

In our May newsletter: Ombudsman Dubé calls on the Ministry of Health to overhaul ambulance complaint services, urges fairness for vaccine passports, and more

[View this email in your browser](#)

[Forward to a friend](#)

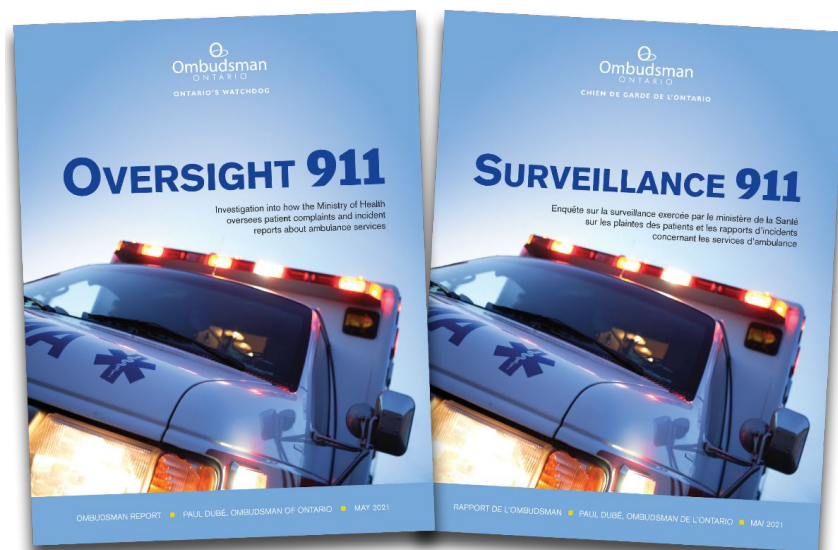


**In this month's newsletter:**

- [New report: Ombudsman Dubé calls on Ministry of Health to overhaul ambulance complaint services](#)
- [Ombudsman and counterparts release guidelines for fairness in vaccine passports](#)
- [Speaking to linguistic lawmakers, at international conferences, and more](#)
- [How we've helped Ontarians – can we help you too?](#)
- [Work with us! Hiring a Communications Officer, ERO, and more](#)

---

[\*\*Ombudsman recommends overhauling  
“complicated, overburdened” ambulance  
oversight system to protect patient safety\*\*](#)



Ombudsman Paul Dubé released his latest investigation report on May 20, calling on the Ministry of Health to improve its oversight of ambulance services. The investigation revealed a system for investigating complaints that is complicated, overburdened, and wholly inadequate.

“Emergency ambulance service can mean the difference between life and death – and we see this now more than ever, as our medical services struggle with the COVID-19 pandemic,” Mr. Dubé said.

The Ministry “has neglected patient safety by failing to adequately monitor EMS providers, dispatch centres, and Ornge,” the Ombudsman writes in his report, entitled *Oversight 911*.

The Ombudsman identified serious concerns, including patients lacking information on how to complain about ambulance services; understaffing and high turnover that contributed to long delays in investigation reports; and issues not being investigated because the Ministry viewed matters such as paramedics’ conduct, medication errors or customer service problems as outside of its purview.

- [Ontario ombudsman calls for overhaul of ‘wholly inadequate’ paramedic services oversight system](#) (Global News)
- [Ombudsman calls for overhaul of Ontario’s ‘unreasonable and wrong’ process for handling ambulance-related complaints](#) (QP Briefing)

[Read the report](#)

---

## [Ombudsman and counterparts urge fairness in vaccine certification approaches](#)



Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé is joining his counterparts from across Canada in urging that provincial and territorial governments considering vaccine passports do so with fairness and caution.

The Canadian Council of Parliamentary Ombudsman (CCPO), which includes Canada's 10 provincial and territorial ombudsman offices, published guidelines for provincial governments and public sector organizations that decide to implement COVID-19 vaccine certification systems.

"It's crucial that any system that potentially limits people's access to public services be fairly implemented," said Mr. Dubé. "That means it must be evidence-based, clearly communicated, provide for flexibility and reasonable accommodations, and offer access to independent oversight. As independent, impartial experts in fairness, my colleagues and I stand ready to help."

[Read the guidance document](#)

---

[Here, there and \(virtually\) everywhere](#)

