



Speaking Up for Fairness

2022/2023 Annual Report of
the Northwest Territories Ombud



Northwest Territories Ombud

We speak up for fairness

June 15, 2023

HONOURABLE FREDERICK BLAKE
SPEAKER
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Dear Mr. Speaker:

It is my duty and privilege to submit the Annual Report of the Northwest Territories Ombud, pursuant to section 43 of the *Ombud Act*, for the period from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.

Sincerely,



Colette Langlois
Ombud

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Message from the Ombud

This report covers the period from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.

In this report, you will find information about our Office, administrative fairness, and how we do our work, as well as descriptions of our activities over the past year: inquiries and complaints, public education and outreach, and our finances.

In 2022/2023 we passed another milestone by completing our first three own-motion investigations (investigations we do on our own initiative, rather than in response to a specific complaint). Two of the three investigations, on the income assistance program, and on records of employment, resulted in public reports which are available on our website, nwtombud.ca. The third investigation, on rules that apply to public housing tenants, is summarized in the "Examples of Our Work" section of this report.

This was the first fiscal year that our activities were not limited by public health orders related to COVID-19, and also the first year we had three full time employees. We did our best to make up for lost time with the public education and outreach part of our mandate! This included promoting the Office at several in-person events and developing and piloting our new one-day in-person training for public servants: "Working Together Toward Fairness." We also released our first podcast as part of the Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman Making It Fair series, produced and distributed a new pamphlet on fairness in long-term care services, and revised our general information pamphlet, which we will print and distribute later in 2023. Both pamphlets will be available in

all official languages. A new presentation about fairness and the role of ombuds aimed at secondary students is ready to go and will be piloted later this year.

Bill 61, *An Act to Amend the Ombud Act*, received assent on March 30, 2023 (a few days ago as I write this), and will come into force on July 1 of this year. The Act will expand the authorities the Office can receive complaints about, including housing associations, the Rental Office, and bodies that review decisions on matters such as staffing, employment

standards, income assistance, and property assessments. This is an important change that brings the Act more closely into line with provincial and Yukon ombud legislation. The Act also implements some of the other recommendations made in my 2019/2020 Annual Report and introduces a new requirement to inform Indigenous governments of investigations made about bodies established pursuant to agreements with the GNWT. I will be submitting updated recommendations for changes to the *Ombud Act* in a supplementary report later this year.

Investigating and helping to resolve individual concerns and complaints is a significant part of the work ombuds do.

We provide citizens with a non-adversarial, free of charge, and accessible form of justice that helps reduce the power imbalance between government and individuals and promotes accountability. Importantly, administrative fairness is not limited to the legal requirements for decision and procedural fairness that a court or adjudicator would apply. A decision or action can be lawful, and still be unfair, or “wrong”, as when someone is treated disrespectfully, or has difficulty getting information about programs and services. In these cases, ombuds are often the only place people can turn for help.

However, like most ombuds, I would rather prevent complaints than investigate them. Prevention means people can avoid the experience of unfairness in the first place and authorities can devote fewer resources to resolving conflicts with their clients and more to delivering their programs and services. The most effective prevention happens through the parts of our mandate provided for in ss. 15(2) and (5) of the *Ombud Act*: own-motion investigations, and education about principles of administrative fairness and the role of the Ombud. This proactive side to our mandate has a high value for both authorities and the public.

The end goal of what ombuds do is to improve public service to the point that one day, we hope, we have put ourselves out of work. *These are the activities that will get us there.*

With the 2023/2024 budget, funding for Office staff will be reduced from 3 to 2 positions. While we will do our best to minimize the impact of this on people who contact us for help, I am concerned about the impact the reduction will have on our ability to undertake own-motion investigations, to respond to emerging fairness issues such as artificial intelligence and increasing impacts of climate change, and to continue gaining ground in making people aware of our Office and fostering a culture of fairness throughout the public service.

2022/2023 was eventful for another reason: last May a catastrophic flood forced the evacuation of our entire community of Hay River and our neighbours in K'at'odeeche. This affected all of us personally and forced us to close the Office for one week. My own home was severely impacted, and I was not able to return to it until February of this year. Many others have suffered much greater losses. Fortunately, the Office was undamaged, and like many other offices and local

businesses we were quickly up and running again shortly after the evacuation order was lifted. I am proud of the resilience of our team and community, immensely grateful for the dedication and kindness of volunteers and emergency responders here and in other NWT communities that sheltered evacuees, and also mindful that as climate change continues and disasters like this become more frequent, we can expect new fairness issues to arise.



Colette Langlois
Ombud



About the Office of the Ombud

We are an independent office of the Legislative Assembly that speaks up for fairness in territorial government administration and services.

