



Office of
**Developmental
Disabilities**
Ombuds

Legislative intent SB 6564

- ▶ "The legislature finds and declares that the prevalence of the abuse and neglect of individuals with developmental disabilities has become an issue that negatively affects the health and well-being of such individuals."

Two approaches to the problem:

- ▶ Increase visitation of clients through enhanced case management in Developmental Disabilities Administration and
- ▶ Create independent Office of the Developmental Disabilities Ombuds - Disability Rights Washington chosen as contractor in 2017.

DD Ombuds created - [RCW 43.382](#)

- ▶ Private, non-profit contracting with the State (Department of Commerce)
- ▶ Independent of the service system
- ▶ Provide DD Ombuds services statewide
- ▶ Exercise independence and authority
- ▶ Protect confidentiality

Who Do We Serve?

- ▶ People with Developmental Disabilities
 - ▶ Children
 - ▶ Adults
 - ▶ All living arrangements
 - ▶ Receiving any state service

Powers and Duties

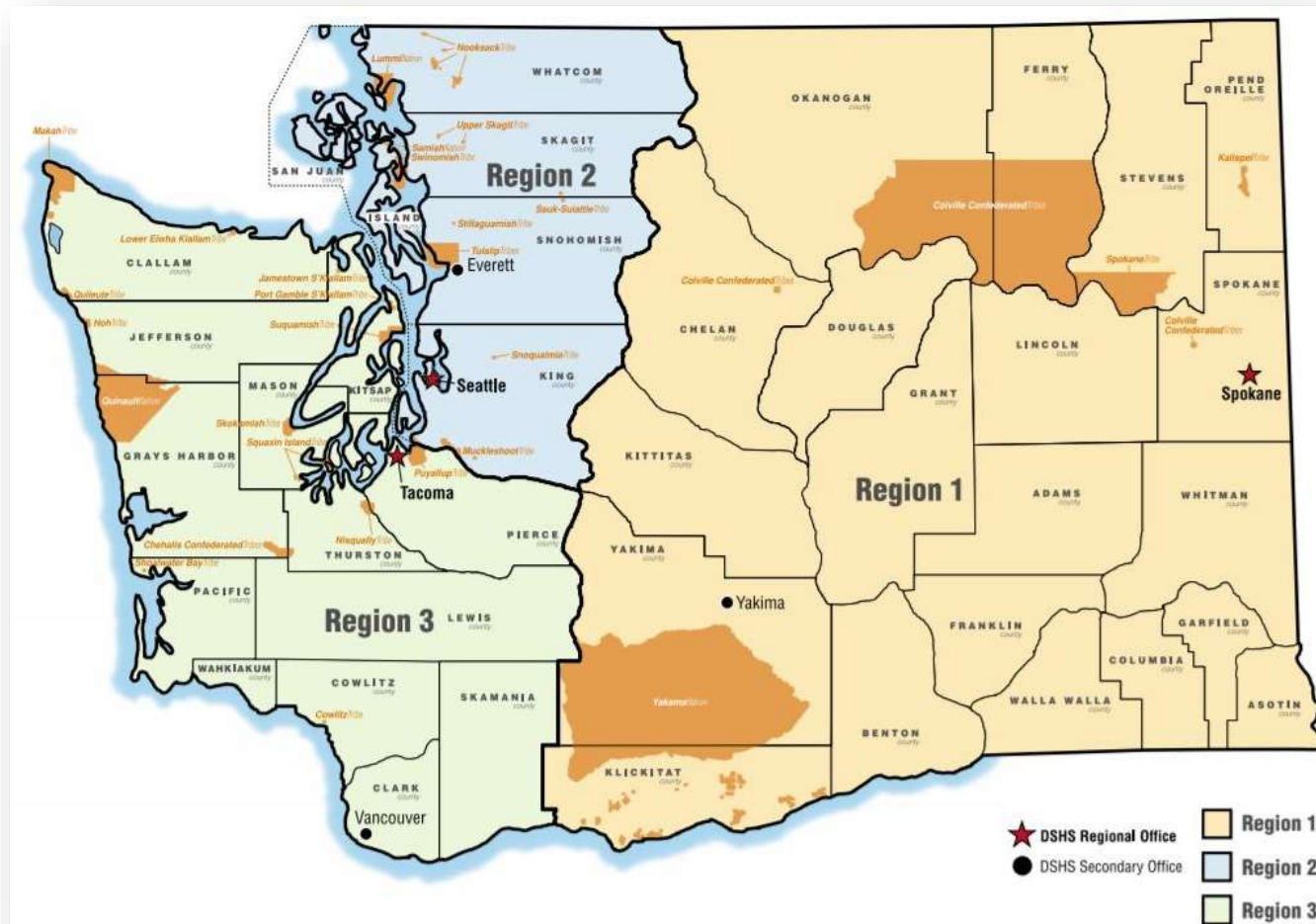
- ▶ Provide information on rights and responsibilities
- ▶ Investigate complaints
- ▶ Address complaints and resolve issues at the lowest level possible
- ▶ Monitor service delivery
- ▶ Review state institutions, state-licensed facilities, and residences
- ▶ Report on services to people with developmental disabilities
- ▶ Publish reports on systemic issues to the legislature
- ▶ Make recommendations for changes in policy and procedures.

