



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Legislative Assembly	Early Resolution and Education Officer	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
12-15631	Hay River	Office of the Ombud

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Early Resolution and Education Officer (Officer) is responsible for complaints intake and facilitating informal resolutions to complaints from the public relating to matters of fairness in public administration. The Officer provides guidance, assistance and education to government and the public on principles of administrative fairness and the role of the Ombud, and leads the Ombud's public education and outreach activities by delivering training, drafting and proofreading content for publication, coordinating logistics, arranging for advertisements, and promoting the office at public events. The position also performs various administrative and financial duties.

## SCOPE

The Ombud is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly responsible under the *Ombud Act* for resolving and/or investigating complaints about fairness of territorial public services and providing public education about the role of the Ombud and principles of administrative fairness. The Ombud produces public reports about these activities. The role of the Office of the Ombud is to be an impartial advocate for administrative fairness; the Office does not advocate for either complainants or public bodies. The Early Resolution and Education Officer's work contributes directly to the protection of the right to administrative fairness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), transparency and accountability of territorial government departments and agencies, and the quality of territorial public services.

Located in Hay River and reporting to the Ombud, the Early Resolution and Education Officer serves the population of the entire NWT. In addition to receiving complaints and managing a case load of complaint files, as lead for the education and outreach functions of the Office, the Officer develops, maintains, and updates presentation decks, workbooks, pamphlets and other training and public education materials, delivers training about administrative fairness to public servants, develops content and proofreads materials for



publication, promotes the Office at public events, and coordinates planning and logistics for delivering outreach and training.

The Officer researches and/or negotiates resolutions to complaints in every area of public service. Examples of areas that have been the subject of complaints include medical travel, public housing, grants and contributions to businesses, property assessment and taxation, income assistance, corrections, K-12, post-secondary student housing, public health, human resources matters and procurement. This requires the incumbent to develop a deep understanding of the program or service complained about and any applicable legislation, policies, guidelines, practices, etc., in order to identify fairness issues, and potential solutions. Administrative fairness includes both legal and extralegal principles. The incumbent must be able to know what fairness principles, policy and best practices might apply to a given situation, locate sources, and interpret them in contexts that cover the full range of territorial public service activity.

The position acts in accordance with territorial legislation, standards, policies and procedures where applicable, as well as policies and procedures established by the Ombud, and is required to take an oath not to disclose confidential information. This position requires the incumbent to exercise empathy, active listening, tact and diplomacy with clients in a wide range of circumstances and with a wide range of communication abilities.

The Officer has daily contact with the general public and senior officials in public bodies, and frequent contact with other independent legislative offices in the NWT and elsewhere in Canada, as well as officials from other levels of government, and non-governmental organizations in coordinating public education activities. The incumbent must maintain impartiality and handle sensitive information with strict confidentiality in handling of complaints to build and maintain public trust in the office, relationships with public bodies, and the interests of members of the public. The incumbent's communication and presentation skills could impact on the office's public education efforts and the office's credibility with the public and authorities and overall effectiveness.

The Officer carries out some administrative and financial duties such as processing invoices and Visa statements, coordinating health and safety matters, troubleshooting Information Technology (IT) and equipment problems, and purchasing supplies and services.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Facilitates Early Resolution of Complaints.**

- Analyzes incoming complaints by interpreting policies, legislation, and principles of administrative fairness, reviewing documents, and interviewing complainants to confirm the Ombud's jurisdiction, to determine whether there are grounds for accepting a formal complaint, to identify additional information needs, determine whether a



complaint should be referred to an alternate resource, and to determine whether an informal resolution process is appropriate.

- Contacts deputy ministers, CEOs or designates to advise them of new complaints, and requests information from appropriate officials either verbally or in writing.
- Resolves complaints informally through approaches such as facilitated contact, information exchange, negotiation, and/or conciliation between the complainant and the department or agency complained about.
- Makes recommendations to the Ombud for the disposition of complaints and administrative suggestions to public bodies.
- Ensures complete and accurate information is recorded and documented in the case management system.

## **2. Complaint Intake and Follow-Up.**

- Receives incoming general enquiries and complaints from the public by email, phone or in person.
- Explains the Office's mandate and processes; advises clients on options, including other complaint processes; helps clients complete intake forms; takes complete and detailed information, communicates clearly and empathically using a trauma-informed approach.
- Makes referrals to other services or agencies where appropriate.
- Follows up with clients regarding progress on complaints.
- Provides active offer for official language services and coordinates interpreter/translator services when needed.

