

# VERMONT LEGAL AID, INC.

## OFFICE OF THE HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE

264 NORTH WINOOSKI AVE. - P.O. Box 1367

BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05402  
(800) 917-7787 (VOICE AND TTY)

FAX (802) 863-7152  
(802) 863-2316

OFFICES:

BURLINGTON  
RUTLAND  
ST. JOHNSBURY

OFFICES:

MONTPELIER  
SPRINGFIELD

## OFFICE OF THE HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE FACT SHEET

Trinka Kerr

Chief Health Care Advocate

January 14, 2015

### OVERVIEW

The legislature created the Office of the Health Care Ombudsman in 1998 to provide advice and advocacy for Vermonters with health care and health insurance concerns. In 2013 the legislature amended the statute and changed the program's name to the Office of the Health Care Advocate. The HCA is not a state agency. Rather, it is part of Vermont Legal Aid, a statewide nonprofit law firm. We provide individual consumer assistance and act as a voice for all Vermonters on policies and matters related to health care and health insurance.

Our funding comes from the state and federal government. Right now we have two federal grants pursuant to the Affordable Care Act: our fourth Consumer Assistance Program grant and our second Rate Review grant.

For more information about the HCA, see our reports at [www.vtlegalaid.org](http://www.vtlegalaid.org)

### INDIVIDUAL CONSUMER ASSISTANCE

Hotline: 1-800-917-7787

Help for consumers: [www.vtlawhelp.org/health](http://www.vtlawhelp.org/health)

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
Total Calls	4,527	3,257	+39%
Vermont Health Connect (41%)	1,873	251	+646%
DVHA (39%)	1,788	1,589	+13%
Commercial Plans (23%)	1,052	494	+112%

Consumer Savings in 2014: \$360,885.47

*The Office of the Health Care Advocate, previously named the Office of Health Care Ombudsman, is a special project of Vermont Legal Aid.*

## **PUBLIC ADVOCACY**

### Green Mountain Care Board

- Rate review cases
- Certificates of Need
- Hospital Budget Reviews

### Vermont Health Care Innovation Project (SIM grant)

- Core Team
- Work Groups

### Vermont Health Connect (VHC)

- Comments on Health Benefit Eligibility and Enrollment regulations
- Work Groups
- Administrative advocacy
- Tax assistance

### Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA)

- Work Groups
- Administrative advocacy

### Medicaid and Exchange Advisory Board

- Work Groups

### Governor's Health Care Consumer Advisory Council

### Legislative Advocacy

### Outreach and Education