

STATEWIDE STATISTICS

The Florida Local Advocacy (FLAC) system became law in 1975 and was reenacted following the Sunset Review in 1989 and 1995. There are **38** approved statewide LACs and all members are volunteers appointed by the Governor for four-year terms. Members reported **300,141** hours of volunteer time in the performance of their duties. LACs act as an independent, third party mechanism for protecting the constitutional and human rights of any client within a program or facility operated, funded, licensed, contracted or regulated by any state agency.

A major responsibility of the LACs is to receive and investigate allegations of abuse or deprivation of constitutional or human rights. Such allegations are received through a statewide toll-free number. A LAC may adopt the findings of any state agency if those findings are consistent with those of the LAC. This year, LACs received **19,092** of such reports and investigated **1,730** of them.

After an investigation, the LAC votes on the validity of the reported allegations and what recommendations should be made to correct the problem. Altogether, the LACs received and reviewed **4,189** complaints directly from clients. LACs received **7705** reports about adults and **5,348** about children through the Department of Children and Families Abuse Hotline. There were **1,844** complaints and **6** death reports received through LAC staff. The total of such matters received and reviewed by the **38** approved local councils total **19,092**. Of the **19,092** matters, **1,730** were investigated by LACs.

Another important function of local LACs is monitoring and reviewing state agency programs and facilities. LACs perform these functions by using on-site visits, inspections of manuals, rules and regulations, and monitoring the delivery and use of services. This year the monitorings increased for LACs by **600 percent** from last year's total of **678** on-site visits to state facilities, community programs and provider agencies to **4,225**.

Baker Act hearings are also monitored by LACs. LAC members were appointed as first representative for **447** individuals while attending **836** Baker Act hearings. **53.5** percent of the Baker Act hearings attended by LAC members were appointed the third party representative of the client.

