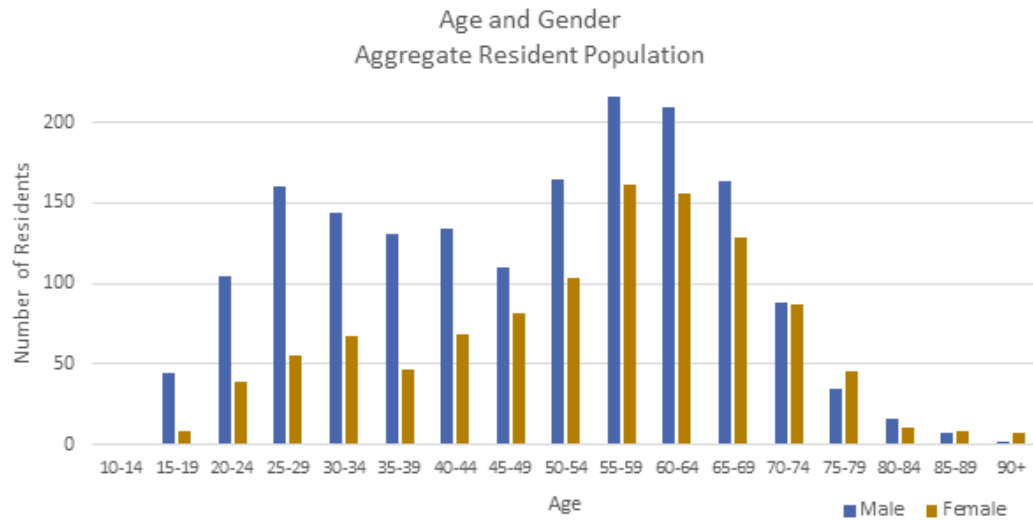
Source: The Health and Specialty Care System division of Texas Health and Human Services. 2010 to 2021

SSLC	Census 2010	Census 2021	Census Decline Difference	Census Decline Percentage
Austin	389	171	-218	56%
Mexia	443	216	-227	51%
Abilene	466	254	-212	45%
Corpus Christi	305	181	-124	41%
Lufkin	411	252	-159	39%
Brenham	362	234	-128	35%
San Antonio	282	185	-97	34%
San Angelo	262	176	-86	33%
Richmond	419	296	-123	29%
El Paso	138	100	-38	28%
Denton	563	419	-144	26%
Lubbock	231	190	-41	18%
Rio Grande	71	62	-9	13%
Total	4342	2736	-1606	37%

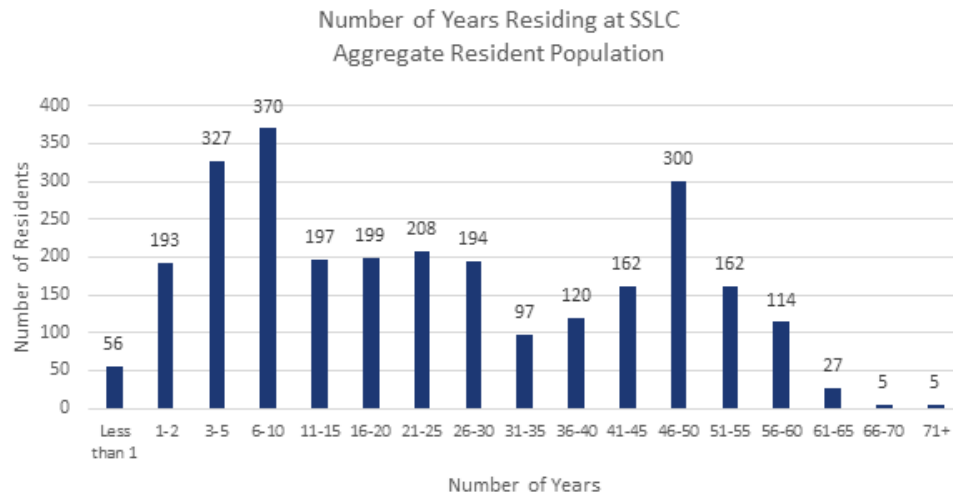
Resident Census and Difference in Resident Census between 2010 and 2021.

Source: The Health and Specialty Care System division of Texas Health and Human Services. 2010 to 2021

In 2021, the census of the SSLC resident population consists of 1,677 males and 1,059 females. There are significantly more males residing at the SSLCs than females in every age category except the youngest and oldest age groups. There are 566 residents over the age of 65, which makes up 21% of the total population. Most of the adults have a legal guardian, which is usually a family member. There are 33% of adults who do not have any type of guardianship. There are 113 residents who are under the age of 22, which is the age of eligibility to attend public school. This number includes 26 residents who are under 18 years of age.



Source: The Health and Specialty Care System division of Texas Health and Human Services. July 1, 2021



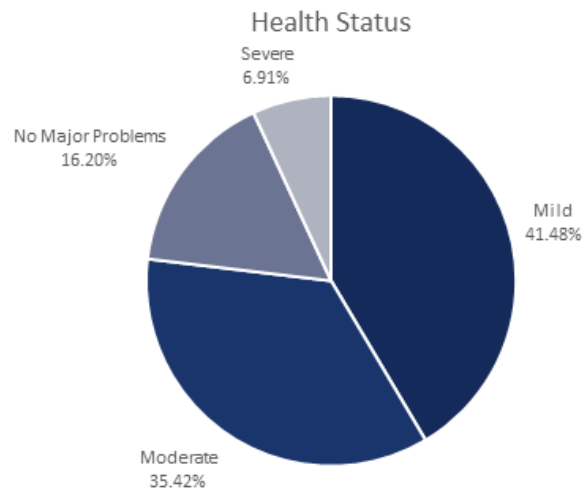
Source: The Health and Specialty Care System division of Texas Health and Human Services. July 1, 2021

The average number of years a resident has lived at the SSLC is 25 years. More than half of all residents have lived at the SSLC for over 20 years. The earliest admission by a living resident took place in 1942 when the resident was a child. Most residents who have lived there since childhood were admitted before 1980, which reflects the limited residential service options for people with intellectual and

development disabilities during that time. The average age at the time of admission for current residents is 25 years old. In 2021, there have been 56 admissions. The youngest person admitted in 2021 was 11 and the median age was 28.

The SSLC with the highest number of admissions was Mexia, where 12 residents were admitted. The Mexia SSLC is designated to provide forensic services to people who are committed under criminal statute. Therefore, it admits and discharges residents more frequently than other centers.

Currently, there are 149 residents who are alleged criminal offenders. Although nine SSLCs serve one or more residents who were alleged to have committed a criminal offense, 69% of the SSLC residents who are alleged offenders reside at Mexia SSLC. San Angelo SSLC is also designated as a forensic services center and currently serves 26 alleged offenders. There are 103 residents that have been alleged to commit a criminal offense at Mexia SSLC and five have been determined to be a high risk of danger to themselves or others, requiring a highly restrictive environment.

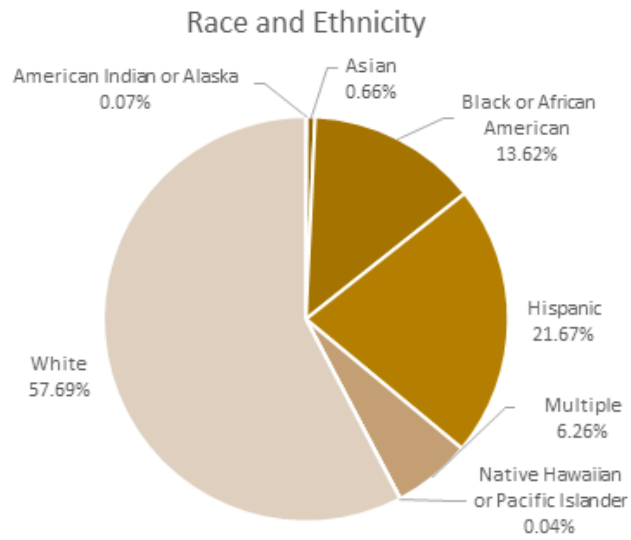


Source: The Health and Specialty Care System division of Texas Health and Human Services. July 1, 2021

Irrespective of age, 42% of the total SSLC resident population are designated with a health status of moderate or severe. A moderate health status is defined by HHS as having chronic health problems which require less than daily professional intervention. A severe health status means an individual is unstable or there are serious multiple health problems which may be life threatening, requiring professional intervention daily. There are 188 residents with a health status of severe.

Race and ethnicity demographic data are provided to acknowledge the identity and culture of residents. The majority of the SSLC population identifies as white at 58%. There are 22% of residents

who are Hispanic. Approximately 14% of residents identify as Black or African American. There are 171 residents who have been recorded as being multiple races or ethnicities.

