



Office of the  
Independent Ombudsman  
for State Supported Living Centers



# 2020 Biannual Report

*July – December*



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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.



Toll-free 1-877-323-6466  
SSLC.Ombudsman@hhs.texas.gov  
[sslc-independent-ombudsman.texas.gov](http://sslc-independent-ombudsman.texas.gov)

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## Executive Summary

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Since the creation of the Office of the Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Centers by the 81st Legislature, the Office has been dedicated to advocating for and protecting the rights and welfare of state supported living center residents and responding to the needs of their families and loved ones. This biannual report which reflects the work of the Office from July 1 through December 31, 2020, has been the most difficult and unique period in the twelve-year history of our Office. This six months has been shaped and dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the various consequences and responses demanded by this event. Like everyone, it has forced our Office, the residents and their families, and the SSLC staff, to change the way we approach our everyday lives, our daily responsibilities, and our work. Our legislative mandate calls on our Office to improve the quality of the lives of the residents and support positive outcomes for them through our work. Each day residents, families, guardians and staff turn to the ombudsmen for assistance in helping residents live meaningful lives, protecting and advocating for the rights of individuals at their request or on their behalf, and helping to guide them by answering complex questions and evaluating the policies and practices of the centers. The edict, agency and commitment of our office and the ombudsmen at the centers has never been greater than during this time.

In my executive summary of our last biannual report I stated, “The isolation of the residents and the restrictions of family visitation are issues impacting the well-being of residents and causing great hardship for their loved ones.” The impact of the pandemic has dominated the work of our office throughout the last year. As is evident by the data in our report, the concerns of residents and their families have been affected in many respects by the crisis. To proactively respond to the anxieties of families during this time, we reached out twice to families and guardians of the residents. In our first correspondence I personally outlined the scope and responsibilities of our Office and provided my direct contact information to them. As a follow up months later, the Assistant Independent Ombudsmen reached out to each residents’ family, or primary contact person by mail, and provided their contact information and explained their remote working circumstances. With our outreach, families were informed of our role and of the help we could provide them during the pandemic and on an ongoing basis.

One of the duties of our office is to provide recommendations to improve the services at the centers. This is continually done by each local ombudsman to their respective centers’ administrators. Recognizing the challenges experienced by the agency and administrations of the centers, as well as in consideration of the worry of residents and their families, I would urge increased transparency and communication to alleviate the uncertainty and anxiety due to this ongoing crisis. I wish to thank the diligent and selfless work of the SSLC staff, the ombudsmen and my staff. I am grateful for the continued support and confidence of Governor Abbott and his staff.

Respectfully Submitted,



George P. Bithos D.D.S., Ph.D.  
Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Center

George P. Bithos D.D.S., Ph.D.

Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Center

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 was appointed the Independent Ombudsman for SSLCs in February 2010 by Governor Perry. Dr. Bithos is certified as a Person Centered Thinking trainer and coach by The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices. He is also certified to facilitate Trauma-Informed Care training. George and Ria have been married for over forty years, have two grown and married children and five fabulous grandchildren. They enjoy traveling, cooking entertaining and the arts.



## Central Office

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Candace Jennings  
Deputy Independent Ombudsman

Ms. Jennings joined as Deputy Independent Ombudsman in 2010, working alongside Dr. Bithos to establish the newly appointed office. 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 began serving people with developmental disabilities in direct care as a college student in San Marcos, Texas. 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. As Deputy Independent Ombudsman, she partners with the Independent Ombudsman to lead with compassion, integrity, and fairness.



Carrie Martin  
Operations Program Manager

Ms. Martin has 10+ years' experience pursuing social justice issues and over five 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 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. Ms. 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 certified in Mediation and SAMA (Satori Alternatives to Managing Aggression). She accepted the position of Assistant Independent Ombudsman for the central office in 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



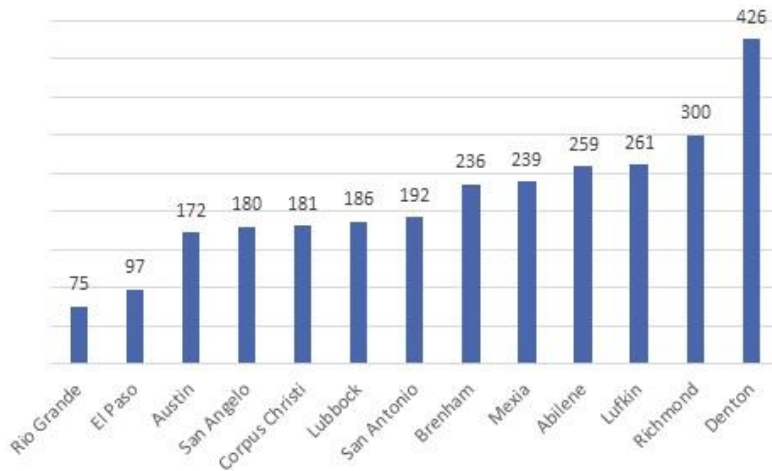
Jessica Rosa was born and raised in Austin, TX. She attended Austin Community College and Concordia University where she studied Finance. She began her professional career working for several financial institutions providing banking services for the community. She eventually moved on to work for D&S 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 2,804 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 supported to work and participate in their communities, as well. Demographic data provided in this report were obtained January 1, 2021 and are according to the Health and Specialty Care System division of Texas Health and Human Services, which manages the centers.

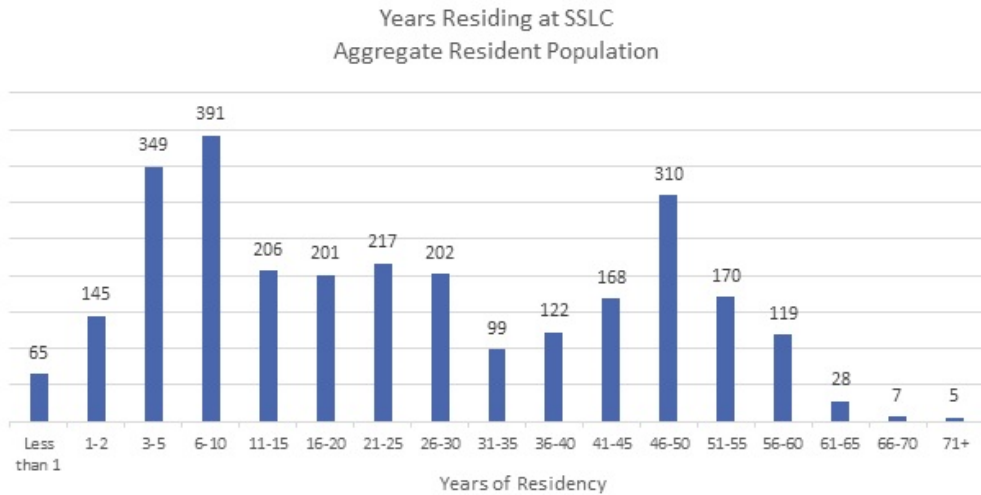
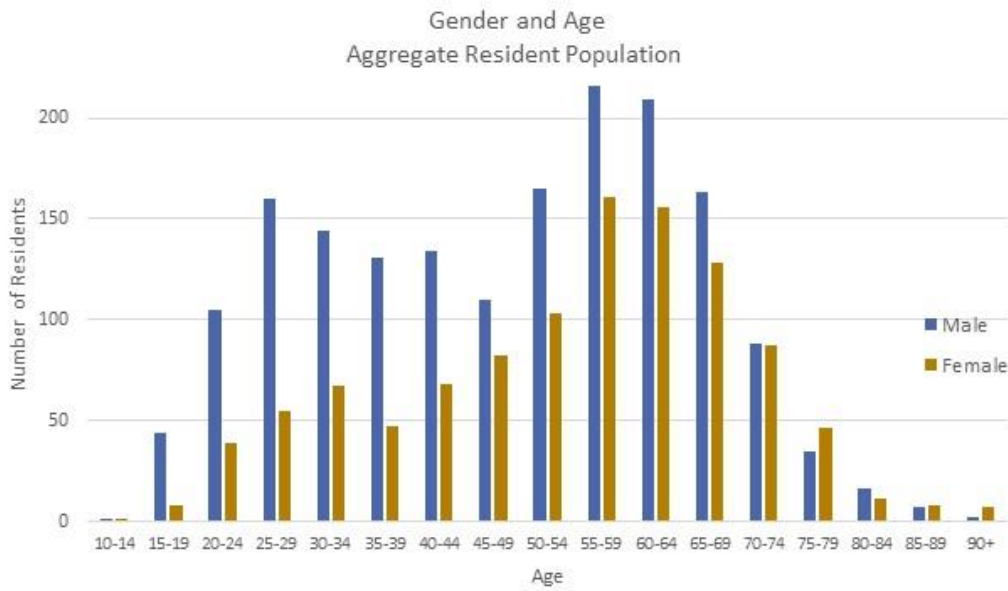


Resident Census by SSLC



The census of the SSLC resident population consists of 1,730 males and 1,074 females. There are more males residing at the SSLCs than females in every age category except in the older ages. There are 598 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 105 residents who are under the age of 22, which includes 22 minors.





