

CPS Ombuds Office

Guidelines and Procedures

Mandate of the Ombuds Office

The Ombuds Office serves as a first point of contact for members of the CPS community in resolving society, institute, or organizational conflicts.

Principles

The Ombuds Office of a psychoanalytic society recognizes that it serves a very particular type of community and strives to be a responsive listening organ. It will approach organizational conflicts in a way that is fair, impartial and confidential.

The Ombuds Office's guiding principles will respect all individuals involved as well as show appreciation for the complexity of relationships. The Ombuds Office will operate with the understanding that, despite good faith and best intentions, individuals can have very different views of a problem. The Ombuds Office will approach such situations with the firm belief that solutions can be found. The Ombuds Office will attempt to facilitate dialogue and resolution of conflict.

Matters brought to the Ombuds Office shall be dealt with in a consultative, facilitative manner maintaining an informal, collegial and confidential environment whether the concerns involve individual or collective matters.

Ombuds Office members

Appointment of Ombuds Office members is regulated by the procedures decided upon by the CPS.

The Ombuds Office will be composed of three CPS members, each from a different branch, at least one of whom is a training analyst, and at least one of whom is not a training analyst. Two analysts in training, from two different Institutes, will serve as advisory members of the Ombuds Office.

The members of the office are nominated for a term of 5 years.

When a complaint involves the local society of a member of the Office, this member should step out of the decisional process.

Jurisdiction

The Ombuds Office *makes appreciative inquiry concerning* complaints and conflicts involving alleged unfair or detrimental treatment, whether it be at the level of Society, Institute or be it an organizational matter. When appropriate and possible, the Ombuds Office will seek a resolution.

Complaints may arise from members, candidates and staff across all programs and services of the Society and Institute, National or local, on non-therapeutic matters.

Before proceeding with a complaint, the Ombuds Office will make sure that internal channels and avenues have been pursued and internal resources explored.

The Ombuds Office receives complaints on individual/collective matters as well as matters of concern to the analytic community and makes recommendations to the parties involved and, when necessary, to the CPS.

The Ombuds Office shall advise that any matter brought before the Ombuds Office requiring a formal decision under the CPS Code of Ethics in order to be settled should be referred to the CPS Ethics Committee.

Functions of the Ombuds Office

1. Answer preliminary questions on the Ombuds Office's jurisdictions over a dispute or issue of perceived unfairness and advise on the possibility of making a complaint;
2. When appropriate, the Office will direct parties to existing institutional means of recourse;
3. Formally receive complaints;
4. Proceed with inquiry into the dispute, or the issue of unfairness, and determine how best to address it;
5. Assist members of the community in resolving the issue in a way that is fair, impartial, *neutral* and confidential;
6. Make recommendations;
7. Submit an annual report to the CPS and the CIP.

Procedures

Part 1 - Disputes

The complainant, or the aggrieved parties, contact one of the Ombuds Office members by telephone or email.

The contacted member will refer the complaint to the other members of the Ombuds Office (3 members) to decide on the Ombuds Office's jurisdiction. The Ombuds Office will nominate one member to deal with the complaint. This member will be the contact person for the complainant. They may consult with one or both of the advisory members (analysts in training) at any time.

The nominated member will respond in writing on the jurisdiction of the Ombuds Office within 10 working days.

If the Ombuds Office declines jurisdiction, the individual will be informed of other possible channels or resources.

If the complaints fall within the Ombud Office's jurisdiction, then the following ensues:

1. Proceed to get the relevant facts and details from the complainant;
2. If the complaint is adequately substantial, contact the other party in writing (email or letter) and provide the main facts of the complaint as reported by the complainant;
3. The Ombuds member will assist in bringing both parties into discussion with the aim of including both parties in a conflict resolution process;
4. If no resolution is reached, the member will make further inquiries in order to obtain more information relevant to the formation of a recommended solution;
5. The recommendation is made by the Ombuds Office (3 members, majority decision);
6. The recommendation is communicated to all parties and, when necessary, to the CPS's Executive Council.

Part 2 - Structural issues

If the inquiry shows that the problem is a structural issue such as one involving a systemic source of difficulty within the CPS then the Ombuds Office may make recommendations to the relevant officer(s), committee(s) or to National Council to help redress the problem on an organizational level. Such a recommendation has to be made by the full Ombuds Office (3 members), that is, by a majority vote.

Access to relevant documentation

In order to come to an understanding of the matter, the Ombuds Office shall have access to relevant documentation and rely on the full collaboration of all parties involved including CPS members and staff while respecting confidentiality regulations and other legal obligations.

The Ombuds Office will keep records of its procedures. These will be appropriately housed in the CPS administrative office.

In using emails or electronic communications, the Ombuds Office will use appropriate and available security measures.