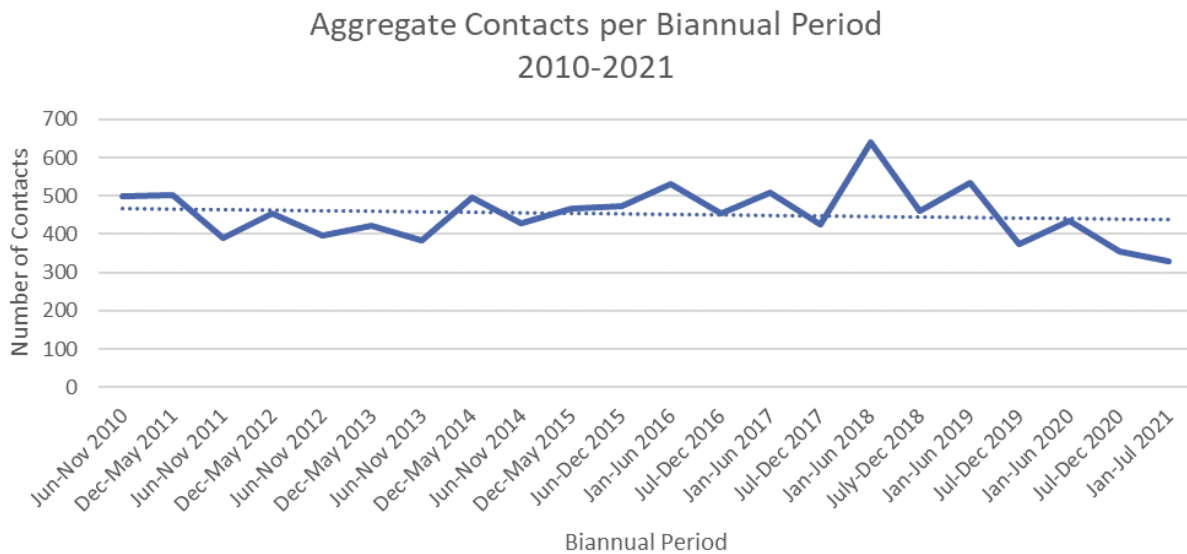


Source: The Health and Specialty Care System division of Texas Health and Human Services. July 1, 2021

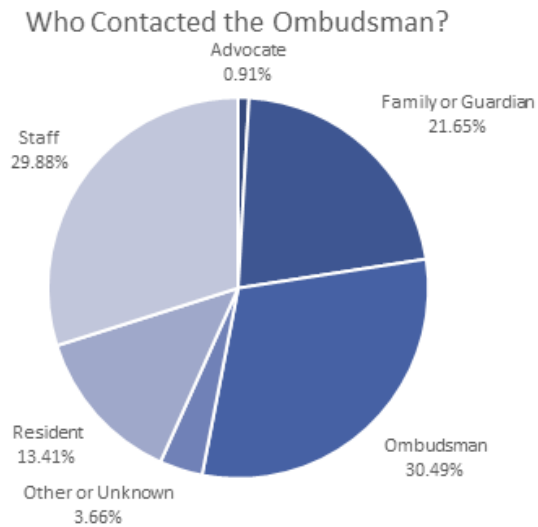
Duties and Activity of the Office

Being visible and engaged in the operations of the SSLC is the hallmark of the ombudsman’s role. The ombudsman at each center provides meaningful input, collaboration, and expertise to the SSLC administration on a routine basis which includes making recommendations. A secure online database is utilized to record and track all contacts made directly to the ombudsman. Documentation of investigations and actions of the ombudsman are recorded and are kept confidential except by special court order. For the biannual period of January 1 to June 30, 2021, there were a total of 328 contacts recorded.

Going on the second year of the global pandemic, the ombudsmen have begun to increase their physical presence at the SSLC’s while maintaining awareness of changing guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The ombudsmen continue to participate in meetings remotely and make efforts to contact residents, staff, and family members, despite having less frequent in-person visits to receive or identify concerns. Like the previous biannual period, there was a decrease in contacts during this biannual period. Efforts to remain accessible are on-going.



Most recorded contacts during this biannual period were concerns the ombudsman identified and investigated, followed closely by contacts from staff members. The ombudsmen have increased efforts to engage residents, staff, and family members remotely to maintain accessibility and promote awareness. Through these efforts, they actively advocated for the protection and welfare of residents during a challenging time. Historically, the largest percentage of contacts are from staff members. This increase from the previous period shows that activities are starting to return to pre-pandemic numbers. The high volume of ombudsman identified cases and contacts from staff members shows the value of the ombudsmen’s presence at the centers.



Likewise, the number of contacts made by residents have increased by 5%. Due to the ombudsmen’s decrease in physical presence on the SSLC campus, resident-initiated contacts last biannual period had decreased greatly. A physical presence on campus affected the likelihood for residents to contact the ombudsman. However, during this reporting period residents brought forth 44 cases to the ombudsmen.

Last biannual period, the ombudsmen received an increased amount of complaints and requests for assistance by family members and guardians due to the constraints of the pandemic response on the visitation policy. In the reporting period for January to June, the percentage of contacts made by family members and guardians significantly exceeded the amount historically experienced by the office. However, the number from last reporting period to this one has decreased slightly by 4%.

Sometimes the ombudsman is contacted about issues that are outside of the office’s scope. During this reporting period, there were 31 contacts referred to another entity, such as the Long-term Care Ombudsman program. The ombudsman is also frequently contacted by staff members with personnel issues. These complainants are always referred to the SSLC or HHS Human Resources. Excluding these

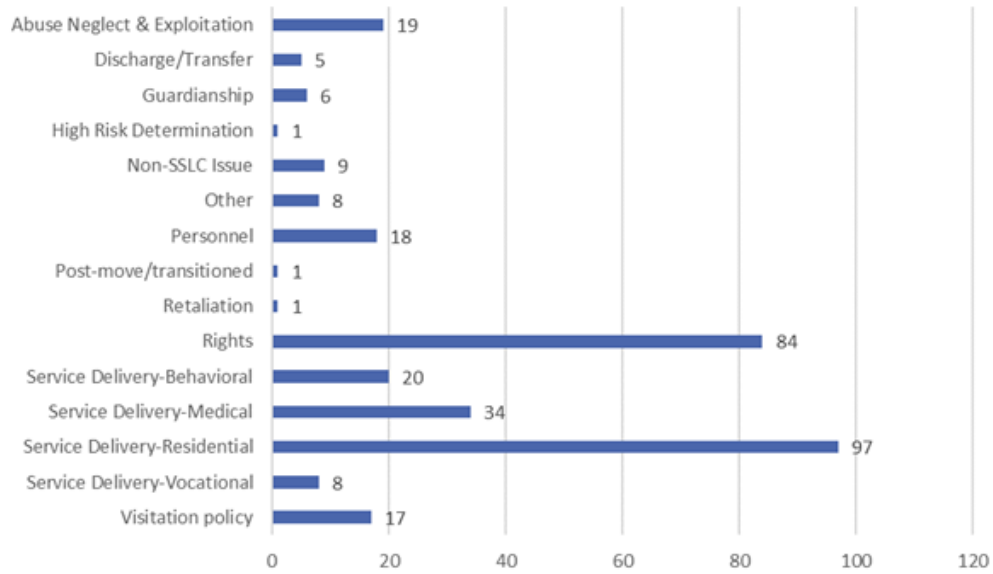
referrals, the office handled 297 cases in this biannual period. Consults and inquiries are contacts made to the ombudsman that do not require an investigation but require the ombudsmen’s expertise and insight. Complaints investigated by the ombudsmen made up 92% of all contacts for this biannual period.

Aggregate Number of Contacts that were Not Referred



Staff, residents, family members, and others contact the ombudsman for concerns that impact residents’ lives. Most concerns were about residential service delivery. These documented concerns were about staffing, activity programming, clothing, meals, daily routine, hygiene, and other services that residential staff provide. The second highest volume of contacts were about residents’ rights. Some of these include a resident’s right to due process for restrictions, right to associate with certain people, and the right to freedom of movement. All concerns are investigated and brought to the attention of the SSLC. Following an investigation, the ombudsman may provide the administration with recommendations, which are monitored by the ombudsman to evaluate if, and how, the SSLC administration addresses the issue.

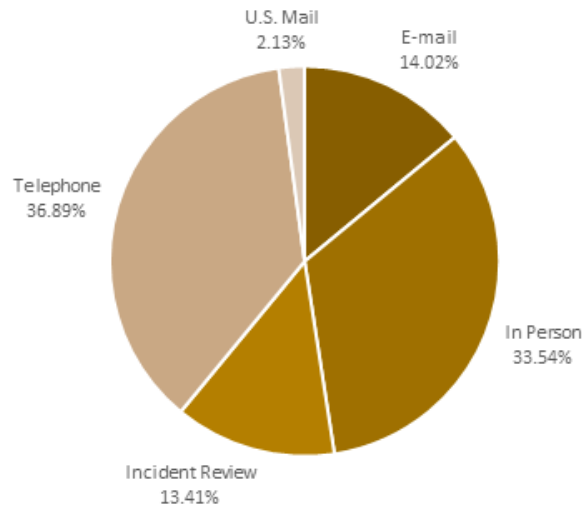
Aggregate Number of Contacts by Type



Each ombudsman has an office at the SSLC which makes them easily accessible to residents and staff. As a result, the majority of contacts are usually made in person. Due to the pandemic response, professional staff and the ombudsmen began working remotely. Therefore, most contacts were made by telephone. The office maintains a toll-free number which directly connects to the ombudsman’s office phone. This number, the ombudsman’s name, direct phone line, office location, and email address are displayed prominently in common areas at each SSLC on posters and brochures. The office also maintains a website that explains the role of our office and provides contact information.

In addition to monitoring service delivery and investigating concerns, the ombudsman at each SSLC evaluates the way the center investigates serious incidents. Each ombudsman attends incident meetings, reads all SSLC investigation reports, and monitors actions taken by the SSLC after each incident. In total, the ombudsmen reviewed 1,519 incident investigations this biannual period. In 44 of these incident reviews a concern was identified that required additional investigation by the ombudsman.

How was the Ombudsman Contacted?



The most common reported and reviewed incidents were abuse allegations. The ombudsmen do not investigate abuse and neglect. Allegations of abuse and neglect are reported to and investigated by the HHSC Provider Investigations (HHSC PI) unit. When a report is made, the SSLC is responsible for protecting the alleged victim and taking precautions to prevent further allegations from occurring. The ombudsman at each SSLC monitors the recommendations that the HHSC PI make to the SSLC administration when an allegation has been confirmed.