We listen to and investigate complaints from people who feel they have been treated unfairly by territorial authorities. We can also investigate matters on our own initiative without receiving a specific complaint. We work to find fair solutions

and to help improve government services.

Our mandate includes public education on the role of the Ombud and the principles of administrative fairness.

Jurisdiction of the Office of the Ombud

The Ombud can look into "matters of administration". Administrative matters include most of the day to day dealings people have with employees of territorial government departments and agencies. Administrative matters do not include, for example, political matters like Cabinet and MLA decisions, decisions by the courts, actions by lawyers who are representing the government, or clinical decisions by health

care professionals, such as diagnosis and treatment decisions.

The Schedule to the *Ombud Act* lists the government departments and agencies that are within the Ombud's jurisdiction, and includes GNWT Departments, Housing NWT, education, health, and housing authorities, and many other agencies.

We cannot investigate:

- Federal government departments or agencies
- Indigenous governments
- Municipal governments
- MLAs
- Legislative Assembly and Executive Council
- Courts
- Police
- Private businesses and individuals

Who We Are

The Office of the Ombud is located in Hay River, and is made up of (from left to right) Chad Kruger, Research and Communications Intern, Ian Thiesson, who joined us this year as Early Resolution and Education Officer, Michelle Staszuk, Early Resolution and Investigations Officer, and Colette Langlois, Ombud.

Photo credit: Aaron Tambour



How We Do Our Work

We listen.

When people first contact us, we want to know which organization their concern is about and what happened. We ask about what they have already tried to fix the situation, and what they would like to have happen.

The answers to our questions help us to know whether the matter is something that we can look into, and whether there are other options that might fix the problem faster. For example, if people have not

contacted anyone within the government authority about the problem, or if there is an appeal process they have not tried, we usually ask them to do that first. If that does not work out, we let them know to contact us again.

Our intake process is confidential. We do not share your name or information, or take action on your complaint, without your consent.

We help navigate.

Sometimes bureaucracy can be confusing or intimidating. It is not always easy to know where to start. We can help point you in the right direction. We often refer people to contacts or processes within government authorities that they might not have been

aware of and that can fix some problems. We also refer people to other services and complaint processes for matters that are outside of our mandate.

We work with people to solve problems.

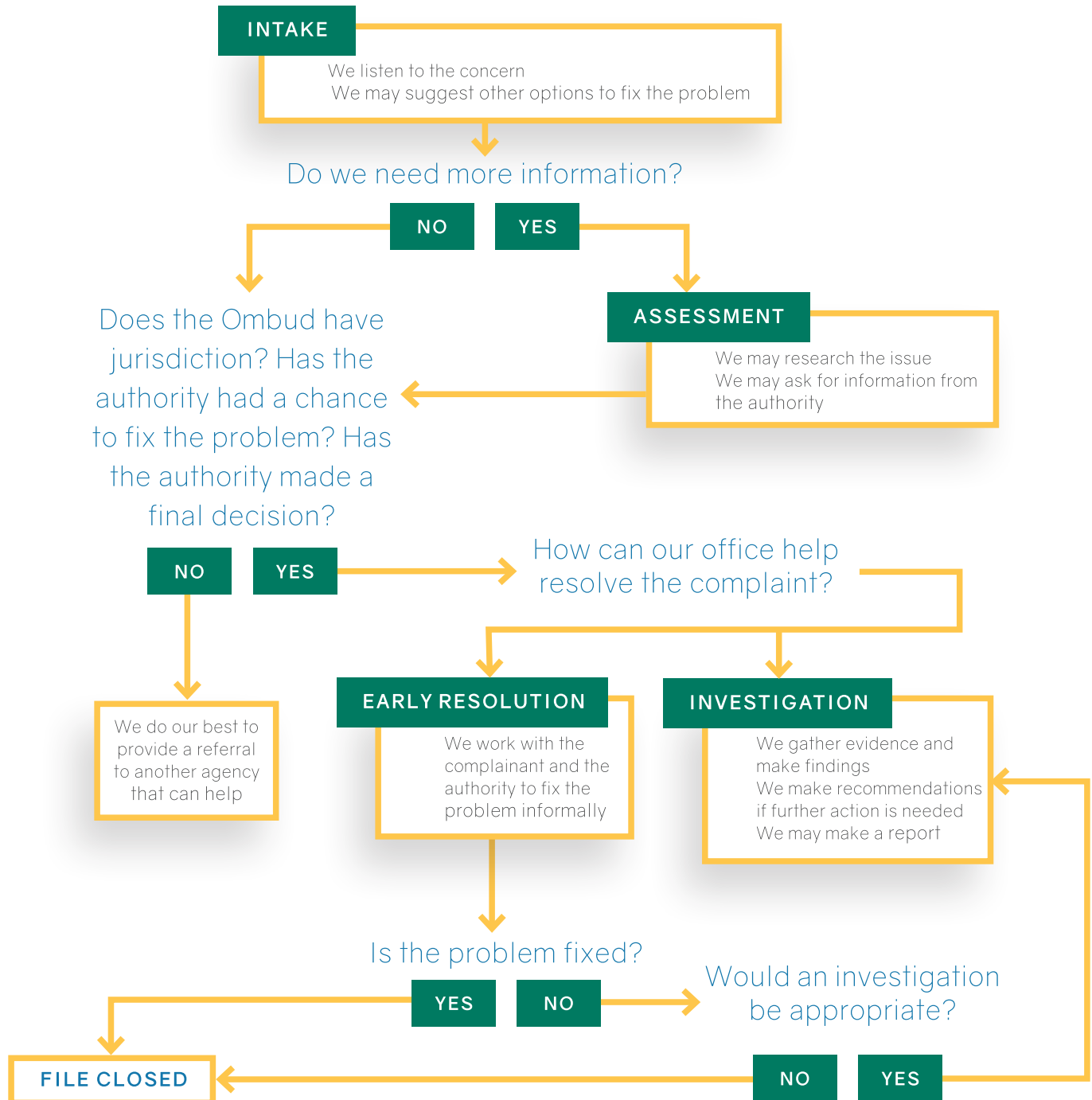
People and government authorities are not always able to work out problems themselves. If the matter is within our mandate, we see what we can do to help solve the problem. Our Office does not take sides with either the complainant or the public authority. Our role is to speak up for fairness.

