

2020-21 Business Plan Outline – Office of the Ombudsman

Department/Office/Agency: Nova Scotia Office of the Ombudsman			
Prepared by: Brock McDougall		Deputy Ombudsman Approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ombudsman Approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ministerial Mandate (MM): See Legislated Mandate			
<p>Legislated Mandate (LM): The Ombudsman is established as an Independent Officer of the House of Assembly, a commissioner for investigations. The Office of the Ombudsman investigates complaints arising from the administration of provincial or municipal laws within Nova Scotia. The Office of the Ombudsman may also initiate investigations of administrative activities and practices (own motion investigations) or matters referred to it by a committee of the House.</p> <p>The primary mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman is to review and respond to citizens' concerns with respect to the administration of provincial and municipal laws, pursuant to the Ombudsman Act. In addition, the mandate includes a proactive role in relation to programs and services for children, youth, seniors, and adult correctional facilities, as well as systemic and policy reviews. The Office also investigates allegations of disclosure of wrongdoing pursuant to the Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act and Regulations, as well as has investigative responsibility under the House of Assembly's Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment in the Workplace.</p>			
<p>Department Priority (DP): *The Office of the Ombudsman is an Independent Office of the Legislature</p>			
<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complaint Resolution: Ensure fair and accountable public sector administration by addressing complaints in a timely, comprehensive, objective, and independent manner. With a dedicated focus on matters related to children, youth, seniors, correctional services inmates, and diversity. 2. Education and Outreach: Broad public awareness and understanding of the role and mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman, and access to services. Increase presence within diverse communities, areas relating to children, youth, seniors, and government stakeholders. 3. Public Policy and Initiatives: Ensure the review and development of sound and effective government policy and procedures; with a focus on children, youth, seniors, and diversity initiatives. 			

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Priorities/Activities/Initiatives for 2020-2021 Listed, grouped or numbered in order of importance/priority Please note category: Government Strategic Goal / Ministerial Mandate/ Legislated Mandate /Department Priority					
Category	Priority Ranking	Activity/Initiative - Brief description	Timing of Implementation	Source of Funding	Expected Outcomes
Legislated Mandate – Ombudsman Act	1	Seniors Summit – In keeping with the role and mandate of our Seniors Services section, the Office will be hosting a provincial Seniors Summit. Nova Scotia has an aging population (the second highest senior’s population in Canada) and it is expected to increase significantly in the coming years. The purpose of the senior’s summit is to engage with seniors and various stakeholders to gather feedback regarding the role of the Office of the Ombudsman and issues impacting seniors, their caregivers and families, and how the Office of the Ombudsman can better assist them and respond to evolving issues or concerns.	October 2020	\$18,000 One-time new funds requested.	Awareness of our role among seniors, their families, caregivers, and service providers. Engage seniors to determine areas we can better service them, their families, caregivers and service providers and respond to evolving issues or complaints.
Legislated Mandate – Youth Services	2	Ombudsman Youth Council – stemming from the Youth Summit and report, the youth council was established as a committee of young people who provide input, advice and guidance from a youth perspective on the role and mandate of our Office on issues impacting children, youth, their families, and service providers. The council was continued from the previous fiscal year	Recurring Meetings	\$3,500 Ombudsman General Budget	Engage diverse youth from across the province to determine how we can better serve children and youth, including youth in care and custody.

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<p>Legislated Mandate – Ombudsman Act, Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act (PIDWA)</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Training – Continue to develop staff skills and operational capacity in investigation and complaint handling services.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>\$28,000 Training Budget</p>	<p>Support staff and operational capacity in conducting fair and efficient reviews and investigations of complaints received under the Ombudsman Act, Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act, and the House of Assembly’s Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment in the Workplace</p>
<p>Approach to progress measurement and/or evaluation</p>		<p>Analyze contact data for changes in contacts from strategic groups (Youth / Seniors)</p> <p>Survey youth on council engagement / expectations</p> <p>Regular meetings between staff and managers to identify gaps in training and to assess progress.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Funded within</p>	<p>Increased interactions with and contacts from strategic groups (youth and seniors)</p> <p>Improved awareness of issues facing youth. Determine areas for improvement to council structure and function</p> <p>Training selected specific to staff requirements. Managers tailor training to areas for improvement within staff.</p>