

August newsletter: Ombudsman calls for updates to strengthen CYFSA, new report release on Sept. 7, we're hiring!, and more

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ONTARIO OMBUDSMAN NEWSLETTER



Ombudsman calls for updates to strengthen Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017

Ombudsman to release report on oversight of long-term care homes, Sept. 7

All about integrity commissioners: Our newest municipal guides

Back to school, ring the bell

Seniors: Learn more about how we can help you

How we helped

Ombudsman calls for updates to strengthen *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*



Ombudsman Paul Dubé is urging the government to fix gaps in the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA)* to ensure children and youth in care are informed of their right to contact his Office.

“My Office has met with hundreds of children, youth and front-line staff at conferences, group homes, and foster homes,” the [Ombudsman wrote in a submission](#) to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services late last month, as part of the Ministry’s mandatory five-year review of the *CYFSA*. “We were told by many people, including children and youth in care, that they were under the impression that there was ‘no longer anywhere for young people to call.’” In particular, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ children and youth said they were unaware that they could call the Ombudsman.

“In my view, part of the reason for this misunderstanding is because provisions of the *CYFSA* that dealt with the rights of children and youth to receive assistance from the Provincial Advocate were repealed in 2019 after the Provincial Advocate’s Office was

dissolved,” Mr. Dubé says in the submission. Previously repealed provisions of the *CYFSA* should be reinstated, setting out the right of children in care to call the Ombudsman, and obliging service providers to display information about his Office, he writes.

He also calls for a new regulation under the *Ombudsman Act* to specify that his Office can investigate concerns about unlicensed facilities, unlicensed agencies, or agencies delivering non-residential mental health or developmental services. “The government should restore access to an independent complaint and oversight mechanism to all children and youth receiving services under the *CYFSA*,” he says.

In all, the Ombudsman makes nine proposals in his submission, including that the Ontario Regulation 156/18 be amended to require service providers to inquire about whether a child would like to receive services in French.

“I am broadly supportive of the Ministry’s identified objectives for legislative change and am hopeful that this review will provide an opportunity to address deficiencies and gaps my Office has identified in the *CYFSA*, and ultimately strengthen safeguards for children and youth receiving government services,” he says.

[Read the full submission here](#)

[Ombudsman to release report on oversight of long-term care homes, Thursday, September 7](#)

Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé will release his latest investigative report on Thursday, September 7 at 11 a.m. His investigation examined the Ministry of Long-Term Care’s oversight of long-term care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ombudsman’s press conference will be webcast live at www.ombudsman.on.ca , and the report will be posted there at 11 a.m.

[All about integrity commissioners: Our newest municipal guides](#)



Ombudsman Paul Dubé and several of our staff were at the annual conference of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) in London, Ont., August 20-23. We shared our reports and resources with at our booth and answered questions from numerous municipal officials and elected representatives about our work.

Making their debut at AMO were our two newest guides for municipalities, [both of which are available on our website](#):

- [Municipal Integrity Commissioners: Best Practice Guide](#)
- [Codes of Conduct, Complaint & Inquiry Protocols, and Appointing Integrity Commissioners: Guide for Municipalities](#)

In addition to tips, these guides feature case examples, information about relevant legislation, and best practices for complaint and inquiry protocols.

[Back to school, ring the bell](#)



As millions of students get ready to return to classes, our Office is standing by to help them and their families sort out a range of issues related to school boards and post-secondary institutions. [Learn about how we help with school boards here](#).

At the post-secondary level, our staff can help students with problems related to financial

aid, admissions processes, academic appeals, student services, and the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP). We can also make referrals, as needed, to university ombudsman offices or to other public sector bodies.

We're setting up a series of presentations this fall to university and college student organizations about how we can help resolve post-secondary issues. [Please reach out to our Office](#) if your university, college or student group would like to schedule a presentation about the services we offer to students!

Seniors: Learn more about how we can help you



Our Office helps Ontarians tackle challenges or obstacles they may run into when dealing with public sector bodies. Our helpful staff can resolve administrative issues with driver's licences, health cards, ServiceOntario, social services programs such as the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or Ontario Works, and much more.

Here are some of the ways we've helped older adults:

- We helped a senior get his driver's licence reinstated after a medical form he sent to the government went missing.
- We reached out to the relevant provincial officials when a long-term care home put restrictions on a senior's visits to his wife.
- We assisted a 74-year-old woman resolve an issue with a cancelled licence after she delayed her driving test due to a hip surgery.

Is your seniors' organization interested in hearing more about the types of problems we can solve? [Reach out to us today](#) to schedule a virtual presentation or request brochures!

You can also contact us directly if you have a complaint or concern. Email us at info@ombudsman.on.ca, call us at 1-800-263-1830, or [fill out a form on our website](#).