The office conducts annual audits of the SSLCs, referred to as Program Review. The legislative mandate requires a biennial on-site review at each center of the adequacy of staff training, rights and due process (including the right to file a complaint), and staff to client ratios. Due to the pandemic, the 2020 reviews were conducted remotely, and the office has continued the remote process for the 2021 Program Review. Ombudsmen also collect data at each SSLC throughout the year. During the ongoing data collection period, ombudsmen surveyed newly hired Direct Support Professionals (DSP) about the on-the-job training they received, monitored and obtained information about staffing ratios, observed and evaluated due process in Human Rights Committee (HRC) meetings, and reviewed thousands of documents related to residents' rights and restrictions. The results of these activities will be combined with the 2022 Program Review data in a biennial report to the legislature prior to the 2023 legislative session. The 2021 Program Review data collected during this biannual reporting period includes the following:

- 112 staff to resident ratio observations
- 123 DSP on-the-job training surveys
- 894 Human Rights Committee documents

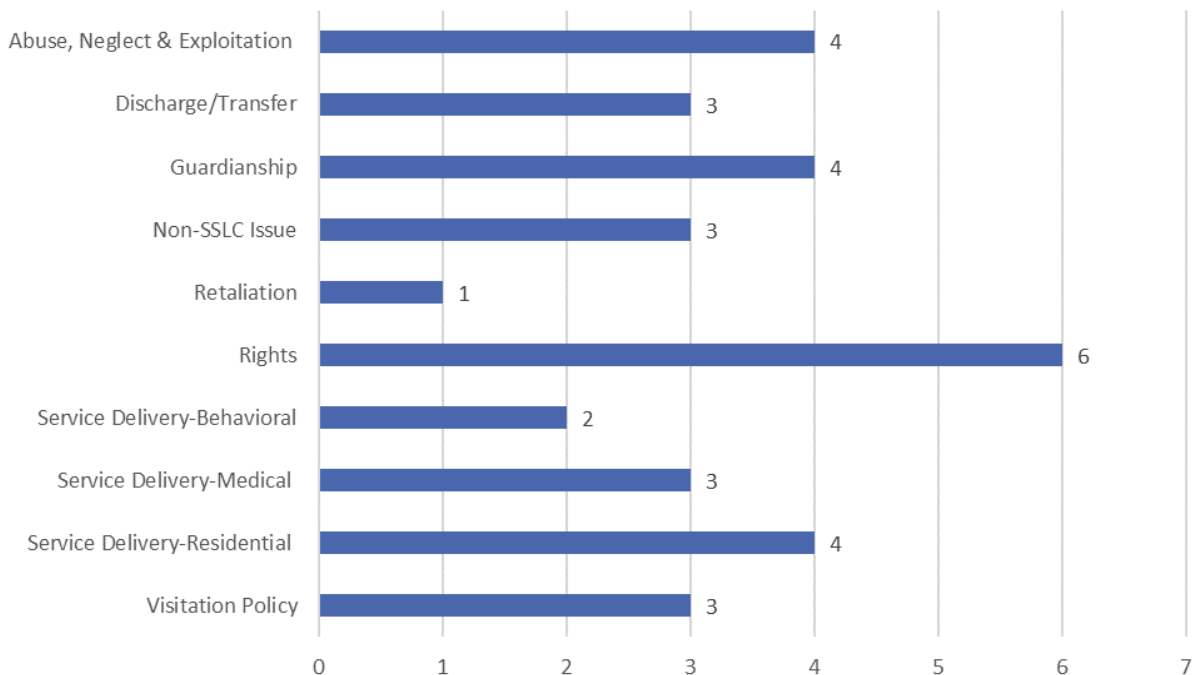
Abilene State Supported Living Center

Jill Antilley, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

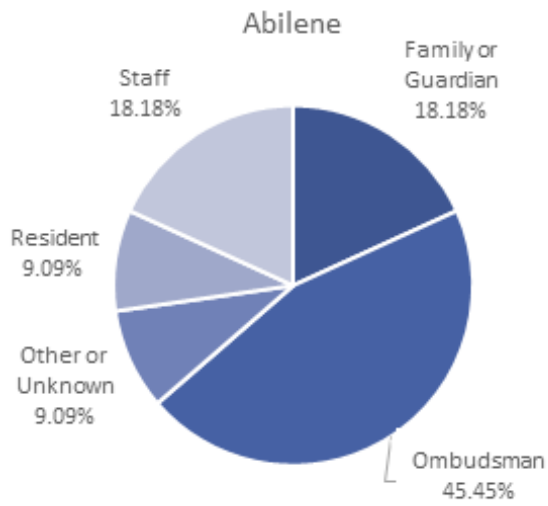


Jill Antilley has served residents at the Abilene State Supported Living Center for 18 years. Her career began in the Recreation Department as a direct-care staff in 2000 while attending college at Hardin Simmons University (HSU). Ms. Antilley graduated from HSU in 2000 with a Bachelor's degree in Police Administration and went to work 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. She joined the office of the Independent Ombudsman as the Assistant Independent Ombudsman to Abilene SSLC in 2010.

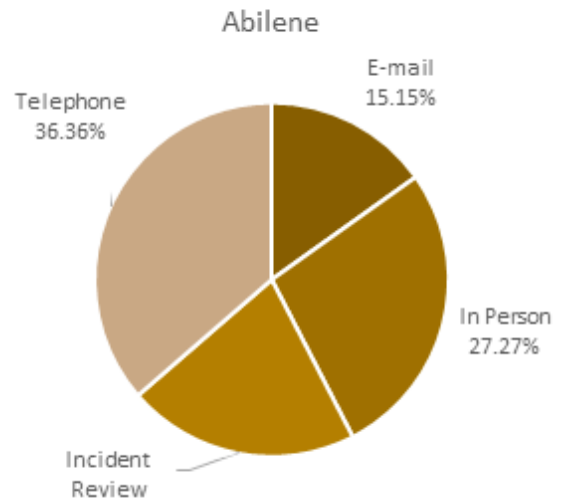
Number of Contacts by Type
Abilene



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?



How was the Contact Made?



Contacts that were Not Referred

Abilene



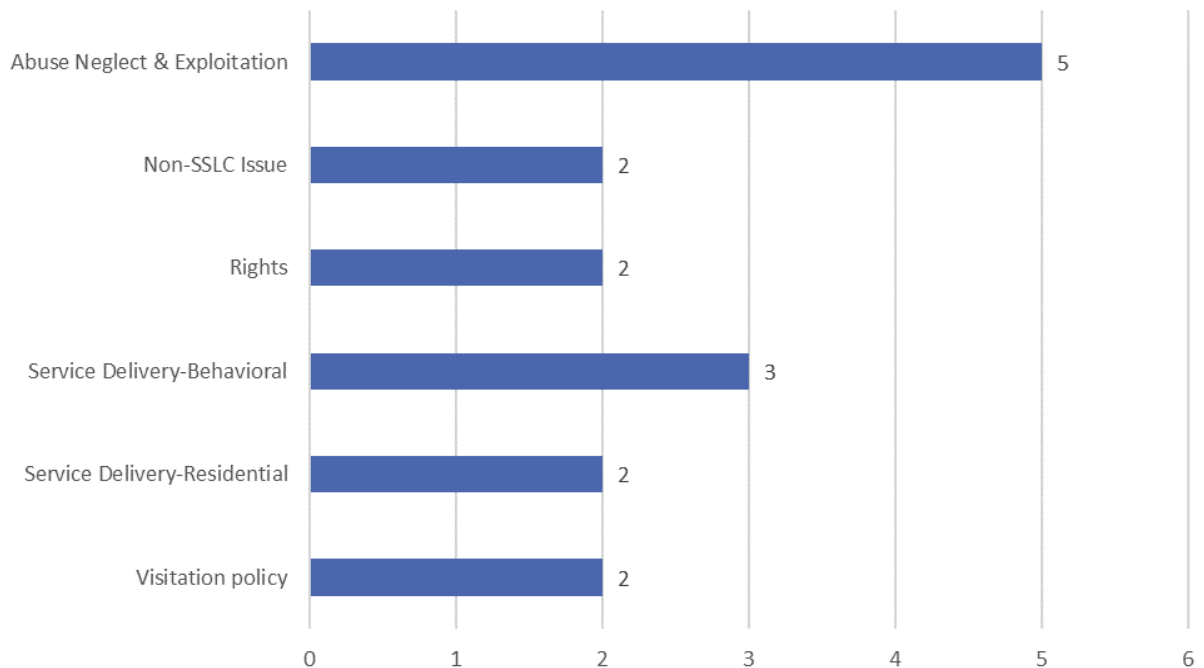
Austin State Supported Living Center

Talya Hines, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

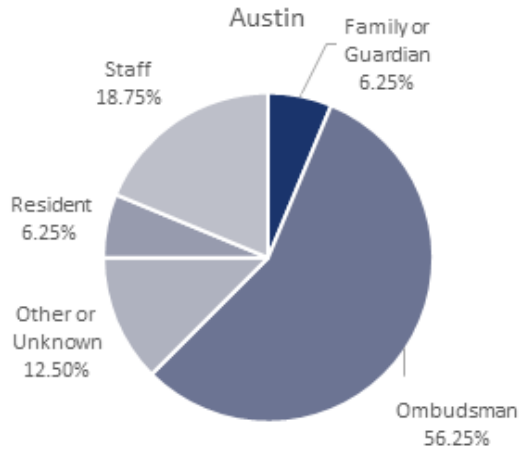


Ms. Hines was born and raised in Grayson County, Texas, and resides in Pflugerville with her family. Ms. Hines earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology and a Master of Science Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of North Texas. She began her professional career at the Department of Family and Protective Services as a Child Care Licensing Specialist in Dallas. Ms. Hines then moved to Austin where she assisted individuals with disabilities with maintaining independence through their environment and employment as a case manager for the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services. Following her passion to help others, Ms. Hines obtained the position of Post-Move Monitor at the Austin SSLC, where she supported individuals who transitioned into a community setting. Before she began serving as the Assistant Independent Ombudsman for the Austin SSLC in 2018, she developed online and instructor led curricula for Local Authorities as a Curriculum Developer for HHS. Ms. Hines is certified as a Person Centered Thinking trainer with The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices.

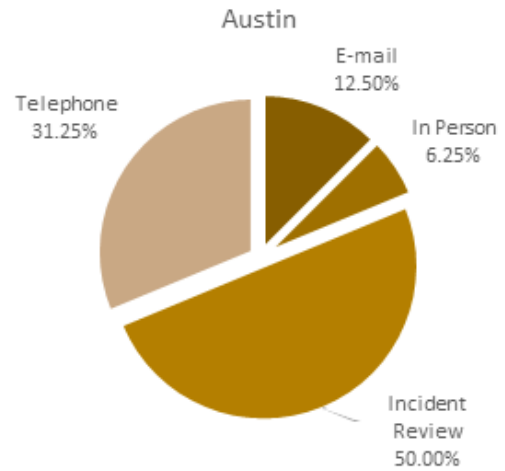
Number of Contacts by Type
Austin



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?



How was the Contact Made?



