



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Ombuds Office

1st Quarter Report

Jan – April 2016

Previous reports can be accessed at <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/departments-services/ombuds-office>

CONTRASTS & COMPARISONS

General categories of why people sought the assistance of the Ombuds office:

JAN – APRIL 2015

JAN – APRIL 2016

28% Supervisor-Employee Relations	8% Supervisor-Employee Relations
5% Interpersonal Relations	34% Interpersonal Relations
25% Career Development	25% Career Development
15% Group Facilitations	6% Group Facilitations
7% Policy Applications	5% Disciplinary Actions
2% Compensation/Benefits	9% Compensation/Benefits
1% Informational meetings	1% Referrals
17% Performance Appraisals	11% Difficult conversations
	1% Safety

Organizational Ombuds

Organizational Ombuds serve as a **confidential, independent, neutral** and **informal** dispute resolution resource for a specific entity. They are **accessible** to a defined population and can **advocate for fairness**.

Both Town Ombuds, Jim Huegerich and Faith M. Thompson, are members in good standing of the IOA and attend an annual conference where they learn more strategies and techniques to assist in conflict management.

CONFIDENTIALITY	<i>The Ombuds holds all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence.</i>
IMPARTIALITY/NEUTRAL	<i>Ombuds will not engage in any situation which could create a conflict of interest</i>
INDEPENDENCE	<i>The office is independent in structure, function, and appearance. Collaborative relationships have been developed to assist visitors.</i>
INFORMALITY	<i>Ombuds do not participate in any formal or administrative procedures related to concerns that visitors have shared with them.</i>

NEXT STEPS

Professional Development

Working with individual department members, and the organizational trainer, the Ombuds office will assist in helping to build capacity to assist them in facilitating community meetings and/or difficult conversations.

Trending information

We have begun tracking how long our visitors have been with the organization in an effort to see if there are any matters that affect certain groups of employees to a greater degree than others.

We are attempting a design of a complexity scale from 1-5 to help relay information about the trends we observe. This rating will reflect factors such as risk level, impact on the organization or impact on others, perceived impact on the individual, and time/effort by the Ombuds.

Communication Levels

We work to bring resolution to conflict at the basic level of the dispute. What that means is that if an employee alleges that they are in dispute with a co-worker, we will work with that employee to help develop their skills to resolve the situation. If they believe they need further assistance, they can invite the other employee to participate in a facilitated discussion or seek additional resources outside of the Ombuds office. Our ultimate goal is to empower more employees to help themselves while they help others.

Best Practices

Through the TownTalk Newsletter, new employee orientation, SLT orientations, and departmental meetings, we attempt to share stories of “best practices” with information on strategies and tactics that other employees used to better tell their story.

Strategic Planning

Will continue to work in collaboration with other Town staff to create strategic initiatives to address job satisfaction, customer service, and facilitative leadership.

REPORTS

If you have any questions, or are interested in the Ombuds visiting with you and your department to discuss this report further, please do not hesitate to contact us at the number below or by email at ombuds@townofchapelhill.org.

For FY 2016-17, the quarterly reports will be available:

- July 2016 (Annual Report)
- October 2016
- January 2017
- April 2017 (released in May 2017)

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