



MAY 27 2014

## Texas Association of Residential Care Communities

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May 23, 2014

Amy Trost  
Sunset Commission  
Post Office Box 13066  
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: Sunset Staff Report-DADS

Amy:

I am submitting information about certain aspects of the administration at DADS, in response to the staff report. Please mail this information to all Commission members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Sid Rich", written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Sid Rich



May 8, 2014

To: The Sunset Commission

From: Sid Rich, Texas Association of Residential Care Communities

Re: Issues with the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services

Texas Register - April 18, 2014

Chapter 46 Contracting

to Provide Assisted Living and Residential Care Services

Under Public Comment, the reader was directed to address questions to a certain employee at DADS Contract Oversight and Support section. Call her employee A.

**On Wednesday, May 7, 2014** I called employee A. with my questions. She asked me why I was calling her. I explained that she was the individual listed in the Register as the contact person. She seemed surprised and said she would find out who I should talk with. Later in the day employee B. left word for me to call.

**On Thursday, May 8, 2014** I returned the call to employee B. and she said she didn't know anything about the rules. I told her that I had now talked to two people, both of whom denied knowledge of the rules in question. I asked her who I should speak with and she referred me back to employee A. I told her that employee A. was the one who referred me to her, employee B. I then called employee A. back and she attempted to answer my questions, while frequently referring to a chapter that I was not talking about at all. Both employees were very nice on the telephone, I'll give them that. Needless to say, this seems like an agency that doesn't exactly have its act together. This is important because the Department issues a great many proposed rules.

**Recommendations:**

- 1) the Department should clearly identify the *correct* contact person, and
- 2) the contact person should be advised that they have been designated and be prepared to answer questions

**Observations:**

1) Over a number of years it seems to me that the Department does not seem to *crossstrain* its employees. If an employee has been assigned a particular project and that employee is unavailable, then no one else can answer questions. With no backup, it seems to me that this situation does not benefit the Department—aside from the consumer.

2) Many times it is difficult to find the right person or section to answer a question or help with a problem. What it seems like is that there is a lack of general knowledge on the part of Department employees if the question or issue is not directly related to their specific job. One might conclude that the "right hand doesn't know what

the left hand is doing.” Because of my years of experience and knowledge of the Department, I am able to eventually find the information I am looking for or answers to my questions. Imagine what it must be like for the average Joe or Jane?

**Recommendations:**

- 3) Insure that more than one person has knowledge of an issue, and
- 4) Implement a general orientation program, with documentation, that equips all employees with general knowledge of Department responsibilities and functions and who to contact.