



THE WATCHDOG

Newsletter

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REPORT RELEASE

Ombudsman to release report on services for adults with developmental disabilities in crisis: August 24

Mark your calendars - the Ombudsman's next systemic investigation report will be released August 24. Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé will report on the Ministry of Community and Social Services' response to adults with developmental disabilities who are in crisis situations.

[This investigation stemmed from a surge in complaints to our office](#) - more than 1,400 in all - about urgent, disturbing cases where adults with severe special needs were ending up in jail, homeless shelters and hospitals because no appropriate care or services were available for them. The Ombudsman's report reflects changes made by government during the course of the investigation, and the Ministry's response to his findings and recommendations.

You can watch Mr. Dubé's news conference live via webcast on August 24 at 11 a.m. at www.ombudsman.on.ca.

ICYMI: Minister accepts Ombudsman recommendations for police de-escalation training

Last month, Ontario Ombudsman Paul



JULY 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. Ombudsman Paul Dubé took office April 1.

[FILE A COMPLAINT ONLINE](#)

Ombudsman Ontario

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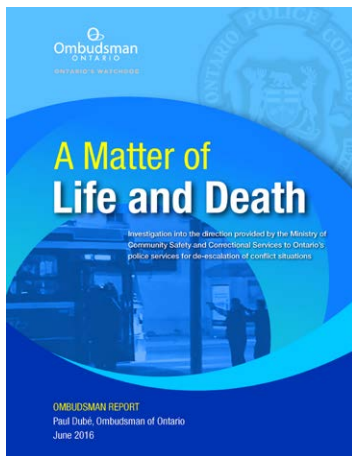
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**A MESSAGE FROM THE
OMBUDSMAN**



Dubé released his report, "[A Matter of Life and Death](#)". In it, he made [22 recommendations](#) on how the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services could improve training for police officers to handle conflict situations using de-escalation techniques before resorting to lethal force. Immediately after the Ombudsman's report was released, Minister Oraziotti announced that all the recommendations have been accepted and will be implemented within 12 months.

- › [Watch the press conference](#)
- › [Watch the Minister's response](#)
- › [Read the report](#)
- › [Watch the highlights](#)

Ombudsman Dubé wrote about the investigation and the Ministry's response in the Speaker's Corner column in the latest edition of the *Law Times*. [Read it here.](#)

The Ombudsman was also interviewed by CBC Ottawa about de-escalation techniques after the police-involved death of Abdirahman Abdi in Ottawa. [Read the story](#) and [listen to the interview](#). He also spoke with CBC's [The National](#) and [Global News](#).

Open Meeting Law Enforcement Team

All Ontario municipal councils, boards and committees are required by law to hold open meetings, with a few exceptions - this is commonly called the 'Sunshine Law'. Under the *Municipal Act*, the public can complain when municipal meetings are closed. The Ombudsman's Open Meeting Law Enforcement Team (OMLET) investigates such complaints in all municipalities except those that have appointed their own investigators.

Brockville

The Ombudsman determined a March 7, 2016 meeting of the City of Brockville's OPP Contact Adhoc Committee to discuss the OPP costing process fit within the "education and training" exception to the *Municipal Act*'s open meeting requirements, but a vote to direct staff to approach an audit firm to assess the proposal violated the Act because it advanced committee business.

Hamilton

The Ombudsman determined that a closed meeting by the city's Election Compliance Audit Committee on July 15, 2015 was illegal, because the committee falls within the *Municipal Act*'s definition of a "local board" and is subject to the Act's open meeting requirements. Notice of the meeting was



What's new at our office? [Check out the Ombudsman's latest post.](#)

CLOSED MUNICIPAL MEETINGS

In the news:

[Ombudsman investigating two complaints regarding London city council \(CTV\)](#)

[Closed OPP meeting broke rules \(Brockville Recorder and Times\)](#)

[Rules broken by council \(Oshawa Express\)](#)

[Hamilton committee reviewing election spending broke rules. Ombudsman says \(CBC News\)](#)

REACHING OUT

We'll be at the [Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference](#) on August 13 and 14. Come see us at booth 511! #AMOCNF16

Attention legal eagles: Visit our booth at the [Canadian Bar Association conference](#) in Ottawa on August 12 and 13.