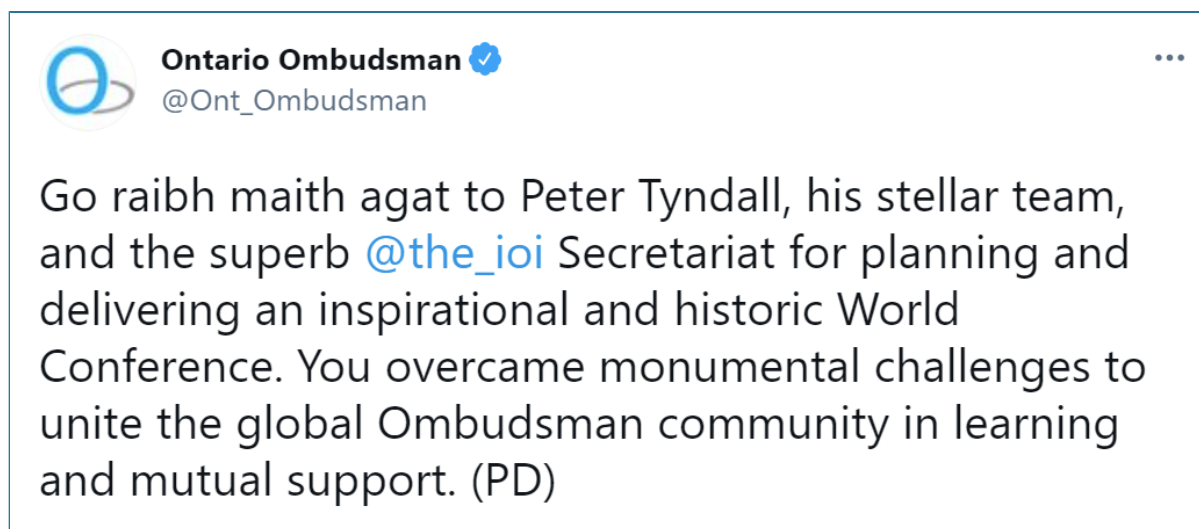


### Language matters

French Language Services Commissioner Kelly Burke joined her federal and New Brunswick colleagues in a panel discussion on linguistic diversity within provincial legislatures on May 14. The “Languages in Parliament” seminar, organized by the Canadian Study of Parliament Group also included federal Commissioner of Official Languages Raymond Th  berge and New Brunswick Commissioner of Official Languages Shirley MacLean.

Commissioner Burke explained her vision and role in the protection and promotion of language rights in Ontario, noting that the *French Language Services Act* recognizes the use of French in the Legislative Assembly, in the institutions of the legislature, by the government, its agencies, third parties and offices located in or serving designated regions. She reiterated her recommendation – stated in her [December 2020 Annual Report](#) – that Ontario develop a strategy that includes rigorous planning to ensure services in French that are equivalent and without delay.

### Sharing expertise with fellow Ombuds



On May 27, Ombudsman Paul Dub   participated in a panel discussion during the International Ombudsman Institute’s (IOI) world conference, alongside Ombudsman of Slovenia Peter Svetina and former Secretary General of the IOI G  nther Kr  uter. Ombudsman Dub   provided an overview

of our Office's work in promoting improvements to services for adults with developmental disabilities in crisis, the subject of his 2016 investigation report, [Nowhere to Turn](#).

On May 18, Deputy Ombudsman Barbara Finlay presented virtually during the French edition of the Forum of Canadian Ombudsman's "Essentials for Ombuds" training course. She discussed strategic approaches and best practices for conducting systemic investigations from start to finish, including interviewing stakeholders and reviewing evidence.

### **Warm welcome**

Ombudsman staff met virtually on May 6 with workers at COSTI, an organization that provides support and services to new Canadians. Our staff delivered a presentation about when people should bring concerns to our Office, and answered questions about the kinds of issues we can help resolve.

*Would your community group like to learn about how our Office helps Ontarians? [Contact us](#) to arrange a virtual presentation.*

### **Connecting with those who care for youth in care**

Throughout May, our Children and Youth Unit staff provided several presentations to child and family well-being agencies, including many staff and caregivers at:

- Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services;
- The Children's Aid Society of Haldimand and Norfolk;
- Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services; and
- Chatham-Kent Children's Services.



We also met virtually with approximately 75 workers who specialize in youth in transition, housing support and anti-human trafficking. In addition to sharing information about what young people and agencies can expect from our Office, we answered many insightful questions about our [Death and Serious Bodily Harm](#) reporting system, [young people's rights in care](#), and our resources for [youth](#) and [service providers](#).

*We can provide virtual presentations to youth and service providers about our Office. To request a presentation, please [get in touch with us](#).*

### Honouring children and youth in care

On May 14, we recognized Children and Youth in Care Day in Ontario ([Facebook](#), [Twitter \(English\)](#), [Twitter \(French\)](#), [Instagram](#)) – a day to honour young people in care (past and present), and to celebrate their strengths and achievements. The Ombudsman's Children and Youth Unit is available to listen to children and youth in care, and to help. Please [reach out to connect](#) with us.



---

## [How we've helped: Case Summaries](#)

### For service in French, dial OO

A Francophone student seeking information about scholarships via the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) contacted us when he discovered there was no option to select services in French in the automated phone system of the OSAP department he called. [Find out how our French Language Services Unit helped.](#)



---

## Right-ing on the wall

A 16-year-old who has a developmental disability and lives in a group home contacted us to raise questions about his rights. [Watch and share our video story](#) – and follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for more real-life stories of how we help young people in care.



---

## Proven parenthood

A father whose wife died in childbirth sought our help in obtaining a birth certificate and Social Insurance Number for the new baby, which he needed in order to claim survivor benefits. [Find out how we helped him.](#)



Read more stories about how we helped Ontarians in the Ombudsman's **2020-2021 Annual Report**, which will be released in late June. Stay tuned for details!

## HOW TO SUBMIT A COMPLAINT

### 1. VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Visit the "Who We Oversee" page on our website. If you're still not sure if your complaint is something we can look at, contact us.



### 2. GATHER INFORMATION

What steps have you already tried to resolve the matter? This information will help with our review.



### 3. FILE YOUR COMPLAINT

You can submit a complaint by using our online form, sending us an email, or leaving us a voicemail.



### 4. BE READY TO PROVIDE DETAILS

Once you have submitted your complaint, someone from our Early Resolutions team will contact you.



Learn more at [www.ombudsman.on.ca](http://www.ombudsman.on.ca)

 Ombudsman  
ONTARIO

## [Work with us: Job openings](#)



### Interested in working with us?

We continue to hire new staff. Check out all of our open positions in the [Careers](#) section of our website.

- [Early Resolution Officer](#)
- [Communications Officer - Generalist Unit](#)
- [Articling Student](#)

---

**[File a complaint 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, as well as child protection services and French language services. Ombudsman Paul Dubé was reappointed for a second five-year term, beginning on April 1, 2021.

*Copyright © 2021 Ontario Ombudsman, All rights reserved.*