



ADR CHAMBERS OMBUDS OFFICE Code of Conduct

Introduction

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office Terms of Reference set out the scope of ADR Chambers Ombuds Office's mandate, the processes it uses upon receiving complaints from members of the public, and the authority and responsibility of ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff and investigators (ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff).

The Terms of Reference are founded on principles of independence, neutrality, fairness, confidentiality and competence. To give effect to these principles, it is important for ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff to have a clear understanding of the standards of conduct expected of them. This Code of Conduct ("the Code") is a statement of these standards and provides guidance for ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff while performing their roles. The Code also informs those who use ADR Chambers Ombuds Office's service how they should expect to be treated by ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff.

Conduct of ADR Chambers Ombuds Office Staff

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should act with respect; act with integrity; act with accountability; protect confidential information; and act responsively.

Respect

Acting with respect means recognizing that every person deserves to be treated in a fair, courteous and appropriate manner. ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should act with respect towards all who deal with ADR Chambers Ombuds Office.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should deal with all persons in a courteous and appropriate manner and should not discriminate against any person when undertaking ADR Chambers Ombuds Office functions.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should consider all relevant matters when making decisions or dealing with cases and should respect the privacy and confidentiality of persons who provide information to ADR Chambers Ombuds Office, including complainants and employees.

Integrity

Acting with integrity means following the highest ethical standards and keeping the trust of colleagues and clients. ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should act with integrity while performing all aspects of their roles with ADR Chambers Ombuds Office.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should be honest and fair in undertaking and reporting all aspects of their work, including situations where a mistake may have been made.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should avoid conflicts of interest (see Appendix A) and should not let any private interest conflict with the impartial performance of ADR Chambers Ombuds Office functions.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should act to keep the workplace free from discrimination and harassment.

Accountability

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should be accountable to complainants and to municipalities for our work.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should undertake their functions in an impartial manner consistent with the law, ADR Chambers Ombuds Office's Terms of Reference, the Code, and all other applicable policies or guidelines. ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should provide a fair and balanced opportunity for both complainants and municipalities to present documents and other information supporting their positions.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should provide full reasons to complainants and municipalities when reporting ADR Chambers Ombuds Office recommendations and should make complete records of work and activities undertaken for ADR Chambers Ombuds Office.

Protect Confidential Information

Protecting confidential information means maintaining the privacy and the security of the information provided to ADR Chambers Ombuds Office by complainants and municipalities and complainants. ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should comply with all applicable laws pertaining to the use, collection and disclosure of the information provided to them by complainants and municipalities.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should not comment publicly on matters concerning ADR Chambers Ombuds Office, make statements to the press, or discuss ADR Chambers Ombuds Office on public internet sites or blogs without the express permission of the Ombudsman.

Responsiveness

Acting responsively means providing competent and impartial service in a timely manner while responding to the reasonable requests of complainants and municipalities. ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should provide professional, relevant and prompt service when performing all ADR Chambers Ombuds Office functions.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should perform all functions with care and diligence and provide professional assistance to all persons who contact ADR Chambers Ombuds Office. ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should be reasonably available to discuss cases with complainants and municipalities, and should consider fully all comments or suggestions pertaining to those cases. They should act on matters as promptly as possible, having regard to competing work priorities, and keep the parties informed of the progress of their cases.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should provide information in a way that can be easily understood by the recipient. ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should maintain a current knowledge of developments in the municipal services sector. They should share good practice ideas with other ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff in order to improve ADR Chambers Ombuds Office services.

Report Concerns Promptly

If ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff learn of anything that may conflict with the Code, any other ADR Chambers Ombuds Office policy, or any laws or regulations, they should report their concerns promptly to the Deputy Ombudsman or the Ombudsman.

Implementation

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff is responsible for implementing the Code and every ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff member is expected to have read the Code and to act in accordance with it in all aspects of ADR Chambers Ombuds Office functions.

Should the provisions of the Code appear unclear to an ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff member, then either the Ombudsman or the Deputy Ombudsman of ADR Chambers Ombuds Office should be consulted.

Appendix A

Conflicts of Interest

Definition

A conflict of interest is a situation in which someone has a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the impartial performance of their responsibilities for ADR Chambers Ombuds Office. A conflict of interest is not just about money but about any factors that a reasonable person might think are likely to bias a decision maker's judgment.

The primary purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff and Board Members to enable them to avoid situations where their personal activities, interests and financial affairs are, or appear to be, in conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of ADR Chambers Ombuds Office and complainants and municipalities utilizing ADR Chambers Ombuds Office's services.

Scope

This policy applies to all ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff.

Responsibility

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff must not use their position with ADR Chambers Ombuds Office to benefit themselves or their friends and families. ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff, friends and families should not offer or receive gifts, entertainment or hospitality that compromise or appear to compromise their objectivity and the honest and fair performance of their duties.

ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should disclose any situation where a potential conflict of interest exists to the Ombudsman or Deputy Ombudsman, who will determine what steps to take to manage the situation. Generally, ADR Chambers Ombuds Office staff should avoid accepting gifts, entertainment, hospitality or other benefits from complainants and municipalities utilizing ADR Chambers Ombuds Office services. Furthermore, should an ADR Chambers Ombuds Office investigator believe that there may be a conflict of interest; he/she must inform the Ombudsman or Deputy Ombudsman promptly. The case will then be reassigned accordingly to another investigator.

Exceptions

Hospitality which relates to joint, work-related activities is an exception to this policy, up to a maximum value of \$75.00, which ADR Chambers Ombuds Office believes to be consistent with industry standards.