

Can we help you, too? Real stories from our 2020-2021 Annual Report

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How we helped: Case summaries from the past year

Here, there and (virtually) everywhere

Work with us: Job openings

[Which of our Annual Report stories resonated most with you?](#)

HOW WE HELPED: CASE SUMMARIES FROM THE PAST YEAR



A 13-year-old in a group home complained that staff were forcing him to talk to them and share his feelings, rather than respecting his privacy. He said they threatened to remove privileges, like making calls to his parents or using an iPad, if he didn't comply. We raised the issue with the home's supervisor, who agreed that staff should not threaten him when he does not feel like talking.

[Click here to learn more about how we helped young people in care with their problems](#)



A woman returning from an overseas trip complained to us that she was not served in French during the COVID-19 test she was required to undergo at Toronto Pearson airport.

We discovered that the test was administered by a third party as part of a screening project set up by the Ministry of Health and managed by Ontario Health. After we made inquiries, Ontario Health committed to ensure its future agreements with third parties include provisions for services in French.

[Click here to read about how we've helped resolve issues with French language services](#)



A man who lost his business due to the pandemic told the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) he could no longer meet his support obligations, and was initially told he would have to go to court to make his case. Instead, we connected him with FRO officials who worked with him on a payment plan he could afford.

[Click here to learn about how we can help with Ontario social services, such as Ontario Works, the Ontario Disability Support Program, the Family Responsibility Office and more](#)

Several inmates in the same facility complained to us that they were strip searched in a main hallway, in view of security cameras. The policy of the Ministry of the Solicitor General is that searches must be conducted in an area and a manner that preserves inmates' privacy and dignity. Our inquiries led us to escalate the matter to a regional director with the Ministry, who acknowledged the policy had not been followed in this case. As a result, the facility made procedural changes, including conducting searches out of view of cameras and using privacy screens.



[Click here to find more examples of how we've resolved complaints related to corrections, policing, and administrative tribunals like the Landlord and Tenant Board](#)



A woman who had lived in Canada for 76 years sought our help when she attempted to renew her health card and discovered she did not have Canadian citizenship. She feared this would affect her health coverage, as she was told she would have to apply for a passport in her birth country and then apply for permanent resident status in Canada before she could renew her health card. We spoke to Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) officials, who confirmed her health coverage would be extended for a year in order to complete the requisite applications.

[Click here to read about how our Office handles complaints about OHIP, the Northern Health Travel Grant, oversight of ambulances, and more](#)

A college graduate seeking to pursue studies at a university sought our help when he was unable to provide official transcripts from the college, whose offices were closed in spring 2020 due to COVID-19. He complained that the college did not respond to his inquiries until June, and did not provide his unofficial transcript until October, which was too late for the university's fall semester. College officials acknowledged that changes to its processes due to the pandemic had resulted in issues that they had since addressed. They offered to apologize to the graduate and explain the situation to his new university, where he successfully enrolled for the next semester.



[Click to read examples of how we've helped with education-related cases in Ontario – from school boards, to universities and colleges, and beyond](#)

[HERE, THERE AND \(VIRTUALLY\)](#)

EVERYWHERE



Do you have questions? We have answers!

How can the Ombudsman help you? In July, we answered this question – and more – during virtual presentations to groups from across the province, pointing them to [resources on our website](#) and explaining how we take and resolve complaints.

On July 13, Paul Sloan, Early Resolutions Manager, spoke to the Supervisory Officer's Qualification Program organized by the Ontario Principals' Council. The program, which prepares candidates for supervisory roles in schools across Ontario, has invited Mr. Sloan to speak to candidates on several occasions, to explain [how we deal with school board complaints](#) and outline what a board might expect if we contact them.

In mid-July, Ombudsman staff also spoke to the Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations and the Older Adults Centres' Association of Ontario. We answered their questions about [organizations within our jurisdiction](#) and [provided information about steps we take when resolving complaints](#).

Are you interested in a free, one-hour presentation to your organization? [Contact us!](#)



Ombudsman conference aims to protect rights across the Francophone world

In July, French Language Services Commissioner Kelly Burke participated virtually in a conference organized by the Association des Ombudsmans et Médiateurs de la Francophonie (AOMF) on the protection of fundamental rights in a time of pandemic. The conference brought together more than 70 representatives from Ombudsman offices around the world – in person and remotely – and concluded with the adoption of the [Monaco Declaration \(in French only\)](#), aimed at protecting rights for future generations, on July 13, 2021.



Ten minutes with the French Language Services Commissioner: Latest updates from Kelly Burke

Last month, French Language Services Commissioner Kelly Burke was interviewed by Michel Picard on Unique FM's radio program “Le Retour,” where she discussed her career path, her role, and her investigation into the recent cuts to French programs by Laurentian

University, which is a partially designated agency under the *French Language Services Act*. Listen to the [entire interview](#) (in French only).

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 Resolutions Officer](#)
- [Legal Summer 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.

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