Contacts that were Not Referred
Austin



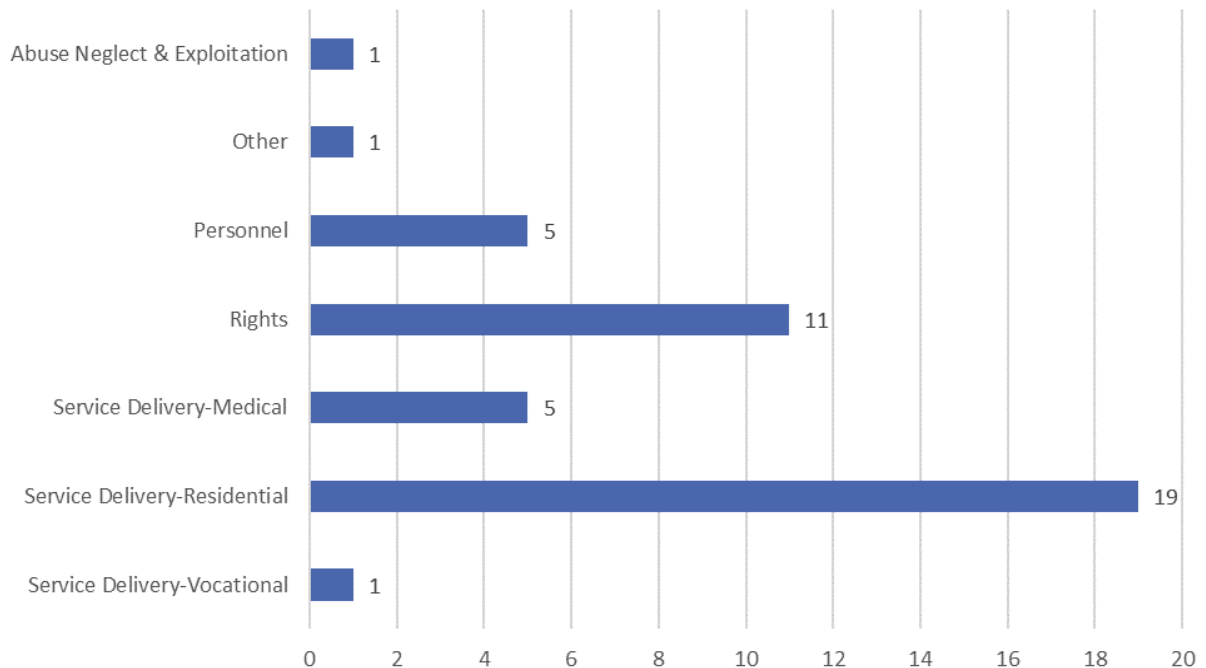
Brenham State Supported Living Center

Susan Aguilar, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

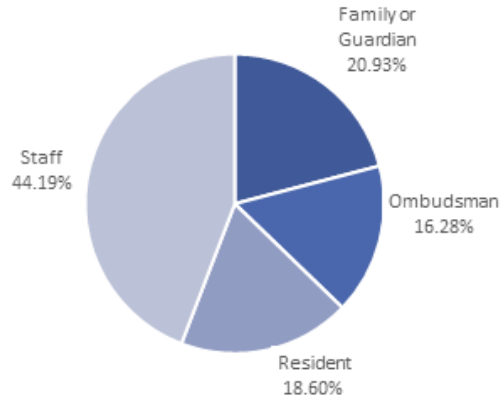


Susan Aguilar earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Texas Lutheran University. She worked in the field of early childhood intervention prior to obtaining the position of Qualified Developmentally Disabled Professional at the Brenham State Supported Living Center. While at the Center, Ms. Aguilar 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. Ms. Aguilar is a certified Person Centered Thinking trainer with The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices.

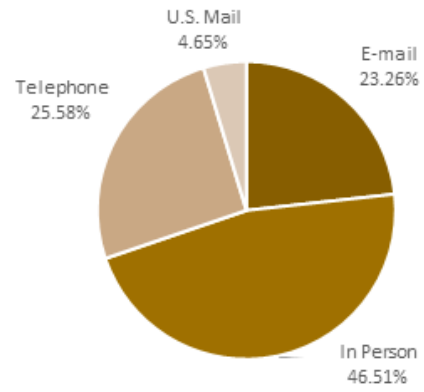
Number of Contacts by Type
Brenham



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?
Brenham



How was the Contact Made?
Brenham



Contacts that were Not Referred
Brenham



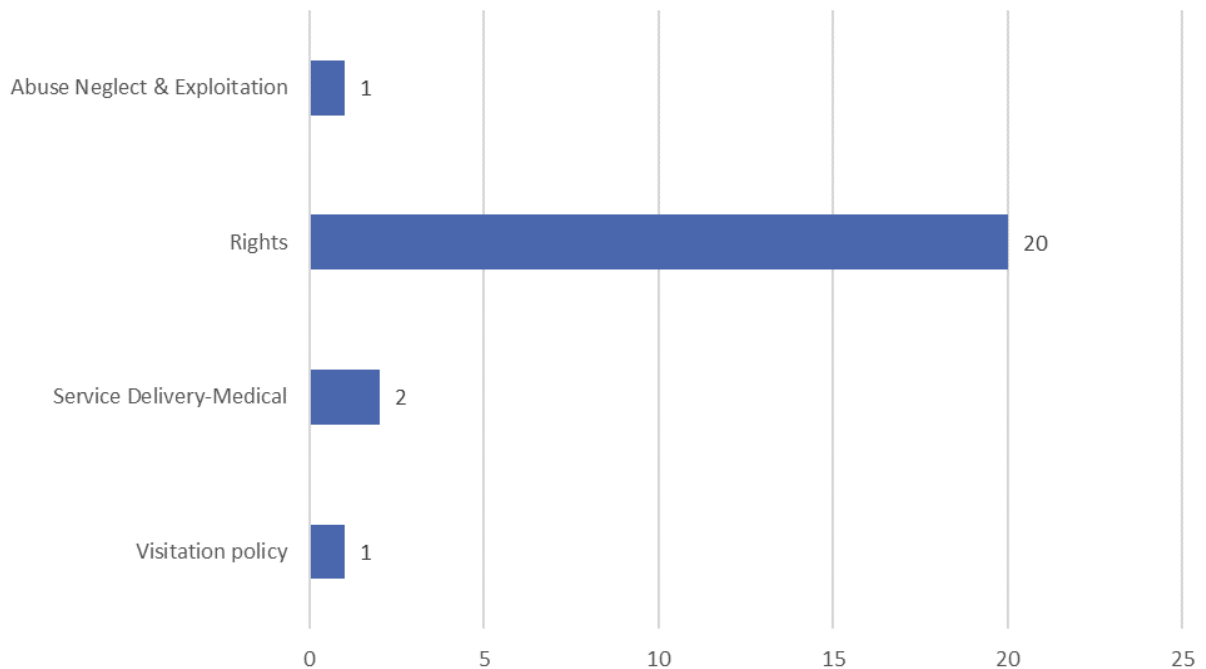
Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center

Kellen Davis, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

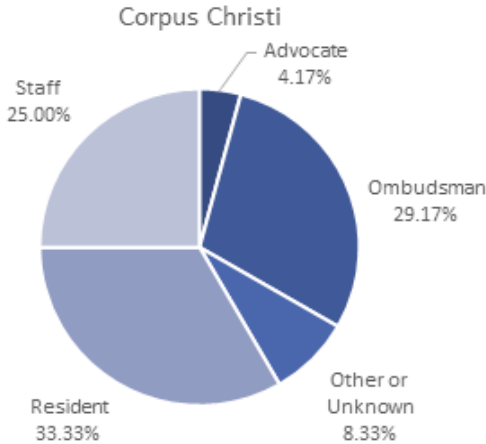


Ms. Davis's career began in 1988 while going to school at Howard Payne University. She worked for the Texas Youth Commission as the Recreation Supervisor. She graduated from HPU with a degree in Physical Education and a minor in English. She went on to work for the TYC for 15 years in various roles. Ms. Davis also worked as an LVN for the University of Texas Medical Branch at a TYC facility and in nursing facilities. She was a respite supervisor for local MHMR and owned her own business, a doughnut coffee shop. Ms. Davis worked at the Mexia SSLC for 4 and a half years as the Transition Specialist. She joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman at the Corpus Christi SSLC in 2017.

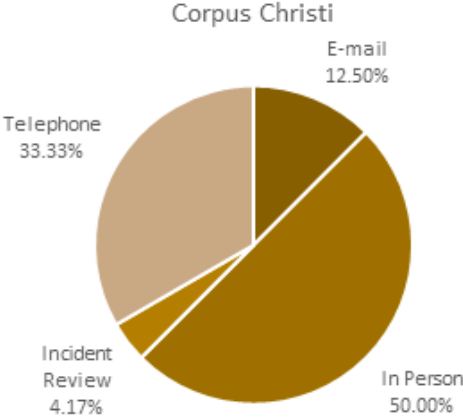
Number of Contacts by Type
Corpus Christi



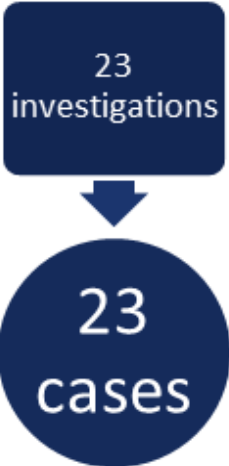
Who Contacted the Ombudsman?



How was the Contact Made?



