

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

NOTICE 14.1

October 20, 2022

TO: All Department Personnel

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: OMBUDS SECTION'S DIRECTED REFERRAL PROGRAM –
ESTABLISHED

This Notice establishes the Ombuds Section's Directed Referral Program. The program provides commanding officers with an additional tool in addressing workplace conflict and attending to the needs of their personnel. In doing so, the program will advance the Department's goals of mitigating risk, promoting wellness, and encouraging a positive working environment.

The mission of the Ombuds Section is to create a positive working environment by focusing on developing and improving internal partnerships among all Department personnel. This is achieved by providing a fair and impartial review process to resolve conflicts and mediate disputes in the workplace. The advantages of utilizing the Ombuds Section's services are:

- Resolutions are reached and determined jointly by the involved parties;
- Sessions are confidential;
- There is an enhanced balance of power for the involved parties;
- The outcome does not establish precedents; and,
- There is an opportunity to preserve, repair, and enhance relationships.

Presently, employees may self-refer to the Ombuds Section for assistance. The Directed Referral Program will expand the Ombuds Section's services by allowing commanding officers who identify workplace conflict that does not rise to the level of misconduct to direct the involved employees to meet with an Ombuds Section associate.

Before directing an employee to the Ombuds Section, commanding officers shall contact the Ombuds Section to advise them of their desire to use the Directed Referral Program. This contact ensures an Ombuds Section associate knows which employees they will be meeting with and the general reason for the referral. Additionally, the associate will verify with the employees' command(s) that there are no known pending complaints, grievances, or lawsuits related to the conflict.

After contacting the Ombuds Section, the commanding officer shall make every effort to complete the following steps to foster a successful mediation process:

1. Meet with the employees to discuss the rationale for the referral.
2. Inform the employees that the referral is not disciplinary or punitive in nature. Additionally, civilian employees may invite a union steward to accompany them to the mandated session for observation only.
3. Indicate that initial attendance is mandatory, but participation in any additional service(s) offered by the Ombuds Section is voluntary.

Note: Employees who choose not to participate further with the program will receive advice from the Ombuds Section on how to best move forward with remedying the dispute.

4. Clarify that all referral-related activities with the Ombuds Section will be conducted on duty.
5. Advise the employees that all Ombuds Section sessions are confidential, and no information will be provided to the referring commanding officer unless the employees provide a signed release or when disclosure is expressly authorized and/or required by law.

The Department continually seeks to enhance the tools and services it provides its personnel in an effort to prevent and intervene in workplace conflict at the earliest opportunity. Implementation of the Ombuds Section's Directed Referral Program reinforces the Department's commitment to maintaining a positive work environment for all employees and providing the resources to resolve conflict effectively.

If you have any questions regarding this Notice, please contact the Ombuds Section, at (213) 486-8127.



MICHEL R. MOORE
Chief of Police

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