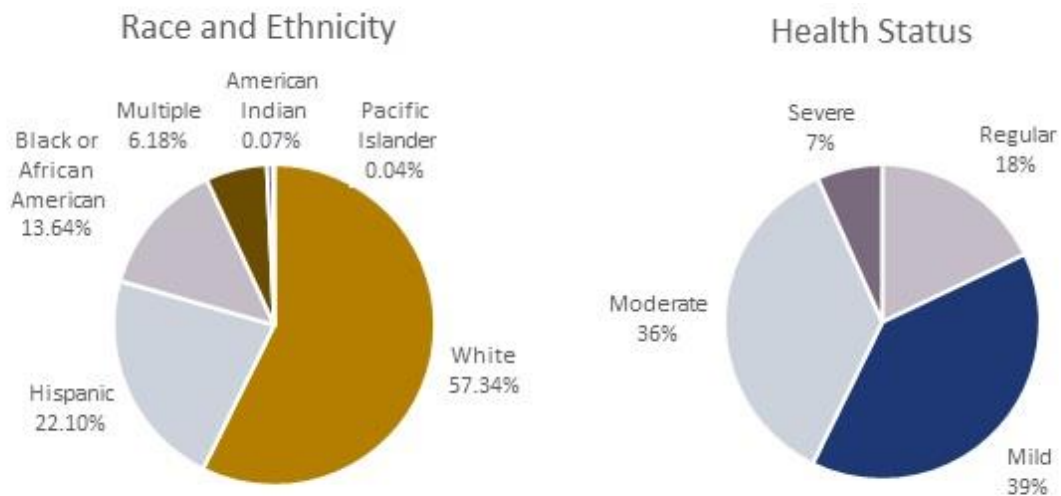
More than half of all residents have lived at the SSLC for over 20 years. The earliest admission by a living resident took place in 1942 when the resident was a child. There are 505 current residents who were admitted to the SSLC when they were under the age of 13. Most residents who have lived there since childhood were admitted before 1980, which reflects the limited residential service options for people with intellectual and development disabilities during that time. In 2020, there were 65 admissions and the median age was 29.

The SSLC with the highest number of admissions was Mexia, where 23 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 155 residents who are alleged criminal offenders. Although nine SSLCs serve one or more residents who were alleged to have committed a criminal offense, 70% of the SSLC residents who are alleged offenders reside at Mexia SSLC. San Angelo SSLC was recently designated as a forensic services center as well and currently serves 27 alleged offenders. There are 108 at Mexia SSLC and four alleged offenders there have been determined to be a high risk of danger to themselves or others and require a highly restrictive environment.

Irrespective of age, 43% of the total 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 on a daily basis. There are 188 residents' health status that are designated as severe.

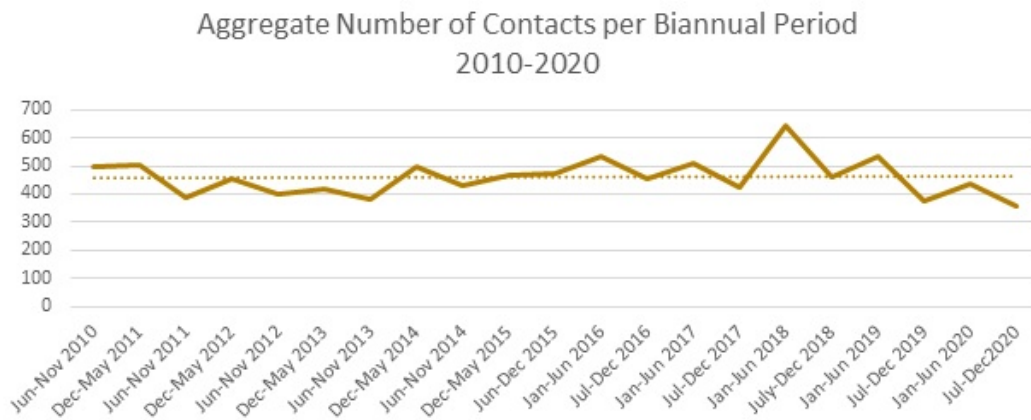
Race and ethnicity demographic data are provided to acknowledge the identity and culture of residents. The majority of the SSLC population identifies as white at 57%. There are 22% of residents who are Hispanic. Approximately 14% of residents identify as black or African American. There are 173 residents who have been recorded as being multiple races or ethnicities.



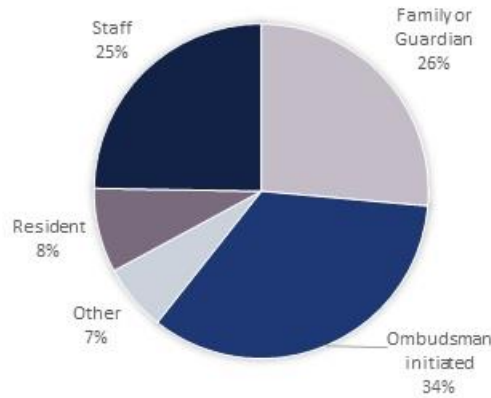
## Duties and Activity of the Office

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 on a routine basis which includes making recommendations to the SSLC administration. A secure online database is utilized to record and track all contacts made directly to the ombudsman and cases documenting the concerns and actions of the ombudsman. For the biannual period of July 1 to December 31, 2020, there were a total of 356 contacts.

The second biannual period of 2020 continues to pose challenges to services because of limited access to residents due to the ongoing pandemic. Physical presence and observation by the ombudsman are crucial to performing the duties of the office. The ombudsmen limit visits to residents’ homes and work places to prevent the spread of COVID-19, depending on the center’s pandemic status. However, the ombudsmen 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. Although efforts to remain accessible were on-going, there was a decrease in contacts during this biannual period.



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman?



Most recorded contacts during this biannual period were concerns the ombudsman identified and investigated. The ombudsmen increased efforts to engage residents, staff, and family members to maintain accessibility and promote awareness. Through these efforts, they actively advocated for the protection and welfare of residents during a challenging time.

The Texas governor enacted visitation restrictions at all long-term care facilities, which includes the SSLCs, to protect the health and safety of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic. Considering the family members' concerns for the welfare of residents during this emotionally challenging time, the Office conducted outreach by mail to apprise family members of the ombudsman's availability. Additionally, the ombudsmen participated in town hall meetings hosted by SSLC directors to promote awareness of the Office and remained cognizant of the changing regulations on visitation. Thus, the ombudsmen received complaints and requests for assistance in advocating for their loved ones. The percentage of contacts made by family members and guardians significantly exceeded the amount historically experienced by the Office. In the first biannual period of 2020, contacts made by family members were 14% of the total contacts. In this biannual period, 26% of all contacts were made by family members and guardians.

Conversely, the volume of contacts made by residents were much lower than previous biannual periods. In both biannual periods of 2019, residents contacted the ombudsman for assistance in 182 documented cases. Due to the ombudsman's decrease in physical presence on the SSLC campus, resident-initiated contacts decreased to 85 in 2020.

Likewise, a physical presence on campus affected the likelihood for staff members to contact the ombudsman. This biannual period 88 staff members directly contacted the ombudsman to report a concern or to request consultation. In the previous biannual period, 125 staff members initiated

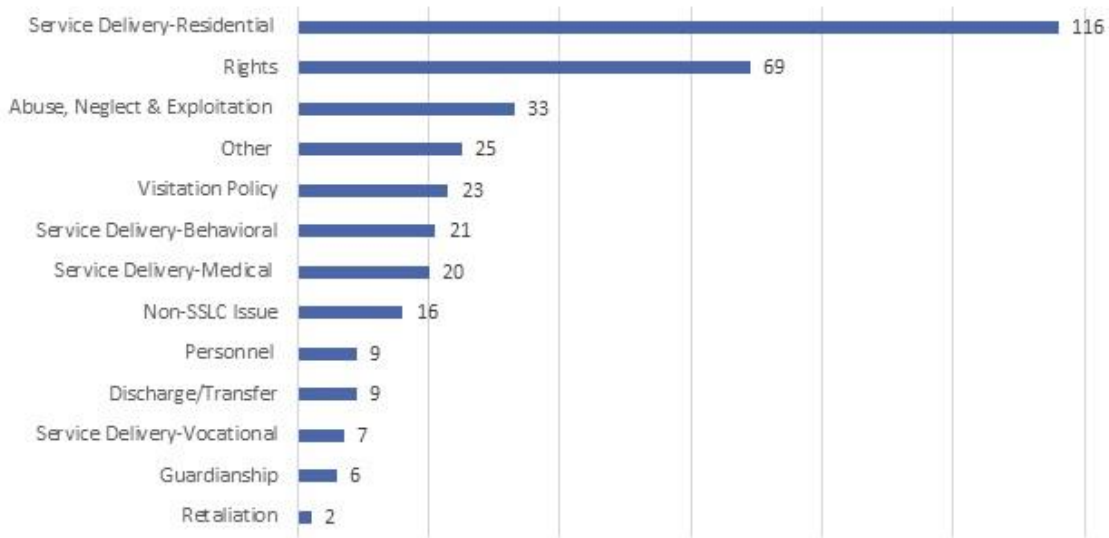
contact, bringing the total to 213 staff contacts in 2020. In 2019, 283 contacts were initiated by staff members.

