



Classification: Band 1	Position: Multiple
Reports to: Manager of Intake and Early Resolution	Location: Victoria
Organization: Office of the Ombudsperson	

Job Overview:

Reporting to the Manager of Intake and Early Resolution, the Early Resolution Officer (ERO) is part of the Intake Team that provides the first line of service for over 7,000 enquiries and complaints received by the Office of the Ombudsperson each year. The ERO uses active listening and conflict resolution skills to assess complaints received from diverse members of the public via phone, in person or in writing about programs and services provided by provincial and local public bodies to determine an appropriate response and course of action. The ERO exercises discretion under the *Ombudsperson Act* and according to office policy and procedures to determine whether a complaint should be referred to an available complaint or appeal process, if it may be resolved through an early resolution investigation, or whether it should be escalated to the investigations team for further assessment. During the early resolution process, which is a short-term investigation, the ERO engages impartially with members of the public and representatives from public bodies to develop solutions through facilitated contact, information exchange and review of actions taken by the public body in response to our notice of investigation.

Accountabilities:

- Provides front-line service to diverse members of the public, including those experiencing significant barriers in accessing government services, by explaining the Ombudsperson's role, using active listening and conflict resolution skills to collect relevant information, and investigating their concerns regarding government services and programs.
- Shares responsibility for coverage of the office's Intake telephone call centre system.
- Conducts initial complaint analysis by interviewing complainants by telephone or in person, reviewing correspondence, assessing for jurisdiction, using strong analytical skills to determine an appropriate response, and identifying potential administrative fairness issues relating to the administration of government services and programs.
- Determines whether new complaints should be referred to alternate resources, internal government complaint processes, or appeal or review mechanisms.
- Assesses suitability of complaints for Early Resolution by identifying communication challenges, informational needs, or opportunities for resolution through immediate review or follow-up by public service employees.

- Conducts Early Resolution investigations by communicating in writing and by telephone with public authority employees, obtaining information from complainants and public authorities, and negotiating commitments from the public authority to take actions to resolve identified issues.
- Escalates suitable complaints to investigative staff for further assessment.
- Researches relevant policies, procedures, and applicable legislation to analyze complaints and identify suitable complaint referrals.
- Identifies emerging issues, jurisdictional questions, and complaint trends and escalates potential systemic concerns, jurisdictional issues, and new referral opportunities to the manager for further assessment.
- Summarizes and documents complaints and communications in the case tracking database system.
- Uses proficient communication skills to correspond with members of the public and public authority employees.
- Conducts all activities in a manner that aligns with our office's strategic goals relating to equity, diversity, inclusion and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples
- Participates in Ombudsperson community clinics, training activities and other outreach activities.
- Assists in training and mentoring new staff and identifies opportunities for improvements to internal policy and practice.

Qualifications and Competencies:

Education and Experience:

- Completion of a relevant post-secondary degree and 2 years related experience or;
- Completion of a relevant Diploma and 4 years related experience or;
- 6 years of related experience
 - Related experience may include the following:
 - researching, assessing, and analyzing information for an oversight or investigative body, or in a complaints-management framework
 - interpreting and applying legislation and policy as it relates to delivery of government services in order to make decisions about appropriate response
 - having challenging conversations with diverse members of the public including those who may experience different kinds of barriers while gathering evidentiary information
 - communicating information verbally and in writing
- An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.

Preference may be given to applicants with one or more of the following:

- Experience providing client service to members of the public who may be living with mental health disorders, physical or cognitive disabilities and/or experiencing personal crisis.
- Experience or training in trauma-informed and/or cultural safety practices.
- Experience building relationships and/or providing client service to people with diverse lived experiences including but not limited to people who are First Nations, Métis, Inuit and/or from urban Indigenous communities, persons living with disabilities, persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (2SLGBTQIA+).
- Experience responding to or assisting with complaints about government services or programs.
- Applicants who self-identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit and/ or Indigenous, Black or racialized, women, 2SLGBTQIA+, people with diverse gender identities or expressions, and/ or people living with disabilities.