HOW WE HELPED



Conversion confusion

A man who had accidentally submitted incorrect information to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) sought our help when OSAP converted his \$32,000 grant to a loan. He told us that because of the mistake, OSAP had concluded that his wife was employed, when in fact she lived in Afghanistan and had no income, and she had submitted a notarized letter to that effect.

Our review determined that the man had received confusing information about OSAP's requirements from his university's financial aid office. After we helped him take steps to appeal the decision, OSAP converted his loan back to a grant.

[Click here to learn more about how we helped Ontarians with their problems](#)



[That's the place](#)

Unhappy with his placement at a foster home, a 17-year-old asked his children's aid society caseworker for a placement change, only to be told the home he was staying in was best for him. Feeling unheard, he contacted our Children and Youth Unit. Our staff explained that all young people have the right to request a review of their placement, under the Residential Placement Advisory Committee (RPAC) process. The youth's worker was not aware of this process. After we spoke with the worker about the youth's right to a review, she said she would consider moving him.

The youth has since moved into a new home, and told our staff he is happy with the new placement and is still in contact with his children's aid society for transition planning.

[Click here to learn more about how we helped with issues or problems concerning children and youth](#)

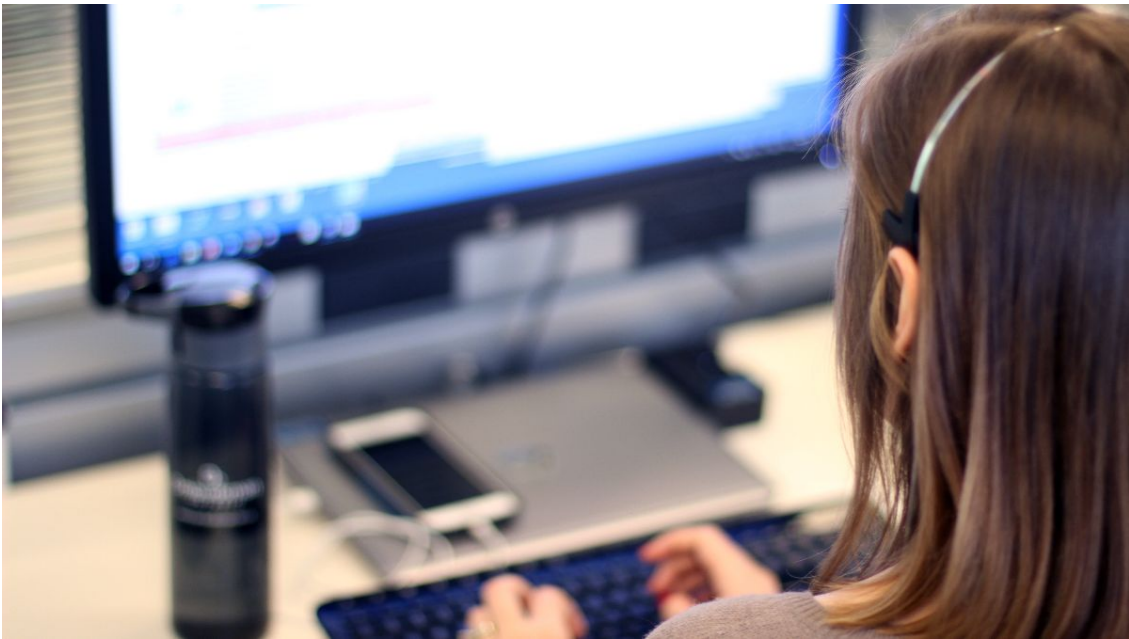


[Hold, s'il vous plaît](#)

A Francophone man complained to our French Language Services Unit that he waited an hour on the phone for service in French when he called the disability eligibility decision unit of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. He finally hung up in frustration, called back and chose the service option in English – and was served in less than 15 minutes. Our staff reviewed the man's case and contacted the service manager, who quickly acknowledged the lack of service in French and undertook to develop and implement policies to ensure bilingual service.

Learn more about the French Language Services Unit which answers questions and takes complaints about services in French

[Careers](#)



We continue to hire new staff.

We are recruiting for two bilingual positions in our French Language Services and Children & Youth Units: [Early Resolution Officer \(ERO\)](#), and a [Communications Officer](#).

APPLY NOW!

We offer:

- Collaborative, exciting work with exceptional colleagues passionate about public service
- Comprehensive health, dental and vision benefits
- Generous paid maternity and parental leave
- Hybrid working environment with an office centrally located on the subway line
- A commitment to work-life balance
- Defined-benefit pension plan
- Ongoing training and professional development opportunities

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. The Ombudsman's investigations have benefited millions of Ontarians and prompted widespread reforms, including improved newborn screening, a more secure lottery system, and better tracking of inmates in segregation.

The Ontario Ombudsman's work takes place on traditional Indigenous territories across the province we now call Ontario, and we are thankful to be able to work and live on this land.

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