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. Excluding these referrals, the office handled 325 cases. Consults and inquiries are contacts made to the ombudsman that do not require an investigation. Complaints investigated by the ombudsmen made up 91% of all contacts for this biannual period.



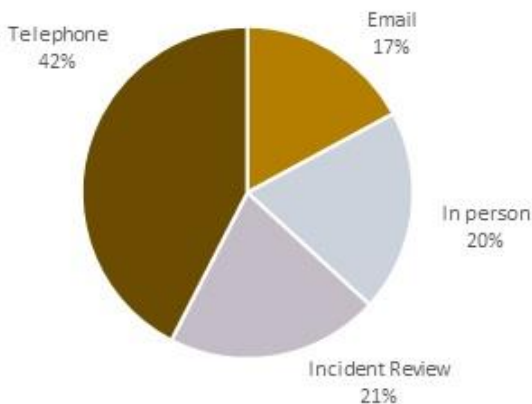
Staff, residents, family members, and others contact the ombudsman for concerns that impact residents’ lives. For this biannual period, most concerns were about residential service delivery. These documented concerns were about staffing, activity programming, clothing, meals, daily routine, hygiene, 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. The ombudsman provides 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 at [sslc-independent-ombudsman.texas.gov](http://sslc-independent-ombudsman.texas.gov) that explains the role of our office and provides contact information.

### How was the Ombudsman Contacted?



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 investigative reports, and monitors actions taken by the SSLC after each incident. In total, the ombudsmen reviewed 1,856 incident investigations this biannual period. From these reviews, there were 74 cases where a concern was identified that required additional investigation by the ombudsman.

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 evaluating staff to client ratios. Due to the pandemic, the 2020 annual program review was modified, and the reviews were conducted remotely. Ombudsmen also collected data at each SSLC throughout the year. During the ongoing data collection period, ombudsmen gathered information from 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, as well as reviewed thousands of documents related to residents' rights and restrictions. The results of these activities are captured in an annual report. Details and findings from the 2020 Program Review will be published in March 2020, and will include findings from the following:

- 228 staff to resident ratio observations (both in person and virtual)
- 156 DSP on-the-job training surveys
- 317 rights restriction determination (RRD) document reviews
- 2,214 HRC document reviews

# Abilene State Supported Living Center

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## Jill Antilley, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

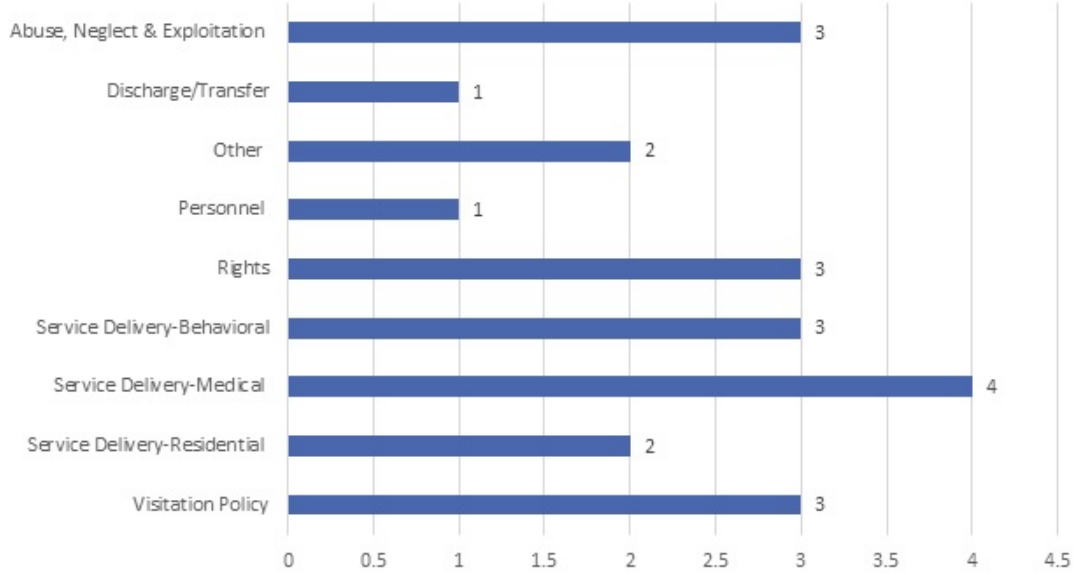


Jill Antilley has served residents at the Abilene State Supported Living Center for 18 years. Her career began in the Recreation Department as a direct-care staff in 2000 while attending college at Hardin Simmons University (HSU). Ms. Antilley graduated from HSU in 2000 with a Bachelor's degree in Police 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.

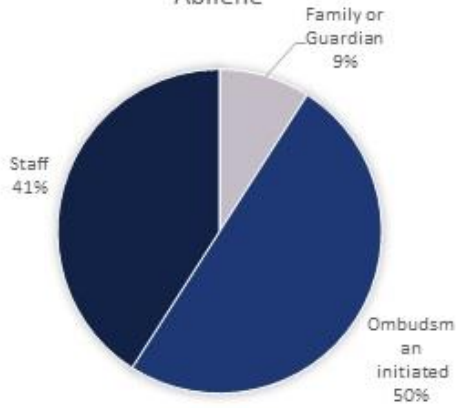




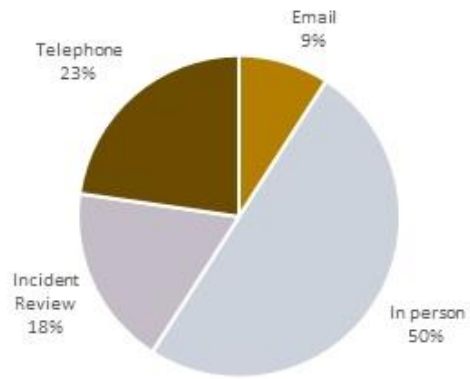
## Number of Contacts by Type Abilene



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? Abilene



### How was the Contact Made? Abilene



# Austin State Supported Living Center

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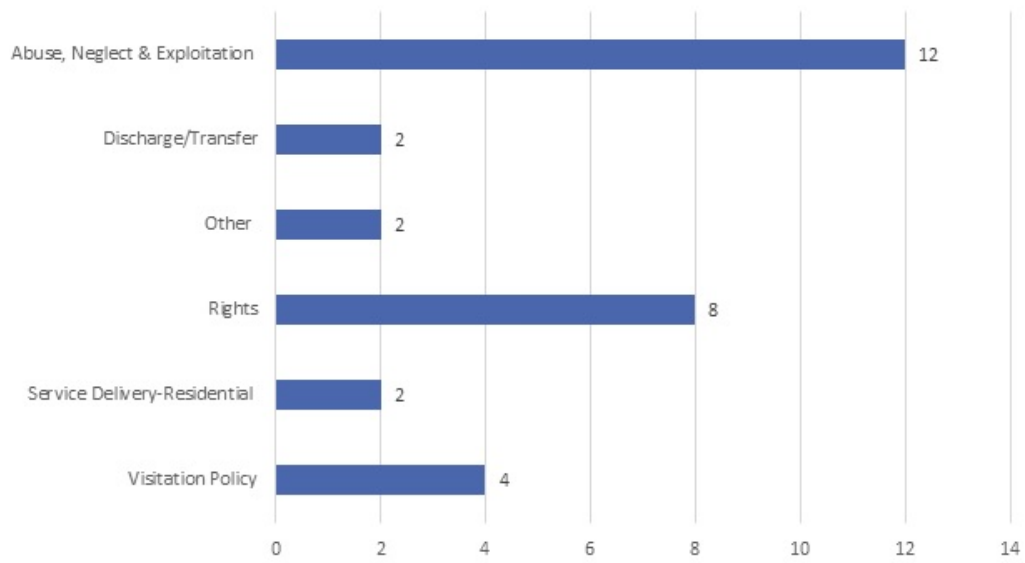
## Talya Hines, Assistant Independent Ombudsman



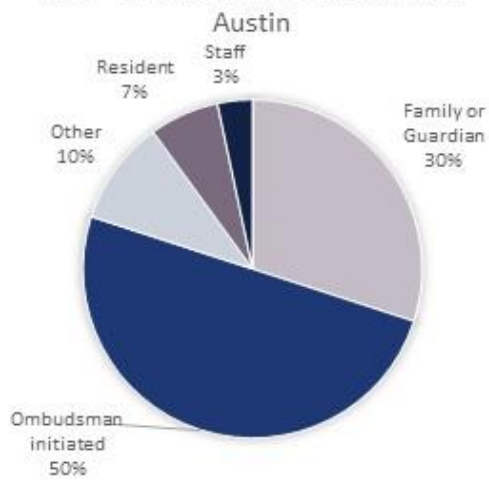
Ms. Hines was born and raised in Grayson County, Texas, and resides in Pflugerville with her family. Ms. Hines earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology and a Master of Science Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of North Texas. She began her professional career at the Department 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.