We can often fix problems informally through our early resolution process. Early resolution involves listening to both sides, asking questions, gathering information, and discussing options.

Sometimes we decide we need to do a more formal investigation. We make

this decision based on a number of considerations, including the kind of evidence we think we will need to get to the bottom of the matter, and whether we think formal recommendations might be appropriate. At the end of an investigation, we let the person who made the complaint and the government authority know what our findings were. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, we might then make recommendations to fix the problem. If the government authority does not take action, we may make a report to the Legislative Assembly.

Our Process



About Administrative Fairness

The Ombud is an advocate for
administrative fairness.

What does that mean?

Every day, government organizations take actions and make decisions that affect many areas of people's lives. Administrative fairness is the standard of conduct that government organizations in a democratic society owe to people.

Government organizations are expected to treat people fairly and reasonably. For example, they need to follow rules, provide clear information about processes

and decisions, and deal with people with honesty and respect.

Although there is no single definition of fairness, there are some basic principles and practices that can help to describe it.

The Fairness Triangle: Three Aspects of Fairness¹

Decision

What was decided?

- Did government have the legal authority to make the decision?
- Was the decision based on relevant information?
- Was the decision oppressive or unjust?
- Was the decision wrong in fact or law?

Process

How was it decided?

- Was the person given enough information to know what was required?
- Was the person given an appropriate chance to present their views?
- Did government take the time to listen?
- Did government provide reasons for decisions?
- Was the decision made within a reasonable time?
- Was the decision-maker unbiased?

Service

How was the person treated?

- Was government approachable?
- Was confidentiality respected?
- Was government honest and forthright?
- Did government offer an apology if a mistake was made?



Fairness is not always simple. Context is important in deciding whether something is fair. Fairness does not mean that government has to agree to every request, or treat everyone exactly the same.

¹ This section is based on materials developed by Ombudsman Saskatchewan. The Fairness Triangle was developed by Ombudsman Saskatchewan from the concept of the satisfaction triangle, in: Moore, Christopher (2003). *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.



2022/2023

2022/2023

Inquiries and Complaints

Inquiries include all contacts to the Office about general information requests and case files (potential complaints).

Complaints are those matters where our Office intervenes by initiating either an early resolution process or an investigation. Many inquiries are resolved before they reach the complaint stage.

Administrative suggestions are suggestions made to authorities in writing to informally resolve a situation and/or to prevent similar situations from recurring. They are less formal than recommendations, which would be provided in a report following an investigation.

Own-motion investigations are investigations that are started on the Ombud's initiative and are not limited to a specific complaint.

From April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, the Office received 157 inquiries, of which 26 progressed to the complaint stage. As of fiscal year-end, 3 complaint files remained open. We made 2 administrative suggestions, which were accepted. We closed 161 files (including 6 files carried over from the previous fiscal year).

