

ACL Response to OMB comment

202008-0985-001	HHS/ ACL	Outcome Evaluation of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)
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OMB Comment:

Provide a brief write-up describing any changes in their plans for the administration of this collection (Outcome Evaluation of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)). Given the coronavirus pandemic, as written there are several in-person elements and we are asking agencies to consider the risks to participants and staff along with alternative modes of data collection, if appropriate, given the public health emergency.

Methodological changes:

Originally, the NORC team planned to conduct in-person focus groups and site visits to the four states selected to participate in the evaluation. Given restrictions related to COVID-19, however, the team now anticipates carrying out much of the data collection virtually and will tailor these activities to each program. Because of the need to be flexible, the team will use a variety of data collection methods across sites. Below we describe modifications to our original in-person data collection approach:

Focus groups with residents/family members: We will work with each program to identify the most appropriate data collection method, given current program practices. For example, we understand that some programs host weekly virtual meetings with residents and their families, while others have been able to host small gatherings with residents and family members out of doors. Based on each program's response to the pandemic, the team will adapt our approach accordingly. Should the team be able to conduct focus groups on site, we will look into providing light refreshments if this is an acceptable option.

Focus groups with facility staff: The team will work with programs as well as facility administrators to identify how to best obtain data from facility staff. Although the team originally intended to host in-person focus groups with a small number of facility staff, the team will offer the option to hold virtual focus groups or interviews by phone.

Interviews with Stakeholders: The team will conduct all interviews by phone or virtual via web, based on the respondent's preference.

Interviews with Program Staff/Volunteers: The team will conduct all interviews by phone or virtual via web, based on the respondent's preference.