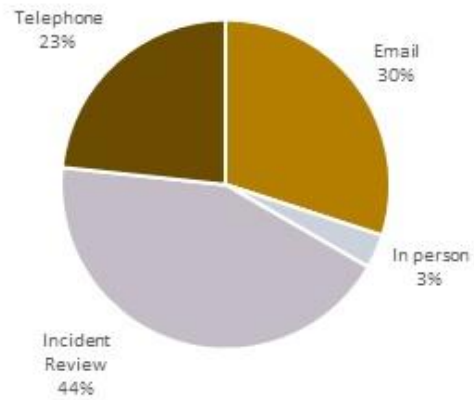
## Number of Contacts by Type Austin



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? Austin



### How was the Contact Made? Austin



# Brenham State Supported Living Center

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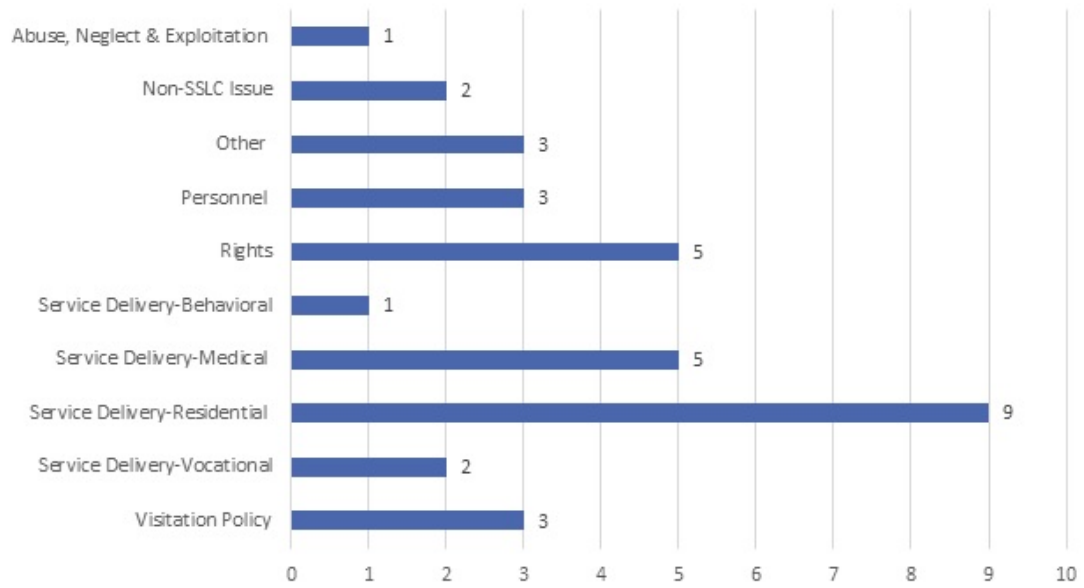
## Susan Aguilar, Assistant Independent Ombudsman



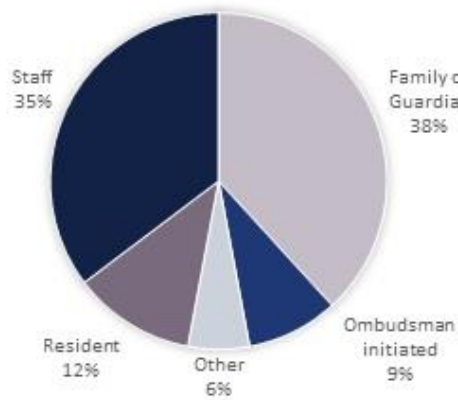
Susan Aguilar earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Texas Lutheran University. She worked in the field of early childhood intervention prior to obtaining the position of Qualified Developmentally Disabled Professional at the Brenham State Supported Living Center. While at the Center, 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.



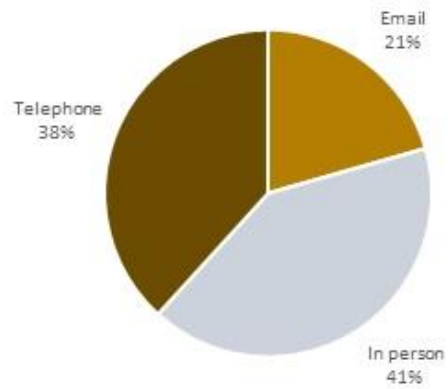
### Number of Contacts by Type Brenham



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? Brenham



### How was the Contact Made? Brenham



# Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center

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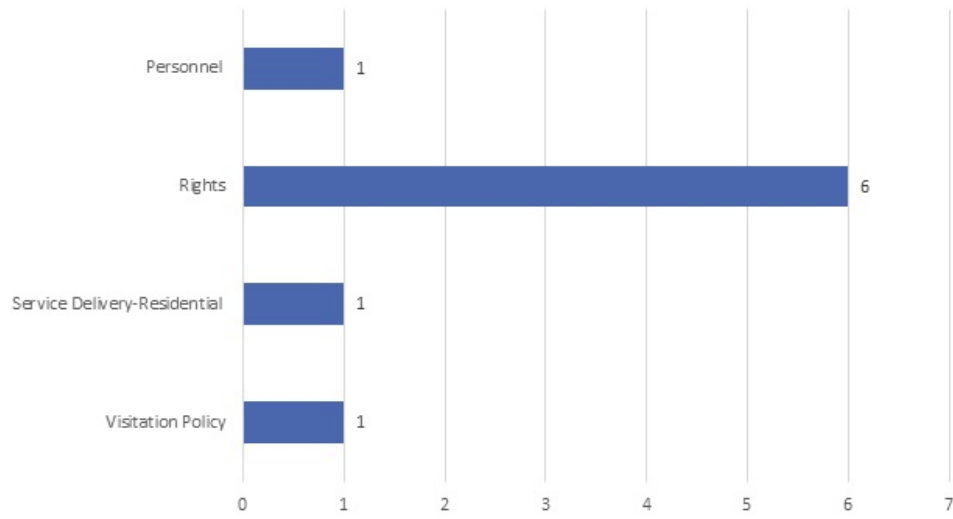
## Kellen Davis, Assistant Independent Ombudsman



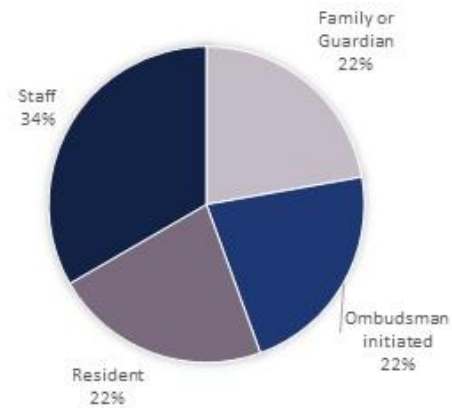
Ms. Davis's career began in 1988 while going to school at Howard Payne University. She worked for the Texas Youth Commission as the Recreation Supervisor. She graduated from HPU with a degree in Physical Education and a minor in English. She went on to work for the TYC for 15 years in various roles. 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.



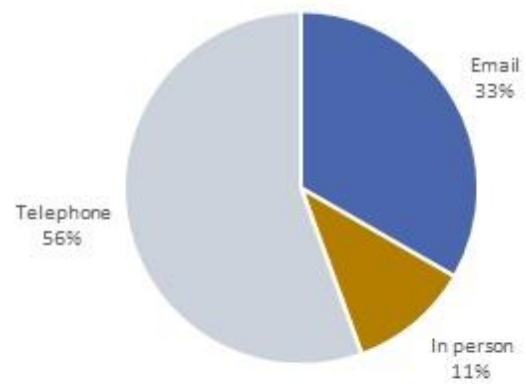
### Number of Contacts by Type Corpus Christi



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? Corpus Christi



### How was the Contact Made? Corpus Christi



# Denton State Supported Living Center

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## Edward Leal, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

