

10 Frequently Asked Questions

ABOUT US

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What is the Ombudsman's Role?

As an independent legislative officer, the Ombudsman investigates complaints made by the public about authorities under his jurisdiction.

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What Does the Office Do?

We investigate **final** administrative decisions using the principles of natural justice and administrative fairness. This includes confirming the actions and policies of municipalities are congruent with the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA).

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What Power Does the Ombudsman Have?

The Ombudsman may make formal recommendations to help municipalities improve decision-making processes or confirm existing processes are fair.

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Why Does the Ombudsman Investigate Municipalities?

Dec. 6, 2016

- Bill 21 passed: *Modernized Municipal Government Act*
- S. 85 amended MGA, s. 136 amended *Ombudsman Act*

Oct. 26, 2017

- Final amendments to MGA proclaimed into law

Apr. 1, 2018

- Ombudsman's functions and duties now include jurisdiction over municipalities

The Ombudsman is not an advocate for complainants, nor does he represent municipalities.

HANDLING COMPLAINTS

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How Are Complaints Received?

We encourage people to phone our office with inquiries, but all complaints must be submitted in writing.

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What Happens When a Complaint is Received?

Written complaints are assigned to and analyzed by investigators. Often, referrals are provided if additional reviews are available (e.g., write to the CAO).

INVESTIGATIONS AND OUTCOMES

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What is an Early Resolution (ER)?

Often the first step of investigation, ER is a collaborative, informal, and efficient process wherein we isolate the core issue of a complaint and provide an objective and impartial assessment using our eight administrative fairness guidelines.

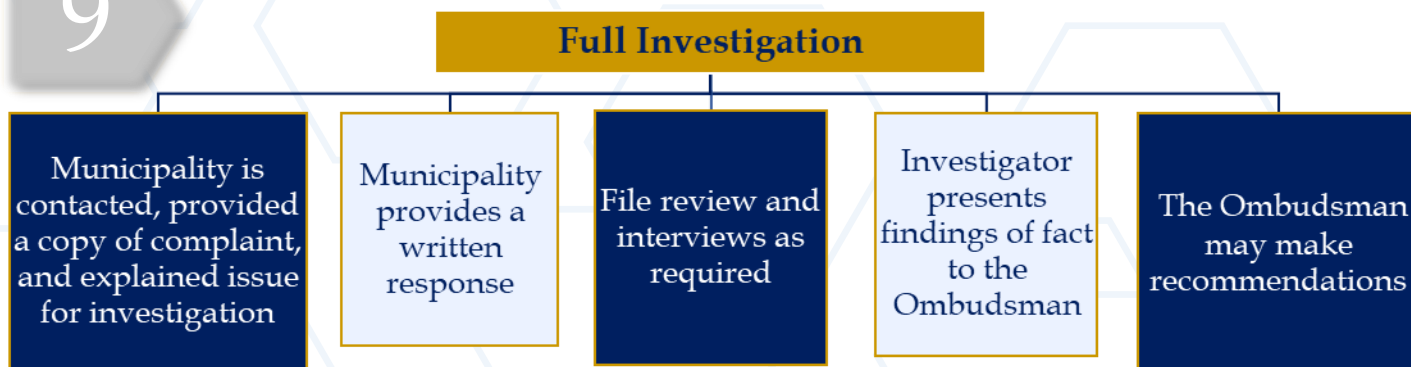
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How is Early Resolution Collaborative?

An investigator may call to understand both sides of the complaint. We may ask for information about the process followed (e.g., relevant bylaws) and/or request a more detailed response, including reasons for the decision. A case is closed once we are satisfied an administratively fair decision was made.

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What if Early Resolution is Not Possible?



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What Are Recommendations?

With the goal of improving decision-making processes, recommendations can be broad or specific. They are not substitute decisions, nor are they based on the merits of a decision. For example, the Ombudsman may recommend a process be amended or an appeal matter be reheard.



FAQs for Municipalities



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