School's in: Ombudsman Paul Dubé will address the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation on Aug. 18 - watch [our website](#) for his speech.

What are the Chanseys? The [Nova Scotia Ombudsman's Office](#) tweets about its newest form of outreach - being an official Pokestop!

not provided, no procedure was followed to close the meeting to the public, and the topic of discussion did not fall within any of the Act's exceptions to the open meeting rules.

Oshawa

The Ombudsman found that Oshawa city council violated the Municipal Act when it met in camera with the Oshawa Power and Utilities Corporation to obtain information about a proposed merger of utility companies. Noting that the meeting did not fall within the "education and training" exception, or any exception, to the Act's open meeting requirements, the Ombudsman made recommendations to improve the city's open meeting practices.

Broader public sector: Recent cases

We've had **647 school board** complaints since September 1, and since January 1, we've received **1,955** complaints about **municipalities** and **152** about **universities**. The bulk of these cases have been resolved informally, usually through referral to local officials.



Municipalities

A woman who was working temporarily in Ontario and renting a house with no private parking complained to us when the municipality denied her a street parking permit because her vehicle had out-of-province plates. We confirmed that this is the municipality's policy, but it is reviewing its permit parking processes within the next year. In the meantime, municipal staff provided the woman with information about where she could park on adjacent streets without a permit, and a municipal lot where she could rent a parking space by the month. The municipality committed to update our Office on its review of the parking policy and relevant by-law.

Universities

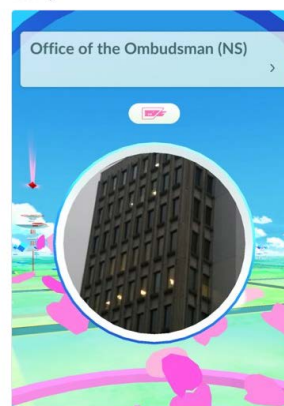
A woman complained to us after her acceptance into a university program through the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC), was somehow not processed, meaning she lost her spot and was put on a waitlist. Our Office referred her to OUAC first, to determine whether the error occurred as a result of a technical error in its online acceptance process, or on her end. Ombudsman staff explained that she could return to our Office if she was unable to resolve the matter by contacting OUAC.

School boards



NS Ombudsman @NS_Ombudsman - Jul 18

A new form of outreach?! Discovering the Office is an official POKESTOP in Pokemon Go :)



OTHER WATCHDOGS IN THE NEWS

Patient Ombudsman: [Christine Elliot, Ontario's first Patient Ombudsman, plans tour in the north](#)

Environmental Commissioner: [Ontario LDCs Not Meeting Their Energy Conservation Targets](#)

Ontario Human Rights Commission: [Ontario Human Rights Commission releases annual report](#)

Information and Privacy Commissioner: [IPC Withdraws Legal Action Against Toronto Police](#)

New Brunswick Ombudsman: [Secret reports raise questions about jail supervision](#)

WANT TO WORK WITH US?

We're always looking for talented people to join our **investigations**, **early resolutions**, and **legal** teams, including an [Articling Student and legal Summer Student for 2017-2018](#). Learn more about early resolutions [here](#). Learn about investigations [here](#).

After a teacher at her daughter's school interrogated the girl for more than two hours over a classroom incident, her mother complained to us about the school board's response. She wanted an apology for the incident, and felt the teacher should have been reprimanded. Our staff contacted a superintendent at the school board, who agreed to review the matter. The superintendent sent the mother a letter apologizing for the teacher's actions and addressing a number of the mother's questions. The school board also committed to developing guidelines for investigating similar incidents, and sharing these guidelines with our Office.

[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](#)



STAY CONNECTED

Ombudsman Ontario has **4,376 Facebook fans** and **36,930 Twitter followers!** Please continue to reach out to us on social media, or drop us a line at thewatchdog@ombudsman.on.ca.

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

1-800-263-1830 - Complaints Line | Ligne des plaintes | 1-866-411-4211 - TTY | ATS

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