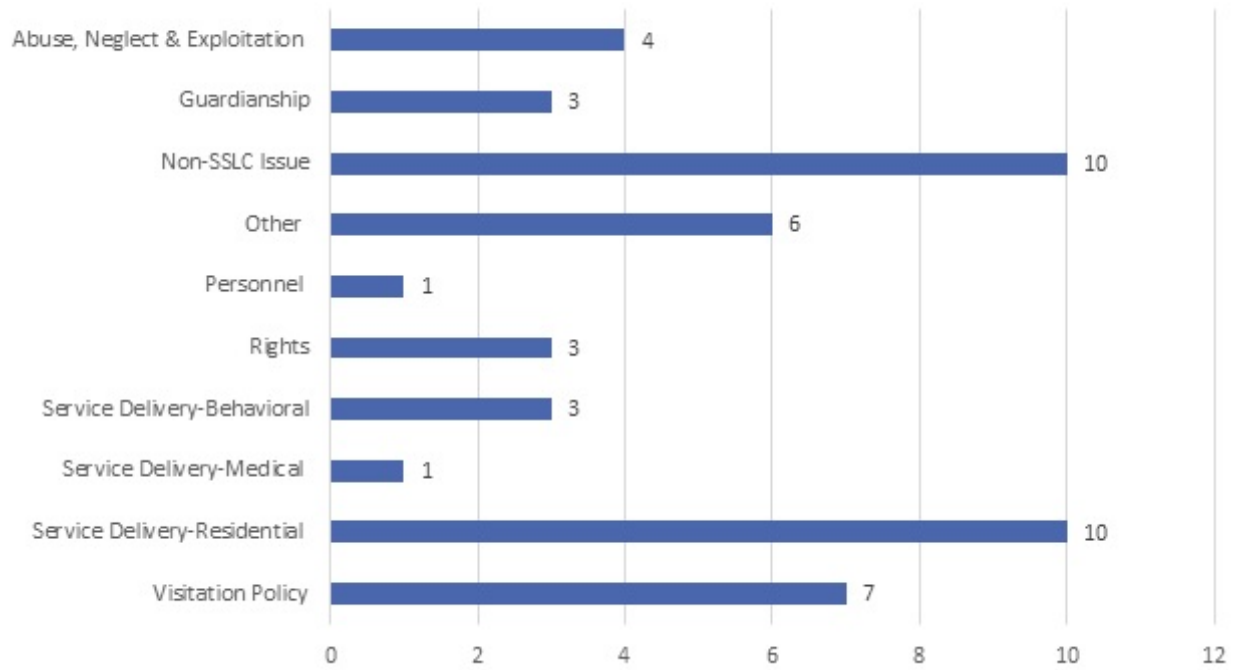


Edward Leal began his career in 2009 at the Denton SSLC where he served both as a Direct Support Professional and the Administrative Assistant to the Center Director for almost a decade. Edward then served as a Civil Rights Specialist where he received extensive training and experience conducting complex 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.

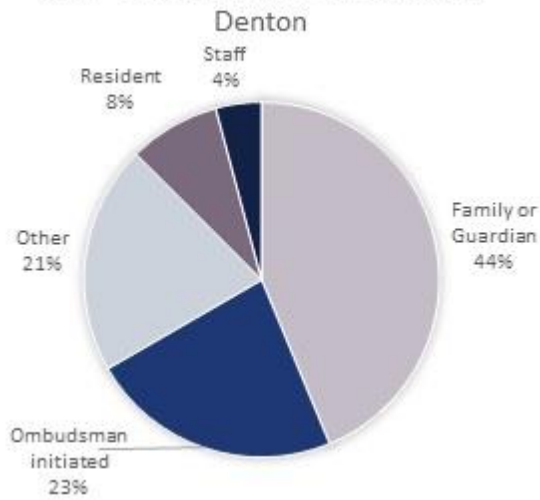




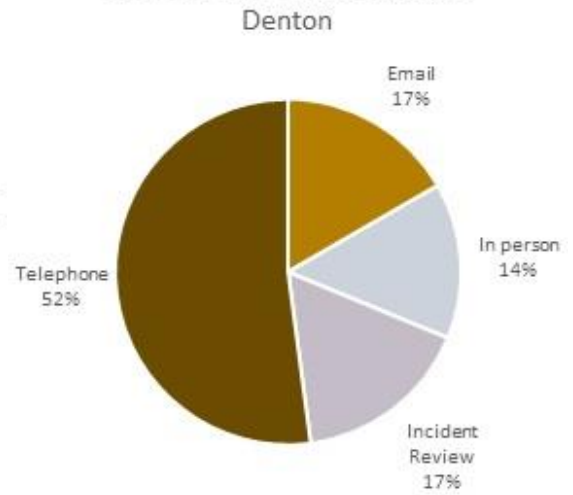
## Number of Contacts by Type Denton



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman?



### How was the Contact Made?



# El Paso State Supported Living Center

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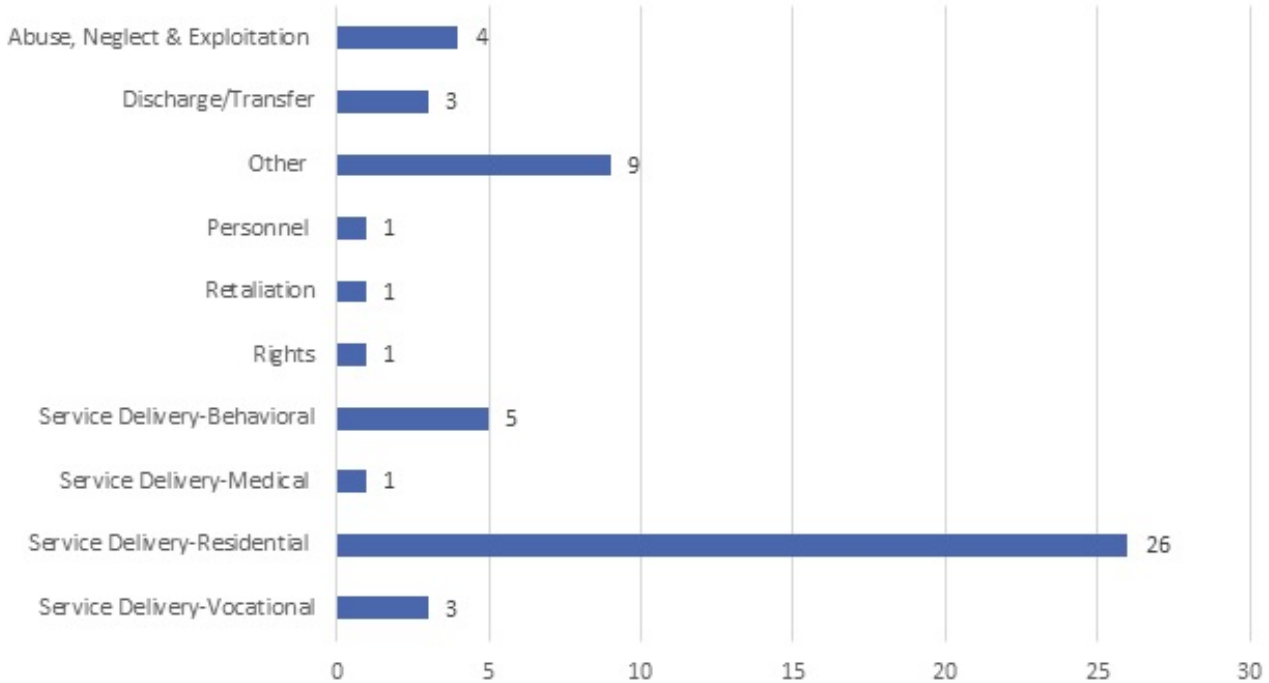
## Isabel Ponce, Assistant Independent Ombudsman



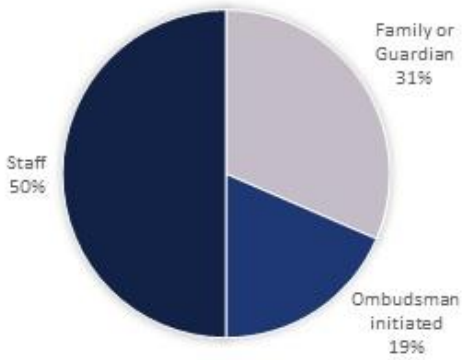
Born and raised in the Sun City, Ms. Ponce went from serving the elderly population to working with children. She was employed by the El Paso Headstart Program where she provided social services to children and their families through Community Outreach. Later she came to serve adults with developmental disabilities as a Residential Director in the private sector. Once she became a Certified Internal Investigator, she began working as a Case Manager for a Home and Community-based Services Provider. After seven years, Ms. Ponce joined the Office of the Independent Ombudsman in December 2010 as the AIO for the El Paso State Supported Living Center.



