



THE WATCHDOG

Newsletter

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Ombudsman launches first municipal systemic investigation

Probe to review non-competitive procurement practices in Brampton

Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé announced on May 25 an investigation into the city of Brampton's procurement practices, focusing on the administration of its purchasing by-laws, policies and procedures regarding non-competitive procurements.

The announcement marks the Ombudsman's first systemic investigation relating to a municipality, and follows Brampton council's vote in February to request the Ombudsman's intervention.

"During our review of information we obtained from informal inquiries, we determined that the issue of non-competitive procurements could potentially have systemic implications on the city, its staff and its citizens," said Mr. Dubé.

Anyone who has specific information related to the matter under investigation is invited to contact the Ombudsman's Office via a [confidential complaint form](#) or by calling 1-800-263-1830.

► [Read the full press release](#)

In the news:



MAY 2016

The Ombudsman investigates public complaints about Ontario government agencies and broader public sector organizations. The office oversees more than 1,000 provincial ministries, agencies, tribunals, boards, commissions and Crown corporations, as well as school boards, municipalities and universities. New Ombudsman Paul Dubé took office April 1.

[FILE A COMPLAINT ONLINE](#)

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**A MESSAGE FROM THE
OMBUDSMAN**

- › [Ontario's ombudsman tackles Brampton city hall](#) (Toronto Star)
- › [Ontario Ombudsman to probe City of Brampton's business practices](#) (Brampton Guardian)

Abolish indefinite segregation: Ombudsman urges in submission

On May 10, Mr. Dubé released his submission to the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services urging the ministry to abolish the practice of placing inmates indefinitely in segregation and develop alternatives to protect the rights of the vulnerable.

In the submission, entitled [Not an Isolated Problem](#), the Ombudsman calls on the Ministry to address what he calls “the serious adverse effects of segregation and the wholesale inadequacy of existing procedural protections.” He makes 28 recommendations, including creating an independent panel to review segregation placements, and giving procedures – such as a 15-day limit on placements – the force of law.

The Ombudsman’s office has significant experience in dealing with complaints about provincial correctional facilities, handling some 4,000 each year. It has received 557 complaints related to segregation in the past three years, and repeatedly sounded the alarm about correctional officials ignoring segregation policies.

- › [Read the Ombudsman's submission](#)
- › [Read the full press release](#)

In the news

TORONTO STAR

Ban long-term solitary confinement: Editorial

Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé is right to call for a ban on the long-term solitary confinement of prison inmates.

- › [Ontario's ombudsman calls for end to indefinite segregation](#) (The Ottawa Citizen)
- › [Ontario ombudsman calls for end to long-term solitary confinement in jails](#) (The Globe and Mail)

Reports on two systemic investigations in final stages - expected in June, July

On May 19, Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé confirmed that he expects to release



Want to know what's new at our office? Check out the [Ombudsman's latest post](#) about his first month in office.

OMBUDSMAN SPEECHES

The Ombudsman will be speaking at the Ontario College of Teachers Annual Meeting of Members on June 2. Tune in to watch it live, [here](#).

The Ombudsman spoke at the Ontario Small Urban Municipalities conference on May 6. [Watch his speech.](#)



The Ombudsman also spoke at the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities on May 12. [Watch his speech.](#)

CLOSED MEETINGS

Sudbury: The Ombudsman found that an April 2016 roundtable with councillors and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was not an illegal meeting. [Read the letter.](#)

Norfolk County: The Ombudsman found a council-in-committee meeting in December 2015 contravened the *Municipal Act* when a legal

reports on two of his office's in-depth systemic investigations in June and July, once required processes are complete. The first involves an investigation into how the province directs police training in de-escalating conflict situations, originally launched in the wake of the police shooting death of Sammy Yatim in the summer of 2013. A draft of the Ombudsman's findings and recommendations in that case was provided on May 19 to the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services for a response, and is expected to be released at the end of June.

The second investigation involves the provision of services for adults with developmental disabilities who are in crisis, an issue that has drawn more than 1,400 complaints to the Ombudsman over three years. A draft of Mr. Dubé's findings and recommendations in this case was delivered to the Ministry of Community and Social Services on May 24, and the report is expected to be released at the end of July.

► [Read the full press release.](#)

Broader public sector: Recent cases

Complaints within the Ombudsman's new jurisdiction of municipalities, universities and school boards are over 2,000. We've had **502 school board** complaints since September 1, and **1,470** complaints about **municipalities** and **121** complaints about **universities** as of January 1. The bulk of these cases have been resolved informally, usually through referral to local officials.

Our staff have pointed people in the right direction and helped them resolve a range of problems. In one example, a parent complained to our office after a school board decided to move their child's bus stop 300 metres to a busier intersection. Our Office reviewed the board's transportation policy and made inquiries about the steps that the board took to assess the safety of the new bus stop. The complaint was closed once it was confirmed that the board had conducted a site visit at the stop, and had responded to all of the parent's concerns.

In another situation, a student complained about the low quality of courses being offered at the university he was attending and explained that he was being pursued by a collection agency for unpaid tuition. He wanted a refund for the tuition he had paid. Our Office directed him back to his university, explaining that our Office is a last resort, but that we could review the university's response if he was not satisfied with the internal complaint process.

[Check out our brochures](#) to learn more about municipal, university and school board complaints, or [fill out a complaint form here](#).

Have a complaint about a municipality? [Read this first](#)
Have a complaint about a university? [Read this first](#)
Have a complaint about a school board? [Read this first](#)

services contract was discussed in camera. [Read the report.](#)

The Nation: The Ombudsman found a meeting in August 2015 did not contravene the *Municipal Act*, but recommended the municipality broadcast its meetings.
[Read the report.](#)

WANT TO WORK WITH US?

We're always looking for talented people to join our **investigations**, **early resolutions**, and **legal** teams. Law students, click [here](#). Learn more about early resolutions [here](#). Learn about investigations [here](#).



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And stay connected with our office in both official languages! Follow our French Twitter account: [@Ont_OmbudsmanFR](#).

Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario | Bureau de l'Ombudsman de l'Ontario

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