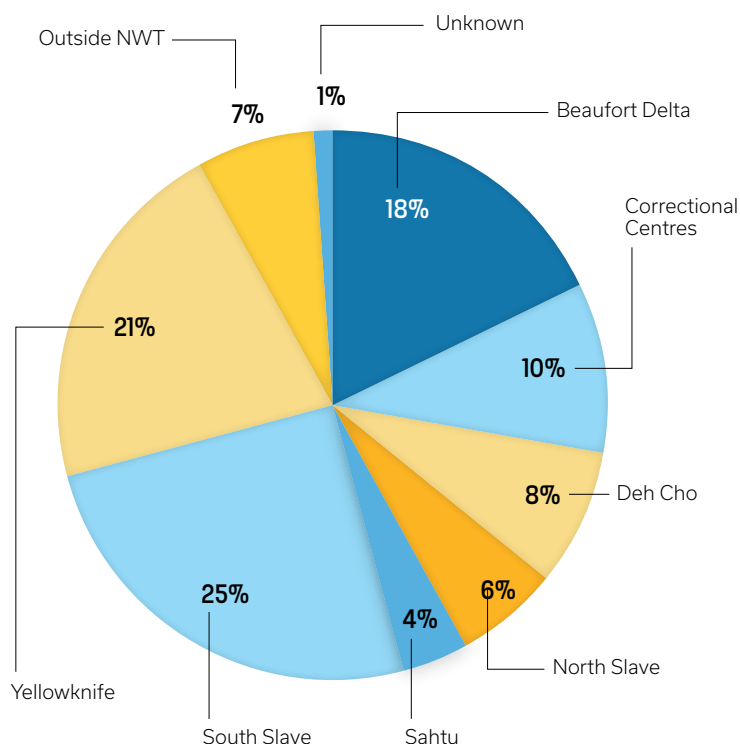
We completed 3 own-motion investigations, resulting in 2 special reports, and 18 recommendations. In all cases, the authorities responded positively to the recommendations and indicated steps they had taken or planned to take.

2022/2023 Inquiries

2022/2023 INQUIRIES	OPEN/ CARRIED OVER	CLOSED	CARRIED OVER TO NEXT FISCAL YEAR	
Carried over from previous fiscal year	7	6	1	
Information Request	23	23	0	
Potential Complaints	157	155	STATUS AT YEAR END	
			At intake	0
			At early resolution	2
			At investigation	1
TOTAL	187	184	3	

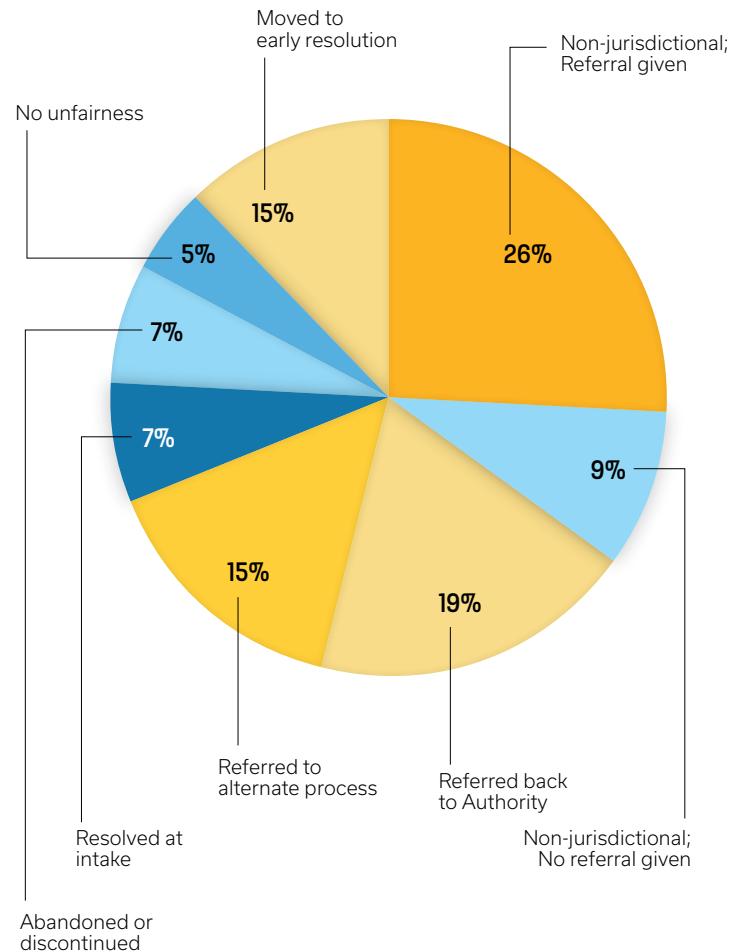
Inquiries by Location

Beaufort Delta	28
Correctional Centres	15
Deh Cho	12
North Slave	9
Sahtu	7
South Slave	39
Yellowknife	33
Outside NWT	11
Unknown	3
TOTAL	157