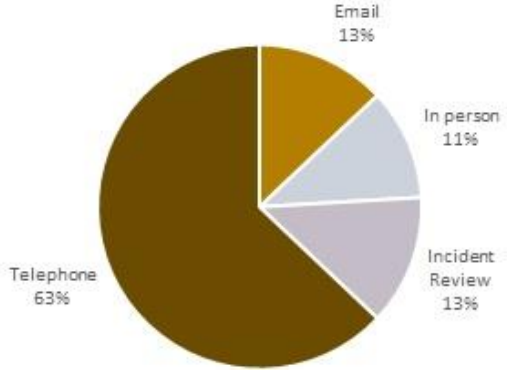
## Number of Contacts by Type El Paso



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? El Paso



### How was the Contact Made? El Paso



# Lubbock State Supported Living Center

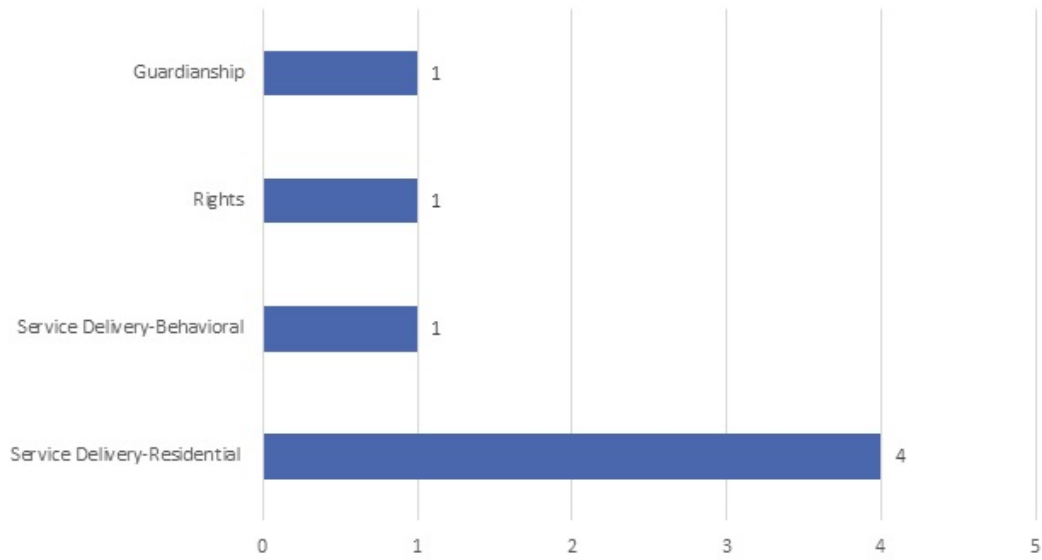
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## James Clark, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

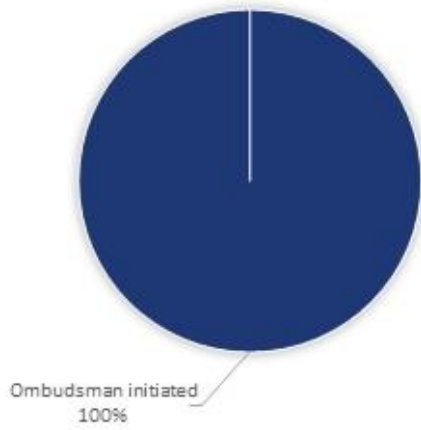
James Clark was born and raised in Lubbock, Texas, and resides in Lubbock with his family. Mr. Clark earned a Bachelor of Applied Science Degree in Human Services from Wayland Baptist University. He began his career with the State of Texas at the Lubbock State School as a Direct Support Professional 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.



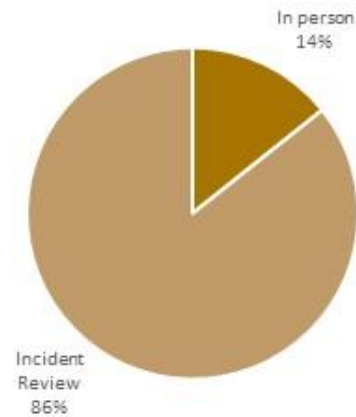
Number of Contacts by Type  
Lubbock



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?  
Lubbock



How was the Contact Made?  
Lubbock



# Lufkin State Supported Living Center

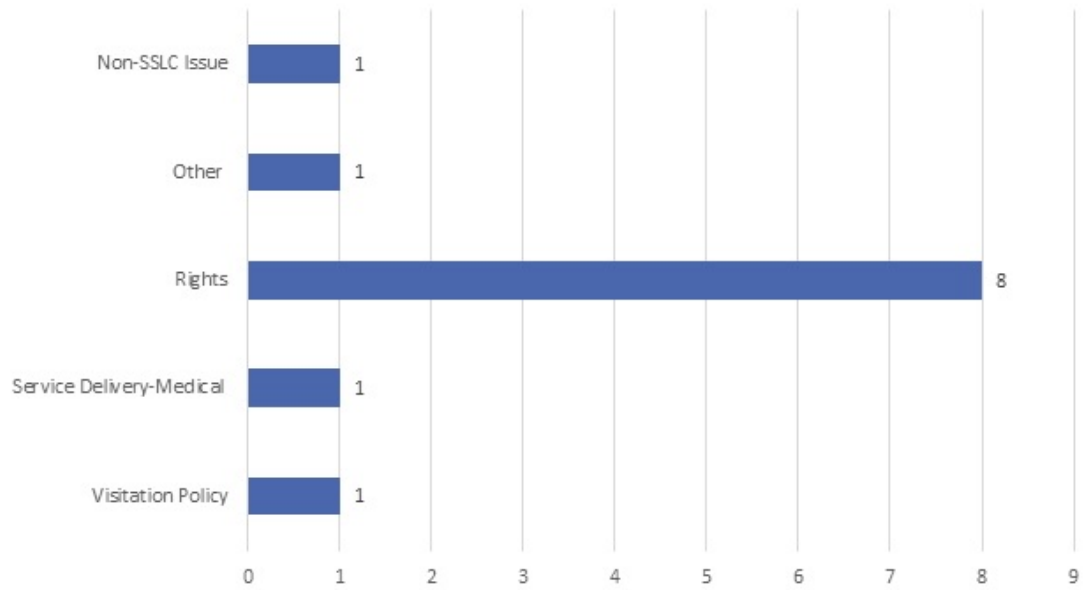
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## Seth Bowman, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

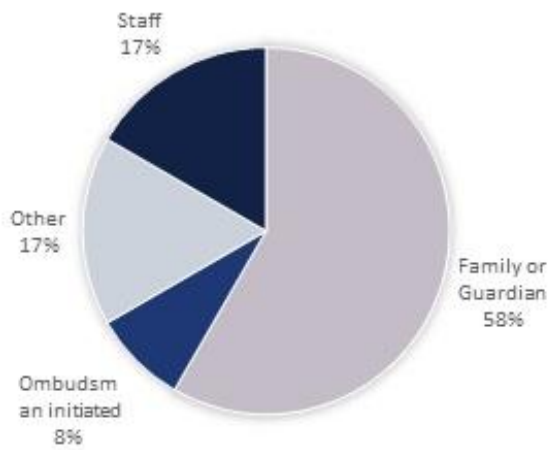
Raised in Lufkin, Texas, Seth Bowman attended Stephen F. Austin State University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communication. After graduation in 2011, he began his professional career with Texas Health and Human Services as a Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional for the Lufkin State 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.



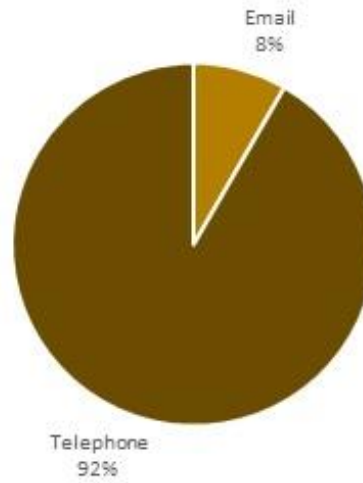
Number of Contacts by Type  
Lufkin



Who Contacted the Ombudsman?  
Lufkin



How was the Contact Made?  
Lufkin



# Mexia State Supported Living Center

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## Adam Parks, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

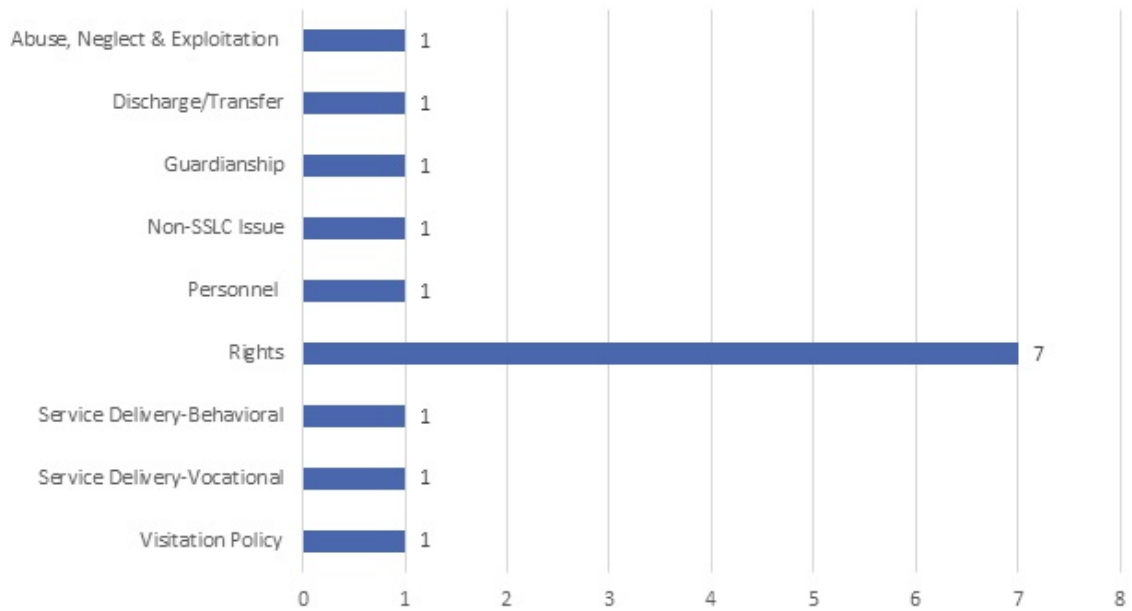


Adam Parks was raised in Mexia, Texas. He attended Stephen F. Austin State University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. After graduation, he began his professional career as a conservatorship caseworker for the Department of Family and Protective Services in Angelina and Shelby County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