Contacts that were Not Referred
Corpus Christi



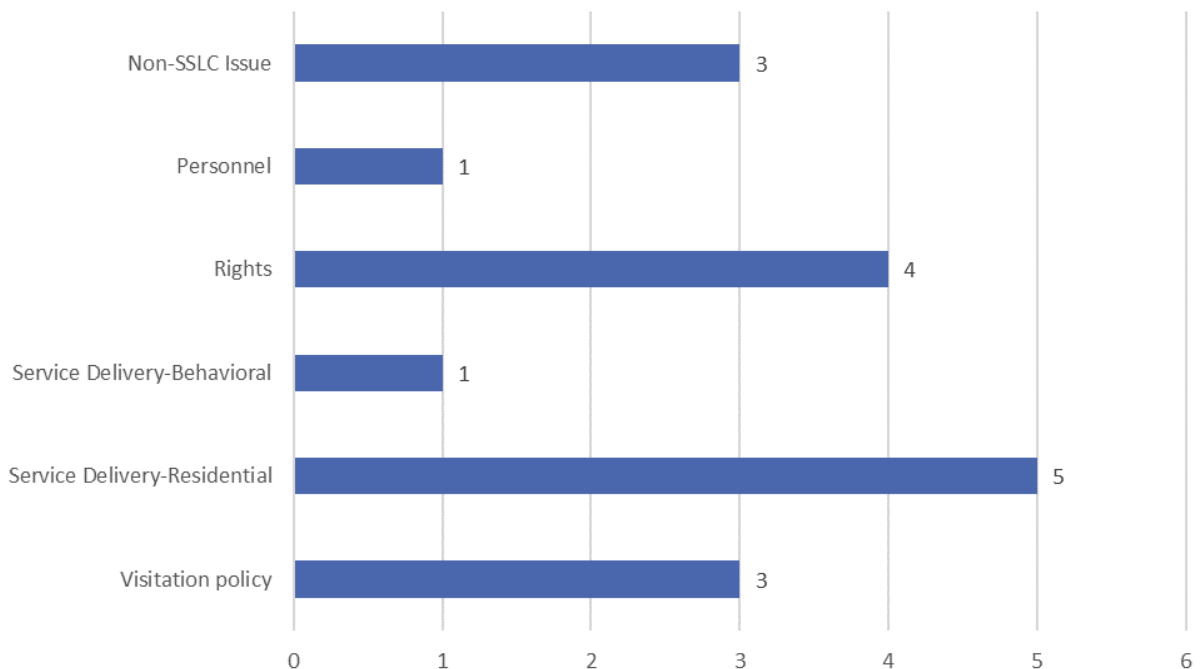
Denton State Supported Living Center

Edward Leal, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

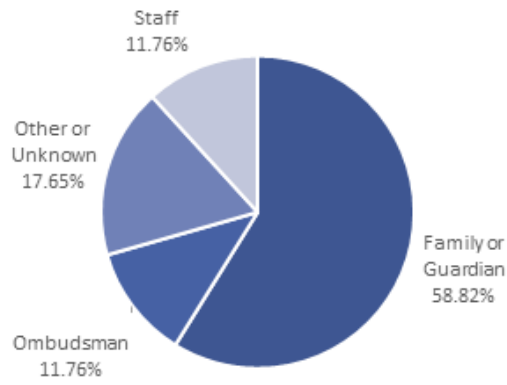


Edward Leal began his career in 2009 at the Denton SSLC where he served both as a Direct Support Professional and the Administrative Assistant to the Center Director for almost a decade. Edward then served as a Civil Rights Specialist where he received extensive training and experience conducting complex investigations of employment discrimination complaints. He has a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree from the University of North Texas with an emphasis in Applied Behavior Analysis and Clinical Psychology and is pursuing a Master of Business Administration degree. Mr. Leal joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman as the Assistant Independent Ombudsman at the Denton SSLC in February 2020.

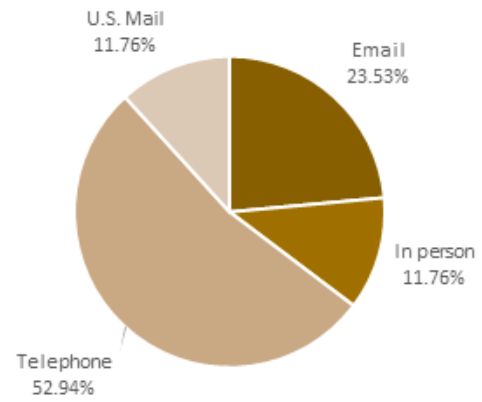
Number of Contacts by Type
Denton



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?
Denton



How was the Contact Made?
Denton



Contacts that were Not Referred
Denton



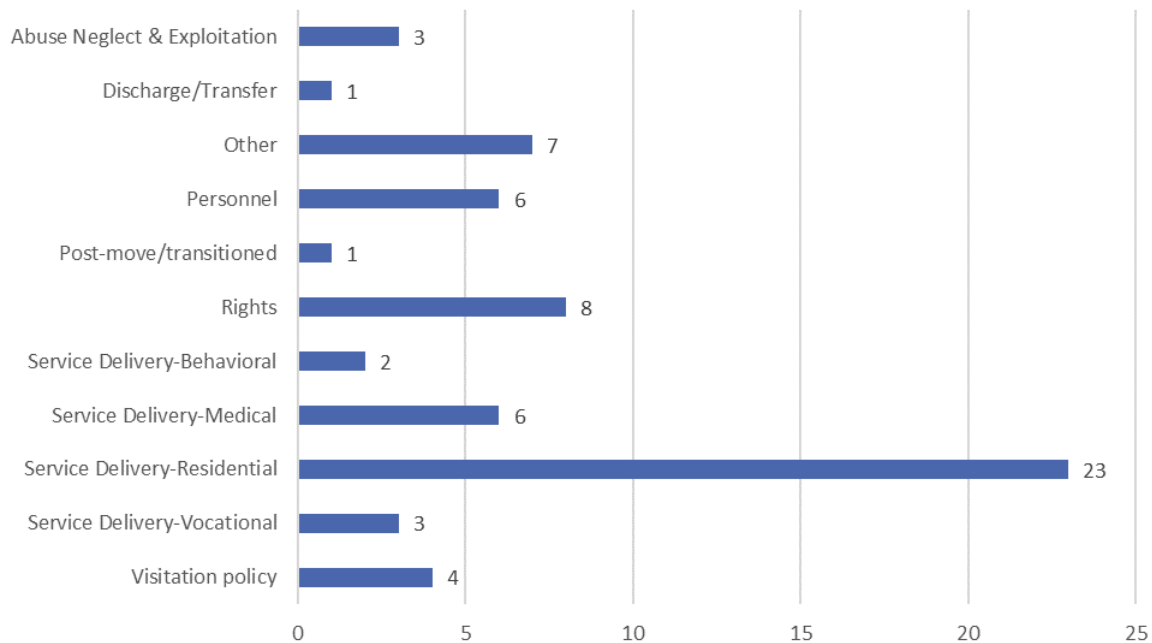
El Paso State Supported Living Center

Isabel Ponce, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

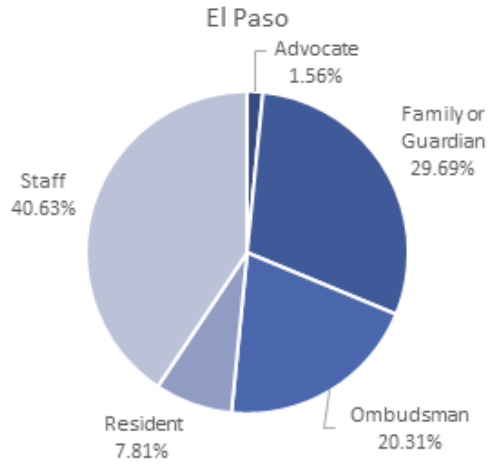


Born and raised in the Sun City, Ms. Ponce has worked in services and advocacy for the elderly, children and individuals with disabilities for over 20 years. She was employed in nursing homes as a certified nursing assistant and then certified medication assistant before working with the El Paso Headstart program where she provided social services to children and their families through community outreach. She then went on to serve adults with developmental disabilities as a Residential Director in a Home and Community Service program in the private sector. Soon after, Ms. Ponce became a Certified Internal Investigator and began working as a Case Manager for the same HCS Provider. After seven years with the community program, she joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman in December 2010 as the AIO for the El Paso State Supported Living Center. She is certified in Mediation and has been trained in Person Centered Practices.

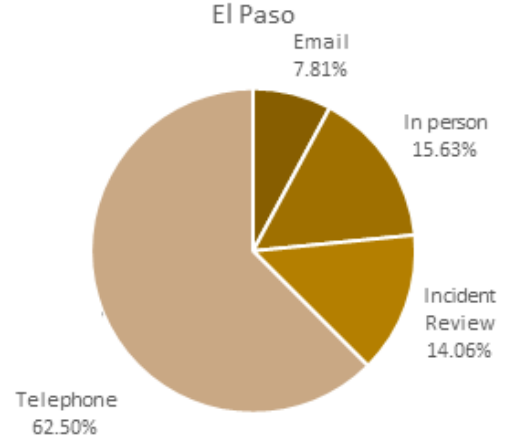
Number of Contacts by Type
El Paso



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?



How was the Contact Made?