Case Files by Outcome at Intake*

NON-JURISDICTIONAL	57
• Referral given	42
• No Referral given	15
JURISDICTIONAL	104
• Referred back to authority	30
• Referred to alternate process	24
• Resolved at intake	12
• Abandoned or discontinued	11
• No unfairness	8
• Moved to early resolution	19
• Moved directly to formal investigation	0
STILL AT INTAKE AT FISCAL YEAR END	0
TOTAL	161



*includes intake files carried over from 2021/2022

Case Files by Organization

NON-JURISDICTIONAL	
• Business	9
• Federal government	11
• Housing association	2
• Indigenous government	2
• Municipal government	7
• Non-government organization	3
• Not a matter of administration	1
• Other Provincial/Territorial government	5
• Pre-2016	2
• Private Individual	5
• Professional Association	3
• Territorial office	7
TOTAL	57

JURISDICTIONAL	
• Aurora College	1
• Business Development & Investment Corporation	1
• District Education Authority	1
• Divisional Education Councils	1
• Education, Culture & Employment	10
• Environment & Natural Resources	3
• Finance	10
• Hay River Health & Social Services Authority	2
• Health and Social Services	9
• Housing Authority	3
• Infrastructure	6
• Industry, Tourism & Investment	3
• Justice	15
• Lands	1
• Legal Aid Commission	2
• Municipal & Community Affairs	3
• NWT Housing Corporation	11
• NWT Health & Social Services Authority	8
• NWT Power Corporation	3
• Tłıchq Community Services Agency	2
• Workers' Safety & Compensation Commission	4
• Unspecified/Other	1
TOTAL	100

Complaints by Outcome*

RESOLVED AT EARLY RESOLUTION	
• Voluntary action by authority	18
• Abandoned or discontinued by complainant	1
• No unfairness	0
INVESTIGATIONS	
• Complaint not substantiated	0
• Complaint substantiated - recommendations	0
• Complaint substantiated - no recommendations	0
• Investigation discontinued - voluntary action by authority	0
STILL OPEN AT FISCAL YEAR END	
• In early resolution process	2
• In investigation process	1
TOTAL	22

*includes complaint files carried over from 2021/2022

Investigation Timelines

We consider investigations complete as of either 1. the date we notify the complainant and the authority that we are discontinuing the investigation, or 2. the date we provide the complainant and the authority with a final report. We did not complete any complaint-based investigations in 2022/2023. One investigation file was still open at fiscal year end.

2022/2023

Examples of Our Work

Thank you for telling me who I can talk to for help. I didn't know who to call, I didn't know what I could do, I just had no idea who to talk to. And then I heard your radio ad. I heard your radio ad at 7:00 am on Monday morning, and I called your office at 7:01 am on Monday morning!

Even if it isn't a problem your office can deal with, I just feel so much better knowing I can call you and ask questions about what to do in this situation.

Thank you for being honest with me when nobody else would even answer me. I don't mind if I don't get the result I wanted, I just wanted an honest answer and nobody else would give me that, that's what I appreciate from you.

I'm so glad you told me to about what I could do, I wish I had known about this a year ago, but nobody else told me. It could have prevented the problem that happened if I had known where to go and what to apply for back then

I was given the go ahead ... thank you so much, I really appreciate the way my concern was handled, I really don't have the words to describe my joy, thank you.

These were some of comments we heard from people about our work.

Sometimes people are not sure who to talk to about their concerns and need a referral to point them in the right direction. Sometimes people do not believe government is taking their issues seriously. Even if it is too late for them, many people would like problems to be fixed so that the same thing does not keep happening to

others. Sometimes people find it hard to trust government and may fear the worst: that someone is making things difficult for them on purpose. Sometimes government is not clear or transparent enough about its processes and decisions. Sometimes government does not communicate with people in a way that works for them. And sometimes people fall through cracks in the system.

These are all situations where our Office has been able to help through our independent and free of charge services. We do this through referrals, our early resolution process, and our investigation powers. We get information from and speak directly with the officials who can help us understand what happened and work with us to come up with solutions. This is different from most other processes. As Justice Dickson wrote in the 1984 British Columbia Development

Corporation decision, the powers granted to Ombuds allow them “to address administrative problems that the courts, the legislature and the executive cannot effectively resolve.”²

The following are a few specific examples of cases that we resolved in 2022/2023. We have changed names to protect people’s privacy.

Example #1

Public Housing Appeal Process

(Referral)

Daniel was concerned about the amount of his public housing rent assessment. Public housing rents are determined based on the person’s tax return from the prior year, but it is possible to ask for a re-assessment if there are unusual or exceptional circumstances. Daniel had been through some changes in his life in the last few months and felt that his income from last year wasn’t the right way to decide his present rent.

