

## Wisconsin's Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program



**Image 1:** Two people with disabilities hold hands and smile while sitting at home.

- Have questions about your benefits and rights under Family Care, Partnership, or IRIS programs?
- Need help in securing the quality and quantity of services you need?
- Do you disagree with any changes in your care plan?
- Are you living in the setting of your choice?
- Would you like help with an appeal?

**The Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program is here for you, at no cost to you.**

## **Advocacy Available**

Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) provides ombudsman services to Wisconsin Family Care, Partnership, and IRIS applicants and members age 18-59. An Ombudsman (OM-budz-man) is an advocate or helper.

Family Care is a State of Wisconsin program for the delivery of managed long-term care services included in Wisconsin's Medicaid home and community-based programs. The Partnership Program integrates all Medicaid and Medicare health and long-term care services. IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self-Direct) is a program for individuals to self-direct their Medicaid-funded long-term supports and services.

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Eligibility for Family Care, Partnership, and IRIS is coordinated by county Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs). The State of Wisconsin contracts with managed care organizations (MCOs) to arrange and provide services for Family Care and Partnership. IRIS participants arrange for and purchase services and goods within an individualized budget.

Anyone 18-59 years of age who is applying for or is a member of Family Care, Partnership, or IRIS is eligible for DRW's Ombudsman services. The ombudsman can assist individuals living in their own homes, supported apartments, or any other residential settings.

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## **Family Care and IRIS's Goals**

Family Care and IRIS's goals are to provide flexibility and to foster independence and quality of life by:

- empowering consumers to make choices about services and supports
- improving access to those services
- supporting consumers' goals for living, employment, health, and social outcomes

Family Care and IRIS are designed to increase effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of services.

## **How the Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program Can Help**

The Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program can help consumers achieve those goals. It offers many free services. It can:

- provide information and education on rights and how to exercise those rights
- inform applicants and members of services and supports in the benefit package
- investigate complaints
- resolve and mediate issues
- represent consumers in grievances and hearings, or help prepare for grievances and hearings.

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## Types of Issues

The Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program can help Family Care, Partnership, and IRIS applicants, members, their guardians and families with questions such as:

- consumer choice and involvement in service planning
- quality and quantity of services
- consumer direction in services
- appropriate notice and explanation before any reduction in services
- access to meaningful employment
- choice of living arrangement

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- access to Family Care, Partnership, and IRIS services for young adults transitioning from the school system



**Image 2:** A Black man is cooking a meal on an electric stove.

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The Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program has offices in Milwaukee and Madison and is available to advocate for Family Care, Partnership, and IRIS applicants and members across the state.

## **Further Family Care and IRIS Information**

Ombudsman services for consumers in Family Care, Partnership, and IRIS age 60+ are available from the Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long Term Care at

- **Phone:** 1-800-815-0015
- **Website:** [longtermcare.wi.gov](http://longtermcare.wi.gov)

More information about Disability Rights Wisconsin, including the Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program, can be found at [www.disabilityrightswi.org](http://www.disabilityrightswi.org).

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More information about Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Family Care can be found at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/familycare](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/familycare)

More information about Wisconsin Department of Health Services and IRIS can be found at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/iris](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/iris)



**Image 3:** A trio of people with disabilities, one person in a wheelchair, play Monopoly together.

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## About Us

Disability Rights is a private non-profit organization established in 1977 that protects the rights of people with disabilities throughout Wisconsin. We serve the state with offices in Madison and Milwaukee.

## Contact Us

Ombudsman services are free. People ages 18-59 who are applying for or are members of Family Care, Partnership, or IRIS may contact the Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program.

- **Phone:** 800-928-8778
- **Email:** [info@drwi.org](mailto:info@drwi.org)
- **Website:** [disabilityrightswi.org](http://disabilityrightswi.org)

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Scan the QR code for our website.



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