Contacts that were Not Referred
El Paso



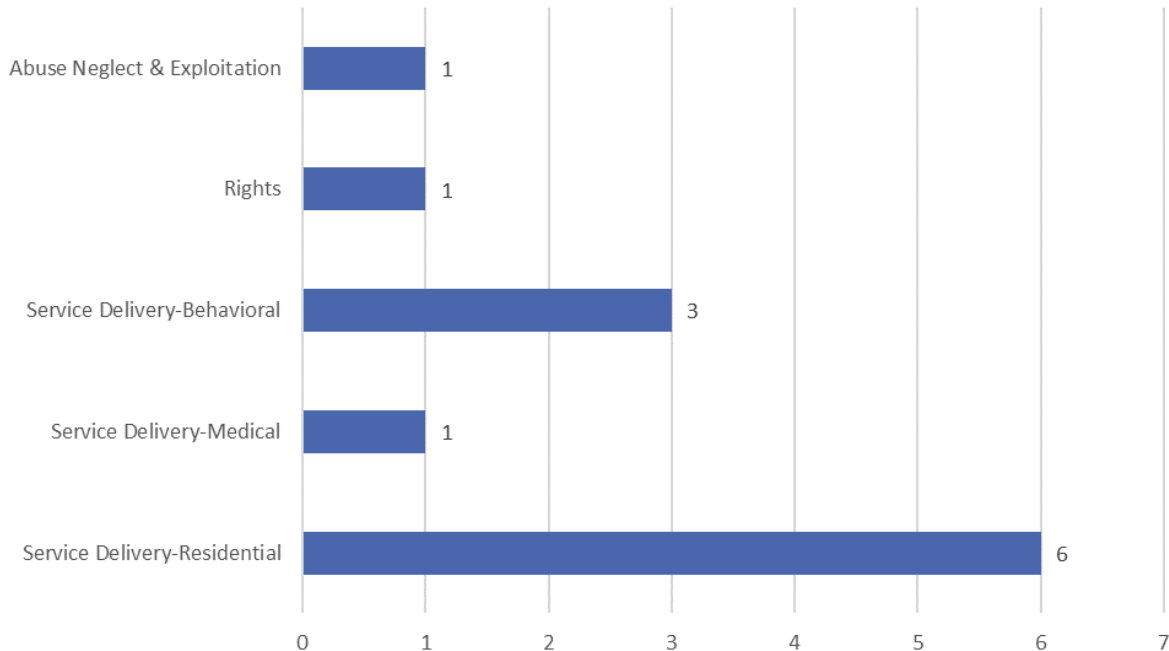
Lubbock State Supported Living Center

James Clark, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

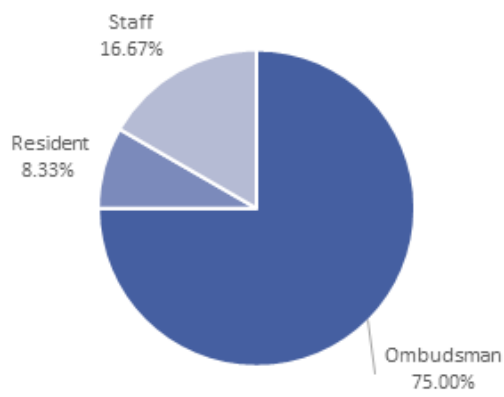


James Clark was born and raised in Lubbock, Texas, and resides in Lubbock with his family. Mr. Clark earned a Bachelor of Applied Science Degree in Human Services from Wayland Baptist University. He began his career with the State of Texas at the Lubbock State School as a Direct Support Professional in 1999, where he worked 14 years in many roles from Unit Director, Campus Administrator, and Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional. In 2013, Mr. Clark’s endeavors for career advancement led him to the Department of Family and Protective Services (Adult Protective Services) where he worked for 6 years as an APS Specialist to advocate for elderly and disabled Texans. In April of 2020, Mr. Clark’s career path led him back to the place he began his career with the State of Texas when he accepted the role as the Assistant Independent Ombudsman of the Lubbock State Supported Living Center for the Office of the Independent Ombudsman.

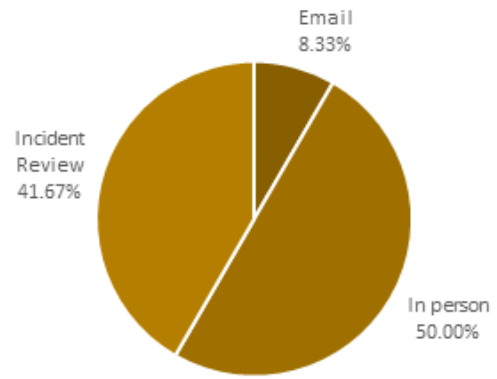
Number of Contacts by Type
Lubbock



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?
Lubbock



How was the Contact Made?
Lubbock



Contacts that were Not Referred
Lubbock



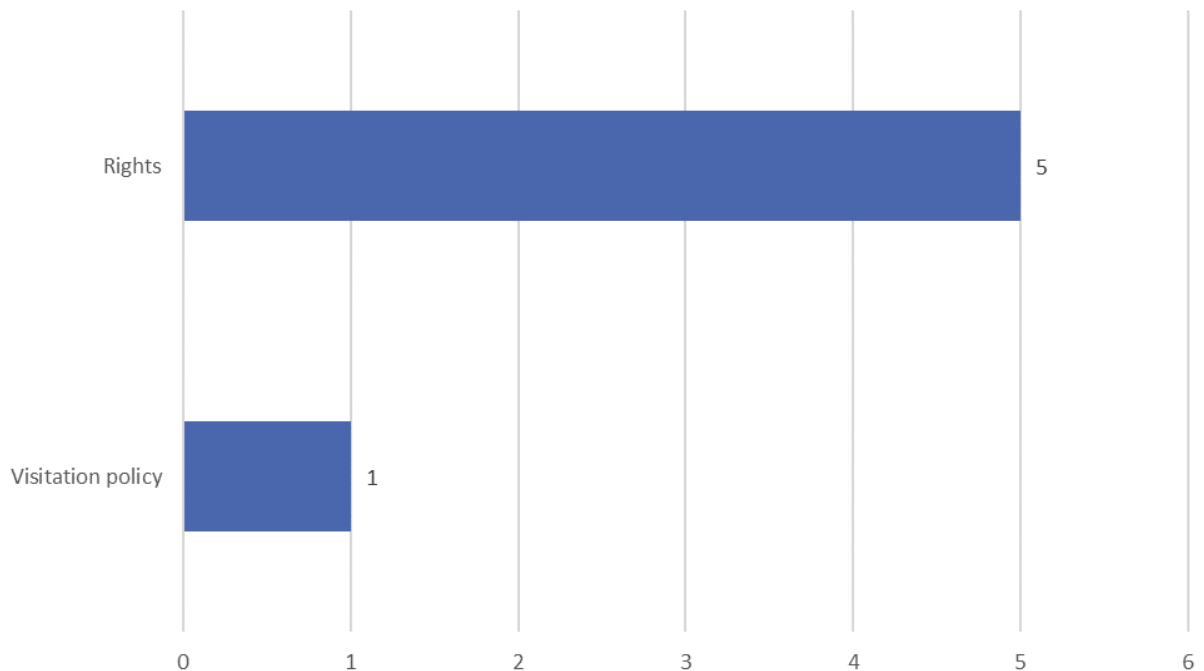
Lufkin State Supported Living Center

Seth Bowman, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

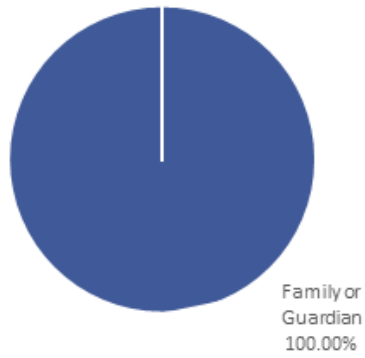


Raised in Lufkin, Texas, Seth Bowman attended Stephen F. Austin State University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communication. After graduation in 2011, he began his professional career with Texas Health and Human Services as a Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional for the Lufkin State Supported Living Center. He then served as a training specialist in the Competency and Training Department where he trained employees on policies and procedures. While in this role, he was a faculty member and helped developed curriculum for the Safe Use of Restraints (SUR) program. Mr. Bowman joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman as the Assistant Independent Ombudsman assigned to Lufkin SSLC in May 2020.

Number of Contacts by Type
Lufkin



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?
Lufkin



How was the Contact Made?
Lufkin



Contacts that were Not Referred
Lufkin



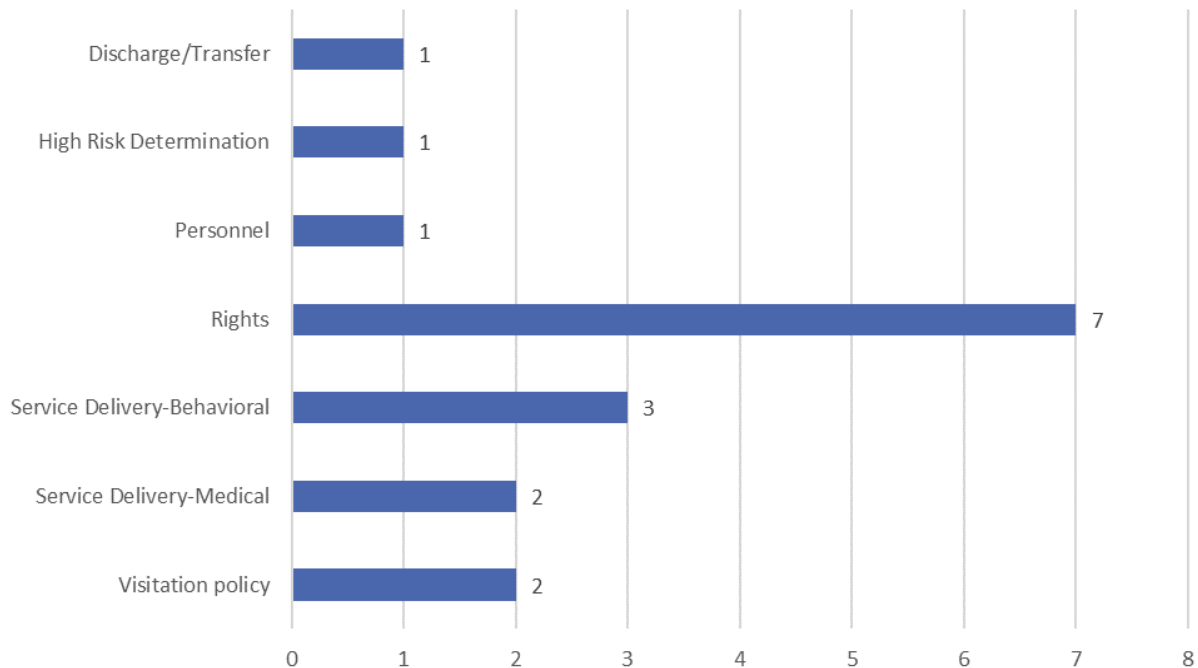
Mexia State Supported Living Center

Adam Parks, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

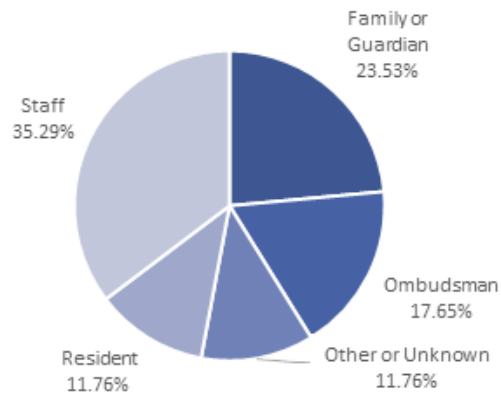


Adam Parks was raised in Mexia, Texas. He attended Stephen F. Austin State University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. After graduation, he began his professional career as a conservatorship caseworker for the Department of Family and Protective Services in Angelina and Shelby County Texas. Mr. 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.