## **3. Leads the Ombud's public information and education activities.**

- Delivers training on principles of administrative fairness, and maintains and updates course materials.
- Coordinates development, design, translation, and publication of promotional materials.
- Prepares written project plans including budgets, timelines, and options or courses of action and associated decision points.
- Coordinates training and promotional events through contact with event organizers, participant registration, advertising, preparation of materials, booking travel arrangements, finding and booking meeting space and other logistical arrangements.
- Promotes the Office of the Ombud at events such as tradeshow and conferences.
- Proofreads annual and special reports, and contributes to content of reports and other publications.
- Arranges for advertising of the office's services and events.
- Procures and keeps an inventory of promotional items.

## **4. Various Finance and Administrative Duties**

- Maintains and ensures adequate supply of office equipment and supplies.



- Requests and evaluates quotes for and purchases supplies and services.
- Resolves problems with equipment including telephones, copier/printer, videoconferencing system and Wi-Fi, and acts as contact person for IT and communications support.
- Acts as office coordinator for health and safety, including communicating information, maintaining records, monitoring health and safety performance, and orienting new staff and visitors to safety protocols, and acting as contact person for landlord regarding building and maintenance issues.
- Maintains and updates formal letter templates; proofreads, prepares and formats Ombud correspondence for signature and distribution; and tracks responses
- Files electronic documents, undertakes annual update of electronic filing system, and ensures security of confidential information.
- Maintains designation as a Commissioner for Oaths.
- Verifies, codes and processes invoices in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the GNWT's Financial Administration Manual.
- Reconciles monthly credit card statements.
- Organizes and compiles financial information for the Ombud and assists with annual budget and variance report preparation.
- Acts as contact for Legislative Assembly Corporate Services staff on finance and administration matters.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

The incumbent works at a desk and may sit for extended periods of time but has frequent opportunity to stand or move about.

### **Environmental Conditions**

No unusual conditions.

### **Sensory Demands**

The incumbent will be required to exercise focused concentration to simultaneously actively listen to and record information from complainants, and detect safety risks.

### **Mental Demands**

The incumbent will be intermittently exposed to upsetting information about clients' circumstances, and swearing, complaints and personal threats when dealing with angry members of the public, including correctional centre inmates, through email, telephone, and occasionally in person. Therefore, the incumbent must be aware of their surroundings, and able to recognize high risk volatile situations to quickly determine a course of action to



ensure their own safety and the safety of the office.

Some travel within the NWT and occasional travel outside of the NWT may be required.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- Knowledge of the *Ombud Act* and administrative fairness principles, theory and legislation.
- Conflict resolution skills to negotiate resolutions to complaints with departments and agencies.
- Writing and proofreading skills, including the ability to translate policy and legal information into plain language
- Knowledge of community resources and government programs.
- Research and analytical skills to gather necessary information and interpret and apply policy, legislation and principles to specific circumstances
- Interpersonal and communication skills, both written and oral, including active listening, in order to convey information concisely and accurately, communicate difficult information and decisions to members of the public who may be distraught or upset, and to assist members of the public to provide all relevant information with respect to complaints.
- Project management skills to plan and carry out education and outreach activities.
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity, understanding of trauma-informed approaches, and ability to communicate courteously and effectively with and provide services to people with diverse abilities, experiences and challenges, including mental illness, physical or cognitive impairment, and personal crisis.
- Legislative interpretation skills.
- Ability to handle sensitive information and maintain strict confidentiality and impartiality.
- Ability to deliver training and presentations to large and small groups and to manage group dynamics.
- Time management skills, and ability to manage competing priorities and projects
- Computer literacy including word processing, spreadsheet, email, planning, presentation, and database software applications, and internet research. Experience with graphic design software would be an asset.
- Ability to quickly assess and respond appropriately to abusive and/or threatening communication and behaviour.
- Ability to work flexibly and supportively with a small team in a collaborative high-volume environment, including self-awareness to recognize when to seek help, advice or other support from colleagues.
- Knowledge of and skill in office administration practices and procedures including reception, records management, using and maintaining office equipment and supplies,



- office workplace safety, and interacting with service providers.
- Attention to detail in taking down information, and preparing and processing financial documents and correspondence.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

**Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:**

The completion of a bachelor's degree in humanities, social sciences, law, or another relevant discipline with significant writing and critical thinking components, plus two (2) years' experience in a role requiring interpretation and communication of policy, legal or other complex issues in plain language, and complaints/ conflict resolution.

Equivalent combinations of education and relevant experience will be considered.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Position Security** (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

**French Language** (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)  
Level required for this Designated Position is:  
ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION  
Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐  
READING COMPREHENSION:  
Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐  
WRITING SKILLS:  
Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
- ☒ French preferred

**Indigenous Language** Indigenous Language - Not Specified

- ☐ Required
- ☒ Preferred