

BACKGROUND

January 10, 2018

The Office of the Ombudsperson

The [role](#) of the Ombudsperson to provide independent and impartial oversight of [public authorities](#) to ensure every person is treated fairly in the provision of public services.

The Ombudsperson serves British Columbians through the investigation of individual complaints, the conduct of systemic investigations and through prevention initiatives.

Individual Complaints

The Ombudsperson provides an independent avenue for individuals with [complaints](#) about B.C. public services. Individuals are provided with referral information and assistance if they have not yet used existing appeal or review processes or are guided to early resolution of their complaints. Other complaints result in an investigation to determine if the actions of a public authority were fair and reasonable.

Systemic Investigations

The Ombudsperson investigates areas of potential systemic administrative unfairness within the B.C. public sector. For example, a systemic investigation can be initiated by the Ombudsperson where there are a number of individual concerns about different aspects of a public program that require a broader review. The Ombudsperson's recommendations aim to benefit all British Columbians who encounter a recurring problem or issue with a B.C. provincial and local public authority. The [results](#) of the investigation and recommendations are then published and made available free-of-charge to the public.

Prevention Initiatives

Through the [Prevention Initiatives](#) three-year pilot project (2017-2020), the Office of the Ombudsperson offers quarterly webinar series, training workshops and individual consultation with public authority staff to support fairness and continuous improvement across the public sector. The program is staffed with investigators experienced in the application of administrative fairness principles and proactive assessment of complaint trends. By leveraging this expertise outside of the context of an individual investigation, the Office of the Ombudsperson aims to support the continuous improvement of public authorities under its jurisdiction.

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