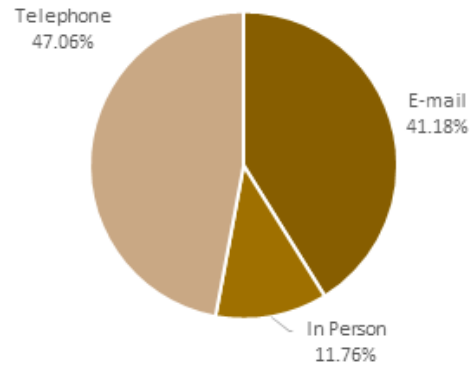
Number of Contacts by Type
Mexia



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?
Mexia



How was the Contact Made?
Mexia



Contacts that were Not Referred
Mexia



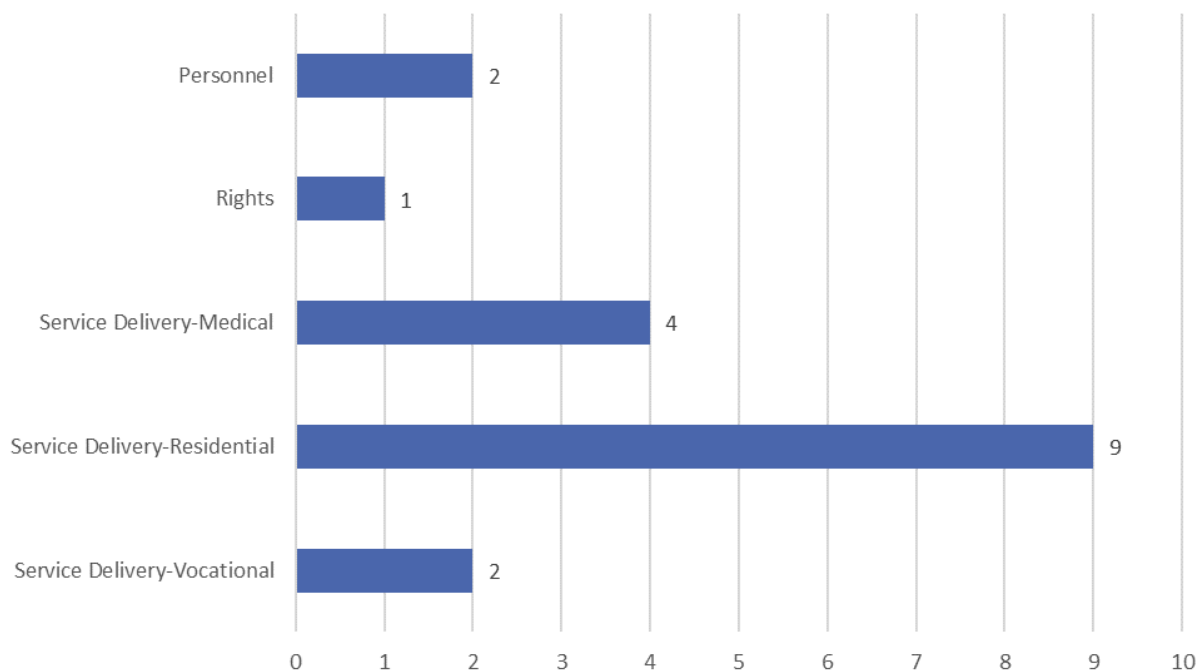
Richmond State Supported Living Center

Deatrice Potlow, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

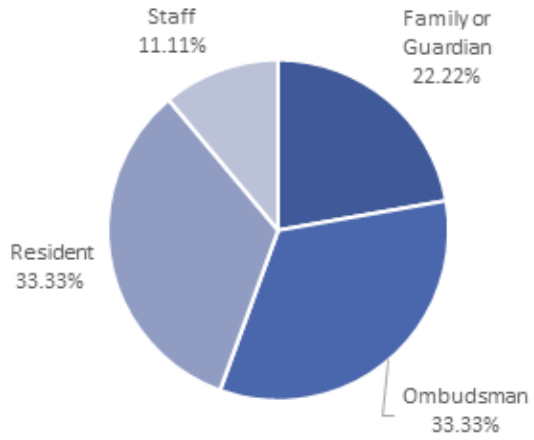


Born and raised in Greenwood, Mississippi, Ms. Potlow earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Office Administration in 1997. Shortly after graduating she began working at a local hospital as a Medical Transcriptionist. She relocated to Houston, Texas for career advancement and began a career with the State of Texas. During her tenure of employment, she served as an Investigator for children, adults and persons with disabilities. Prior to joining the Office of the Independent Ombudsman as the Assistant Independent Ombudsman in 2012, she worked as a facility investigator who was responsible for investigating allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation at the Richmond SSLC.

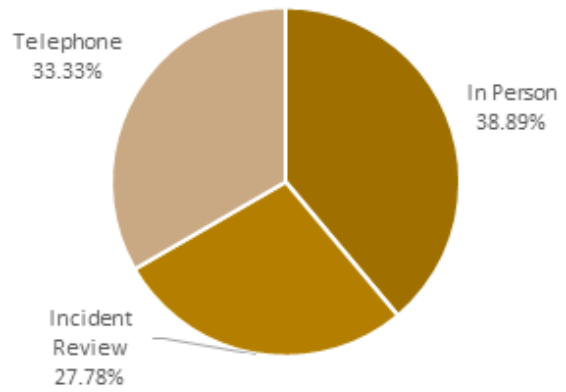
Number of Contacts by Type
Richmond



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?
Richmond



How was the Contact Made?
Richmond



Contacts that were Not Referred
Richmond



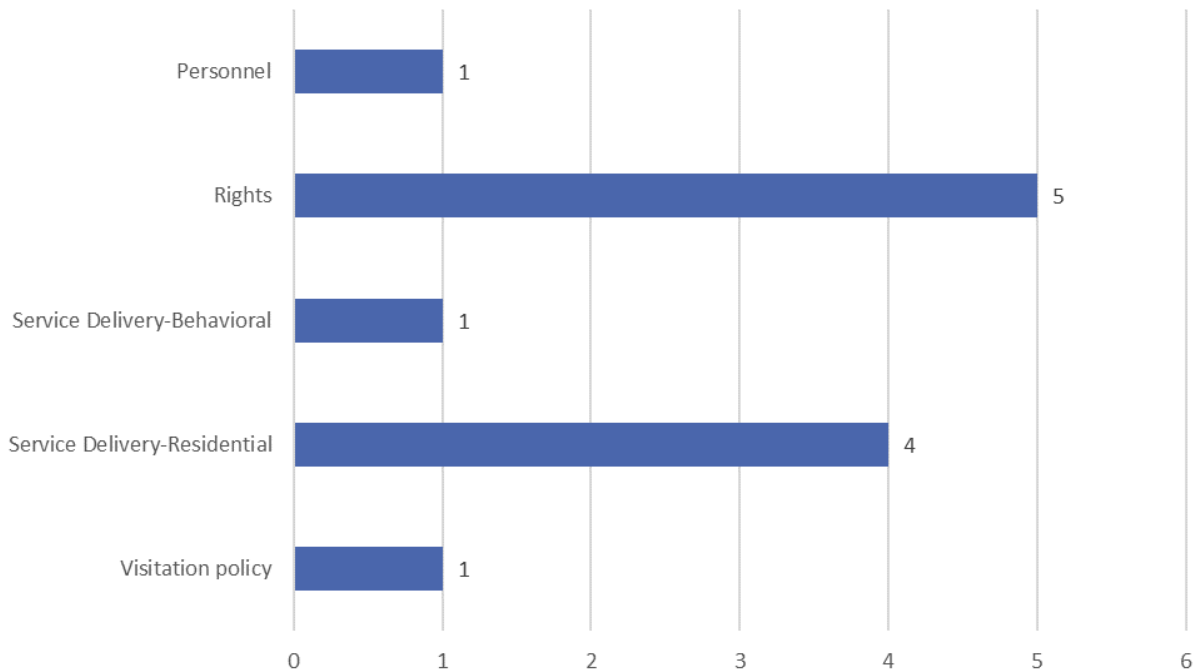
Rio Grande State Center

Horacio Flores, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

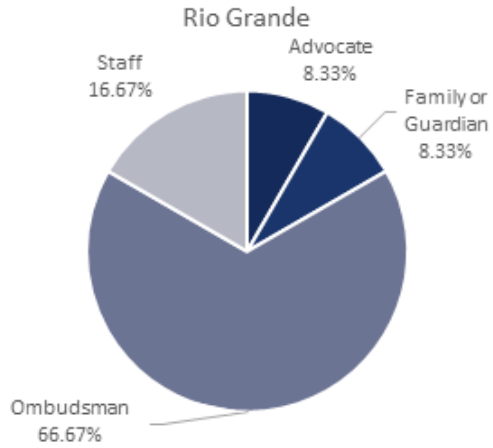


Horacio Flores hails from the Rio Grande Valley and attended Texas A&M Kingsville where he earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology. He began his career with the State of Texas working for the Department of Family and Protective Services as an Investigator for Child Protective Services in Nueces, Kleberg, Duval and Jim Hogg counties. Mr. Flores then accepted the position of Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professional (QIDP) at Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center. Shortly thereafter he was appointed to a Lead QIDP. Mr. Flores then relocated to the Rio Grande Valley and accepted the position of QIDP at the Rio Grande State Center in Harlingen. Mr. Flores accepted the position of Assistant Independent Ombudsman of the Rio Grande Center in April 2017.

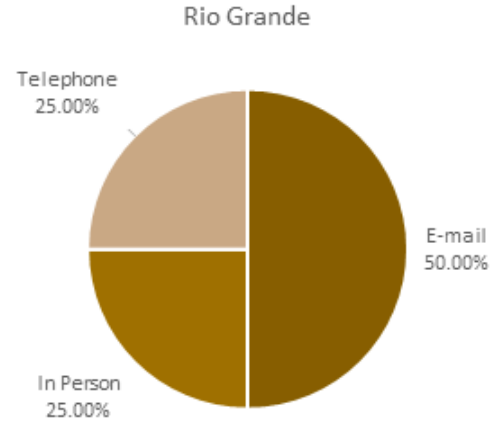
Number of Contacts by Type
Rio Grande



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?



