

**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA
Quarterly Report
Oct 2014 – December 2014**



In the Beginning

Consistent with an adopted 2010-12 Council Goal to “ensure success of the organizational approach to strengthening community connections and resolving issues of discrimination and mistreatment”, the Town Manager established the Ombuds Office in July 2012.

Contacts this Quarter (2014)	
85%	Were employees of the Town of Chapel Hill
15%	Were residents, visitors, or business owners in Chapel Hill

Employee Concerns	Residents, visitors, business owners concerns
48% Career Development	56% Conflict w/ family, work, neighborhood
32% Interpersonal relations with co-workers	11% Conflict with Town rules /policies
12% Reorganization	23% seeking information
8% Disciplinary actions	10% seeking resources

Ombuds Activity This Quarter



- **Coaching** - - an amount of time spent with an individual or group to help them evaluate decisions; make decisions, set and reach goals, or devise a plan to deal with a particular set of problems. Most contacts last no more than one and one-half hours.
- **Facilitation** – working with a group or multiple groups to help them outline their common objectives and assists them to create a plan of how they might achieve these objectives.
- **Reference** – Offering assistance to individuals to help them locate the best resource for their needs. This may involve both Town and external resources.

Trends this Quarter

- Employees have expressed the desire to expand their talents, skills, and abilities in areas beyond their department;
- Though employees understand that the Ombuds Office is an informal resource, a number have discussed their formal options with the Ombuds Office before making a decision;
- To avoid unintended negative impact, need for the organization to consider impact on all employees, especially marginalized groups, when considering reorganization and changes in policies;
- Employees would like greater opportunities to meet and learn about other TOCH employees and what they do for the Town;
- Perceived disconnect for lower-level employees between Values, Vision and Mission statements and application;
- Emphasis on development of employees appears absent in areas where remediation deemed appropriate;
- Increased opportunities for HRD / Ombuds to work together in the areas of training, brainstorming, and employee engagement.

HOW THE OMBUDS OFFICE REPORTS INFORMATION

In accordance with the guiding principles of the International Ombuds Association (IOA), the Chapel Hill Office follows a practice of confidentiality and ***reports trending information that does not identify individuals or their work areas***. Trending information is used to help identify employee concerns, and offers suggestions for ways to address those concerns in a manner that is systemic and consistent with the principles of a learning organization.

Members of the Ombuds office meet with the Town Manager and Deputy Town Manager monthly to discuss and strategize around organizational trends.

A quarterly report detailing the nature of the quarter's contacts and proposed next steps is delivered to the Town Council through the Manager's Office; published in the Town Talk Newsletter; an electronic version is available on the Ombuds webpage; and paper copies are printed and distributed throughout the organization.

For **FY 2015-16**, the quarterly reports will be available:

- April 2015
- July 2015 (Annual Report)
- October 2015
- January 2016

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