

# RESIDENTS' COUNCILS

## RESIDENTS' COUNCIL ASSISTANTS (RCAS)

### Ontario LTC Homes

The Residents' Council Assistant (RCA) plays a vital role in the successful operation of the home's Residents' Council. While not an official member of the Residents' Council, the RCA often acts as a meeting facilitator, knowledge broker, idea enabler, solution generator and a conduit between licensees and residents. Thank you, RCAs!

### **The *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021*, (the Act) legislation says:**

“Every licensee of a long-term care home shall appoint a Residents' Council assistant who is acceptable to that Council to assist the Residents' Council. [2021, c. 39, s. 64 (1)]”

“In carrying out his or her duties, a Residents' Council assistant shall take instructions from the Residents' Council, ensure confidentiality where requested and report to the Residents' Council. [2021, c. 39, s. 64 (2)]”

### **What Can the RCA Do?**

- Takes instructions from the Council in carrying out their responsibilities and reports directly to them
- Recognizes the fine balance between “helping” and “doing for”
- Respects the autonomous decision-making process of the Council
- Advises the Council about their provincial association, OARC
- Educates Council members of their rights under the FLTCA;
- Helps build and sustain a supportive environment in the home by promoting the importance of the Residents' Council
- Offers support and assistance, as required, in the implementation of Council decisions
- Empowers members so their Council can perform as effectively and independently as possible

There are many ways the RCA can support Council operations. It's important to note that not every Council will request or require the same support. Remember – the residents give direction to the RCA.

## COMMON WAYS RCAs CAN SUPPORT COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Work with residents to create a meeting agenda in advance of meeting date (OARC recommends at least two weeks prior)
- Consult with the Council to choose a suitable meeting date and time, and a private, accessible meeting space
- Advertise the meeting on the activity calendar, with posters, etc. Verbally remind residents of the meeting; encourage them to attend
- Serve as a timekeeper during meetings to help stay on track and cover all agenda items
- Support and encourage residents to share their ideas and contribute to discussions
- Assist the Secretary with preparing and posting the minutes for approval (the minutes must be approved by a member of the Residents' Council leadership team prior to posting)
- Inform the home's management team of Council decisions and the reasoning behind them, if directed to do so by Council

Finding a person who is the “right fit” for the RCA role is an important and necessary step. While this individual is typically appointed by the home's Administrator, they must be acceptable to the Council. OARC recommends that Residents' Councils allocate time to discuss and carefully review the suitability and fit of their assistant on an annual basis. If necessary, Councils can work with the home's Administrator to select a new assistant to support the Council moving forward.



## For Residents, By Residents

**Ontario Association of Residents' Councils**

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