How was the Contact Made?



Contacts that were Not Referred
Rio Grande



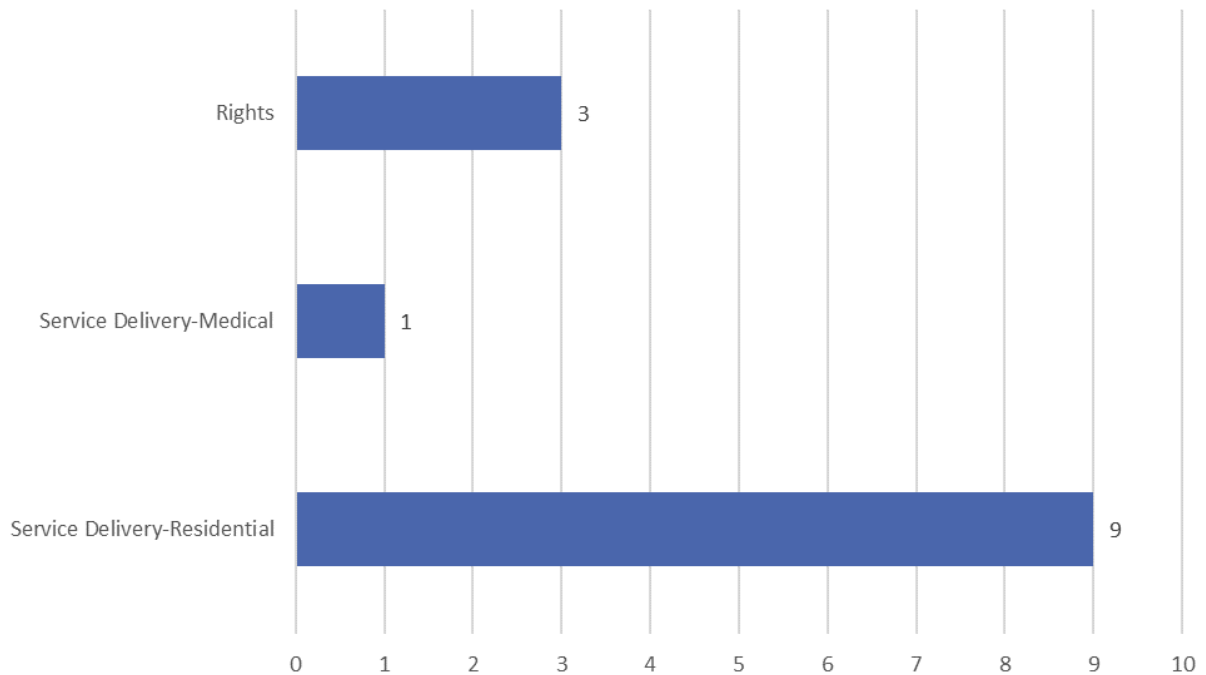
San Angelo State Supported Living Center

Brenda Frausto, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

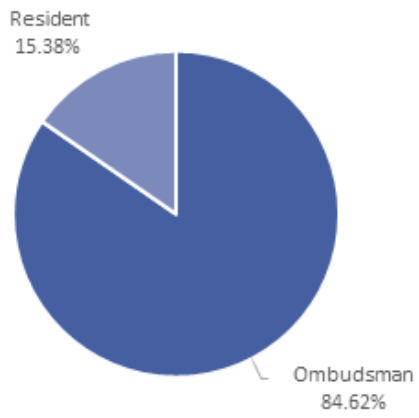


Ms. Frausto obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology with a minor in Sociology from Angelo State University. She began her career at the San Angelo SSLC in 1991 as an active treatment provider then later assumed the role of Admission and Placement Coordinator. Ms. Frausto was also the Admission Coordinator for MHMR Service of the Concho Valley. For 13 years, Ms. Frausto worked for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services as an Adult Protective Services Specialist where she earned the reputation of going above and beyond to protect and serve Texas' most vulnerable adults. Ms. Frausto has served as a Guardian Advocate with Guardianship Alliance of the Concho Valley and was a member of the Tom Green County Coalition Against Violence She joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman in 2016. Ms. Frausto is certified as a Person Centered Thinking trainer with The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices.

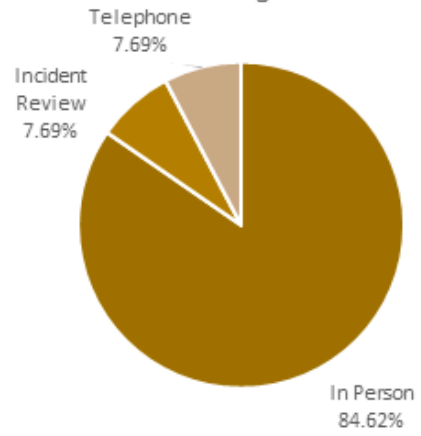
Number of Contacts by Type
San Angelo



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?
San Angelo



How was the Contact Made?
San Angelo



Contacts that were Not Referred
San Angelo



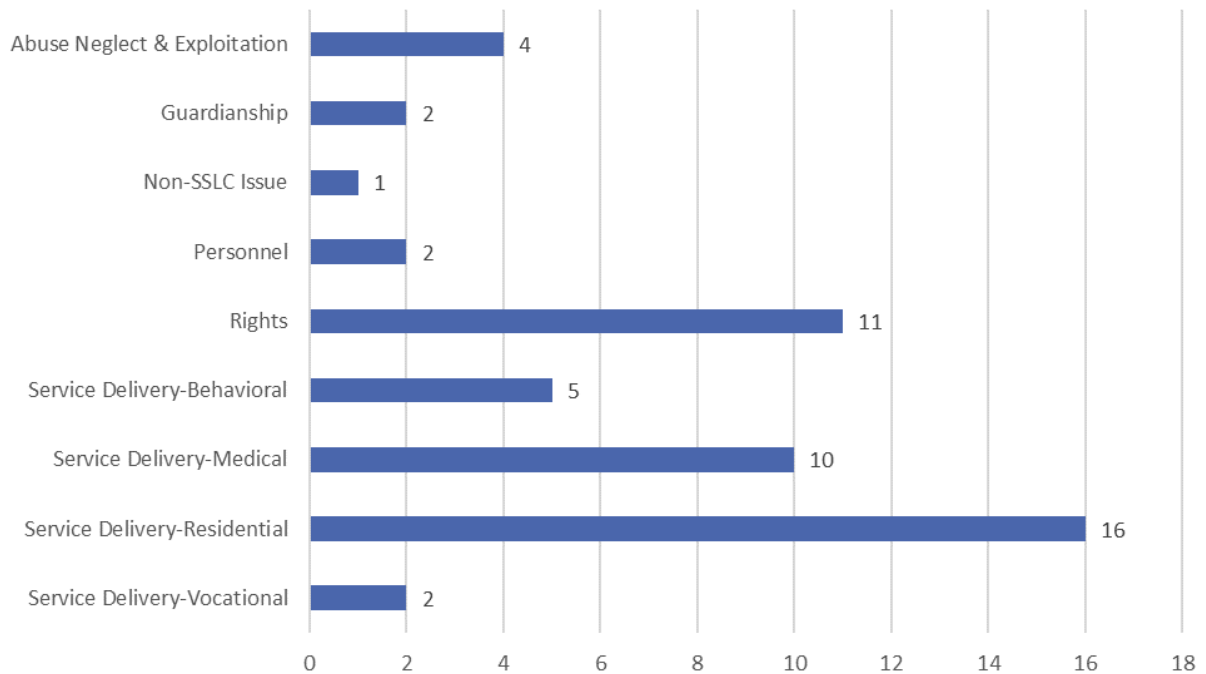
San Antonio State Supported Living Center

Gevona Hicks, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

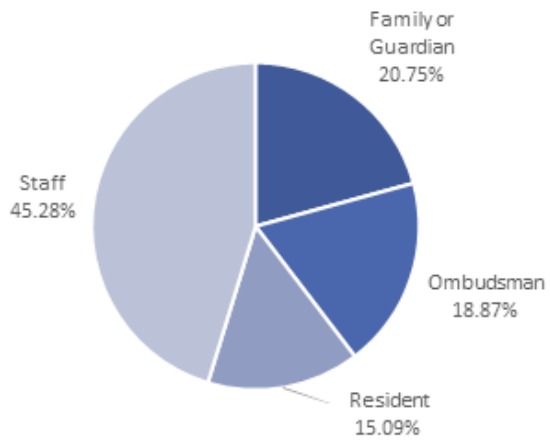


A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Ms. Hicks received her Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a certificate in Gerontology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She relocated to San Antonio, Texas in 2001 and worked with infants and toddlers at a local children's shelter. Before joining the Office of the Independent Ombudsman in April 2014, she supported people with IDD by coordinating services for state and community intermediate care facilities as well as home and community-based service providers. She also served as a Qualified IDD Professional and the Human Rights Officer at the San Antonio SSLC. Ms. Hicks is a certified Person Centered Thinking trainer and People Planning Together trainer with The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices. Ms. Hicks supports Texans to live the lives they envision for themselves and is a valued resource for Texans with disabilities, their families and service providers, and the community.

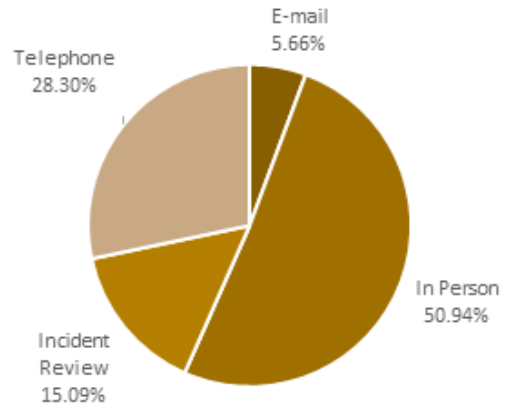
Number of Contacts by Type
San Antonio



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?
San Antonio



How was the Contact Made?
San Antonio



Contacts that were Not Referred
San Antonio