Plans for Growth

- ▶ Specific requirement to expand the program to use volunteers
- ▶ Model program on the Long-term Care Ombuds program - Regional Ombuds, Paid staff, Significant volunteer force.

DD Ombuds Regions

DD Ombuds offices in Spokane, Seattle and Olympia



DD Ombuds

- ▶ Works for the interests of people with developmental disabilities.
- ▶ Informs the legislature to ensure safe, quality services.
- ▶ Reaches people with developmental disabilities who may not have a way to contact us.
- ▶ Focus on issues of abuse and neglect.

DD Ombuds Video

▶ <https://ddombuds.org/videos/>

Some of what we did last year.

- ▶ Developed information on rights and responsibilities.
- ▶ 106 training and outreach events reaching over 2,000 people.
- ▶ Monitored 348 residences and facilities.
- ▶ Handled 130 individual complaints and 17 group complaints benefitting 345 people.
- ▶ Identified systemic issues

Systemic issues identified for continued work include:

- ▶ Systemic Report: [“Diverting Crisis - Maintaining housing and supports for people with developmental disabilities”](#);
- ▶ Systemic Report: [“Stuck in the Hospital”](#);
- ▶ Staff shortages and staff turnover in certified residential settings;
- ▶ Access to activities and social engagement;
- ▶ Access to behavioral supports and access to mental health care;
- ▶ Simplification of the eligibility process for DDA services;
- ▶ Address abuse and neglect, especially procedures for handling physical assault by one roommate against another in residential settings.

Some of the issues we have worked on with individuals and groups

- ▶ Lack of privacy
- ▶ Confidentiality
- ▶ Respect and dignity
- ▶ Abuse, neglect
- ▶ Service plan
- ▶ Transfer/Discharge
- ▶ Provider decertification

Continued work

- ▶ Regular meetings with Developmental Disabilities Administration, Adult Protective Services, Complaint Resolution Unit, Residential Care Services to share information identify systemic issues, and make recommendations for improvements.
- ▶ Collect data to use in reports and recommendations for improvements to the department, State Legislature, and Governor
- ▶ Develop information on rights - website, videos, info cards
- ▶ Presentations to people with developmental disabilities, families, service providers
- ▶ Develop training and recruit and train volunteers

For this to work, we need to hear from you

- ▶ What issue areas do you think we should focus on?
 - Priority is abuse and neglect
- ▶ Where should we focus our work?
 - What is working and not working?
- ▶ What issues should be addressed in a report to policy makers?
- ▶ Fill out the stakeholder survey online
<http://ddombuds.org/stakeholder-input/>



Office of
**Developmental
Disabilities
Ombuds**

Contact information:

Betty Schwieterman

State DD Ombuds

Office of Developmental Disabilities Ombuds

info@ddombuds.org

Complaint Line 833 727 8900

www.DDOmbuds.org