Proviso:

- This position frequently interacts with members of the public who are living with mental health disorders, physical or cognitive disabilities and/or experiencing personal crisis. Incumbents of this position will at times be exposed to challenging or escalated behaviour and content of a sensitive and potentially traumatic nature. Please consider whether the psychological load of the tasks in this job profile align with your capacity to take on this type of work.
- Demonstrated commitment to anti-racism
- Some travel may be required.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Ability to demonstrate commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, reconciliation, and accessibility and contribute to fostering inclusion in the office.
- Knowledge of the *Ombudsperson Act*, *Public Interest Disclosure Act* and role of the Ombudsperson.
- Understanding of the concepts and principles of administrative fairness and natural justice.
- Broad understanding of government programs, legislation and public policy, and the administration of public services in British Columbia.
- General knowledge of community resources.
- Demonstrated ability to conduct research and analysis of complaints by applying legal rules or policies to diverse fact patterns and determining an appropriate course of action.
- Ability to exercise discretion and delegated authority within a statutory framework in an unbiased, objective and impartial manner.
- Effective oral interviewing and conflict resolution skills.
- Ability to communicate in writing in an effective and clear manner to varying audiences.
- Ability to practice and maintain mental and emotional resilience during escalated and challenging interactions with members of the public.

- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively and demonstrate empathy and active listening with individuals with diverse abilities and challenges, including mental health disorders, physical or cognitive disabilities, and personal crisis.
- Demonstrated ability for self-control when serving members of the public who demonstrate challenging behaviours, including opposition or hostility.
- Demonstrated ability to set and adjust workload priorities and manage tasks in response to changing demands and emerging issues.
- Ability to learn and effectively work with case management database systems and call centre administration software.
- Ability to work flexibly and supportively with a small team in a collaborative high-volume environment.

Competencies:

Indigenous Relations Behavioural Competencies:

The Indigenous relations behavioural competencies help the BC Public Service improve our individual and collective abilities to work effectively with the Indigenous peoples of B.C. The successful applicant will demonstrate experience and/or thinking, attitude, approach and behaviours illustrating potential with respect to the following Indigenous relations behavioural competencies:

- **Open Listening** is letting go of conventional means of listening. It means listening to and valuing the telling of stories, and letting pauses in conversation extend into silence rather than jumping in to dispute, agree, question, or move on. It is an awareness of personal bias or judgment and its effect on one's ability to hear. It is the desire and ability to set aside physical, mental, and emotional distractions in order to be fully focused and listening respectfully and openly. It is staying open to the message even when conversations are filled with raw emotions like sadness or anger and believing that each person's knowledge and reality is legitimate and valuable. Finally, it requires a willingness to reflect upon a story or message and to derive meaning from it based upon the situation in which it is shared.
- **Cultural Agility** is the ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably and effectively with Indigenous people. It is noticing and readily adapting to cultural uniqueness in order to create a sense of safety for all. It is openness to unfamiliar experiences, transforming feelings of nervousness or anxiety into curiosity and appreciation. It is examining one's own culture and worldview, and the culture of the BC Public Service, and to notice their commonalities, and distinctions with Indigenous cultures, and worldviews. It is recognition of the ways that personal and professional values may conflict or align with those of Indigenous peoples. It is the capacity to relate to or allow for differing cultural perspectives and being willing to experience a personal shift in perspective.
- **Self-Discovery and Awareness** means understanding one's thoughts, feelings, values and background and how they impact the success of the interaction and relationship, or how they may influence one's work. It is recognizing one's own biases by tracing them to their origins, through reflection and by noticing one's own behaviour – and then intentionally seeking a way forward that

positively impacts the interaction and relationship. It means maintaining new ways of thinking and acting when situations become difficult or uncertain, or in times of urgency.

Applicants may review the [Indigenous relations behavioural competencies](#).

Behavioural Competencies:

Behavioural competencies describe the essential skills and attributes expected of all BC Public Service employees. The successful applicant will demonstrate experience, knowledge and/or ability with respect to the following behavioural competencies:

- **Analytical Thinking** is the ability to comprehend a situation by breaking it down into its components and identifying underlying complex issues. This is based on verification of the validity or accuracy of all information.
- **Information Seeking** is driven by a desire to know more about things, people or issues. It implies going beyond the questions that are routine or required in the job. It may include "digging" or pressing for exact information; resolution of discrepancies by asking a series of questions; or less-focused environmental "scanning" for potential opportunities or miscellaneous information that may be of future use.
- **Service Orientation** implies a desire to identify and serve customers/clients, who may include the public, co-workers, other branches/divisions, other ministries/agencies, other government organizations, and non-government organizations. It means focusing one's efforts on discovering and meeting the needs of the customer/client.
- **Self-Control** is the ability to keep one's emotions under control and restrain negative actions when provoked, faced with opposition or hostility from others, or when working under stress. It also includes the ability to maintain stamina under continuing stress.
- **Teamwork and Co-operation** is the ability to work co-operatively within diverse teams, work groups and across the organization to achieve group and organizational goals.

Applicants may review [behavioural competencies](#) for all staff in the BC Public Service.

BC Ombudsperson

Fairness and Accountability in British Columbia's Public Services

<http://www.bcombudsperson.ca/>