Daniel appealed to the housing authority board and then to the District Office of

the NWT Housing Corporation to ask for a re-assessment of his rent, but he wasn’t successful at either level. Daniel didn’t know where to go next, so he contacted our Office. We let Daniel know that there was still another level of appeal, to the NWT Housing Appeal Committee, which he was not aware of. We also let Daniel know that he could contact the Legal Aid Outreach Clinic for some advice on how to prepare and present his appeal.

² *British Columbia Development Corporation v. Friedmann (Ombudsman)*, [1984] 2 S.C.R. 447.

Example #2

Concerns About Private Medical Information

(Referral)

Kaitlyn was injured at work and submitted a worker's compensation claim to the WSCC. She was concerned that the records WSCC requested from her doctor included information about unrelated medical treatments she had accessed which were very personal and were not relevant to her claim. Kaitlyn wasn't sure what she could do about it, so she contacted our

Office. We let Kaitlyn know that complaints about how authorities access and use medical and other private information can be made to the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and how to reach them. Kaitlyn contacted us afterwards to thank us for having pointed her in the right direction to address her concerns.

Example #3

Inmate Disciplinary Hearings

(Referral)

Jordan was involved in an altercation with another inmate. Jordan had to attend a disciplinary hearing as a result of the incident, which he felt proceeded in a way that was biased against him. Jordan also disagreed with the outcome of the hearing. We referred Jordan to the NWT Investigations and Standards Office ("ISO"), which provides independent oversight of the NWT Corrections Service and can take complaints about and review inmate disciplinary hearings. We explained to

Jordan that because of the ISO's specialized expertise in corrections, this was the best place for him to bring his complaint. He could come back to our Office afterwards if he still had concerns that the ISO process did not address.

Example #4

Health Services Concerns

(Referral back to the authority)

Shannon contacted our Office after comments from a health professional that she experienced as hurtful caused her to lose confidence in using health care services in the future. As we are an Office of last resort, we usually ask people to let the organization know about a problem and give them the chance to address it first, before coming to us. We talked with Shannon about her comfort level addressing the matter with the NWTHSSA and explained their process for dealing with patient complaints. After our

conversation, Shannon felt ready to talk with an NWTHSSA Patient Representative.

Shannon got in touch with us afterwards to tell us that the process had been helpful to her. While she did not feel fully restored from the impact of the original experience, she did feel that she was genuinely heard and that her concerns were acknowledged and taken seriously. She also said that the steps taken by the NWTHSSA in response had given her confidence to use health services in the future.

Example #5

Making Services More Client-Centred

(Early Resolution)

Allison's utility bills were paid by her Client Service Officer (CSO) as part of her Income Assistance (IA) benefits. Clients with this benefit are responsible for bringing in their utility invoices each month. However, Allison had transportation difficulties, especially in winter, and it was often hard for Allison to get to the CSO's office in person. Sometimes Allison brought her

utility invoices in late, which resulted in late fees because the bills did not get paid on time.

Other times, Allison forgot to bring in invoices and got cut-off notices from the utility provider. She would bring the notice to her CSO, who would then work with her to get copies of the missing invoices from

Example #5 Continued

the utility provider so they could be paid. However, the late fees were still Allison's responsibility.

Allison was sure that she had brought some of her unpaid invoices in on time, but the IA office had no record of receiving them and there was no way to find out for sure what happened. Our main focus was to find a way to prevent this problem from continuing so that Allison could avoid more late fees and cut-off notices. Allison's CSO shared our concerns.

It was agreed between Allison and her CSO that Allison would take the steps needed to get her utility provider to email her invoices rather than post them. Allison would then be able to forward her utility invoices by email to the IA Office, instead of having to wait until she could arrange for transportation to get her invoices submitted. That way, Allison would always be able to check her sent emails to confirm that she had sent an invoice in for payment and on what date.

Example #6

Fairness and User Fees

(Early Resolution)

Emilia approached us about an airport user fee that had not been advertised or established in a regulation. The airport had been charging the fee for close to 4 months before she contacted our office. Emilia didn't believe that it was lawful for the GNWT to charge for a service without properly advertising it or justifying the amount being charged and felt the general approach to the fee was unfair and clouded by a lack of transparency.

We contacted the Department of

Infrastructure to find out what authority it was using to charge the fee, and also reached out to the Department of Finance to get more information about the rules for user fees. While in the end we were satisfied that the fee was lawful, we were concerned that there were some elements of best practices, service fairness, and procedural fairness missing. The Department of Infrastructure acknowledged that it could have been more open with its communication of the new fee and the policies surrounding it.

Example #6 Continued

We worked with both parties to come up with solutions that would satisfy the aspects of administrative fairness that were missing from the government's previous approach to collecting fees. The Department of

Infrastructure identified several short-term and long-term solutions that would make collection of this and other airport fees fairer and more transparent

Example #7

Fairness in Public Housing

(Investigation)

Like other landlords, public housing landlords sometimes have a set of rules for tenants in addition to what is in the lease. This is allowed under the *Residential Tenancies Act*,³ as long as the rules are reasonable.

