

Learn about how we're handling more than 1,000 complaints about the OCS, resources for new municipal council members, and more in our October newsletter.

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OMBUDSMAN REVIEWING MORE THAN 1,000 COMPLAINTS ABOUT ONTARIO CANNABIS STORE

Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé today confirmed that [his office has received more than 1,000 complaints](#) about the Ontario Cannabis Store (OCS) since it opened October 17. Most are from customers frustrated with delayed deliveries, billing problems and poor customer service.

"I have informed the OCS that we are seeing a high volume of complaints and we are monitoring their response to these issues," Mr. Dubé said. "We have assigned a team of staff to triage complaints and resolve them quickly wherever possible, and we are in regular contact with senior officials of the OCS."

"Our office is uniquely positioned to assist organizations with addressing backlogs and implementing effective complaint processes," the Ombudsman added. "We can provide feedback, flag emerging trends in complaints, and propose best practices to improve service to the public."

The most common complaints thus far about the OCS's first two weeks of operations involve delayed deliveries, poor communication with customers and those seeking to escalate complaints, and orders that were incorrect, cancelled without notice or could not be cancelled.

The Ombudsman is an office of last resort, meaning it does not intervene unless existing complaint avenues have been tried. "As is our normal process, we are monitoring complaint trends and flagging them to the appropriate officials first. We also look for potential systemic issues that could warrant a formal investigation," Mr. Dubé said. "At the same time, our discussions with OCS reveal that it is working hard to resolve the issues generating these complaints, and if it can alleviate the issues we identify in an effective and timely manner, a formal investigation might not be required." [Read more](#)

IN THE NEWS

- [Ombudsman reviewing over 1,000 complaints about Ontario Cannabis Store](#) (CityNews)
 - [Ontarians fed up with cannabis delivery delays are complaining to the provincial ombudsman](#) (Global News)
 - [Office of Ontario ombudsman reviewing cannabis delivery complaints](#) (CBC)
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CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW AND RETURNING COUNCIL MEMBERS AND SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEES

We would like to congratulate all new and returning council members and school board trustees who were elected on Oct. 22, 2018.

Our office works collaboratively with all municipalities in Ontario to resolve concerns and complaints. Our website provides plenty of great resources for incoming municipal council members - such as wallet-sized municipal tip cards on everything from when to close a meeting to best practices for creating a local complaint process. [We](#)



[encourage you to print and share our municipal tip cards here.](#)

We also oversee all of Ontario's school boards. You can read more about the types of issues we typically deal with, and how we work with boards to resolve complaints, by [clicking here](#).

COMPLAINT TRAINING BY THE OFFICE OF NEW SOUTH WALES OMBUDSMAN



Ombudsman Paul Dubé attended the training session alongside Toronto Ombudsman Susan Opler, Montreal Ombudsman Johanne Savard, and speaker Don Sword of the New South Wales Ombudsman's office on October 9 - 10.

On October 9 and 10, our office hosted colleagues from multiple ombudsman offices and oversight bodies for day-long training sessions. The training was conducted by Don Sword of the New South Wales Ombudsman in Australia, and focused on strategies for dealing with complex complaints. It is the second time our office has had the pleasure to work with Don and provide this training to colleagues.

The training was centred around resolving complaints and dealing with difficult situations in a healthy, professional, and effective way. Participants were able to share their stories and learn from the experiences of their counterparts.

TRAINING THE WORLD'S WATCHDOGS



Ombudsman staff providing our advanced investigative training for administrative watchdogs in Manitoba, October 3, 2018.

In mid-October, Ombudsman General Counsel Wendy Ray and Laura Pettigrew provided *Sharpening Your Teeth*, our advanced investigative training, for the Manitoba Ombudsman's Office and the Manitoba Child and Youth Advocate in Winnipeg. Meanwhile, other senior Ombudsman staff hosted similar programs in The Hague, Netherlands and Anchorage, Alaska.

These training sessions, which are conducted entirely on a cost-recovery basis, provide best-practice teachings on identifying systemic issues, planning investigations, assessing evidence, and stakeholder engagement. This training session will be coming to Toronto in November.

OUT AND ABOUT

On October 11, our office participated in a Developmental Services Fair in Toronto, featuring Toronto-based agencies providing services and supports for transitional youths and adults with developmental disabilities. Attendees included parents, caregivers, and support



workers, as well as students from developmental services worker programs.

Our staff engaged with members of the public and spread awareness of what our office does and how we can help people in the developmental services sector.

Attendees who were curious about our recommendations in action were able to pick up copies of our Annual Report for updates on our past investigations, as well as read for themselves how we can help resolve their issues with government.

Our office was fortunate to host a delegation from Seoul, South Korea. Gareth Jones, Director of the Special Ombudsman Response Team, and Wendy Ray, General Counsel, met with Jang Jeonguk and Park Chin Young of the Seoul Metropolitan Citizen's Ombudsman Commission. They discussed matters of municipal oversight and challenges that commonly arise, as well as elaborated on best practice measures each organization uses when dealing with complaints.

LEARN MORE: INDIVIDUAL RESOLUTIONS

Ever wondered how the Ontario Ombudsman's Office has helped Ontarians find resolutions to their problems? We cover a wide jurisdiction - [click here](#) to learn who we oversee, or access our case summary database and read some of our recent case resolutions below.

- [Cost of living](#)



- [Thanks a lot](#)
- [Bugs in the system](#)

File a complaint online or contact us here

The Ombudsman is an independent officer of the Ontario legislature who conducts oversight of provincial government agencies and municipalities, universities and school boards. Ombudsman Paul Dub   began his five-year term on April 1, 2016.

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