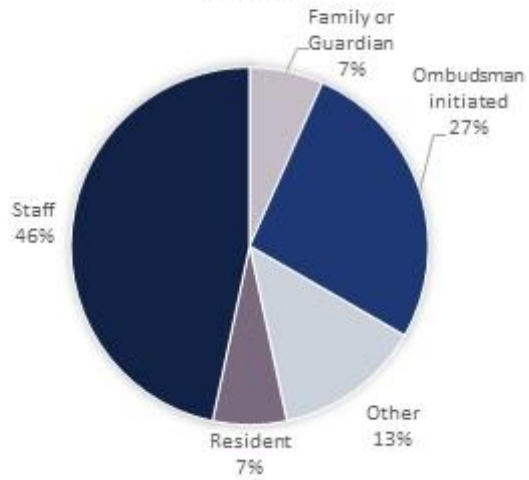


## Number of Contacts by Type Mexia



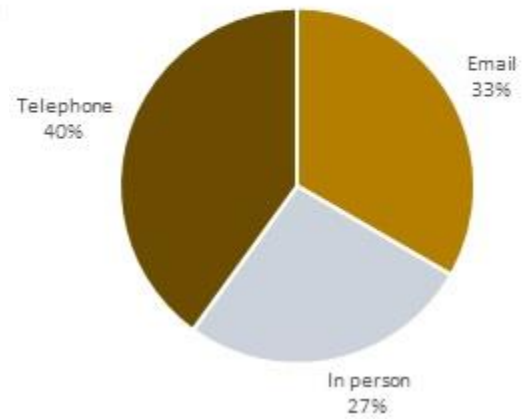
### Who Contacted the Ombudsman?

Mexia



### How was the Contact Made?

Mexia



# Richmond State Supported Living Center

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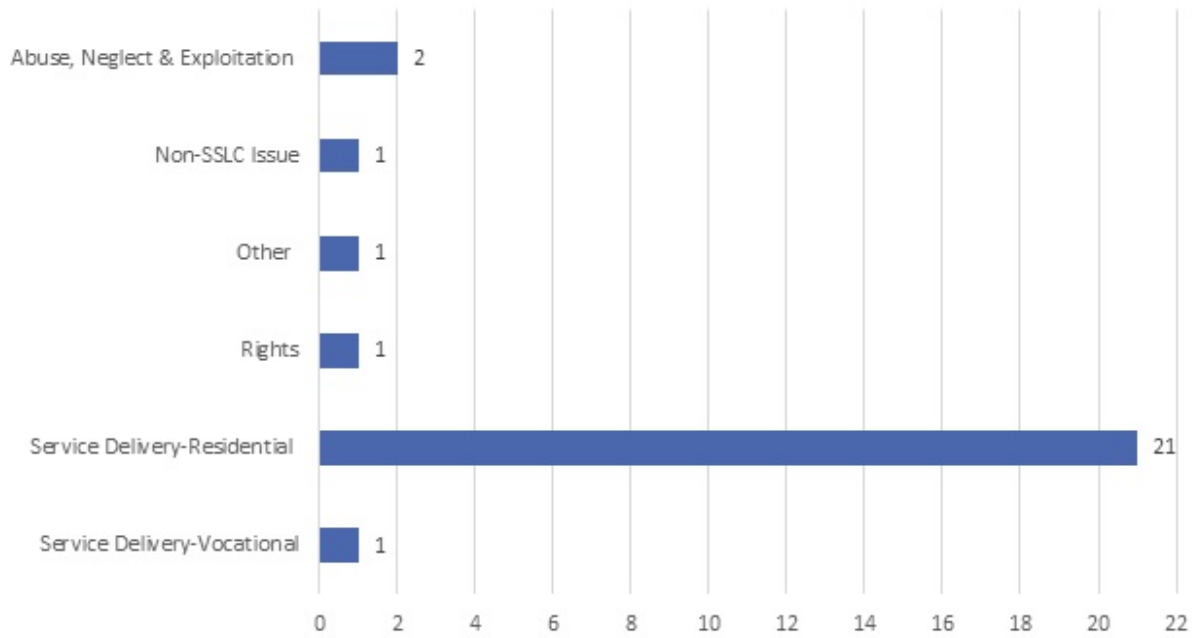
## Deatrice Potlow, Assistant Independent Ombudsman



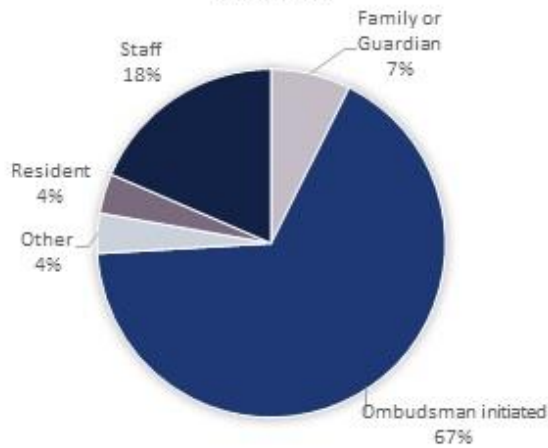
Born and raised in Greenwood, Mississippi, Ms. Potlow earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Office Administration in 1997. Shortly after graduating she began working at a local hospital as a Medical Transcriptionist. She relocated to Houston, Texas for career advancement and began a career with the 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.



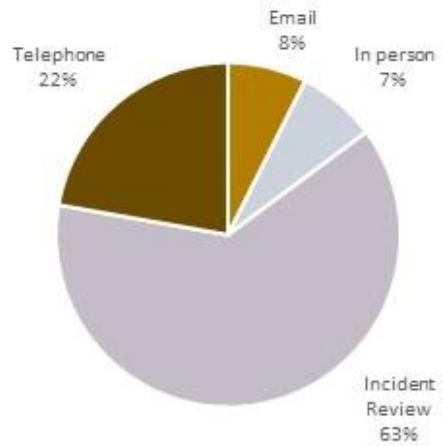
## Number of Contacts by Type Richmond



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? Richmond



### How was the Contact Made? Richmond



## Rio Grande State Center

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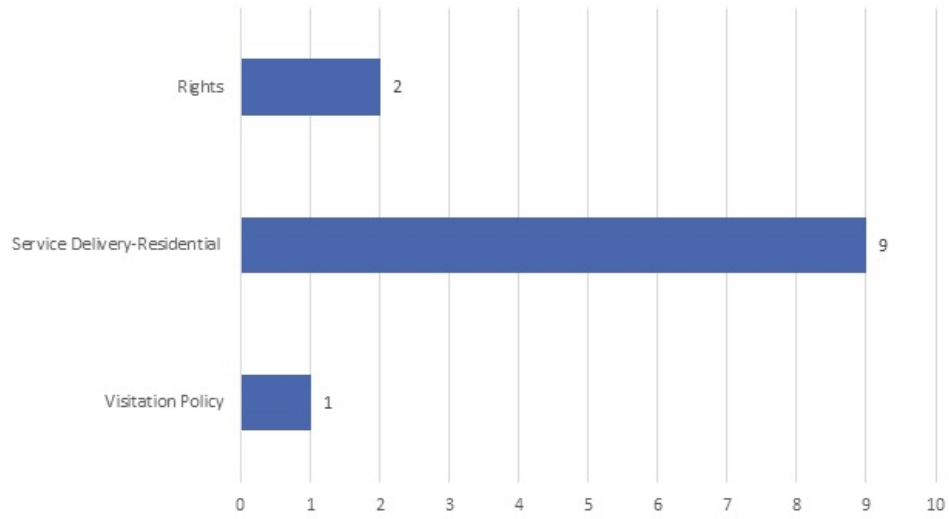
### Horacio Flores, Assistant Independent Ombudsman



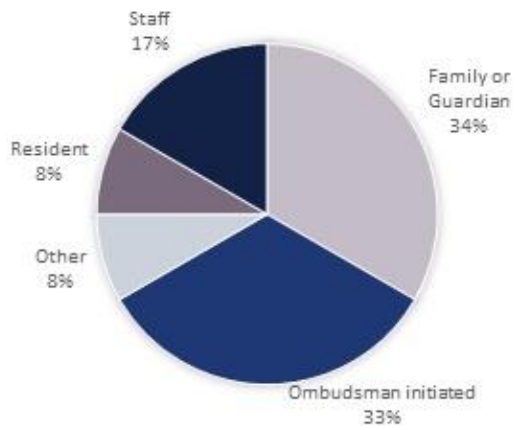
Horacio Flores hails from the Rio Grande Valley and attended Texas A&M Kingsville where he earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology. He began his career with the State of Texas working for the Department of Family and Protective Services as an Investigator for Child Protective Services in Nueces, 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.