We did an own motion investigation to look at the standard leases and "house rules" for all thirteen housing authorities in the NWT (not all of the authorities have "house rules"). We did not find any fairness concerns with the standard leases, however, we did have concerns with the house rules for three of the housing authorities.

One concern had to do with the "fair use of discretion". For decisions to be fair, they need to be made based on the merits of each case or situation. This means that while authorities can establish policies and

guidelines to help decision-makers, these policies and guidelines must not be so rigid or "one-size-fits-all" that they restrict or "fetter" the decision-maker's discretion to consider each situation. For example, a policy that says an authority "shall" start the process to terminate a tenant's lease if they break any of the house rules would not be fair because it makes the authority's decision automatic. A policy that instead says an authority "may" start the process to terminate someone's lease would be fair because the authority would have to use its discretion in each case to decide what to do.

Fair decisions also have to be based on "lawful rules" - rules that follow the law. Another concern we had with some house rules is that they contradicted the

Example #7 Continued

Residential Tenancies Act. For example, a rule that said an authority could terminate someone's lease if they broke a rule would be unfair, because in reality the authority cannot terminate someone's lease on its own, it would have to go through a rental officer. Rental officers do sometimes deny landlords' applications to terminate

leases. This rule could also be misleading for tenants who are not aware of the law – they might assume the landlord can evict them and leave on their own without taking the opportunity to make their case to a rental officer.

The investigation resulted in four recommendations for changes to house rules to ensure fair use of discretion and consistency with the *Residential Tenancies Act*. All four recommendations were accepted and implemented by the authorities. The recommendations resulted in changes to:

- the Fort Smith Housing Authority's rule on alcohol-related cooking fires (rule 7);
- the Inuvik Housing Authority's rule on alcohol and/or drug-related fires and smoke incidents (rule 23);
- the Yellowknife Housing Authority's rule on what happens if a tenant violates the house rules (concluding statement of the rules);
- and the Yellowknife Housing Authority's rule on when the landlord can enter the rental space (rule 18 – this rule was inconsistent with the *Residential Tenancies Act* and was removed altogether).

³ R.S.N.W.T. 1988, c. R-5, s. 12.

2022/2023

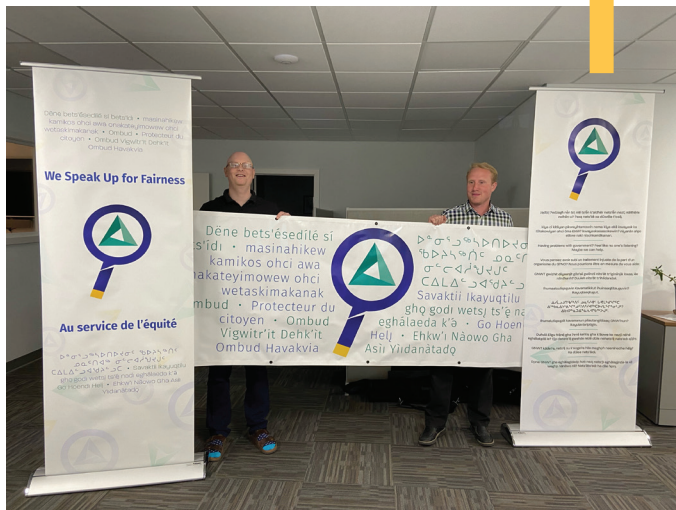
Public Education and Outreach

In 2022/2023, with the easing of COVID-19 public health restrictions and with a team of three staff, we were at last able to carry out a full schedule of in-person public education and outreach activities to raise awareness about administrative fairness and our Office.

We connected directly with over 200 members of the public at events including a Farmers Market in Fort Smith, the Christmas Craft Sale in Inuvik, and "meet and greets" with the Ombud in Fort Providence and Fort Simpson.

The Ombud provided in-person presentations to the December 2022 Native Womens' Association annual general meeting in Yellowknife, and to the Deh Cho and Beaufort Delta GNWT Regional Management Committees. We also had a table at the June 2022 NWT Association of Communities AGM in Yellowknife (where we met some colleagues from the federal Office of the Taxpayers' Ombudsperson!), and made presentations to Housing NWT staff, Local Housing Organization staff, and Government Service Officers.

This year we launched a new pamphlet, "Speaking Up for Fairness in Long Term Care Facilities". The pamphlet highlights



matters residents, families and others with concerns can contact our Office about, including: not getting answers to questions or clear explanations for decisions, concerns about how facility rules are applied, health and safety concerns that are not being addressed, lack of timely services, billing issues, and quality of care. We followed up with in-person visits to facilities in Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Hay River, and Inuvik to give them pamphlets and information about us and answer any questions.