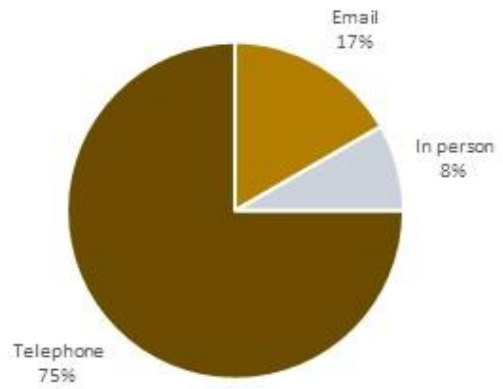
### Number of Contacts by Type Rio Grande



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? Rio Grande



### How was the Contact Made? Rio Grande



# San Angelo State Supported Living Center

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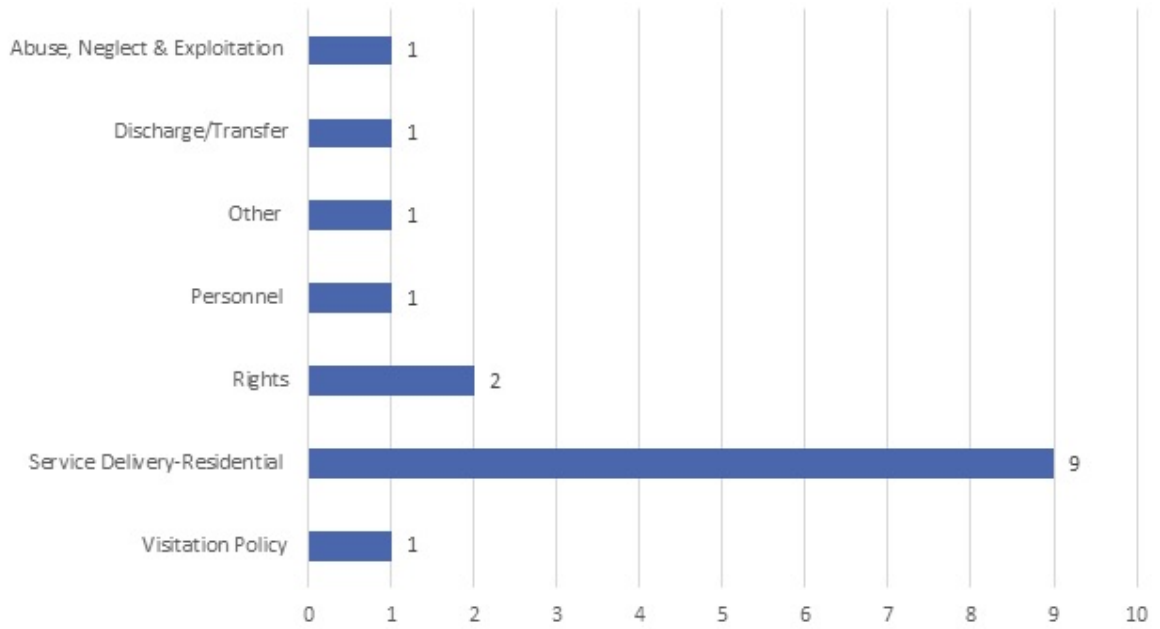
## Brenda Frausto, Assistant Independent Ombudsman



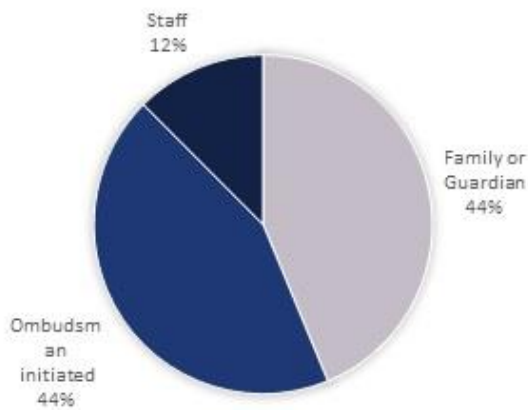
Ms. Frausto obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology with a minor in Sociology from Angelo State University. She began her career at the San Angelo SSLC in 1991 as an active treatment provider then later assumed the role of Admission and Placement Coordinator. Ms. Frausto was also the Admission 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.



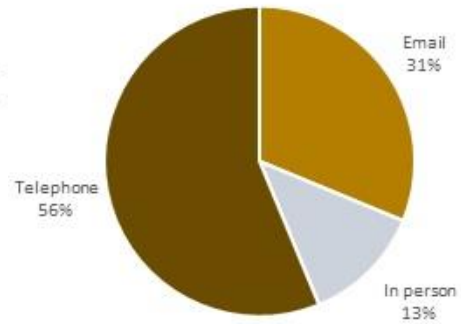
## Number of Contacts by Type San Angelo



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? San Angelo



### How was the Contact Made? San Angelo



# San Antonio State Supported Living Center

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## Gevona Hicks, Assistant Independent Ombudsman

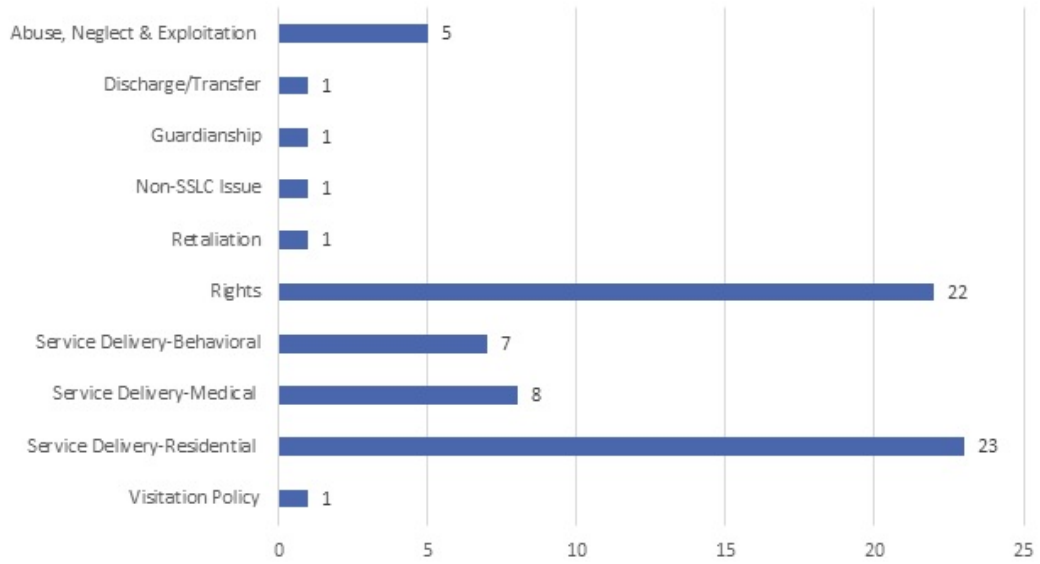


A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Ms. Hicks received her Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a certificate in Gerontology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She relocated to San Antonio, Texas in 2001 and worked with infants and toddlers at a local children's shelter. She began her career supporting children and adults with developmental disabilities providing direct care and then as a case manager, supervising multiple group homes in San Antonio for an Intermediate Care Facility and Home and Community Service provider. Ms. Hicks began her employment with the state of Texas in 2006 at Austin SSLC prior to transferring to San Antonio SSLC where she worked as a QIDP and Human Rights Officer prior to joining the Office of the Independent Ombudsman for State Supported Living Centers in April 2014. Ms. Hicks is a certified Person Centered Thinking trainer with The Learning Community for Person Centered Practices.

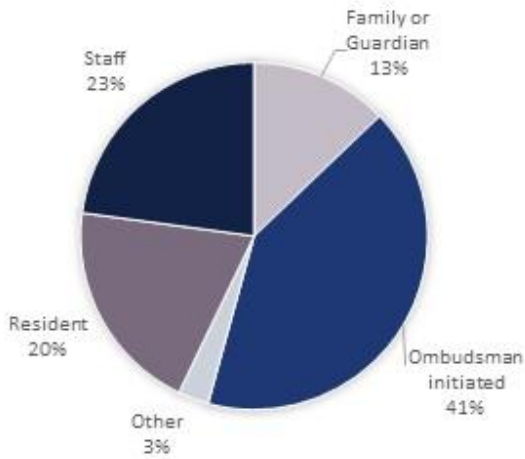




### Number of Contacts by Type San Antonio



### Who Contacted the Ombudsman? San Antonio



### How was the Contact Made? San Antonio