The Ombud also had meetings to exchange information and promote the Office with Chief Hardisty in Jean Marie River, officials with long term and continuing care responsibilities, the Government Services Officer in Fort Liard, and the YWCA in Yellowknife.

The Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsmen launched a new website and Making It Fair podcast series this year, which we were happy to contribute to. The Fairness: A New Frontier episode, released in January 2023, features a conversation between the Ombud and former MLA Wendy Bisaro about the long road to establishing an ombud office in the NWT.

Bottom photo caption: With new friends from the Taxpayer's Ombudsperson at Cameron Falls

Fairness Training

In 2022/2023, we were excited to introduce a new one-day in-person workshop and accompanying guide for public servants called Working Together for Fairness. The course, which we developed in-house, is an interactive program designed to help learners further their knowledge of administrative fairness and the principles of fair service, fair decisions, and fair process. It provides an introduction to concepts like bias, expectations, discretion, effective decision making, trauma-informed service, and cultural safety.

The course was offered in Hay River in March 2023, and had 6 participants.

163 employees accessed the Fairness 101 course through the GNWT training platform. Fairness 101 is a one-hour webinar and introduction to administrative fairness that is offered courtesy of the Office of the BC Ombudsperson.

2022/2023

Other Highlights

We were delighted to welcome Renée Gavigan, Deputy Ombudsman, Saskatchewan back to Hay River in August 2022. Renée, who first visited us in February 2020, has been an inspiring and generous mentor to our Office from the very beginning, and our entire team has benefited greatly from her wisdom and experience. We wish her all the best in her retirement.

Photo caption: Renée (far left) and the NWT Ombud team.



Professional Development

The Ombud participated in the annual Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman (CCPO) meeting hosted by the Alberta Ombudsman in June 2022, and the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman conference in Ottawa in October 2022. Later that week, the Ombud also joined BC Ombudsperson Jay Chalke, Minnesota Ombudsperson for American Indian Families Jill Esch, and Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé in a panel discussion on Ombuds, Reconciliation, and Dispute Resolution at the ADR Institute of Canada national conference in Gatineau, Quebec.

The NWT office hosted the CCPO's monthly webinar in November 2022, on the subject of our special report on Fairness in Income Assistance Programs.

One staff member completed the "Essentials for Ombuds" course jointly sponsored by Osgoode Hall Law School

and the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman. Staff also attended several monthly CCPO webinars hosted by other Canadian offices, completed courses in conflict resolution, negotiations, the GNWT Management Series, GNWT financial processing modules, unconscious bias, trauma-informed service delivery, and diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

This year, the CCPO launched a new online advanced training for ombud staff, "Raising the Bar", which was developed by a committee of senior ombud officials from across Canada. Program participants were assigned to small groups to research and prepare presentations on various topics that they then delivered during the course. One staff member from the NWT office participated in the training. The Ombud provided the opening address to attendees via videoconference from Inuvik.

2022/2023

Financials

ACCOUNT	EXPENDITURES (\$S)
COMPENSATION & BENEFITS	<u>592,287</u>
OTHER EXPENSES	
Travel & Transportation	32,274
Materials & Supplies	17,359
Purchased Services	37,848
Contract Services	71,095
Fees & Payments	3,041
Controllable Assets	0
Computer Expenses	12,055
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES	<u>173,673</u>
TOTAL	<u>765,960</u>

Chipewyan

Cree

English

French

Gwich'in

Innuiaqtun

Inuktitut

Inuvialuktun

North Slavey

South Slavey

Ttichq

ʔerihł'ís Dēne Sų́líné yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theʔą ʔat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yółtı.

Chipewyan

Kīspin ki nitawihtīn ē nīhīyawihk ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.

Cree

If you would like this information in another official lanugage, call us.

English

Si vous voulez ces informations dans une autre langue officielle, contactez-nous.

French

Jii gwandak izhii ginjik vat'atr'ijāhch'uu zhit yinothtan jì, diits'àt ginohkii.

Gwich'in

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.

Innuiaqtun

ᑕᑦᑭᑦ ᑎᑎᑦᑕᑦᑭᑦ ᐱᑦᐱᑦᑭᑦ ᐃᑦᑕᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ, ᐃᑦᑕᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ.

Inuktitut

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqłuta.

Inuvialuktun

Edı gondı dehgáh got'ıe zhatıé k'éé edat'éh enahddhę nıde naxets'ę edahfı.

North Slavey

K'áhshó got'ıne xədə k'é hederı ʔedłhtł'é yerıniwę nıde dúle.

South Slavey

Tłıchq yatı k'éé. Dı wegodı newq dè, gots'o gonede.

Tłıchq



Office of
the Ombud

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